vizient®

CASE STUDY

LEARN HOW VIZIENT MIGRATED INFRASTRUCTURE FROM FOUR DIFFERENT HEALTHCARE COMPANIES INTO A SINGLE, HIPAA-COMPLIANT ENVIRONMENT USING CLOUD MIGRATION, HYBRID CLOUD, COLOCATION, AND DISASTER RECOVERY SERVICES FROM SUMMIT

A CASE STUDY BY

SUMMIT

COMPANY:
Vizient

COMPANY DESCRIPTION:
Vizient is the largest member-driven, healthcare performance improvement company in the country.

INDUSTRY:
Healthcare

SUMMIT PRODUCTS:
Cloud Migration, Hybrid Cloud, Colocation, Disaster Recovery

VIZIENT CAME TO US WITH THEIR LIST OF REQUIREMENTS:

MIGRATE HEALTHCARE SYSTEMS SPREAD ACROSS THREE DATA CENTERS TO OUR CLOUD, TURN ONE OF THEIR DATA CENTERS INTO A BACKUP SITE, AND GET THEM OUT OF INFRASTRUCTURE MANAGEMENT — ON A VERY TIGHT TIMETABLE, AND WITHOUT ANY DOWNTIME. SO WE DID.

Cloud migrations are always a bit like a puzzle, except you're trying to find all the pieces and figure out how they fit together at the same time. Mergers are much the same way — you need to figure out what's there, then determine what role each piece has to play in the new system.

To find yourself managing both at the same time…well, you have to enjoy the challenge.

Fortunately at Summit, we do. When Vizient came to us about migrating to our managed Hybrid Cloud service, they were in the process of integrating the operations, teams, and technologies of VHA, UHC, Novation, and Sg2 — all group purchasing and healthcare consulting companies — into the nation's largest member-driven healthcare services company, with more than $100 billion in annual purchasing volume.

Vizient knew what their Cloud Migration should look like, but they had one limiting factor: They had about six months to manage the entire Cloud Migration process and right-size the technology infrastructure from multiple, disparate operating environments into a single, virtual data center architecture.

> *For this project to be successful, we had to migrate over 225 servers (a mix of Windows and Linux) and convert over 30 discreet site-to-site VPN connections in less than six months. Making it even more complex, this effort spanned multiple teams at three separate companies, and there was a reliance on individual customer resources for site-to-site VPN cutovers. We definitely could not have done this without* ***[Summit]****.*
>
> — Infrastructure Manager at Vizient

By asking questions that cut through the chaos — and listening closely to the answers — we built a Cloud Migration strategy that provided Vizient two key assets: a migration within their required timeframe and a brand new, future-proof footprint.

Now, all its companies are within a single infrastructure that is set up for easy scale and architected for Vizient's SaaS solutions.

Vizient's tech team is no longer spending time managing data centers, and being in the same hybrid cloud environment has brought the companies onto the same page. With a shared objective and the systems to support it, Vizient can act as one company — one that innovates blazingly fast

CLOUD TECHNOLOGIES ARE A COMMODITY THESE DAYS — SUCCESS OR FAILURE IS DETERMINED BY HOW THEY ARE DEPLOYED

At Summit, we focus on the second half of that sentence. When you work with us, you are getting our expertise at finding and meeting your company's needs, even the ones you don't think cloud can solve.

Starting the project, we knew Vizient had three main goals:

- Create a primary hybrid cloud housed in a new data center capable of supporting all the merged businesses
- Execute a cloud data migration and a cloud application migration to get everything onto the new cloud
- Get out of the infrastructure business, transitioning data center operations and expenses from CapEx to OpEx

We also knew Vizient had one pressing catalyst: Moving its proprietary Decision Support System (DSS) platform out of its current data center in six months, before a very important deadline. Vizient's clients depend on the SaaS application, using it to track and compare the costs of healthcare equipment.

> *DSS helps customers make strategic decisions with clear visibility into critical volume, cost, and profitability measures across the continuum of care. It's central to our business, and it needed to stay online throughout the move.*
>
> — Director of Infrastructure & Operations at Vizient

Vizient came to Summit because we already had relationships with two of the merging companies, delivering colocation for one and managed services for the other. Both those IT teams were happy with the work we had done and championed our solutions. To win the combined business, though, we needed a Cloud Migration plan that could hit all Vizient's goals, stay within its constraints, and meet needs Vizient didn't yet know to ask for.

A CLOUD MIGRATION ASSESSMENT TO ACCOUNT FOR 4 BUSINESSES' WORTH OF INFRASTRUCTURE

We kicked off a Cloud Migration assessment to unravel all the threads — both organizational and technical — that needed to be accounted for.

We started to map Vizient's ecosystem of companies, services, applications, data, and customers, and we quickly realized how critical that ecosystem is to Vizient's mission and success. Vizient is very invested in the markets it serves and the companies it works with. The team needed an

infrastructure that allowed them to serve those people as efficiently as possible — and was future-proofed to support their continued expansion into SaaS offerings.

We also realized that some things marked critical were not "critical" in the infrastructure sense of the word (requiring 24/7 availability). Diving deeper into Vizient's needs and contextualizing them in the world of cloud allowed us to find sizable cost savings.

The Cloud Migration approach we ultimately delivered took all of our findings into account, and proved to Vizient's management team that we could meet their needs — in an exceedingly compressed timeframe. The return on investment and total cost of ownership we calculated showed we could do so in a way that was technically and financially feasible.

