DDS IT

Accomplish more with cloud

A New Zealand cloud guide to achieving success with Microsoft Azure's NZ North region

Microsoft Solutions Partner
Infrastructure
Azure

Specialist
Infra and Database Migration





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FOREWORD

ACCELERATING NEW ZEALAND'S DIGITAL FUTURE



by Vanessa Sorenson
Chief Partner Officer ANZ, Microsoft

It is an exciting time for Microsoft with the recent opening of our Azure NZ North Cloud region. This new, local Azure region represents more than just infrastructure and services – it's an opportunity to super-charge New Zealand's digital transformation. NZ North will create a sustainable, local home for New Zealand's data at a scale and speed beyond anything we've seen before.

With the North region now launched, the challenge for New Zealand businesses is to understand how they can securely and confidently accelerate cloud adoption and access the power, resilience, and efficiencies of Azure's local cloud infrastructure.

The new Azure region is more than just infrastructure and services; it represents a significant opportunity to super-charge New Zealand's digital transformation.

The NZ North region has created a sustainable, local home for New Zealand's data at an unprecedented scale and speed. This underscores the importance of DDS IT as a valued Microsoft partner, leveraging their expert Azure knowledge and innovation to achieve exceptional outcomes for New Zealand organisations.

As a leading provider of cloud-enabled managed services, DDS IT is strategically positioned to support New Zealand businesses in their digital journeys.

Having achieved the Microsoft Partner specialisation in Azure Infra & Database Migration highlights DDS IT's deep knowledge, extensive experience, and proven success in helping customers transition seamlessly to the cloud, modernise their applications, and driving digital transformation.

With their strong customer-centric approach, DDS IT is a valued Microsoft partner that has leveraged their expert Azure knowledge and innovative accelerators to achieve impressive outcomes for their New Zealand clients. Together Microsoft and DDS IT have partnered to guide many customers with complex legacy environments and challenging requirements to unlock the full benefits of their cloud investment.

The DDS IT Cloud Adoption Guide is a great tool to help business leaders and IT decision makers answer many of the questions they might be grappling with and gain clarity on the opportunities the new Azure region unlocks.

Like us, DDS IT shares the goal of delivering practical, impactful solutions, for customers; whether migration services, building foundations and Landing Zones, or aligning AI technologies with real business requirements and outcomes. DDS IT keeps customers at the heart of everything they do.

Warm regards
Vanessa Sorecenson



INTRODUCTION

by Simon Browne
CEO and Founder, DDS IT

Welcome to DDS IT's comprehensive guide, "Accomplish More with Cloud"

Welcome to DDS IT's comprehensive guide, "Accomplish More with Cloud Adoption." This guide aims to educate and raise awareness about our approach to cloud adoption, guiding organisations through a seamless and efficient transition to the cloud.

We understand that navigating the cloud can feel complex. That's why our approach begins with a thorough assessment of your current on-premises or legacy cloud deployments, considering not just technical aspects but also your business objectives and data needs. This assessment helps us understand your specific needs and develop a tailored migration strategy that aligns with your goals.

We prioritise building a protected and resilient cloud environment with robust security measures and compliance protocols in place. This ensures your data remains safe and secure throughout the transition and beyond.

The planning phase is crucial. We translate your aspirational goals into actionable plans, aligning technical goals with your business drivers. This involves carefully considering your service requirements and identifying the most suitable cloud tools for your needs.

By leveraging cloud technologies, we help you enhance agility, innovation, and customer experiences. We also prioritise risk mitigation, ensuring business continuity and minimising security threats. Furthermore, we focus on optimising costs by leveraging cloud economics and right-sizing resources, helping you avoid costly mistakes and maximise your return on investment.

Finally, we ensure compliance with relevant industry regulations and data privacy standards, giving you the confidence to embark on your cloud journey knowing your data is secure and your business is protected.

Warm regards,

Simon Browne



ABOUT DDS IT

DDS IT is a premier provider of cloud-enabled managed services, committed to driving digital transformation and operational excellence for businesses. Recognised for our Azure Migrate and Modernisations (AMM) specialisation, we deliver strategic guidance and technical expertise that empower businesses to leverage the full potential of Azure solutions. Our local data residency experience ensures compliance and security, enhancing the cloud adoption success.

Specialisation in Azure

As a cloud specialist, DDS IT excels in providing tailored cloud migration and modernisation solutions that align with industry-specific needs. Our expertise in Azure allows us to offer seamless transitions to the cloud, optimising performance and cost-efficiency for our clients. By partnering with DDS IT, businesses gain not just the knoweldge they are in a safe pair of hands, but are backed by Microsoft both technically and progammatically, with access to migration funding programs to facilitate a smoother cloud adoption.

Comprehensive Managed Services

Beyond our cloud specialisation, DDS IT offers a full suite of managed services designed to reduce complexity and enhance operational efficiency, ultimately delivering what we are all about "incredible customer experiences":

- IT Cloud & Infrastructure Management: 24/7 proactive observability & monitoring across cloud and hybrid environments.
- Security: Security solutions to protect critical business data.
- Service Desk: Intelligent support with a reliable and consistent user experience.
- Endpoint Device Management: Comprehensive support for all endpoint devices, ensuring seamless operations.
- AI Implementation and Management: Co-Pilot services.
- IT Service Management: Modern, value-driven ITIL practice with strong business integration.

Partnering with DDS IT ensures businesses receive expert-driven IT management, enhancing efficiency, security, and technological agility. By leveraging our extensive experience, clients can focus on core business operations while we manage their IT needs effectively.



WHAT IS THE NZ NORTH REGION?

"Think of the New Zealand North region as more than just a single datacenter building".

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The New Zealand North region is more than just a single data center—it consists of three availability zones spread across Auckland. These zones operate independently, each with its own power, cooling, and networking, ensuring that if one experiences an issue, the others keep services running. This design enhances reliability and protects businesses from disruptions caused by power outages, severe weather, or localised failures. By distributing workloads across multiple zones, organisations can maintain high availability and seamless operations.

With its recent launch, the New Zealand North region strengthens both local and global cloud connectivity, enabling businesses to integrate seamlessly with Microsoft's extensive cloud infrastructure. As part of Azure's global network of over 60 regions, it provides fast, secure, and low-latency data transfer across international markets. These regions are strategically divided into geographies that adhere to data residency requirements, ensuring compliance while delivering scalable cloud services. The inclusion of multiple availability zones in New Zealand North further enhances regional resiliency, making it a robust choice for enterprises seeking secure, high-performance, and disaster-resilient cloud solutions.

Beyond resilience and connectivity, the New Zealand North region also plays a key role in sustainability and digital transformation. Microsoft has committed to running its cloud regions on 100% renewable energy by 2025, helping businesses reduce their carbon footprint while leveraging cutting-edge cloud technologies. This region will enable organisations to modernise operations, improve efficiency, and drive innovation. With access to Azure's broad ecosystem of services, businesses in New Zealand can accelerate their digital strategies while ensuring compliance with local and global regulations.

