



Compete 366

Microsoft
Partner

Gold Small and Midmarket Cloud Solutions
Gold Cloud Platform

Case Study

Expert Azure Advice For IT Managers

Global pharmaceutical sourcing specialist enlists assistance from Azure specialist at no additional cost

Internal IT specialist manages and executes migration

Companies can choose how much engagement they want from Microsoft Azure Gold Partner, Compete366

IT managers and other company leaders may assume that engaging a Microsoft Gold Partner involves consulting agreements, service contracts and outsourced delivery. For some companies, outsourcing of data and service migration to cloud services like Azure, might well be the only option. But what if you've got perfectly good and qualified technical people on-staff? Such was the challenge faced by Caligor Coghlan, a global corporation providing pharmaceutical sourcing solutions for major pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies.

Caligor Coghlan has employees in two principal locations in the US and the UK and operates depot locations worldwide. Today, apart from dumb servers in depots operating things like print servers and local temperature control systems, the company's entire IT architecture is in the cloud. Azure provides Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS) to host and deliver internal applications such as ERP and workflow, Platform as a Service (PaaS) to host and deliver bespoke client-facing applications as well as backup and other services.

Organic Growth Needs Often Create Unscalable IT

Gurindar Jheeta is the IT Manager at Caligor Coghlan who led the migration project. He explains how the company's IT infrastructure was becoming unsustainable.

"We had grown organically, and the IT services had really developed as people needed them", he explained. "We had two different domains, there was no meaningful security and we

didn't really know what our users were doing. For example, we weren't able to implement or manage regular password changes which is a fairly basic security measure."

In 2016, Caligor Coghlan was acquired by Diversis Capital, a private equity firm that invests in middle market companies needing operational transformations. On acquisition, Diversis Capital announced its intention to invest heavily in Caligor Coghlan's logistics, infrastructure and service offerings. By early 2017, attention was turning to the IT infrastructure.

Transforming IT Infrastructure Means The Cloud

Gurindar continues: "Scaling a business while maintaining flexibility, security and cost control these days means one thing; the cloud. So, it was clear that, as a strategic imperative, the company needed to migrate its IT infrastructure to the cloud. I was brought on board a year ago to do just that."

Microsoft makes trialling Azure very easy with its “Start for Free” pilot scheme. In addition to a free Azure account, the pilot offers £150 credit to explore services for 30 days, 12 months of popular free services and always-free access to over 25 other services.

During the pilot programme, the company experimented with Azure by creating a VPN, linking two internal networks together using VPN tunnels, and creating a domain controller in the cloud. Gurindar adds: “We didn’t do too much with the trial, just enough to validate that it was the right solution for us. We were also considering Amazon Web Services, but the trial convinced us that the right decision was to go with Microsoft. We’d already implemented Office 365, so it was a natural progression for us to stick with Microsoft.”

Microsoft Partners Add Value to Azure

At the end of the free trial period, Gurindar contacted Microsoft and asked to be connected with a specialist partner. While it’s perfectly possible to pay for Azure using just a credit card, Microsoft Azure partners are able to offer credit terms and a supported subscription service.

Caligor Coghlan engaged Microsoft Azure Gold Partner, Compete366, which took over monthly billing for the Azure consumption on a pay-per-use basis. Caligor Coghlan’s own team then executed and managed migration of the company’s entire IT architecture to the cloud. Compete366 provided advice and guidance throughout the project and still offers expert Azure advice to this day.

Flexibility, Scalability, Security and Resilience

Azure is enabling Caligor Coghlan to grow its IT infrastructure without the fixed costs associated with on-premise hardware. It’s also about speed. Azure enables Caligor Coghlan to grow IT at the same pace as the business is growing, to deploy services and users when and where they are needed.

Infrastructure as a Service: Internal applications and data

Caligor now uses Azure’s Infrastructure as a Service to host and run internal applications. Like many companies, Caligor Coghlan operates a mixed OS environment so needs to support macOS, Windows, iOS and Android too. While applications are hosted in Azure, the company uses Citrix XenApp to deliver applications securely to any device, anywhere. For example, applications Sage 200 2016 and PerfectForms can be accessed on any internet enabled device.

Platform as a Service: customer apps

Caligor Coghlan's is delivering custom-built Java apps using Azure SQL Database on the back end and Azure Web Apps on the front end. These cloud-based apps create managed access platforms to enable doctors and hospitals to request drugs, manage procurement and deal with regulatory issues.

Data both inside and on-premises Azure is backed up to Azure.

Service Management

Caligor Coghlan's first engagement with Compete366 was a quick introductory telephone call. This was quickly followed up by a more involved teleconference which covered detailed requirements. For Caligor Coghlan, there was no difference in cost between self-service using a credit card and selecting a guided service using Compete366. This made it a simple decision, so Caligor signed up.

With a highly experienced IT resource in-house, Caligor Coghlan didn't need extensive consulting, outsourced implementation projects or managed services. Compete366 became a trusted partner on Caligor's Azure journey, there to advise and guide decisions relating to architecture as well as helping out with details of specific services.

As their needs grew, Gurindar was able to send an email query to Compete366 and by return, be presented with a solution he could implement. That's how he added email backups, infrastructure backups and more.

Today, Gurindar joins a scheduled monthly call with Compete366 to learn about the latest developments in Microsoft Cloud, discuss Caligor Coghlan's implementation and to plan future needs. This valuable service is provided at no additional cost to Caligor Coghlan as part of Compete366's commitment to its Microsoft Gold Partner status.

Gurindar concluded: "Without Compete366's advice, I don't think we'd be where we are. They have really helped with the whole process and made the journey not just possible, but enjoyable. We may only need advice, but with Compete366, it's always good advice. They provide us with expert access to Microsoft services, without trying to put a consulting agreement in the way. It has been a really good relationship."

To find out more about migrating data or services to Azure, please call Warren Duke on 07500 919547 or email engage@compete366.com quoting "CCCS".