



## WHAT DO CLOUD MIGRATIONS & NACHOS HAVE IN COMMON?

Follow a conversation between...



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...on what's stopping your cloud migration?

Have your cloud migration plans stalled?

Would you like to know how fix this?

Do you know what good cloud migration looks like?

And what do nachos have to do with any of it?



# WHAT IS THE MAIN CHALLENGE FACED BY MOST CLOUD MIGRATION PROGRAMS?

The thing we hear from customers is **'we don't know what we've got.** We've got servers running in data centers and in our building. They've grown organically over time, but we don't know what they do. If we don't know that, how can we know how to sequence our cloud migration.'

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Something I say often is:

## 'Cloud is for everyone, not for everything.'

Organizations need to understand which applications they have and the interconnection of them all. If I take app A and C across to cloud, what else needs to go with that? This is one of the main challenges we see.



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A lot of people might think it sounds crazy that the IT department doesn't know what is in the data center. But there are multiple reasons for that.

**Estates evolve over time.** Servers get used for different things. People install software without other people's knowledge. Acquisitions happen. Companies merge.

And all this has been happening for years in your datacenters and you've got a mass of technology in there. When you want to migrate it, the complexity involved in unpicking it all is a nightmare.

## Think of it as the Nacho Syndrome.

Imagine a plate of nachos covered in cheese. You see a nacho that you're sure you can pick up without disturbing the rest but as you pick it up, the strings of cheese keep it stuck to others and you end up with a mess down your front. Cloud migrations are like this with so many interconnected parts that can result in a mess.

So how do you understand what's on that plate of nachos? It takes time and this is where organizations get stuck. People leave. Knowledge is gone. If they do start to do data analysis, they get too much data and analysis paralysis sets in and it's impossible to move forward.

All of these reasons add up to cloud migrations stalling.

## WHAT CAN BE DONE TO FIX THIS?

**Knowing your objective**

**Breadth then depth**

**Getting the right backing**

**Time boxing**

## 1. KNOWING YOUR OBJECTIVE



Before you begin a cloud migration, you need to know what you want to get out of it. It sounds simple but it's critical to success. And on that point, **do you know what success looks like?**

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Are you happy to simply lift and shift everything across to cloud because you have air conditioning problems in the data center, and you've got to solve that quickly?

Or do you want to get everything onto SAAS or PAAS platforms or do you want to modernise your applications? Thinking through the objectives you want to achieve will mean you can then align the cloud migration against that. We've seen that organizations who set clear objectives at the start are more successful.

## 2. GETTING THE RIGHT BACKING



This is a critical success factor – you need senior stakeholder backing. If you leave it to the infrastructure team to try and do this on their own, they're going to struggle. **You need to have the whole of the IT organisation on board.**

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This is going to be challenging.

You'll come up against people who say, 'My application is fine as it is. Why do I have to move it? I have a million other things to do, new features to build. It runs fine. Why do I have to move it?'

Meeting this resistance is the reason you need senior stakeholder backing and sponsorship at the top levels.

**You're going to have to go through some pain to get all the information needed to do your migration** - getting people to come on board, getting application owners to provide information to map servers to applications, understanding how business critical an application is and whether it has confidential data on it.

You need time with those application owners to get that information from them and if you can get a mandate from senior stakeholders to drive that through, you're going to be much more successful.

**Otherwise, you'll just meet a wall of No!**



GORDON

You can get a loose mandate from the top – we're going cloud first – and at the bottom level (the engineers and developers) they all love cloud and want it.

**Where we see barriers is in the middle of the organization.** The owners of applications who don't want to take the risks – 'it's running fine now, why would I want to upset the cart?'

Mid-level managers see the data center as their domain and don't want to lose control of that. So often it's the mid-tier that is the barrier to cloud adoption. It can't just be top level endorsement. It needs to be senior managers who drive the day-to-day business to get the strategy through.

### 3. BREADTH THEN DEPTH



We see people capturing too much data too early. What they need instead is iterative data capture. It's very easy to deploy a load of discovery tools that will tell you all the servers you've got in data centers, CPU memory discs, utilization stats, armfuls of spreadsheets... **People spend a lot of time getting all this data, but don't know how to use it to start making the decisions.**

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**A better approach is to go wide across the portfolio, so you capture information across what your data center scope is, what data centers and server rooms you have and get a view of the portfolio of all the applications you've got in there.**

**Once you've got the scope of a particular data center, you can do deep into the applications that reside in it. You don't need to know, for example, the precise version of Java that is running on an app to make a decision about whether to move it to the cloud or want to move it to a PAAS service, you just need to know it's there. So going wide rather than deep is important.**

**You only need to capture a small amount of info about the apps to start making decision** and what you need to look at is 'what is the roadmap status of that app?' If it's got a long-term future and is strategic to the business, it makes more sense to do modernisation on it. If it's not strategic, has a short life span, being decommissioned, is being replaced by something else, it makes no sense to refactor all the code - that's expensive. So you can leave it to die in the data centre or you lift and shift it to move it out of the data centre. Looking at it from the server level you can't tell this.



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From the board we kept getting the question, how many apps have we moved to the cloud? The IT team didn't know. They were moving servers, not apps. They didn't know the correlation.

**There was frustration from both sides.** The business was using servers to run their apps on but there was no understanding from IT about what servers related to what apps. Which is why the board will want to know what apps there are.

### 4. TIME BOXING



Don't turn discovery into this massive project in its own right. Use time boxes effectively.

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If you let this run on and on and on, you can be there forever, months and months trying to get the info. You won't know everything!

**We prescribe using time boxes on a 4, 8 or 12 week cycle.** That focuses everyone's mind on when they need to get this done. You use the breadth, then going into depth. You're not trying to get every bit of info. This makes it possible to time box.



# WHAT DOES GOOD LOOK LIKE WHEN IT COMES TO CLOUD MIGRATION?



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It's important to understand the various approaches to cloud migration and to know where and when they fit. **Rarely is lift and shift everything or modernise everything a reality.**

Modernisation isn't necessarily quick so there is an investment you need to make. **When you choose the right applications the benefits can be transformational. But choosing the wrong ones can just be a waste of money.** Identifying the right ones is important.

That doesn't mean the rest shouldn't be migrated. There is a business case for lifting and shifting to the cloud. There are scenarios where you can lift and shift to the cloud and it does cost less than maintaining your data centre.

A simple inventory tool that scans your environment doesn't give you the insights you need to make the right decisions about each application.

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