By kiwis leveraging the New Zealand cloud region, customers gain several benefits:

Data Residency: Store and process data within New Zealand to meet regulatory and cultural requirements.

Security & Compliance: Access local, regional, and global security solutions, ensuring compliance for sensitive data.

Latency: Improve efficiency with lower latency and faster network connectivity between local data centers and the cloud.

Sustainability: Reduce energy costs and carbon footprint by leveraging Microsoft's green technology and local energy partnerships.

Global Continuity: Benefit from high-bandwidth, low-latency connectivity to Microsoft's global Azure network for seamless international operations.



NOT IN THE CLOUD BUT WANT TO GET THERE?

Getting Started:

Begin your cloud adoption journey by clearly defining your key business objectives. Are you aiming to reduce costs, boost efficiency, enhance customer experience, or drive innovation? Start by assessing your current IT infrastructure to identify any gaps or inefficiencies that might hinder your progress. How well do your existing systems align with your strategic goals, and what changes are necessary to support a smooth transition?

Once you have a clear picture of your objectives and current state, focus on building a robust business case to secure leadership support. How can you clearly demonstrate the potential return on investment while addressing risks and opportunities? Consider what skills and expertise your team already has and what additional capabilities will be needed. Should you invest in targeted training programs, recruit new talent, or collaborate with external partners to bridge these gaps? How will you support your staff throughout the change process? A comprehensive training plan combined with clear, ongoing communication can help ease any concerns and ensure everyone is on board.

Next, evaluate which cloud model best suits your business needs. Would a hybrid approach provide the balance you need, or does a multi-cloud strategy offer greater flexibility and resilience? It's essential to plan ahead by establishing measures to maintain security, compliance, and operational efficiency. What specific controls and best practices will you implement to ensure that your cloud environment meets industry standards?

Starting with a small-scale pilot project is often a prudent approach—it allows you to test and refine your strategy before committing to a full-scale rollout.

All good questions that must be answered before, during, and after your cloud adoption journey!

HOW PREPARED ARE YOU TO MOVE TO THE CLOUD?

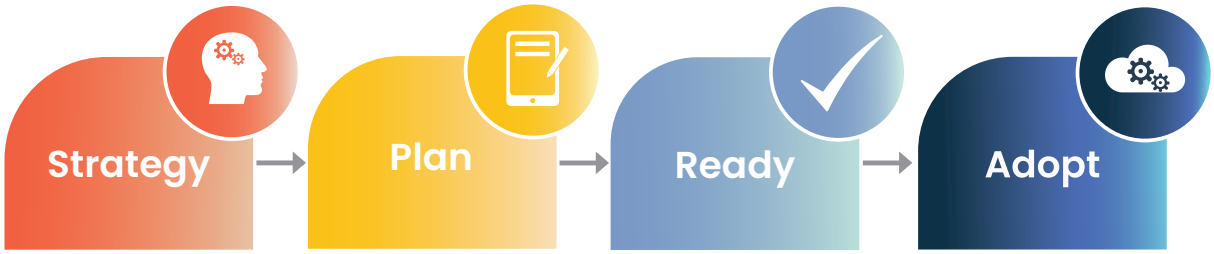
? **Strategy: Why are we moving to the cloud?**

? **Plan: How do we prioritise workloads for migration or modernisation?**

? **Ready: How do we design a secure, scalable foundation?**

? **Adopt: How do we migrate or build workloads effectively?**

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Strategy: Why are we moving to the cloud?

The foundation of any successful cloud journey begins by tightly coupling technical decisions to measurable business objectives. For executive leaders, this requires treating cloud infrastructure not as an operational expense but as a lever to accelerate revenue streams, mitigate operational risk, and unlock new competitive differentiators. Start by interrogating the "why" behind modernisation: How will scalable infrastructure shorten time-to-market for high-value products? What legacy constraints currently inhibit response to customer demands or regulatory shifts? Azure's hybrid architecture enables organisations to incrementally modernise without sacrificing stability, transforming technical limitations into strategic opportunities by balancing innovation with operational continuity.

Governance frameworks must evolve from a static process to being dynamic and automated. A forward-looking strategy integrates financial accountability and compliance directly into cloud operations, ensuring every workload aligns with organisational risk tolerance and profitability thresholds. Consider automated policies that prevent cost overruns without stifling innovation, security architectures that preemptively adapt to emerging threats, and workload placement aligned with geopolitical realities.

This approach doesn't constrain—it accelerates by providing stakeholders with granular visibility into how infrastructure decisions impact margins, resilience, and strategic agility.

Scalability without intentionality can lead to waste. Lasting competitive advantage stems from infrastructure designed to amplify business-specific outcomes—whether deploying AI models that personalise customer engagement or supporting real-time supply chain optimisation. Azure's modular services and global reach provide the tools, but success demands ruthless prioritisation of initiatives that directly influence market positioning. This requires synchronising technical roadmaps with top-tier business goals: If global expansion is a priority, architecting infrastructure that meets regional compliance and latency requirements becomes foundational. If innovation cycles define market leadership, investing in developer velocity through platform engineering and automated deployment pipelines is critical.



Plan: How do we prioritise workloads for migration or modernisation?