DELIVERING INFRASTRUCTURE SOLUTIONS FROM COLOCATION TO MANAGED SERVICES TO HYBRID CLOUD

Our assessment made it clear that one type of infrastructure would not cut it for Vizient. The company required that their Oracle deployment, for example, remain on bare metal. Incorporating a data center capable of colocating physical servers that could run Oracle was just one of many Cloud Migration strategies we came up with to optimize performance and keep costs down. The Vizient team also wanted to get out of the business of managing physical servers, meaning they needed managed cloud support to keep systems up and running.

Because Summit has been providing infrastructure expertise since 2000, we knew we could offer everything Vizient needed. (We started in data centers and Colocation, moved into Managed Services as clients needed additional help, and we have been developing cloud solutions since the technology was invented.) Our work across all three spaces enabled us to see Vizient's infrastructure holistically and search out best practices to implement and share across the Vizient departments. The IT team at Vizient did not have to worry about anything. All of it was taken care of right at Summit.

UNTANGLING COMPLEXITY FOR A SUCCESSFUL MIGRATION TO THE CLOUD

With four companies still in the process of integrating services, information, and technical and management teams, corralling all of the moving parts would be the make-or-break factor in this cloud computing migration. To guarantee success, we took that part over. One of the results from our assessment phase was a detailed Cloud Migration checklist that laid out everyone's responsibilities and deadlines. Then, Summit provided a team to project-manage moving to the cloud.

Thanks to the work of our managed services team, and the detailed Cloud Migration planning that kept everyone on track, we were able to move all of the applications and data out of the old data centers and onto Vizient's new cloud on the timetable we provided.

We were then able to migrate all 29 hospitals and healthcare providers running Vizient's software to their new Hybrid Cloud with a 100 percent success rate.

RELYING ON EXPERIENCE TO ADAPT CLOUD MIGRATION SERVICES INTO A CUSTOM PLAN

The best thing you can do when facing wholesale organizational change? Stay flexible. Vizient was still finalizing its structure and service offerings when we came on board. This meant we could not

take a waterfall approach to designing and providing a Cloud Migration service. We had to stay agile.

As we started moving through the migration steps, we allowed our plans to evolve alongside the company. This was critical as we came across migration challenges we could not have anticipated. We found out about a training environment that hadn't come up in Discovery, for example, and were able get developers access to it without needing to spend the money to move it.

There was also the challenge of connectivity. Vizient's applications and data were spread across three data centers. We were moving all the data to a new, primary cloud hosted in our data center, keeping one as a backup center, and closing the other two. This is a fairly normal procedure, but when we went to start moving applications to the Hybrid Cloud, we found a major problem — throughput to and from the existing, aging data centers. This meant transferring the data and applications over the wire would have taken days – time that did not exist.

So we pivoted.

We built custom storage appliances that were able to serve as a physical backup of the data. We then deployed our team to each data center to collect the data and bring it back to our Illinois data center for migration. With the bulk of the data transferred, we were able to then sync the much smaller amount of new data over the older, slower connections.

A CURVEBALL

When the WannaCry hack hit (while we were mid-migration), we were already well-versed in hitting curveballs. Vizient needed immediate patches across all of its environments. Summit was able to start implementing a solution right away, like we were doing for all our clients. As we were patching legacy environments, we identified other systems that needed to be updated as well. Our team was able to manage the entire process for Vizient, addressing all necessary infrastructure and earning a 100% path success rate.

> *As a large and highly visible healthcare company, security is paramount at Vizient. When the WannaCry ransomware vulnerability was released, we needed to act quickly to across our entire environment. The [Summit] team was able to provide us a full patch management solution within a few days, and they worked tirelessly to get our entire DSS server environment patched on an escalated schedule. It was phenomenal that [Summit] was able to adjust their project schedule on the fly to meet our security needs.*
>
> — Director of Infrastructure & Operations at Vizient

DESIGNING A CLOUD MIGRATION FRAMEWORK FOR INNOVATION AND SPEED

Vizient came to us with their list of requirements: building a new cloud, migrating the data, getting the company out of infrastructure management and doing it all on a very tight timetable. And we delivered — without any downtime. We do not stop at checking the boxes on a contract though.

When we dug into Vizient's business, we found all kinds of ways the right Hybrid Cloud could make their business faster, easier, and better. SaaS delivery was one area. The Decision Support System is one of Vizient's core products and a crucial area for growth. When we designed the new cloud, we architected it as the hub for all Vizient's application deployments and customer connections. Then we created an environment optimized for SaaS, which will dramatically shorten the process for onboarding new members. As Vizient continues to grow, those rewards will compound, saving them time and money.

In all the ways Vizient needs, the new infrastructure is designed to scale. We created a super clear system to ensure Vizient always know what the next step is, so growth and support is addressed as efficiently and cost effectively as possible. We have given Vizient control over their technology, which ultimately means control over their business. That is the confidence we aim to deliver to our clients, and the confidence we continue to deliver to Vizient as we embark on several new projects with the company.

> *There were a lot of moving pieces — everything had to fall in place almost perfectly for us to pull this off. With [Summit]'s expertise, responsiveness, and flexibility, we were able to complete the server migration on time and on budget.*
>
> — Infrastructure Manager at Vizient