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White paper
Fujitsu Cloud Service K5:
Cloud experience matters

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Introduction

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According to a McKinsey and Company analysis, "digital should be seen less as a thing and more a way of doing things"[1]. So while digital transformation undoubtedly involves new infrastructure and systems, it also requires new ways of thinking by the people who use those systems.

"Being digital requires being open to reexamining your entire way of doing business and understanding where the new frontiers of value are," McKinsey's Karel Dörner and David Edelman wrote. And a big part of that new way of doing business, they said, means being "closely attuned to how customer decision journeys are evolving in the broadest sense".

In other words, digital transformation means enterprises must change both systems and processes to put their customers' needs front and centre. To ensure that they do this right from day one, it helps to have a partner to guide them that has already taken that journey first-hand.

Fujitsu is that partner.

When Fujitsu works with customers to migrate their IT systems onto the cloud, it understands the potential benefits and pitfalls firsthand. That's because, starting in 2015, it embarked on a massive project to move its own internal core systems to the cloud.

That in-house migration effort is expected to save Fujitsu some $300 million. However, the company expects the lessons learned from that experience will allow it to provide even greater, long-term value to enterprise customers that want to take that same cloud journey, now and in years to come.

Fujitsu undertook its migration with the help of Cloud Service K5, the company's open-source-based and scalable platform for digital transformation. Supporting a broad range of technologies, from mobile services to the Internet of Things, K5 is one of four sets of capabilities within Fujitsu's MetaArc portfolio of services for digital business.

Migration lessons learned

So what can an organisation expect to learn from a digital transformation programme? The benefits go far beyond cost savings alone.

When Fujitsu embarked upon its own five-year cloud journey, it knew the transformation would save the company a considerable amount of money. However, it decided to reinvest those savings into a growing portfolio of digital business innovations to benefit its enterprise customers. Built into K5 and MetaArc, these innovations are designed to help organisations streamline and modernise their legacy infrastructures, both for cost savings and improved customer offerings.

The goal is to give enterprise customers the confidence to migrate anything to the cloud.

Recent research for Accenture Interactive by Forrester Consulting, for instance, found that many businesses undertaking digital transformation journeys have a hard time truly embracing the changes needed across the organisation, operational processes and technology.

"[B]usinesses are making strides but they are still struggling with traditional silos and a lack of alignment," the report – 'Digital Transformation in the Age of the Customer' – noted. "Many firms are stuck offering an 'average' digital experience with limited understanding of what to do next, who should lead it, and how to measure success."

The best solution, in many cases, the report added, is for a business to work with a third-party provider that can "plug the gaps and manage the drive for transformation".

Fujitsu's own journey involves migrating 640 systems from across 13,000 servers onto the cloud. K5 provides a single platform from which to manage every step of the process, and Fujitsu has been developing continual refinements along the way to ensure the transformation is scalable, reliable and secure.

The methods it developed have been designed from day one to accommodate enterprise-class workloads. Built upon an open-source foundation, those methods also help to ensure that organisations adopting them stay flexible, whatever the future brings. In addition to avoiding lock-in to any single vendor or technology, this will also help enterprise customers become less reactive and more proactive over time.

Reinventing its own business using K5 required Fujitsu to adopt wholesale changes beyond technology alone. It also took considerable education of people across the enterprise, a transition to new processes and programmes, and a shift to a truly cloud-first mindset. Taken together, those changes have enabled Fujitsu to build a truly globalized platform for future-ready business.

Open-source innovation

Along the road to its own transformation, Fujitsu has also made increasingly significant additions to the global, open-source ecosystem. Over the past two years, the company has gone from the 93rd place in terms of open-source code contributions to the sixth-largest contributor in the world.

At the same time, Fujitsu's experience working with a large, global customer base ensures that the open-source solutions it helps to develop are enterprise-class, which reduces implementation risks for enterprises adopting those solutions.

For example, Fujitsu has been working with the Tokyo Stock Exchange to help it transform its systems for the digital business age. Over the past few years, for example, it has helped the exchange modernise its trading platform using Red Hat Enterprise Linux for faster, more flexible and more reliable operations.

[1]http://www.mckinsey.com/industries/high-tech/our-insights/what-digital-really-means

Fujitsu also actively participates in the open-source developer community through its membership in leading initiatives such as The Linux Foundation, the OpenStack Foundation, the Cloud Native Computing Foundation and the Open Container Project.