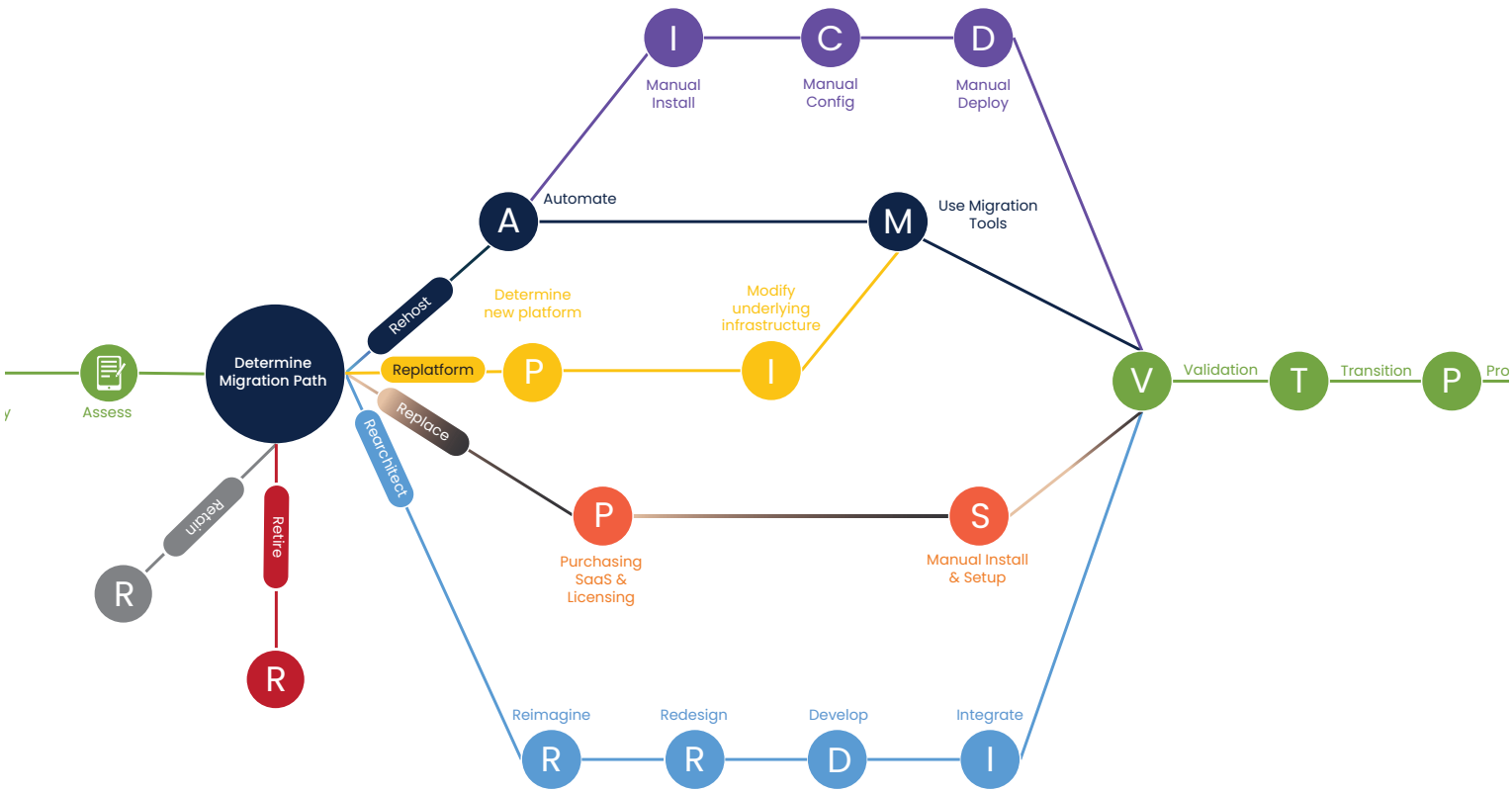
Cloud planning isn't just about moving workloads—it's about making smart, strategic decisions that align technology with business goals. It starts with a full inventory of your applications, data, and dependencies to determine how the estate should be rationalised - what should be migrated, optimised, or left behind. Each asset is assessed for business value and technical feasibility, weighing options like rehosting for a quick move, replatforming with minor optimisations, repurchasing cloud-native alternatives, or refactoring for a complete redesign. Some applications may be retired, while others might stay on-premises for regulatory or operational reasons.

Beyond the technical aspects, successful cloud adoption requires preparing your team. A skills readiness plan identifies knowledge gaps and ensures employees are equipped to manage cloud environments effectively. This may involve targeted training, hands-on experience, or hiring specialists to fill critical roles. By addressing both infrastructure and skills, this process builds a clear migration roadmap, mitigates risks, and ensures a smooth, cost-effective transition to the cloud.

Rationalisation

This crucial stage involves a comprehensive assessment of your existing IT environment to identify which applications and workloads are suitable for migration to the cloud. We analyse factors such as business value, cost, performance, and security to determine the most appropriate migration strategy for each workload, considering the 6R's model.

This holistic approach ensures that business objectives and drivers are aligned with technical recommendations, providing a clear understanding of the potential savings and total cost of ownership (TCO) of Azure for your organisation.



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Rehost

A rehost migration is when an application or system is moved from an on-premises environment to the cloud without making any significant changes to its architecture or functionality. The application is typically replicated as-is onto a cloud infrastructure, allowing it to run in the cloud with minimal modifications. This approach can offer benefits such as cost savings, scalability, and increased flexibility, but it may not take full advantage of the cloud's capabilities or optimise the application for cloud-native environments.

Example:
Using Azure Migrate to lift-and-shift a VM running on VMWare vSphere to an Azure Virtual Machine.

Replatform

A replatform typically involves modifications to an application so it can make full use of the cloud. These changes typically require more effort than a lift-and-shift, but can offer many benefits including decreased operational overhead, along with elasticity and scalability.

Example:
Switching from a database on a VM (SQL Server) to a cloud-managed database (Azure SQL).
Moving from a self-hosted file server to a cloud storage solution (such as Azure Blob).

Rearchitect

This type of migration includes a redesign & reimagining of an application, allowing it to fully leverage the benefits and capabilities of the cloud. Specifically, this could include a redesign of the app to support it running on a PaaS-based platform.

Example:
Moving a legacy integration tool to a serverless-based solution, significantly decreasing operational effort.

Replace

This approach involves the full replacement of an application with a different version, or an entirely different product. This may occur when a traditional server-based product can be migrated to an equivalent SaaS replacement.

Example:
Moving/Replacing an on-premises ticketing tool with a SaaS service.
Replacing Microsoft Dynamics CRM On-Premises with Dynamics 365 Cloud

Retain

Workloads may end up being retained in some cases as part of a cloud migration. Applications or their underlying hardware may have been upgraded recently, and organisations want to realise those benefits. Some services may be very latency sensitive and need to be kept on-site. In many cases, these workloads can be reassessed in the future and may then make their way into the cloud.

Example:
A critical SCADA system that has extreme low latency requirements.
An application with a license not up for renewal for 18 months.

Retire

The retire strategy refers to the identification and decommissioning of applications that are no longer required by the organisation. As part of the cloud migration process, organisations often undergo an application portfolio analysis to evaluate the relevance and value of each application. During a cloud migration, organisations typically identify around 35% of their apps that can be retired.

Example:
Shutting down an unused legacy file server.



DID YOU KNOW?

Start Small – early migration waves should generally be smaller, with 10 servers or less. Waves can gradually be increased in size over time, allowing teams to fail fast and learn from any mistakes.

Waves

A “wave” in cloud migration refers to a structured and phased approach to transferring digital assets, applications, and infrastructure from on-premises or existing cloud environments to a new cloud platform. It represents a strategic progression of migrating specific sets of resources, systems, or workloads in a coordinated and efficient manner.

This entails grouping related components, such as applications or business units, into logical units for migration. These units are then migrated as a distinct wave, following a predetermined sequence or priority based on business objectives, dependencies, and technical feasibility.

Effective management of a cloud migration wave involves comprehensive stakeholder engagement, clear communication, and ongoing monitoring and evaluation.

It is essential to align business objectives with the migration strategy, consider interdependencies between waves, and incorporate feedback loops to incorporate lessons learned and adapt the migration plan as necessary.

The overall goal of migration waves is to enable organisations to execute a structured, phased, and well-coordinated migration process, minimising disruption, optimising resource utilisation, and accelerating the realisation of business benefits in the cloud environment.



Skills Readiness

Ensuring people feel consulted and empowered to adopt the cloud is critical to the success of the transformation. Mapping existing roles to the new roles and skills required to operate, maintain, build, and govern cloud environments is essential. This involves defining learning pathways and technology stacks, as well as providing robust training programs to bridge skill gaps.

