

Governance and control: the hallmarks of Buckinghamshire's cloud migration



Civica's Cloud Optimisation service helps Buckinghamshire County Council maximise the benefits and minimise the risks of cloud adoption.

Setting cloud migration on the right track

Buckinghamshire County Council delivers services to more than half a million residents. Like other local authorities throughout the UK, it's under constant pressure to control costs in the face of shrinking budgets.

To reduce capital expenditure and make better use of real estate, the council's technology team is migrating from physical to cloud-based IT infrastructure. As well as contributing to cost control aims, migrating to cloud enhances the technology team's ability to support development of new services.

"Cloud-based infrastructure makes it much simpler to provide capacity for new projects, with no need to make upfront investments in compute capacity," says Jon Branch, Senior Technical Officer at the council. "That means projects can start much sooner, and new services can be developed and delivered faster."

Branch is well aware, however, that without proper controls, cloud's easy flexibility and scalability can quickly lead to overprovisioning and overspending. He's counting on the Civica Cloud Optimisation service to help the council avoid those risks and get best value from its cloud platform.

Outcomes

- ▶ **Maximum value from cloud migration** through targeted spend and adoption of best practice
- ▶ **Better business decision-making** enabled by visibility into cloud spend and usage
- ▶ **Senior management confidence** in the council's cloud migration boosted by expert third-party validation
- ▶ Ability to draw on **Civica's cloud expertise** and learn from its experience of supporting other councils' cloud migration projects

Migrated 4,000 staff

to Office 365

Reduced

capex investment in new infrastructure

Enhanced control

over cloud expenditure

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Governance and visibility assured from day one

"Civica is one of the inner circle of trusted suppliers we rely on to advise us and help us take the right approach," says Brainch. Over a period of several years, Civica has helped the council rightsize its software licensing and make savings. More recently, Civica supported the migration of Buckinghamshire's 4,000 staff to Office 365, and worked with the council to create its new IT platform on Microsoft Azure.

Now Civica's Cloud Optimisation service is helping the council migrate to Azure in a structured way. "We didn't want to simply jump in at the deep end," says Brainch. "We wanted to make sure we had full governance and visibility of our cloud migration and usage from day one."

The Cloud Optimisation service provides regular reporting based on real-time data feeds from the council's Azure environment, complimented by analysis and consultancy from Civica specialists. "This is expertise we simply don't have in house," says Brainch. "Civica helps us understand the data and the options available to us. In addition, we can draw on the knowledge Civica has gained through its work with other local authorities to ensure we follow best practice."

This ability to compare Buckinghamshire with its peers and benefit from broader experience is important to the council's senior management team. "Having a third party like Civica assess and validate what we're doing reassures senior management that we're handling the migration in a controlled way, and that there won't be any sudden spikes in expenditure," says Brainch.

Spending money where it counts

Information provided by the Civica service helps the council target its spend appropriately to get best value from its cloud environment. Cloud Optimisation reports show, for instance, which virtual machines (VMs) are unused outside office hours, and can therefore be switched off overnight to save money; or which tier one applications would run better with a higher allocation of storage.

Brainch can also use information provided by the service to tackle issues like unallocated cloud spend and shadow IT. "With Cloud Optimisation, we have a clear picture of how much we're spending and what we're spending it on," he says. "The service gives us the information we need to have fruitful discussions with the business and make more informed decisions."

Early implementation of Civica Cloud Optimisation allows Buckinghamshire to understand its cloud expenditure and usage from the start, so that it can target spend appropriately and avoid the risk of overprovisioning.

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Ready to support future needs

As Buckinghamshire moves more and more of its IT to the Azure environment, Brainch anticipates that the council will make use of further capabilities within the Cloud Optimisation service — to enable, for example, cross-charging of cloud expenditure to business areas.

And with a merger between the county council and four district councils on the cards, Buckinghamshire's cloud migration will doubtless prove timely, delivering flexible capacity that can scale and grow as their future business needs and requirements become clearer.

"That's yet another reason we're confident that migrating our IT to the cloud is absolutely the right decision," says Brainch. "Having the Civica Cloud Optimisation service in place already means it's perfectly positioned to support us as we increase our use of the Azure platform."



Cloud adoption reduces costs



Accurate and compliant license procurement



Supports flexible, mobile working