Kainos Accelerates Time-to-Value for Customers Adopting Cloud with Azure Migrate

Kainos Software has a mission to empower its customers to think big, be bold, and do great things with technology. Their software services help organizations spearhead large-scale digital transformation while driving greater innovation across the business.

Headquartered in Belfast, Northern Ireland, the 34-year old company has a presence in 15 locations across Europe and North America and serves over 400 customers in the commercial, public, and healthcare sectors. Kainos has a long-established and deeply collaborative relationship with Microsoft, working together to deliver the best possible outcomes to customers through technology.

A need for modernization
Enterprise modernization is a core service for Kainos. Over the years, as new technologies emerged and made possible new ways to modernize, the company realized just how integral the cloud was to that effort. That's why over a decade ago, Kainos decided to go “all in” on the cloud and to move away from on-premises development services. The company developed a robust cloud practice, focused on delivering a range of cloud services, from migrations to cloud-based applications.

As cloud adoption has continued to grow in the enterprise, so has the momentum for Kainos’ cloud practice. “In the last couple of years, we've seen strong interest in our cloud services, and that has accelerated over the last few months with what’s going on in the world. We’ve seen that companies are now moving entire infrastructures to the cloud instead of select applications. They are ready to make the leap,” says Martin O’Neill, Azure Technical Lead at Kainos.

One reason for that readiness to jump to the cloud is the maturity of the Azure platform. “It brings our customers a high degree of comfort knowing that their data is safe and being well looked after by Microsoft,” says O’Neill. Also, by engaging Kainos, organizations can ensure their migrations are handled by a firm with years of expertise in navigating migration complexities, with proven methodologies for keeping systems and data secure.

Simplifying migrations
As a software service provider, Kainos is continually updating and evolving its best practices so it can accelerate and amplify the value that customers receive. Its most recent update has been to adopt Microsoft Azure Migrate as part of its core migration toolkit.

“In the early days of our cloud practice, our teams used a combination of four to five third-party tools during the course of a migration to help with activities like building inventories of assets in an environment or creating detailed pictures of migration paths,” says O’Neill. “With Azure Migrate, all of that resides in a single place.” Azure Migrate became the single tool Kainos needed for handling a migration from beginning to end, from discovery, to planning, and execution.

Using Azure Migrate not only accelerated the pace of the migration, but it also helped instill confidence and peace of mind in Kainos’ customers that migration risks were being appropriately handled. For example, instead of installing four to five third-party agents from different vendors, customers only saw one, from Microsoft, which for most customers is a familiar brand that complements their existing Microsoft investments.

In addition, Azure's vast numbers of global regions made it easier to handle migrations with specific data sovereignty requirements – a common challenge for Kainos customers in industries such as the public sector. Azure allows the customer to keep all their data in one place, under one vendor, with full visibility and control as to where that data can reside.

Lastly, Azure Migrate’s physical server migration process leverages Azure Site Recovery technology in the background, providing customers greater security and assuring that no data gets lost or corrupted during the migration effort.

“Azure Migrate has significantly accelerated the migration process for our customers. I often visualize migrations like a 20,000-piece puzzle. With Azure Migrate, we have the first 10,000 pieces already filled in—it’s a tremendous advantage. For example, activities such as cost estimations, which used to take days or sometimes weeks, get reduced down to hours,” says O’Neill.

**Transformation at The Pensions Regulator**

For Kainos, using tools like Azure Migrate has helped to accelerate time-to-value for their customers. One such instance is their recent work with a UK national agency, The Pensions Regulator (TPR), which needed to quickly and efficiently migrate its IT estate to Azure due to their existing data center nearing end of life.
One important consideration for TPR in planning this migration was ensuring minimal downtime of IT resources, since the agency provides 24/7 services. Using Azure Migrate, as well as its own proven migration methodology and best practices, Kainos was able to meet this goal and successfully migrate over 300 servers with no major issues. Throughout the migration, Azure Migrate enabled Kainos to easily provide TPR with complete visibility into the process so they could see the procedures in place for handling all levels of complexities, such as navigating dependencies between applications.

By moving to the cloud and exiting its prior legacy and very expensive data center, TPR was able to significantly reduce hosting costs. They also gained much greater control and flexibility over the configuration of services, the handling of sensitive data, and enforcement of security controls.

**Further accelerating cloud adoption**
With today’s increased enterprise interest in adopting the cloud, Kainos sees many opportunities to expand the value they bring to customers.

For example, while most organizations start their cloud adoption strategies with infrastructure migration, the next step is often modernizing their application estate. Kainos sees a future where Microsoft tools like Azure Migrate will expedite and streamline the entire cloud lifecycle.

In fact, as Kainos continues to collaborate and work closely with Microsoft, they expect to advance how they provide feedback and insight on customer experiences to Microsoft product teams. By participating in activities like partner advisory councils, Kainos will help shape the future of upcoming tools and services on Azure.