Key aspects of skills readiness in a cloud migration include:

Role-based Training: Offer targeted training programs tailored to different roles, such as cloud architects, developers, security specialists, and operations teams. This ensures that each team member understands their responsibilities and how to effectively use cloud tools and services.

Certification Programs: Encourage and support team members to obtain relevant cloud certifications from Microsoft and other key vendors. Certifications validate skills and knowledge, boosting confidence and competence in handling cloud environments.

Hands-on Experience: Provide opportunities for practical, hands-on experience through labs, workshops, and real-world projects. This helps teams apply theoretical knowledge to actual scenarios, enhancing their problem-solving abilities.

Continuous Learning: Cloud technologies and best practices evolve rapidly. Implement a culture of continuous learning, where team members are encouraged to stay updated with the latest advancements and trends in cloud computing.

Collaboration and Knowledge Sharing: Foster a collaborative environment where team members can share knowledge, insights, and best practices. Creating internal communities of practice can facilitate ongoing learning and support.



Ready: How do we design a secure, scalable foundation?

Cloud readiness is about building the solid foundations and groundwork, and choosing the right operational model, whether centralised IT control, decentralised team ownership, or a hybrid approach.

Landing zones lay the groundwork with networking, security, and identity management built-in from day one. Well-defined governance frameworks help prevent cloud sprawl by standardising access controls, compliance, and workload placement. Design decisions—like single or multi-subscription models, hub-and-spoke networking, or policy enforcement—ensure a structured, scalable cloud environment.

Planning beyond deployment is crucial. Setting up incident response, disaster recovery, and cost management early prevents future bottlenecks. Training teams in cloud operations, automation, and platform management ensures long-term success, allowing organisations to scale efficiently while keeping workloads optimised, secure, and under control.



The terms “greenfield” and “brownfield” in cloud computing are borrowed from construction. “Greenfield” refers to projects built from scratch on undeveloped land, while “brownfield” pertains to developments on sites with existing structures. In cloud deployments, a greenfield approach allows organisations to design a new environment without constraints, whereas a brownfield approach involves integrating new solutions into existing infrastructures.

Landing Zones

A landing zone provides a structured cloud environment with essential governance, security, and operational controls in place before workloads are deployed. Organisations can build landing zones using pre-configured templates (like Azure Blueprints or Terraform), modular approaches that scale with business needs, or fully customised designs tailored to complex enterprise requirements. These approaches ensure best practices for identity management, networking, security, and compliance, creating a scalable foundation.

Greenfield vs Brownfield Azure Landing Zones

Greenfield

A net new cloud environment designed from the ground up.

A Greenfield landing zone is a net-new cloud environment, designed from the ground up with predefined governance, security, networking, and operational best practices. It provides a clean slate for cloud adoption, ensuring alignment with Microsoft’s Cloud Adoption Framework (CAF) and enabling structured, scalable deployments. Greenfield landing zones are ideal for organisations with minimal existing cloud footprint or those looking to establish a fully controlled environment from day one.

Brownfield

Deployed into an existing Azure environment.

A Brownfield landing zone, on the other hand, is deployed into an existing Azure environment where workloads, networking, and governance structures may already be in place. This approach focuses on retrofitting governance, security, and operational controls into an environment that has often evolved organically. Brownfield implementations require careful discovery, rationalisation, and remediation to align legacy deployments with best practices while minimising disruption.



Identity & Access Management (IAM)

When organisations build their cloud environments using Azure landing zones, Identity and Access Management (IAM) becomes a cornerstone for balancing security and productivity. At its core, Microsoft Entra ID acts as the central hub to verify user identities and control what each person or team can access. This is streamlined through role-based access control (RBAC), which assigns predefined permissions to ensure users only interact with the tools and data they truly need. For instance, a marketing team member might access analytics dashboards but not financial records, while an IT administrator might have broader access—but only under specific conditions.

To add layers of security, features like Conditional Access allow organisations to set rules that adapt to context. This can help to ensure users are logging in from only specific locations or countries. Meanwhile, Privileged Identity Management (PIM) helps minimise risk by granting temporary, just-in-time access for high-level tasks—like giving a contractor a keycard that works only for the duration of a project.

This approach not only strengthens security by reducing unnecessary exposure of sensitive resources but also simplifies compliance with regulations like GDPR or industry standards.

By keeping permissions tightly aligned to roles and auditing access regularly, organisations can avoid the complexity of outdated or overlapping privileges. However, success depends on thoughtful planning: access requirements must be defined clearly to prevent confusion, teams need training to understand security protocols, and rights should evolve as projects or team structures change.

Networking & Connectivity

Effective networking practices in a landing zone are crucial for several reasons. First, they facilitate efficient traffic flow and connectivity between different resources, both within the cloud and in hybrid environments. Second, they provide robust mechanisms for securing data in transit, controlling access, and mitigating potential threats. Azure Virtual Network (VNet) peering, ExpressRoute, and VPN gateways enable hybrid connectivity, while Azure Firewall and Network Security Groups (NSGs) enforce traffic control, ensuring that the cloud environment remains compliant with organisational security policies and regulations.



Directly applying on-premises networking and security models to the cloud often leads to reduced efficiency and increased vulnerabilities. Tailoring these strategies for cloud-native environments is key to robust, streamlined protection.



Security and Compliance

When organisations adopt Azure landing zones, integrating security baselines with tools like Azure Policy and Microsoft Defender for Cloud becomes a powerful way to proactively safeguard cloud environments while meeting regulatory standards. Azure Policy acts as a rulebook, automatically enforcing guardrails—like requiring encryption for data storage or blocking risky network configurations—to ensure resources align with security best practices and compliance frameworks. This minimises human error and prevents misconfigurations that could expose sensitive data.

Meanwhile, Defender for Cloud continuously scans for threats—such as unpatched vulnerabilities, suspicious login attempts, or malware—and even automates fixes, like quarantining compromised assets or updating outdated software.

This combination not only stops breaches before they escalate but also simplifies audits by generating compliance reports that demonstrate adherence to industry or internal standards.

For visibility, Log Analytics & Sentinel can collect and analyse logs, metrics, and activity trails across applications, networks, and users, flagging anomalies in real time—such as a sudden spike in failed login attempts or unauthorised access to a database. Teams can set alerts for critical events, like a user accessing sensitive data outside normal hours, and trace incidents back to their source. This transparency helps security teams both respond to threats and meet any compliance requirements.



Adopt: How do we migrate or build workloads effectively?

Adoption focuses on migrating workloads and modernising applications while maintaining operational stability. It's here where you use your rationalisation strategies as a guide but be ready to adapt as you encounter challenges. Cloud adoption is best approached in an agile and iterative manner.

Invoking your migration using your defined waves to reduce impact by minimising the blast radius. Infrastructure-as-Code (IaC) automates deployments, ensuring consistency and reducing manual errors.

