MEETING NOTES: HIGHERTECH - VMWARE TO AWS MIGRATION KICKOFF

Date: November 18, 2025
Time: 2:00 PM - 3:30 PM PST
Location: Virtual (Zoom)
Recorded By: James Miller (Lead Solution Architect)

ATTENDEES:
- HigherTech:
   - Linda Pei (VP of Infrastructure)
   - Marcus Thorne (Director of IT Operations)
   - Sam Al-Fayed (Network Engineer)
- Migration Partner (CloudPivot):
   - James Miller (Lead Solution Architect)
   - Sarah Connors (Project Manager)

OBJECTIVES:
1. Align on the primary migration strategy (VMC on AWS vs. Native EC2).
2. Address immediate concerns regarding IP addressing and downtime.
3. Establish the timeline for the "Pilot Wave."

DISCUSSION HIGHLIGHTS:

1. Strategic Direction: VMC vs. Native
   - Linda (HigherTech) emphasized that the primary driver is the rapid exit from their colocation facility by Q2 2026 due to rising costs.
   - **Decision:** The team agreed to pursue **VMware Cloud on AWS (VMC)** as the primary strategy. This allows HigherTech to use existing vSphere skills and tools without refactoring applications immediately.

   - *Note:* A smaller subset of stateless web apps will be moved directly to native Amazon EC2 using the AWS Application Migration Service (MGN) to save on VMC host costs.

2. Networking & IP Preservation
   - Sam (HigherTech) raised a critical blocker: Hardcoded IP addresses in the legacy "InventoryPro" application. Re-IPing would break the app.
   - **Solution:** James (CloudPivot) proposed using **VMware HCX (Hybrid Cloud Extension)** to stretch the L2 network. This will allow HigherTech to migrate VMs to AWS while retaining their on-premise IP addresses during the transition.

3. Storage Concerns

- Marcus (HigherTech) noted that their current environment is storage-heavy but compute-light (lots of archival data).
   - **Risk:** VMC on AWS runs on hyper-converged infrastructure (vSAN). Expanding storage usually means buying more expensive compute hosts, which is not cost-effective for archival data.
   - **Action:** James to model a solution using **Amazon FSx for NetApp ONTAP** to offload storage from the VMC cluster, keeping the host count low.

4. Licensing
   - Linda expressed concern about recent changes in Broadcom/VMware licensing models.
   - **Action:** Sarah (PM) to schedule a separate breakout session with the AWS licensing specialist to ensure HigherTech leverages the "Bring Your Own License" (BYOL) benefits where applicable.

ACTION ITEMS:

[ ] Sam Al-Fayed: Provide the VLAN topology map and current firewall rules by Friday.
[ ] James Miller: Setup the "Pilot" SDDC (Software Defined Data Center) in the AWS US-West-2 region.
[ ] Marcus Thorne: Identify 10 non-critical VMs for the initial Pilot Wave migration.
[ ] Sarah Connors: Send over the "Migration Readiness Assessment" (MRA) questionnaire.

NEXT MEETING:
Technical Deep Dive (Networking & HCX Setup) - Thursday, Nov 20th @ 10:00 AM.