HAYNES International

Case Study:

WatServ Solves Global Manufacturing Company's ERP Challenge by Migrating Microsoft Dynamics AX to Azure

WatServ

For over 100 years, Haynes International has developed, manufactured & distributed high performance alloys.

The Challenge

In late 2019, WatServ was approached by Haynes International, a global manufacturing company, who was facing a challenge: their mission-critical ERP, which they relied on for Order Entry, Operations and Finance, was running on Microsoft platforms that were going out of support by Microsoft in January 2020. They needed an expedited solution to protect their ERP from security, performance and resiliency risks and to safeguard their overall critical business processes.

Although their end goal was to migrate to Microsoft Dynamics 365 Finance and Operations, they were not yet ready to upgrade. They needed an immediate solution that would extend the support they were receiving from Microsoft for Windows Server 2008 and SQL Server 2008 as they planned for the upgrade.

The company chose WatServ because our team has extensive cloud engineering and consulting experience, including specialized knowledge in migrating and managing Microsoft Dynamics. We also offer a robust CloudOps platform and our SOC certification means we follow industry-standard best practices for service management that is audited yearly.

The Solution

Given Haynes International's challenge, we recommended a proven solution that our team has vast experience with: migrating Dynamics AX to Azure. This would extend Microsoft's support for Windows and SQL Server 2008 by three years, providing the company with time to plan an upgrade to Dynamics 365 Finance and Operations while also improving security, performance and overall resiliency. Using our hybrid project management approach that leverages waterfall and agile methods, the timelines of this migration were accelerated to meet the end of support deadline.

The first step our team took was to migrate the workloads to Microsoft Azure, maintaining the existing application functionality while modernizing the underlying infrastructure. Instead of implementing Microsoft's Remote Desktop Services, the team implemented a Citrix-based secure remote solution leveraging Citrix Virtual Apps and Desktops along with Citrix NetScaler ADC (Application Delivery Controller). This helped the company securely connect their users, many of whom are located globally, while load balancing the application to optimize performance with Citrix on Azure.

Next, our team developed an application migration plan to ensure successful integration and mitigate the risk of interruptions to customers during go-live. A few technical challenges arose along the way, but our team drew on their expertise and past experience to resolve them quickly.

1	**2**	**3**	**4**
Migrate Workloads	Develop Application	Right-size Environment	Develop Payment Consumption Strategy

After the migration to Azure was complete, our team focused on right-sizing the environment to control costs. We also developed a payment consumption strategy, presenting cost options and a recommendation for a blended approach (including Azure Reserved Instances and Azure Hybrid Use Benefit) as an alternative to pay as you go pricing.

The Outcome

The Azure-based solution now provides the company with a resilient, reliable and scalable environment and improved performance. Thanks to careful optimizations to the Azure environment post-migration, WatServ was also able to help the company get the following results:

- **20% reduction** in the number of servers to host application components (AOS)
- **20% reduction** in the number of terminal servers required for users to access AX
- **40% reduction i**n the total number of servers in the AX environment
- **50% reduction** in the number of development and test environments
- **Savings of 33%** of Azure hardware costs by moving to reduced availability and automating server infrastructure
- **Savings of 26%** of Azure hardware costs thanks to smart pricing strategies

Finally, WatServ helped the company achieve SOC compliance by improving technology management practices through our service management.

Today, WatServ continues to be Haynes International's trusted partner, providing CloudOps managed services. Our team is also pleased to be working with the company for a new engagement involving cloud and application security.

Services Provided		Business Drivers	
Cloud Journey		SQL & Windows Server 2008 End of Support	
CloudDiscover		Performance	
CloudPlan		Cost	
CloudMigrate		Security	
CloudOps		Resiliency	

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WatServ is an IT solutions provider helping clients digitally transform
their businesses through cloud technologies and services.

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