Paragraph locked by Everard Borland
Post-migration, monitoring and governance frameworks track performance, cost, and security, ensuring workloads operate smoothly.

It is during this phase you can also look to establish a cloud governance model. This involves defining policies and procedures that manage cloud resource usage, access controls, and compliance requirements. Implementing tools like Azure Policy and Azure Blueprints can automate governance and ensure adherence to organisational standards. Additionally, fostering collaboration between cross-functional teams—such as Infrastructure, security, and finance promotes a unified approach to cloud adoption.



Well-Architected Framework

The Azure Well-Architected Framework (WAF) serves as a critical companion to the adoption of the cloud, ensuring that workloads deployed in Azure are designed and operated to meet business goals while adhering to best practices for security, reliability, cost efficiency, and performance. During this phase—where organizations transition from planning to actively deploying cloud solutions—the Well-Architected Framework provides a structured set of guidelines to evaluate and optimise workloads, aligning technical decisions with long-term operational and strategic objectives.

At its core, the framework revolves around five pillars:

- Cost Optimisation
- Operational Excellence
- Performance Efficiency
- Reliability
- Security

In the Adopt phase, these pillars act as guardrails to ensure workloads are built sustainably from the start. For example, Cost Optimisation principles guide teams to right-size resources, leverage Azure Reservations for predictable workloads, and adopt serverless or PaaS (Platform-as-a-Service) models to minimise waste.

Security mandates embedding Zero Trust principles early—such as encrypting data at rest, enforcing least-privilege access via Azure RBAC, and integrating Azure Defender for threat detection—so compliance and protection are foundational, not retrofitted.

The Reliability pillar ensures workloads are resilient to failures by designing for redundancy (e.g., multi-region deployments, Availability Zones) and automating recovery processes. During adoption, this might involve using Azure Site Recovery for disaster recovery or Azure Load Balancer to distribute traffic across healthy instances. Similarly, Performance Efficiency encourages selecting the right Azure services (e.g., Azure Kubernetes Service for scalable apps, Azure Cosmos DB for low-latency databases) and continuously monitoring metrics with Azure Monitor to refine resource utilisation.

Operational Excellence, perhaps most critical during adoption, focuses on streamlining workflows. This includes automating deployments with Infrastructure-as-Code (IaC) tools, centralising logging with Azure Log Analytics, and establishing governance via Azure Policy to enforce organisational standards (e.g., tagging resources for cost tracking). By embedding these practices early, teams reduce manual errors and accelerate time-to-value.

Integrating the Well-Architected Framework during the Adopt phase ensures that cloud solutions are not just deployed but built to last. It shifts the mindset from "getting it working" to "getting it right," balancing speed with sustainability. Organisations migrating to Azure might use WAF reviews to validate that application architecture scales for traffic spikes (Performance Efficiency), complies with security standards, and uses platform capabilities to control costs during off-peak periods (Cost Optimisation).



Resiliency

Resiliency is central to successful cloud adoption, ensuring systems continue operating smoothly even during unexpected disruptions. As organisations move from planning to actively deploying workloads in the cloud they must prioritise architectures that tolerate failures, recover quickly, and scale effortlessly. Cloud platforms provide foundational tools to achieve this, balancing innovation with reliability.

At its core, resiliency starts with designing for failure. This means distributing workloads across multiple data centers within a region to guard against localized outages and replicating critical data to geographically separate locations for disaster recovery. For example, a financial institution might deploy its applications across isolated zones to ensure transactions proceed uninterrupted, even if one data center faces an outage. Automation further strengthens this approach by enabling systems to self-heal—such as dynamically scaling resources to handle traffic surges or rerouting traffic away from failed components without manual intervention.

Testing is equally vital. Simulating failures, like sudden spikes in demand or simulated hardware crashes, helps teams identify weaknesses before real-world incidents occur. Continuous monitoring tools track system health in real time, alerting teams to anomalies like performance bottlenecks or security threats, so issues can be resolved proactively.

Data management plays a key role in resiliency. Storing session data separately from applications allows systems to recover quickly during outages, while regular backups ensure data can be restored to meet business recovery targets. For global businesses, hosting data closer to users reduces latency and ensures access even if a region is impacted.

Adopting modern practices like infrastructure-as-code (IaC) ensures consistency in deploying resilient architectures. By defining environments through code, teams eliminate configuration drift and enforce redundancy at every layer—whether deploying web apps, databases, or containerised services. Managed services reduce operational overhead by automating maintenance tasks, such as patching and scaling, so teams focus on innovation rather than upkeep.

Aligning resiliency with business goals is critical. Defining uptime targets and monitoring them ensures teams prioritise high-impact scenarios. A retail company, for instance, might design its e-commerce platform to handle holiday traffic spikes by automatically scaling resources, while a logistics provider ensures real-time tracking systems remain available during network disruptions.



WANT TO GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR CLOUD?

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Innovation & Value Realisation:

Adopting Azure's New Zealand North region enables organizations to combine local data residency with access to Azure's global cloud ecosystem. By hosting workloads in-region, businesses meet strict data sovereignty requirements—critical for regulated industries like healthcare, finance, and government—while maintaining fast, reliable access to core cloud services. This local footprint integrates with Azure's worldwide infrastructure, ensuring scalable performance for regional operations and seamless connectivity to global resources.

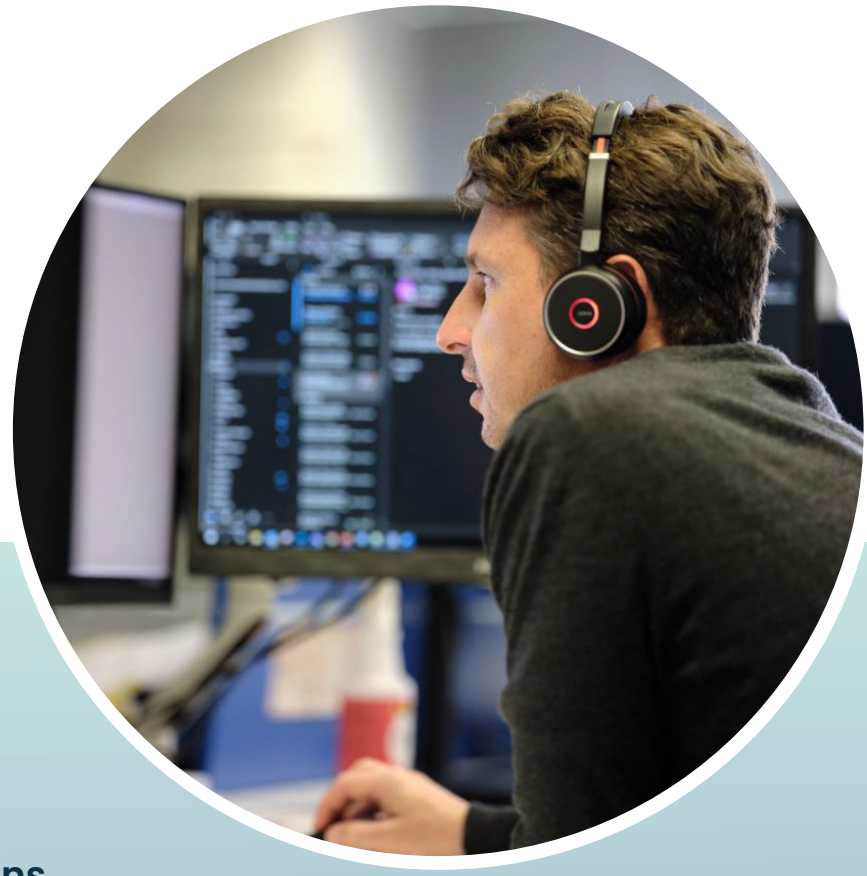
While advanced AI/ML capabilities may require validation or phased deployment in newer regions like NZ North, the region's foundational tools still empower organisations to innovate. Big data analytics, for example, turns complex datasets into actionable insights, helping identify operational inefficiencies, market trends, or supply chain risks. A logistics company could analyze historical delivery data to optimise routes, while a retailer might use real-time sales dashboards to adjust inventory strategies. Azure's automation tools and integrations further streamline workflows, reducing manual effort and accelerating decision-making.

