MARCH 2021

DELIVER THE BEST

a SAP migration to Microsoft Azure success story

The Background

Gallagher is New Zealand's largest privately-owned technology company, the company has been operating since 1938 and recently celebrated its 80th birthday.

With over 1000 staff and product in 160 countries worldwide, Gallagher is a global leader in the innovation, manufacture and marketing of animal management, security, fuel systems and contract manufacturing solutions.

SAP's ERP solution is a critical part of Gallagher's technology landscape, and for the last 20 years, Gallagher's Information Services (IS) team has managed this infrastructure.

Over the past 4 – 5 years, Gallagher's IS team has increasingly looked at ways in which to improve the value add activities the team can bring to the organisation.

THE CHALLENGE

With this initiative in mind, and with some ageing infrastructure, latency issues in the current network, and the fact they had extended maintenance on VMware environment several times already. In late 2018, It was the right time to start to work the business case for a potential move to the cloud.

Realtech has worked with Gallagher since the mid-2000s., and has supported Gallagher's upgrades, basis work, as well as providing some flexibility with resources in the developer and integration space. With this existing relationship and Realtech's experience, particularly in the Logistics space, we were asked to investigate and produce a design and architecture document plus the required Bill-of-Materials (BoM) for a migration to the cloud.

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The Solution

Selecting the cloud partner was an exciting process; the two primary providers were Azure and AWS. Gallagher already had an existing partner of AWS. Products from the Gallagher portfolio were based on the AWS platform, and AWS was extensively used for research and development (R&D).

The IS team, however, had a stronger preference for Azure, as this platform better supported the Microsoft based IS workloads. This conflict created some meaningful debates & discussions around a split hybrid model.

There were also several other benefits to an Azure Hybrid, these included:

- Pricing benefits for Microsoft Software Assurance
- Security Updates
- Overall lower migration costs
- The ExpressRoute via Auckland, and
- The announcement of the new New Zealand data centre

With the support of Realtech, Datacom and the Azure Fast track team from Microsoft, Gallagher validated the initial design, and decided to move forward with Azure.

Before the migration, there were several significant ERP service pack upgrades required. Realtech's functional consultants assisted in addressing and ensuring that development and test environments were migrated to Azure with minimal impact on the Gallagher functional team.

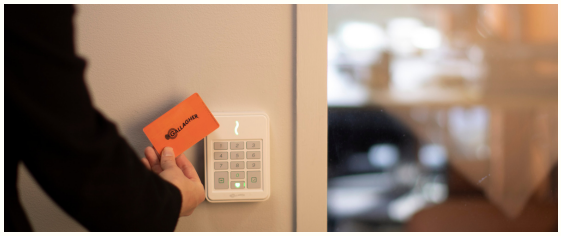
The Outcome

The cutover from on-premise to Azure was seamless. Performance and availability have been outstanding. The past 12 months under their belts with the development and test environments, Gallagher has now made the move to the Production environment.

Key performance improvements include:

- Enhances the DR (Disaster Recovery) capability
- Provides a higher level of SLA (Service Level Agreement)
- Provides the ability to scale when needed.
- Removed the need for infrastructure management, and
- Reduced the lead-time on infrastructure changes

Mark Howes, Operational Excellence Manager said migrating to Azure takes a team. As a member of our team, we see Realtech as a trusted partner who understands and aligns with the Gallagher culture. Brilliant Simplicity is one of the fundamental principles at Gallagher, Realtech have utilised SAP and Microsoft best practice to ensure we are following a well-trodden/proven path with minimal risk.



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GALLAGHER

Realtech Ltd
PO Box 8300, Symonds Street, Auckland 1150
P: +64 9 308 0900, F: +64 9 308 0909
info@realtech.co.nz, realtech.co.nz