ACCELERATE CLOUD MIGRATION SUCCESS WITH PORTFOLIO DISCOVERY

Cloud migration can be one of the most important moves an organization makes, bringing new levels of agility, scalability, and cost efficiency—but the journey isn't always a smooth one. As with any major initiative, it's crucial to have a well-designed process in place before you begin. Otherwise, the migration is all too likely to take too long, cost too much, run afoul of compliance requirements, or simply fail to deliver the benefits you were counting on.

The complete cloud migration process encompasses five phases, beginning with migration preparation and business planning. In this blog, we'll zero in on the second phase: portfolio discovery and planning. This step is absolutely critical for success, providing data to inform every other part of the end-to-end process, from the initial business plan through the remaining phases of application migration, validation, and ongoing operations.

Why is portfolio discovery and planning so important?

Having complete information about assets and application dependencies throughout your enterprise environment makes it possible to:

- Build a data-driven business case and migration plan for your cloud initiative
- Determine the most efficient way to migrate and operate your infrastructure at the portfolio and application levels

- Understand and model costs to make the right decision about where and how each application should run (or whether it should be retired instead)
- Design cloud-based applications to help sequence and execute the migration

Clearly, portfolio discovery and planning can go a long way to streamline and optimize cloud migration. As the name suggests, there are two things that need to happen in this phase:

- **Discovery** – discovering and mapping your IT assets, their dependencies, and their relationship to the business services they power.
- **Planning** – enriching this information with data on cost and performance to make recommendations on what should be migrated and how.

While both these parts are critical, for now we'll drill further into discovery. Traditionally, this has been an underdeveloped capability in most organizations. You might be able to discover many or most of your assets, but understanding their business context—the way they power specific business services—has been difficult to achieve on a systematic, enterprise-wide basis. Given the increasing rate of change in today's dynamic digital environments, even the information that does get collected is liable to become out-of-date too quickly to be reliable. Before you begin your cloud migration, make sure your discovery capability is up to the challenge. You'll need to be able to:

- Inventory your IT assets from end to end, including servers, software, network devices, and storage; as well as applications and their utilization metrics.
- Map and document dependencies across your environment; including software dependencies, containers and microservices, server-to-storage relationships, hybrid application deployments, host-to-edge network relationships, and hardware and software load balancing.
- Group components into application maps or models to help you visualize and work with the information you've gathered.

This process provides a consistent framework to evaluate applications and workloads for their suitability for cloud migration. Beyond a simple yes-no answer, you should be able to make informed choices among a range of options, including rehosting the application, refactoring or rearchitecting its code or configuration, rebuilding it on a [PaaS service](#), replacing it with a SaaS equivalent, keeping it as-is, or simply retiring it.

Both accelerating and optimizing the decision-making process that guides your migration, portfolio discovery can contribute greatly to its success and value in both the short term and the long term. This blog serves as an introduction to the process; you can learn much more, including a discussion of cost analysis and management, tips for post-migration success, and a case study of a multinational corporation's cloud migration, in our in-depth white paper, ["Achieve Cloud Migration Success."](#)

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