Innovation thrives through iterative experimentation. Organisations can pilot solutions using Azure's flexible services—such as automating repetitive tasks or deploying analytics dashboards—to test ideas and refine them based on feedback.

The pay-as-you-go model supports this agility, allowing teams to scale successful pilots without upfront costs. For example, a company might prototype a customer feedback analysis tool using available analytics services before expanding it into a broader solution.

Building a culture of innovation ensures lasting value. Training teams to leverage collaborative tools and scalable cloud resources empowers employees to solve challenges creatively. Aligning technical and business goals bridges gaps between departments—for instance, using shared analytics platforms to reduce costs while improving service delivery.

By anchoring operations in Azure's NZ North region, organisations prepare for future growth. They gain the agility to adapt to market shifts, optimise cloud costs, and scale efficiently—all while maintaining compliance and customer trust. As Azure expands service availability in the region, businesses will be positioned to adopt advanced capabilities like AI/ML when they become accessible. This approach fosters a cycle of continuous improvement, where iterative testing and scalable infrastructure drive resilience and long-term success.



Hybrid Cloud Operations

Hybrid Cloud Operations allow organisations to extend Azure's capabilities to their on-premises infrastructure. This unified approach simplifies IT operations by managing both cloud and on-premises resources through a single pane of glass.

Azure Arc

Azure Arc extends Azure's management capabilities beyond the cloud, allowing organisations to bring on-premises, multi-cloud, and edge resources into a unified control plane. By doing so, it creates a consistent operational experience across diverse environments. This means you can apply the same governance, security, and compliance policies to resources regardless of their physical location. Consistency reduces complexity, streamlines administrative tasks, and helps avoid the pitfalls of managing siloed systems with disparate tools.

Azure Arc can help enable IT teams to modernise legacy systems without completely rearchitecting them, allowing for a more agile response to changing business needs. Integrating existing investments into on-premises hardware with modern cloud practices not only extends the lifecycle of your current infrastructure but also supports scalable, future-proof operations.

Arc also helps organisations deliver Extended Security Updates (ESUs), extending support for workloads running on legacy versions of Windows Server. This allows for a unified approach around resource management and policy enforcement which helps to simplify operations, enhance security, and lays a solid foundation for leveraging cloud innovations across the entire organisation.



Azure Local

Azure Local is designed to enable businesses to embrace cloud computing while maintaining control over critical workloads and modernising their on-premises data centers by integrating cloud capabilities into their existing infrastructure.

One of the standout features of Azure Local is its seamless hybrid cloud integration, which enables businesses to leverage both on-premises data centers and Azure's cloud computing power. This is particularly valuable for companies that require low-latency edge computing, allowing critical workloads to run closer to users and devices. Industries such as manufacturing, healthcare, and finance benefit from this capability, as real-time data processing is essential for their operations.

Azure Local also supports compliance and data sovereignty, ensuring that sensitive data remains within specific geographical boundaries. This helps organisations meet regulatory requirements and other industry-specific compliance standards. The infrastructure is designed to be highly scalable, allowing businesses to adjust their resources dynamically based on demand without the need for significant upfront investments in hardware.

Security is a top priority, with integration into Defender for Cloud, offering proactive threat detection and response. Additionally, enterprise-grade identity and access management is available through Microsoft Entra ID, ensuring secure authentication and access control.

Managing IT infrastructure becomes more streamlined with Azure Local, thanks to centralised resource management through Azure Arc. Automation further simplifies operations, reducing the complexity associated with traditional on-premises environments.



Infrastructure as Code (IaC) enables rapid scaling of your IT infrastructure? By defining configurations as code, you can quickly replicate and adjust environments to meet changing demands, ensuring consistency and efficiency across deployments.

Automation

Cloud automation is essential for successful cloud adoption. It streamlines processes, improves efficiency, and reduces risks. This guide highlights the importance of platform automation and DevOps practices for creating a resilient, controlled, and scalable cloud environment.

Platform automation automates infrastructure provisioning and management. DevOps practices foster collaboration between development and operations teams.

Automation offers several key benefits. It increases speed and efficiency by accelerating time-to-market for new applications. Automated processes improve consistency and reliability by reducing errors and enhancing stability. Automated scaling mechanisms enhance scalability and agility by enabling organisations to quickly adapt to changing demands.

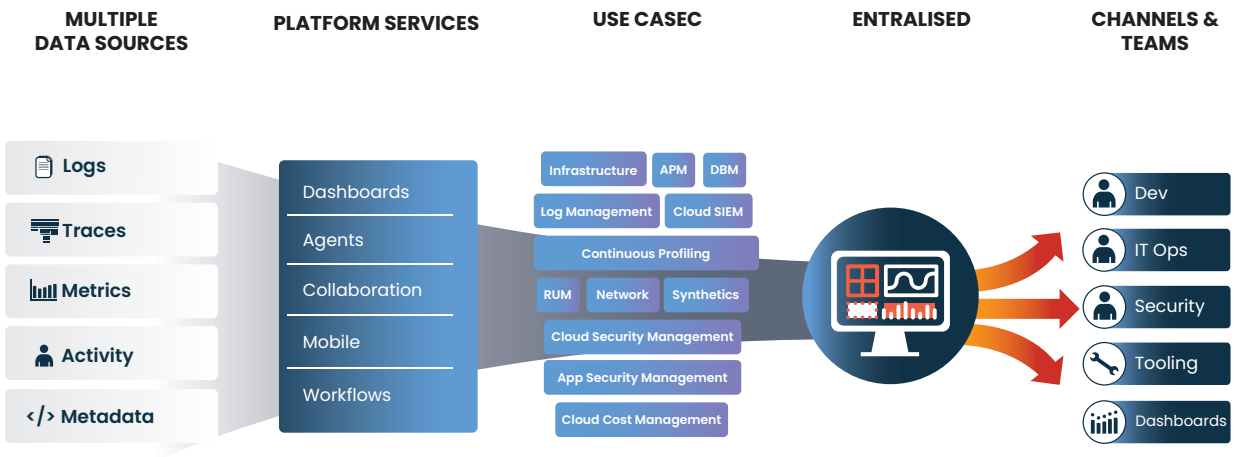
Furthermore, automation reduces costs by optimising resource allocation and minimising manual intervention. Finally, automated security checks and compliance audits improve security and compliance by enhancing the organisation's security posture and ensuring adherence to regulations.

