



IT operating costs cut in half: Cloud First as a recipe for success at Swisshaus



Full cost transparency is the motto of Swisshaus AG. The Swiss market leader in the construction of turnkey single-family homes plans individual solutions tailored to the needs of its customers at a guaranteed fixed price. More than 5000 houses have already been planned, built and handed over to their new owners. How the world of individual construction works is shown by exciting testimonials from Swisshaus clients.

Adaptable and flexible with Cloud First

Swisshaus AG belongs to the Swiss investor Bernhard Alpstaeg and is managed by the central IT department of the Swisspor Group. The group comprises various companies at 25 locations in six countries with over 2000 employees. The prerequisite for the successful planning and construction of their individual homes is modern and forward-looking IT. Swisshaus previously operated its IT in the computer centre and set itself the goal of optimising and modernising it. In order to achieve this goal, those responsible

decided on a cloud first strategy for the future operation of the entire IT. With the lowest possible investment costs for hardware and software, a high degree of adaptability to market requirements was to be achieved. At the same time, they wanted to reduce IT operating costs.

In a first step, Swisshaus carried out a Microsoft Azure Migrate Assessment together with BitHawk. The assessment was used to check the existing services for their cloud capability and thus gained an overall view for the cloud strategy. 73% of all services could be migrated to Microsoft Azure without restrictions, 18% with minor adjustments and only 9% of all services required more detailed clarifications. With regard to storage data, a hundred percent migration capability to the cloud was shown.

Based on this analysis, the project managers then implemented the planning for the cloud strategy. This was implemented in three phases.



Sebastian Elben, CDO, Swisspor Management AG

«Together with BitHawk we were able to define and successfully implement our Cloud First strategy. At the same time, we have created a reference architecture that enables us to apply similar approaches to the Swisspor Group. We were able to achieve all our commercial and technical goals. Our future IT operating costs were reduced by approximately 50%, which strengthens our competitiveness and confirms our strategy».



BitHawk

Phase 1: Assess

In the assess phase, the project team always took care of the commercial and technical analysis with a view to the targeted objectives. Several tools were used for the assessment: Azure Migrate Assessment and Azure Data for a transparent starting point. Based on the commercial and technical analysis, the team defined the target architecture on Microsoft Azure as a further prerequisite for the next phase (Migrate).

Phase 2: Migrate

In the migration phase, the responsible persons prioritized all services, databases and file data and then transferred them step by step to the cloud. The Azure Database Migration Service handled the migration of the databases to the new platform with minimal downtime. The Azure Site Recovery was used for disaster recovery. This created the conditions for a successful fallback in the event of a failover.

Phase 3: Optimize

In the third phase, the entire IT system was optimised in terms of the commercial and technical objectives. In order to achieve the maximum, various Azure services were used, such as the Azure Security Center or monitoring. Cost management was used to continuously analyse and optimise cloud utilisation for business.

The result exceeds the high customer expectations

The operation of IT in the Microsoft Azure cloud has now more than fulfilled Swisshaus commercial and technical objectives.

The commercial advantages achieved

- IT operating costs are reduced by 50 % in the new architecture
- No investment costs for hardware and software
- Highest availability of IT for employees
- Optimal mobility and professional home office for Swisshaus employees thanks to current SaaS solutions (Office365, Microsoft Teams)
- Development of experience in dealing with Microsoft Azure within the swisspor Group

The technical advantages achieved

- Flexible, scalable expandability in line with business requirements
- Use of current security standards and cloud-based security instruments
- Redundant and cross-platform data storage
- Easily move workloads
- Use of memory, network and CPU resources on demand



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