

Cloud Migration

Case Study

Energy Industry

Migrating desktops to the cloud to power greater user productivity

A large UK-based energy organisation turned to Cutter for expert advice to help it move over 800 Citrix desktops to the cloud. With Cutter's guidance, the company achieved a successful phased migration, tightened its application security and enabled users to work more productively from any location.

Challenges Faced

The energy provider had a central datacentre in the UK, from which it delivered desktop applications for over 800 employees, across multiple offices, using Citrix XenApp. However, the datacentre relied on ageing hardware and urgently needed to be updated. To avoid the substantial capital expense that such a large-scale datacentre upgrade would inevitably entail, the organisation decided to move its Citrix desktops into the cloud.

Another key driver for the project was to improve the user experience. The existing Citrix XenApp platform had reached the end of its life, and employees often experienced slow log-in times and other performance issues that impaired their productivity. In addition, this ageing solution didn't support Windows 10, constraining the organisation's ability to deliver new functionality for employees that would enable them to collaborate and work together more securely and effectively.

Cutter made all the difference by:



Guiding the client throughout the cloud migration journey



Going beyond the brief to improve security and business resilience



Responding quickly to the challenges presented by COVID-19



Providing ongoing support and proactive monitoring

Services Provided

Drawing on its strong experience of cloud migration projects, Cutter worked with the organisation to design a Citrix cloud solution in Microsoft Azure. Then, Cutter planned and implemented a phased roll-out, delivering the latest Citrix Virtual Desktops to groups of employees at a pace that worked for the business. Throughout the project, Cutter helped to on-board users, transferring across their personal settings, and offering advice and guidance to the in-house IT team.

As is the case with all cloud migrations of this type, the project didn't just involve moving desktops to the cloud. Cutter helped the IT team to identify potential incompatibility issues with legacy solutions and address them before they impacted business performance. Most importantly, Cutter helped the IT team to integrate the Citrix cloud environment into the organisation's existing multi-factor authentication systems, tightening desktop security.

Fortunately, the cloud migration project was already well underway when COVID-19 emerged, enabling Cutter and the energy business to respond to the challenges of the pandemic very quickly. "We were able to turn on the tap and enable remote working very quickly," says Kim Mount, Technical Director at Cutter.

In response to the national lockdown measures, Cutter accelerated the planned roll-out of Microsoft Teams, delivering this new collaboration platform to employees at the time when it was most needed. Cutter also helped the IT team to repurpose its on-premise equipment to create a hybrid business resilience solution. Designed to jump into action in the event of a cloud failure, this solution allayed concerns about the potential risk of restricted cloud capacity during the lockdown.

Results Achieved

With Cutter's support, the organisation was able to achieve a smooth migration to the cloud, despite having a small in-house team with limited knowledge of cloud-based solutions. "Partnering with Cutter gave our client the additional scale and experience it needed to modernise its desktops and realise the full potential of the cloud platform," says Andy Trevor, Cutter's Managing Director. "We completed the project on time and on budget in challenging business circumstances."

The new Citrix in Azure platform delivered the ability for the organisation's employees to work securely from anywhere, at a point in time when remote working became critical. By connecting the new Citrix Virtual Desktops to the organisation's pre-existing identity management system, Cutter improved desktop security and enabled the organisation to better control access to corporate resources.

Importantly, the project transformed the user desktop experience and improved productivity, by eliminating frustrating software quirks and slow log-ins. The migration to Citrix Virtual Desktops also paved the way for the organisation to move to Windows 10 and deliver new tools, such as Microsoft Teams, that enable employees to work more effectively together.

While the desktop cloud migration project is now complete, Cutter is continuing to support the organisation, providing ongoing advice and a remote monitoring service to constantly check desktop performance. "We have an honest and open relationship with the client," Trevor says. "The IT team view us as trusted advisors whom they can call upon to help them to make important new decisions as they continue their cloud migration journey."