Essential tools include Infrastructure as Code (IaC) tools like Terraform and Azure Resource Manager, which define and manage infrastructure using code. Version control and collaboration platforms such as GitHub and Azure DevOps facilitate code management, collaboration, and CI/CD pipelines. Configuration management tools like Ansible and Puppet automate server and application configurations.

Success requires equipping teams with the necessary skills in IaC, DevOps, and cloud-native technologies through training and upskilling.

DID YOU KNOW?

Observability goes beyond traditional monitoring by providing deep insights into system behaviour through logs, metrics, and traces. While monitoring detects known issues using predefined alerts, observability enables proactive debugging by uncovering unknown problems. It allows teams to analyse system health in real-time, ensuring resilience, performance, and user experience.



Observability

Observability plays a crucial role in the DDS IT cloud adoption approach, ensuring that systems and applications are monitored extensively to maintain peak performance and user experience. Our observability platform, Datadog, provides comprehensive views of your systems, including end-user experience. For instance, Service Delivery Managers utilise tailored dashboards to demonstrate system performance to their customers. This is further elaborated in our webinar, "Datadog, DDS IT, Datam: The Culture of Observability."Better Together"

Our approach to monitoring emphasises user experience and total observability. By implementing centralised logging and utilising our extensible tooling, we can investigate almost any cloud and on-premises stack.

This commitment to observability allows us to offer stakeholders access to service health dashboards through Datadog, providing real-time insights into system status and performance metrics.

This aligns with best practices for incident communication, highlighting the importance of clear, timely, and transparent information sharing to effectively manage and resolve incidents.

Additionally, DDS IT's strong partnerships, like the one with Datadog, enable us to deliver exceptional observability capabilities. Datadog is a versatile monitoring and analytics platform that integrates seamlessly with over 400 technologies, offering deep visibility into cloud-scale applications. This integration is key to our strategy of maintaining a resilient, controlled, and scalable cloud environment, ultimately supporting the long-term growth and innovation of our clients.



Implementing a FinOps (Financial Operations) practice can reduce cloud costs by up to 30% by improving cost visibility, accountability, and optimisation. FinOs helps businesses align cloud spending with business goals, ensuring teams only pay for what they need. By focusing on reserved capacity, auto-scaling, and rightsizing workloads, organisatons can eliminate waste, optimise resource usage, and forcast budgets more effectively. A stong FinOps strategy enables continous cost control, ensuring cloud investments deliver maximum value while avoiding overspending.

Cost Optimisation

Enhancing cloud spending efficiency is paramount for maximising return on investment (ROI). By leveraging advanced Cost Management tools, organisations can gain comprehensive insights into resource utilisation, enabling the identification and elimination of unnecessary expenditures. Implementing these optimisation strategies allows businesses to significantly reduce their cloud costs while maintaining peak performance.

We adopt a FinOps framework to optimise costs for public cloud workloads (multi-cloud). This involves working closely with customer teams to create a shared culture of financial stewardship. This model can be operated in a shared responsibility style or fully outsourced as a standalone service.

While the core capability focuses on getting the most value out of cloud-based digital assets, we can also streamline procurement and optimise Microsoft 365 licenses. Our centralised and secure tooling offers greater visibility for customers through published reports and dashboards.

Cost optimisation is an integral part of the cloud adoption approach, ensuring that businesses not only migrate to the cloud efficiently but also manage their expenses effectively. By integrating these strategies, organisations can achieve a sustainable cloud environment that supports long-term growth and innovation.



WHERE TO FROM HERE?

DDS IT Cloud Enablement Services

With DDS IT, you get tailored Azure Cloud solutions designed specifically for Kiwi businesses, leveraging the power of the Microsoft New Zealand Cloud Region.

We offer three Azure tailored services **Cloud Adoption, Migration Readiness Assessment,** and **Cloud Ops** to fit your business needs, helping streamline and expedite migration and modernisation projects. Partner with us to access expert help and benefit from Microsoft's migration funding programs to assist with cloud adoption.

Azure Cloud Adoption

Our Cloud Adoption offering is tailored for business leaders and IT decision-makers seeking to strategically leverage cloud technologies:

Evaluate your current IT landscape and business objectives, identify opportunities, challenges, and alignment with Azure services.

Plan your approach to cloud including readiness of processes, skills, application migration and rationalisation strategies.

Build a secure a scalable foundation. Establish an Azure Landing Zone with governance, identity, security, and ation using the 6Rs framework (Rehost, Replatform, Refactor, Replace, Retire, Retain) to minimise disruption.

Modernise applications and operations. Optimise workloads with cloud-native technologies like serverless, containers, and AI-driven automation.

Ensure cost efficiency and performance. Implement FinOps best practices, monitoring, and auto-scaling to optimise cloud spend and resource utilisation.

Ongoing management and innovation. Continuously improve cloud operations, security, and compliance while unlocking new digital transformation opportunities.



DDS IT has a facility to perform complimentary rapid migration assessments for customers. Contact us to see if you qualify.

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DDS IT

Azure Migration Readiness Assessment

For organisations aiming to fully leverage their cloud infrastructure, our Azure Readiness Assessment simplifies and accelerates migration and modernisation projects. This comprehensive assessment provides a thorough analysis and mapping of your IT environment, encompassing both physical and virtual infrastructure, and aligns with your strategic objectives and current deployments.

This strategic assessment not only pinpoints opportunities for cost savings and operational improvements but also ensures that your cloud infrastructure is primed for future growth and innovation.

End-to-End Analysis: Delivers a detailed evaluation of all migrating workloads, including Windows/Linux, SQL on physical instances, and Hyper-V on-premises to Azure IaaS.

Governance and Compliance: Assessment of your current cloud infrastructure, governance, security policies, and compliance needs, aligning them with Azure's best practices for Landing Zones.

Customised Recommendations: Offers tailored suggestions for remediating existing or re-deploying your Azure Landing Zones, focusing on scalability, cost optimisation, security controls, and operational efficiency.



Ask our team if your organisation is eligible for Microsoft funding.

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Azure CloudOps

Our CloudOps service elevates your cloud operations to new heights. At DDS IT, we offer proactive 24/7 observability, ensuring high availability and reliability with continuous monitoring and automated incident response. We continuously analyse and optimise cloud resource to boost application performance, reduce costs, and enhance resource utilisation. By enforcing stringent security measures, compliance policies, and regular vulnerability assessments, we safeguard your cloud assets.

