

Generating savings and sharpening the focus on 'mission' with a move from mainframe to cloud



Maintaining legacy technology can become a distraction for any organization—diverting time, money, and other resources away from the central mission. In the health care realm, that reality can be an especially stark one. Each dollar spent on unnecessary activities represents a dollar that could be used to support the primary mission: caring for patients.

For a large, nationally recognized academic hospital, simplifying IT emerged as a strategic priority as the organization continually looked for ways to improve patient care—through greater stewardship of patient and other essential data, more efficient operations, and an improved experience for employees.

For years the hospital relied on a mainframe platform for its data and applications. But as annual maintenance costs approached the \$1 million mark—and as skilled mainframe personnel became scarcer due to retirement and a skills shortage in the market—the organization decided to take a step back and ask one simple question: How can we do things more efficiently and in a way that positions us for the future? ▶

What happened next

To begin transforming its data and applications landscape, significantly reduce costs, and address the shrinking mainframe specialist labor pool, the organization worked with Deloitte to understand the value that resided in the mainframe environment and to determine a way to get it out.

The organization had already been moving in the direction of cloud for some of its enterprise needs, and it already had a Microsoft Azure agreement in place. Cloud, therefore, emerged as an obvious choice as it looked to simplify IT and streamline its business processes through a true enterprise-level pilot project—with cloud offering lower total cost of ownership, scalability, and rapid innovation.

But with a tremendous amount of data and applications still residing in the mainframe, becoming a cloud-driven organization would require a major effort to analyze the resources and define a path forward. Leveraging the knowledge of mainframe and health care specialists, the hospital conducted a thorough inventory of all of its existing mainframe assets, including an analysis of their value and retention policies. The assessment uncovered 54 applications and 53 databases on mainframe, most of which were retired or nearing retirement. Although those assets might have been retired in the move to the cloud, lengthy data retention policies required that the organization maintain data for most of the applications.

While adhering to retention policies and creating a future state for each asset in the cloud, Deloitte and the organization developed a detailed road map for retiring each mainframe asset. The result after migration? Data that can be made rapidly available for regulatory and reporting needs, as well as used with any cloud apps that might require the data. Another major impact of the cloud move: dramatic savings—with overall costs reduced by nearly 95%.

Legacy HR apps and data have been a significant element of the project, as they continue to be essential day to day. As part of the mainframe-to-cloud migration, the hospital made historical mainframe data available via a cloud app, through Tableau reports and an SQL server on Azure. Deloitte undertook a number of key activities to help the hospital save time and achieve the required outcomes.

Leveraging its industry-specific knowledge and cloud transformation experience, Deloitte was able to guide the migration of mainframe data and archives to the cloud, creating the Tableau reports to replicate inquiry-only screens from mainframe applications, and deploying robotic process automation (RPA) to download documents that had to be retained in their native format. With cloud fully deployed, the organization can now focus its resources on projects that will benefit the community without relying on costly mainframe infrastructure or increasingly hard-to-find mainframe specialists.

The wins

- ✓ Lower total cost of IT ownership
- ✓ Reduced staffing pressures and dependency on mainframe specialists, with many nearing retirement
- ✓ Ability to focus more resources on activities that can improve patient outcomes and service
- ✓ Greater data accessibility, reliability, and security for reporting and regulatory compliance needs
- ✓ An expanded cloud footprint to support future innovation and flexibility—as part of a larger cloud journey

By the numbers



Typical annual mainframe costs for the organization saved



Projected cost savings in moving from mainframe to cloud



Mainframe applications successfully migrated to cloud



Mainframe databases successfully migrated to cloud

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