

CASE STUDY

Airways

Cloud solutions provide modernisation, optimisation, reliability, resilience, access from anywhere and bottom-line savings



THE SITUATION

Airways provides air traffic control and infrastructure to keep New Zealand's skies safe. Responsible for controlling all air movements across 30 million square kilometres of airspace in New Zealand and over the Pacific, the company handles over one million air traffic movements a year. Airways is also an innovative business making a real difference on the global stage. It partners with airlines, airports, governments, and other air navigation service providers developing future-ready innovative procedures and technology to reduce the environmental footprint of the aviation industry.

Like many other organisations which have been in operation over the course of several decades, Airways had tried and trusted business systems in place. But changes in the way necessary IT services can be delivered were increasingly coming to the company's attention. Looking to modernise operations, Airways chose Intergen as its trusted partner to provide expertise, applications and services in a carefully managed move to the cloud.

THE OPPORTUNITY

Sean Kennedy, Manager Enterprise Business Systems at Airways, says among the key attractions in considering a move to the cloud was improved cost structures where application licensing was concerned, as well as resilience and business continuity aspects. "Before the move, we had services spread across three data centres with Microsoft Exchange servers in each of them; we were also serving up Microsoft Office from these locations."

Pre-cloud, keeping track of licensing agreements and costs across employees was proving onerous. Additionally, the Christchurch, Seddon and, more recently, Kaikoura earthquakes had reinforced the importance of business continuity and disaster recovery. "Those quakes highlighted the potential disadvantages of our Christchurch and Wellington data centres, so we were looking for more certainty for the future."

As an organisation which has safety as an absolute priority, and which depends on its business systems to execute operations effectively daily, Kennedy says it sought a partner which 'had been on the journey before'. "We have worked with Microsoft before, so there was a well-trodden track there, but we tested the market for a partner to assist in the migration of our applications to the cloud, and chose Intergen."

THE TECHNOLOGY

Kennedy says the implementation process has several aspects, key amongst which were the establishment of secure cloud identity management and the implementation of Microsoft Office 365 itself. "That aspect is quite straightforward, with just a little training required as Word is still Word and Excel is still Excel apart from gaining a few additional features," he notes. "The big one, however, was moving Exchange to the cloud and introducing Mobile Device Management. We saw a need to introduce that to improve security and further delineate between personal and work data on personal devices."

Exchange migration was the most challenging aspect of the project, says Kennedy, and required a 'stepped' approach to bring systems up to date. "This is where Intergen's experience, advice and guidance really proved invaluable."

THE RESULT

The most obvious benefit of the shift into the cloud is simply that Airways now has an optimised environment, where licensing costs are accurately matched to business requirements. Another important benefit is that the successful move of common, but mission-critical, business services is reinforcing the value and benefit of a 'cloud first' approach. Confidence is building, in other words; meanwhile, hard-hitting upgrades, which would cause interruptions and angst, are a thing of the past.

"With the cloud, the reliability is up there. Availability from anywhere is another key factor which our people appreciate. As a company with people all around the world, being able to connect straight into the data centre in Australia is great," says Kennedy.

He adds that, using ExpressRoute, the performance of those connections is as good as access over a Local Area Network. "It isn't impacted by distance."

Expenditure on IT services has improved not only on the bottom line, but in terms of visibility of costs against licensing. "That means we can budget better, know what the costs are and what we're getting for the money," Kennedy says.

The biggest eye-opener, however, is the advantage of improved reliability and resilience. "This project has shown that, for example in the wake of the Kaikoura quake, our people can simply log in from home if they have a connection, and do their work. It's shown that the more we put in the cloud, the better it will be."

He says the success of moving Microsoft productivity and collaboration to the cloud has provided impetus to move other applications where possible, in line with Airways' intention to do so. "This is the first step into the cloud. There are next steps to come, such as potentially the financial systems. That said, there will always be some on-premise systems such as our operational ones. But for now, the cloud has proven that for some systems, it delivers the promised benefits."

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the better it will be."*

Sean Kennedy

Manager Enterprise Business Systems,
Airways

SNAPSHOT

AIRWAYS

www.airways.co.nz

Location: New Zealand

Industry: Aviation

Business objective

- Move collaboration and productivity applications to the cloud
- Optimise licensing/software assurance
- Improve resilience
- Introduce mobile device management

Solution

Microsoft Office 365, Microsoft Exchange Online, Azure and Enterprise Mobility + Security – Mobile Device Management.

Business value

- Reduced costs through license optimisation
- Improved visibility of costs for better budgeting and control
- Business resilience boosted with cloud applications
- Remote working made easy
- Benefits of cloud demonstrated, driving confidence in 'cloud first' approach.

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