Security, compliance, and risk management. Implement Azure Security Center, Defender for Cloud, identity governance, and regular vulnerability scans to enforce security best practices.

Hybrid and multi-cloud management. Seamlessly integrate on-premises and multi-cloud environments, leveraging automation tools like Azure Arc, and Infrastructure-as-Code (IaC) for consistency.

Incident management and root cause analysis. Ensure rapid incident resolution with automated playbooks, log correlation.

Operational efficiency through automation. Use DevOps, CI/CD pipelines, and infrastructure automation to reduce manual intervention and enhance operational agility.

Observability Continuously analyse and optimise cloud resources to improve application performance, reduce operational costs, and enhance resource utilisation.

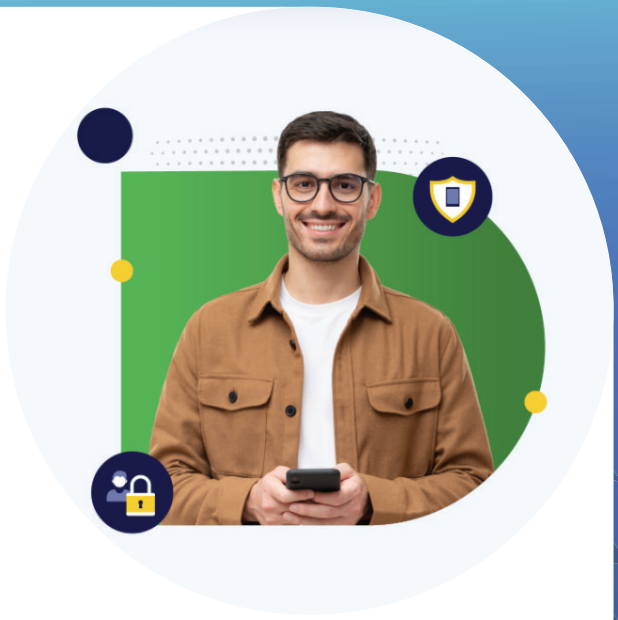
Governance and policy enforcement. Enforce cost controls, security policies, and compliance guardrails to maintain operational consistency and cloud governance.



Contact us to see how we can mature your cloudops with greater visibility and a 'sleep easy' service.

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DDS IT



Datam Success Story

"The new cloud system means we can be more agile and quick at innovation, and the Azure functionality gives us a layer of insights that didn't exist before. That makes reporting to our customers and stakeholders on things like security and costs easy,"

Executive Summary

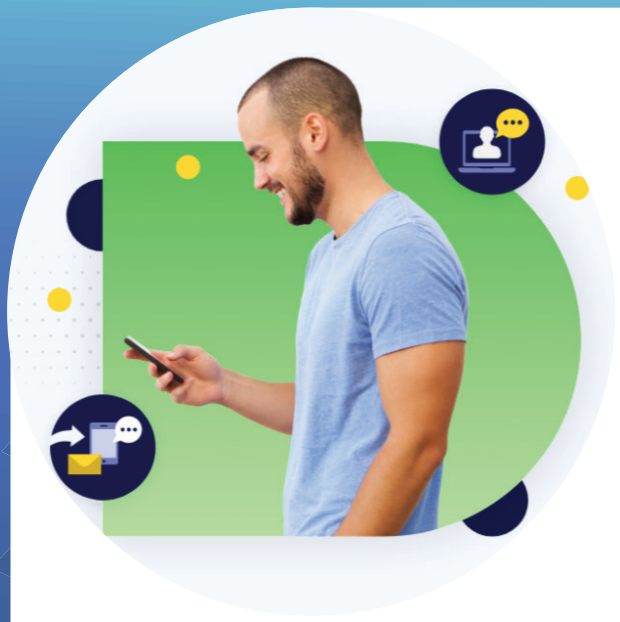
"Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night…" starts the famous saying about how you can always depend on the mail. But New Zealand Post's customer communications management division, Datam, found it needed to update its outdated tech infrastructure. With IT partner DDS IT, it set out on a journey to consolidate its bloated and expensive systems in one easy to manage cloud platform, hosted on Azure. Now it's fully scalable, secure and set up for years of seamless delivery.

However, like many organisations, Datam wanted to do more with the data it had, as well as make its systems more resilient. Its legacy on-premises cloud systems were becoming more costly as storage grew and infrastructure was added, with some applications duplicated across several systems. Many were becoming out of date, unable to keep up with the latest security requirements or scale to meet increasing customer demand. Without an automated security system, customers were usually the first to alert the team to outages. Meanwhile, improvements were slow to implement, requiring a request to be sent to Datam's managed services provider. This also made governance challenging.

The Challenge

DDS IT was chosen to help Datam push the digital envelope. From the first, it identified Microsoft Azure as the best choice to deliver the scalability and resilience Datam was after.

Yet because of the nature of Datam's customers, from banks to government departments, migrating to Azure wasn't simply a case of flipping a switch overnight. "Customers were a big part of the process. Unlike a lot of other organisations, many of them have strict requirements about sharing, storing and accessing data, so we consulted with them every step of the way to ensure the new system met their requirements. There were a lot of meetings and workshops, and a great deal of testing was required to ensure customers' systems were properly integrated as well. All our plans had to be designed from scratch," explains Norbert Bojarski, Executive General Manager, Investments and Ventures at NZ Post.



The Solution

"It's been so rewarding for us to hear all the positive feedback. Datam told us that before their architecture was in the cloud, patching and updates used to take hours. Now they describe them as 'just a blip'," says Simon Browne, CEO and founder of DDS IT."

While it used to take a month to get new servers working, having everything in the cloud makes adding capacity almost instantaneous. Better still, Datam's own teams can make changes themselves without relying on a cumbersome external process. New platform upgrades can be rolled out in super-quick time.

Since going live with Azure, Datam has been able to deploy two new solutions to its customers and replace a legacy product running on traditional virtual machines. This new product has improved performance by 30 times, saving 30 per cent on the legacy running cost.

"The new cloud system means we can be more agile and quick at innovation, and the Azure functionality gives us a layer of insights that didn't exist before. That makes reporting to our customers and stakeholders on things like security and costs easy," says Norbert. "We now have a much more seamless customer experience, with significant cost savings."

The Results

So, what does this mean for the future?

It won't only be Datam's customers who see the benefits. Because Datam's teams can now access the organisation's data anytime and anywhere, it allows the business to enable flexible working in a way that simply wasn't possible before.

And equipped with futureproofed, scalable tools and the freedom to make their own changes, Datam is now set up to provide the next generation of communications to Aotearoa's citizens. In time, could we be seeing holograms deliver our tax refund? Be shown through a new infrastructure project in immersive augmented reality from our own phones?

Maybe not yet, but with digital horses, no leap is impossible. And now, Datam is writing its own page.



DDS IT

Your Cloud Specialist Partner in Aotearoa

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Azure

Specialist
Infra and Database Migration