All of this is significant because of open-source software's increasingly important role in enabling enterprises to build flexible, scalable and secure IT systems for the future of digital business. Fujitsu believes open source is the best trajectory choice for most organisations today. As more contributions are made, the open-source ecosystem becomes increasingly robust, enabling ever-better and faster innovation.

Open source-based models are "essential to facilitate and achieve digital transformation"[2], the analyst IDC reported early in 2016.

What makes open source so powerful? By enabling code contributions from a global community of developers, open-source solutions can be updated, refined and improved upon quickly to address new challenges and opportunities as they arise.

"For now, the increasing traction of open source in enterprises and the accelerating pace of digital transformation are creating an unstoppable momentum for open source-powered digital transformations," said Sanjay Gupta, adjunct research advisor with IDC's Research Network. He added that it's likely "more and more enterprises will embrace the open source-based model to engage with outside developer communities for digital transformation".

Bottom-line benefits

So what does this all mean for enterprises looking to migrate onto the cloud? It means they can be assured of a transformation journey built on best-of-breed technology and processes that have been tested and proven by a company through its own, in-house transformation efforts. Even if these customers choose to work with other additional service providers, Fujitsu has the enterprise-level experience to make sure any implementations are smooth and successful.

For instance, Fujitsu's own migration has enabled the company to develop a template, or blueprinted approach, that standardises platform and application stacks along the way. This has been shown to dramatically reduce the time – to as little as one-eighth the time – needed to set up new infrastructure. Fujitsu has also learned first-hand how to use automation and comprehensive cloud monitoring to cut operational costs by as much as two-thirds.

Fujitsu's experience with security and network management helps ensure that enterprise cloud migrations are both safe and efficient, while the company's investments in data analytics and artificial intelligence provide insights and support for future-ready innovation.

These capabilities have been developed as part of Fujitsu's work with some of the world's largest and most complex enterprises, including international telecommunications firms, utilities and services organisations. The vendor has helped such customers quickly deploy mobile applications, rationalise data centres and migrate to either public, virtual private or fully private cloud environments, and has applied the lessons learned to even more innovations for users.

Service innovation

However, Fujitsu's experience extends beyond software and hardware innovations alone. The lessons learned from its in-house cloud migration have enabled it to develop a unique set of services and approaches that other organisations can benefit from on their own transformation journeys.

For example, one lesson has shown that an organisation-wide analysis of the application stack with a focus on business strategy can help identify many areas where systems can be rationalised or consolidated. Why? Such an analysis should result in quick and significant cost savings. A comprehensive understanding of applications and data can also help develop more efficient strategies for handling dynamic workloads – all with a minimum investment in new infrastructure.

Fujitsu has also found that cloud migration initiatives can progress more effectively under the guidance of small, agile teams with skillsets specific to the tasks at hand. What's more, it can advise organisations about when to keep some of these teams in place to provide ongoing, strategic benefits well into the future.

Finally, Fujitsu has learned first-hand how to ease business transformations from legacy systems into the cloud through the power of APIs for exploiting and integrating systems, processes and data. In its own migration, the company was able to expose as many of half of its existing applications using APIs to maximise business value. These lessons can help ensure that customers' transformation efforts will be just as successful.

[1]http://www.idc.com/getdoc.jsp?containerId=US41073416

Conclusion

By embarking on its own cloud transformation journey, Fujitsu knew it would gain far more than significant, in-house cost savings; the company realised that by 'walking the walk' first it would be able to provide far better support and services for enterprise customers undertaking similar efforts. Fujitsu's migration programme, while still under way, has proven this.

What's more, the company's hands-on work to ensure enterprise-class, open-source solutions that are adaptable and flexible enough to meet future business needs has helped it to become a global leader in open-source code contributions. This enables Fujitsu to offer even further assurance to customers looking for help in implementing cloud strategies, no matter which service providers they choose to work with.

Beyond the technology, Fujitsu has also 'walked the walk' by transforming its own people, processes and programmes to become a cloud-first enterprise. As a result, customers looking to adopt the same kind of changes can be assured that Fujitsu has the experience and expertise needed to guide them successfully.

Fujitsu understands well the challenges that are likely to arise, and the solutions most likely to help, in any large-scale enterprise cloud migration, because it has taken that journey for itself first, learning many lessons along the way. These lessons ensure that the support and services available to other business customers taking similar journeys will be just as efficient and effective.