

Say “Yes” to Successful Application Migration to the Cloud



There are a lot of naysayers in the IT world – and the topic of application migration to the cloud has its share. People point out how difficult it is to migrate multiple applications to the cloud. How legacy applications don't function properly in the cloud environment. How missed interdependencies cause operational snarls. How user frustration increases. How the cost of fixing the resulting mess completely obviates any possible return on investment (ROI).

Don't listen to the naysayers. If you say “Yes” to the following questions, you will experience a successful migration of all your applications to the cloud!

Q1. Do you want to understand what it takes to move enterprise applications, including hard, monolithic legacy applications, to the cloud?

Are you tired of hearing “we will start with the low hanging fruit,” but then never getting to the applications that are really costing your organization the most resources to operate and maintain? If so, then say “Yes” to this question and pave the way for developing the value-driven enhancements your customers truly need.

Q2. Do you want to know what most enterprise migration efforts fail to consider?

Most migration efforts focused on technology migration, which actually tends to be the easiest part of the migration. Few migration providers consider “enterprising” the target environment: that is, ensuring that the entire operational structure is prepared for the post-migration situation. So, as you plan your application migration, be sure to say “Yes” to:

- Reviewing the current processes and policies that are used to operate your hosting and application environment today. Processes and policies may need to evolve to support cloud-native or optimized applications operations.
- Looking at existing cloud service procurement models and make changes or alternative recommendations to allow application teams to consume cloud resources during and after the migration.
- Recommending training models that will help position your people prior to migration with the skills they will need post-migration.

Q3. Do you want to fully understand where you are so that you can get where you want to be?

Saying “Yes” to an intensive discovery process is the first step in a successful application migration to the cloud. This discovery process should assess your entire portfolio of applications to determine the existing application state, the level of risk involved in migration, and the suitability of each application for the cloud. Automated tools and techniques can help in the collection of relevant data, as can review of any analyses and assessments that may have already been performed.

As part of this process, you should also identify the business, technical, and operational objectives you have for the migration. What do you hope to accomplish? How will you define a “win”?

Q4. Are you prepared to perform a pilot migration before engaging in “the real thing”?

You are likely on a tight deadline and cannot wait months to show results. Conducting pilot migrations during the Discovery Phase enables rapid migration value without sacrificing the greater migration quality. It can also unearth unforeseen challenges for the larger migration effort, giving you time to resolve any potential roadblocks before the wave migrations occur. All in all, a very critical “Yes” for your application migration.

Q5. Do you want to migrate your applications to the cloud using known, repeatable migration patterns?

You will undoubtedly find, upon assessing your portfolio, that not every application can be migrated the same way or even to the same cloud service provider. That being said, most application migrations fit into a standard application migration pattern (also known as a “treatment”). Selecting the right pattern based on your business or application requirements can vastly expedite the enterprise migration:

- **Rehost** – Typically referred to as “Lift and Shift,” this treatment type typically offers the quickest migration strategy due to the least amount of application changes required. This option makes the most sense when there are time- and/or risk-based migration objectives that limit the number of changes that can be made to an application prior to migration, and the application is already operating in a virtual IaaS platform.

- **Replatform** – This treatment does not involve a code change, but instead recommends a hosting platform change – typically, at the operating system layer. Replatforming treatments are used when you need to upgrade from an older version of an operating system or move from a paid version to an open source version of an operating system.
- **Redesign** – Like a replatform, a redesign treatment typically will not require any code change. Rather, a redesign focuses on the delivery mechanisms of the functionality utilizing the same code base. For example, adding cloud-native load balancing, content delivery, or caching services typically does not require code modification, but can supplement legacy application designs to improve durability and performance of the cloud-hosted application.
- **Refactor** – This is the most effective migration treatment if you desire to take full advantage of the benefits that cloud computing offers. Traditional applications are multi-tier and stateful, preventing them from realizing the true utility, elasticity, and durability benefits a native cloud services application can offer. Applications recommended for refactor will be pushed to maximize these benefits, but typically experience the highest upfront risk and cost to yield them.
- **Retain** – This application disposition is appropriate for applications that are still required by the organization, but are not cloud suitable; therefore, they must remain in a non-cloud hosting environment.
- **Retire** – This application disposition is recommended when either use, utility, or redundancy levels allow you to consider the retirement of the application.

Q6. Will you plan out your migration to the finest level of detail?

Planning is everything, so be sure to say “Yes” here! Generate a step-by-step migration plan for each application, and be sure to have application stakeholder engagement when you do so. This migration plan should contain the necessary details to clearly execute a successful migration from source to destination.

Q7. Will you validate your migration after it is finished?

It’s not over ‘til it’s over! In the relief of seeing applications migrated to the cloud, it can be easy to forget to say “Yes” to this one. But migration validation is an important step. After migration, review the migration checklist and compare your pre- and post-migration performance levels. Review and resolve all discrepancies.

Q8. Are you ready to train your people really well?

Training is vital to reduce operational risk, increase adoption, and prepare your people to work effectively in the migrated state. Say “Yes”!

Q9. Will you continue to monitor performance and optimize applications post migration?

This is a “Yes” that will ensure continued ROI to your business. Keep your eye on performance to make sure there is no service degradation as time progresses. And, if certain application treatments prevented the best cloud operating environment, consider future optimization activities.

Q10. Are you prepared to ask for expert assistance if you need it?

Saying “Yes” to external help when you lack the internal expertise and experience to plan and execute application migration to the cloud is the single greatest step you can take to ensure a successful migration. This “Yes” supports your “Yes” to every other question asked here!

Are you ready? It’s time to say “Yes” to successful application migration to the cloud!

Migrating the Simple and the Complex with Ease

Unisys Federal recognizes that not all organizations are at the same point in the cloud migration journey and that each agency has unique technologies, constraints, and objectives. Based on our industry-leading technology service delivery, our vast federal cloud migration experience, and our detailed observance of the federal cloud migration market, Unisys has developed a multi-phase migration process that minimizes cloud migration risk, maximizes process reuse and automation, and consistently delivers targeted cloud migration outcomes to our federal customers.

In addition to our cloud migration methodology, Unisys is uniquely positioned to offer a complete cloud migration capability, including the migration of truly difficult and complex applications. Most federal cloud migration efforts focus on the cloud-friendly applications and leave the more challenging non-x86 or mainframe-based applications for later phases – or ignore them altogether. As an industry leader in both the challenging mainframe and non-x86 workloads as well as the “cloud friendly” technologies, Unisys has proven pathways to address these challenging applications as well.

The Unisys Federal Application Cloud Migration Capability provides the right combination of outcome-based managed services to model and rationalize your existing state, determine the best transformation pathway, and establish a continually improving operational model that emphasizes objective-based optimization.

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