



VERSION 1 Enterprise Cloud

Eight Key Principles for Safely and Successfully Migrating Enterprise Applications to the Public Cloud

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Upon engaging with our Enterprise Cloud customers, Version 1 often conducts an in-depth Cloud readiness evaluation to help define a clear Cloud Strategy. This consultancy process equips you with expert knowledge at the start of your Cloud journey, thus simplifying the complexity of your organisation's strategy for Cloud Adoption and maximising outcomes by aligning with real business objectives. Depending on the customer's circumstances, Version 1 may consult with multiple departments in an organisation, including senior management, to develop a robust Cloud Strategy. This approach considers a range of business objectives, outcomes and multiple stakeholder perspectives.

Understanding the implications of the Cloud properly ensures that your organisation can trust that your Cloud Strategy will achieve real business objectives and benefits.

Governance of the Cloud Adoption journey is a key step in fully achieving the benefits that Cloud computing offers to enterprise customers. Version 1 has laid out a range of best practice principles and objectives for any cloud migration journey to ensure our customers embark on Cloud migrations safely.

1. Plan and Phase

There are no shortcuts in Public Cloud migration around planning and phasing. We advise customers to take an incremental approach to build confidence and experience. An approach Version 1 often takes with our Enterprise Cloud customers is to recommend starting with a number of representative, sample pilot solutions for any intended Cloud migration. Such a pilot solution activity typically involves migrating an application that is not business critical first and then working through applications of increasing importance in an incremental manner. This incremental approach poses a lower risk to day-to-day activities, and crucially, a minimised risk to commercial disruption due to mission-critical systems experiencing downtime.

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2. Qualify Heavily

One of the most detrimental methods of planning for an Enterprise Cloud journey is to plan your Cloud strategy around directly replicating the way things used to work, in the old on-premise systems and environments. The reason it is so critical to heavily assess business needs for new and potential migratable systems, is that the old systems and processes were based on your historical business needs, drivers and requirements, not the ones which may be currently influencing such types of systems. Business decision makers should therefore be analysing business needs, drivers and requirements which influence current and future needs. While the criteria might remain the same, qualifying migration and transformation activity heavily against current and predicted business needs still offers opportunities to continually assess and monitor on-going needs. It is these current requirements which you should try to satisfy in your own Public Cloud Migration. However, this method of qualification can have a significant impact on cost and the level of effort needed to move applications to the Cloud. It is recommended that any detailed assessment is carried out early so these costs and timescales can be evaluated at the earliest opportunity.

3. Prioritise

Prioritisation in this context is based on the level of business risks, impact and dependencies of the specified applications. Critical enterprise systems are often highly integrated with on-premise systems, and often possess a high level of dependencies from reporting, departmental and adhoc solutions (e.g. spreadsheets and custom data extracts). Prioritisation varies greatly for each business, as the over-arching Cloud strategy, acceptable levels of disruption and the number of applications considered business critical will often dictate the order of prioritisation.

4. Be Granular

Version 1 recommends that prioritisation be approached in a granular manner. This means examination of each individual application separately and associated assessment of whether the Public Cloud is an appropriate target for that application. Making 'blanket' Cloud migration decisions based on high-level characteristics rather than individual case by case assessment should be avoided, as you may discover that the specific application is more suited to another type of cloud provision compared to others with similar characteristics. Such 'blanket' decisions can often occur with applications which share similar underlying database technologies, licencing agreements or workflow engines. Avoiding such 'blanket' decisions will often prevent your organisation from shocks and potential project disruptions later in the Cloud journey.

5. Understand and Capture

It is important to understand the applications you wish to migrate and the extent to which you can move all or part of those application and solution elements. Understanding these factors is important not only in terms of the technology aspects, but also by determining the maximum level of parallel migration activity that your organisation can sustain without such activities posing significant business risks. Essentially it is about identifying the units of migration you can achieve and how best to put those in place.

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6. Be Compliant

One significant aspect of Public Cloud migration is the requirement to understand your current licensing and support positions in addition to the business and technical factors that drive those licencing and support levels. A good level of understanding of this area provides business and commercial understanding of the implications of moving those same applications to a Public Cloud context. Application licensing is often detailed and complex and can vary highly across different vendor and application usage contexts. It is often worth engaging licencing and Software Asset Management specialists such as Version 1 to conduct relevant assessment and provide a detailed understanding so that corresponding business discussions and associated financial planning can occur.

7. Move Beyond 'Lift and Shift'

To maximise the potential of Cloud for your organisation, particularly for future flexibility and scaling, you should try to think and move beyond the initial 'Lift and Shift' activity. 'Lift and Shift' refers to migrating your applications 'as is' with minimal transformation directly to Public Cloud environments that are matched to 'as is' requirements. If you foresee requirements for new services, scaling, or future market opportunities, it is recommended to try to deliver a platform which supports future transformation and extension which allows you to effectively deliver these types of future requirements as they emerge. Enabling such future platform based transformational change may require a different Cloud architecture or a different way in which the application is built and run, but use of this approach can avoid having to rework the application when you get it into the new environment. This approach needs to be carefully evaluated against the level of budget impact, and technical change that can be accepted whilst remaining within the specified risk profile that you are willing to accept.

8. Address Culture and Organisational Issues

There are often cultural and organisational issues to resolve with a Cloud Strategy as it can bring a lot of change to certain organisations and certain business units. Many Public Cloud services deliver levels of managed functionality which means that organisations no longer need to provide the same levels of such services. In many cases this may mean therefore, fewer in-house technical roles are required, but that does not mean an overall reduction in the number of roles as new roles also emerge. Skills requirements often change with migrations to public Cloud – but not all skills are affected. Understanding the components of Cloud that you are implementing impacts how the skills and expertise of your team will change. There is certainly a case for winning hearts and minds in your organisation however, and this often also requires an understanding of future roles and opportunities in those new environments.

About Version 1

Experts at developing Cloud strategies that deliver real business benefits, regardless of the complexity of your enterprise application estate. Version 1 provides the full range of services for enterprise applications in the Cloud. Version 1 proves that IT can make a real difference to our customers' businesses. We are trusted by global brands to deliver IT services and solutions that drive customer success.



More Than Just Cloud

Our expertise extends beyond the Cloud, with over 20 years enterprise application experience.



Experts in Leading Cloud Platforms

Enhanced partnerships with three leading Cloud vendors guarantees the right solution for our customers.



Next Level Managed Services

Cloud Managed Services taken to the next level with a focus on continual improvement and optimisation.

To find out more about Enterprise Cloud services at Version 1 and to access more Enterprise Cloud Insights, please visit www.version1.com or email our experts directly at info@version1.com.

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