



Case Study:

WatServ Modernizes Royal LePage's Real Estate Portal Using the Power of the Cloud

Canada's Royal LePage partners with WatServ to modernize enterprise applications by rebuilding their intranet portal on Azure, reducing deployment times for new services by 80%, improving productivity by 400%, and providing Realtors^{®1} with competitive tools to grow their businesses.



Royal LePage is a real estate company that has been helping Canadians buy and sell their homes since 1913.

To be successful, Realtors® need cutting-edge tools and services to meet the growing demands of today's consumer.

By leveraging the power of Azure, WatServ helped Royal LePage (RLP) modernize and migrate its Intranet portal, known as the rlpNetwork, to the cloud, enabling better scalability, resiliency and sustainability.

The re-imagined and completely rebuilt portal is a proprietary platform that empowers RLP's 18,000+ sales professionals working out of over 600 brokerage locations nationwide, to grow their businesses.

The Challenge

In an industry where time is money, RLP strives to be at the forefront of new technologies to provide robust solutions to its Realtors® and brokerages. To ensure the company's Intranet portal delivers the experience and tools its Realtors® need, RLP, a Google Cloud (GCP, GSuite) subscriber with limited internal Azure expertise, reached out to WatServ for help.

An initial review of the existing Intranet portal by WatServ uncovered numerous operational support challenges because the application was:

- built on a java-based CMS that required intensive computing and manual resources to maintain up-time and performance
- developed using proprietary technology of the CMS, making it difficult for the team to manage
- hosted within RLP's data centre without enough support from internal IT staff

For example, the system required content to be manually re-indexed to ensure peak performance, which would prevent users from accessing the Intranet.

To remain competitive, RLP needed to modernize the portal to overcome operational challenges and scale the system to offer users a robust, responsive design and cutting-edge features.

RLP also wanted to move the application out of their data centre so IT could focus on improving the portal's business functionalities instead of managing its hosting environment.



The Solution

WatServ worked with RLP's technology team to re-imagine, redesign and re-engineer the application on Azure to reduce the hosting footprint, improve agility, and remove reliance on their data centre by taking maximum advantage of the cloud.

WatServ replaced VMs with Azure's web, SQL platform and serverless functions services. Azure's Web Application Firewall (WAF) and other security services were used to protect the application from threats, and auto-scaling was enabled for peak load.

The existing Intranet architecture was also updated to eliminate challenges that had resulted from the customized CMS and to provide overall improved UX, performance and security. To achieve this, the team converted the platform to an ASP.NET web framework and developed a sustainable design and architecture.

The result was a modernized application and a fully outsourced and managed hosting solution.

Launched in January 2019, the new powerful rlpNetwork lets agents:

- access data to help make better business decisions
- track their momentum with the new awards tracker widget
- monitor e-campaigns, contacts and tasks from the new CRM dashboard
- automatically view individual sales pipeline
- post their profiles in the online referral directory to easily connect with other agents

In other words, rlpNetwork helps agents be more productive by accessing the information they need, when they need it, through a consistent, uninterrupted user experience.

For RLP's IT staff, modernizing the portal on Azure has improved operational efficiencies by removing 10 hours per week of manual work and reducing deployment time of new features and bug fixes by 80% (from 8-10 hrs to only 2 hrs).



Going into this project, we knew there'd be lots of learning and change involved since we'd never used Azure before. WatServ worked with us to gather details and understand our needs, and then designed an ideal cloud infrastructure that's tailor-made and customized for our business goals. Along the way, they provided superior support and even identified some additional back end jobs that were good candidates for serverless. With WatServ, the solutions were easy to implement, cost-effective and scalable.



Raed Alahmad

*Development Manager and Architect at
Royal LePage*



The Outcome

The modernized rlpNetwork portal has strengthened RLP’s competitive position while securing its reputation for providing best-of-breed technology to its agents, brokers and franchises.

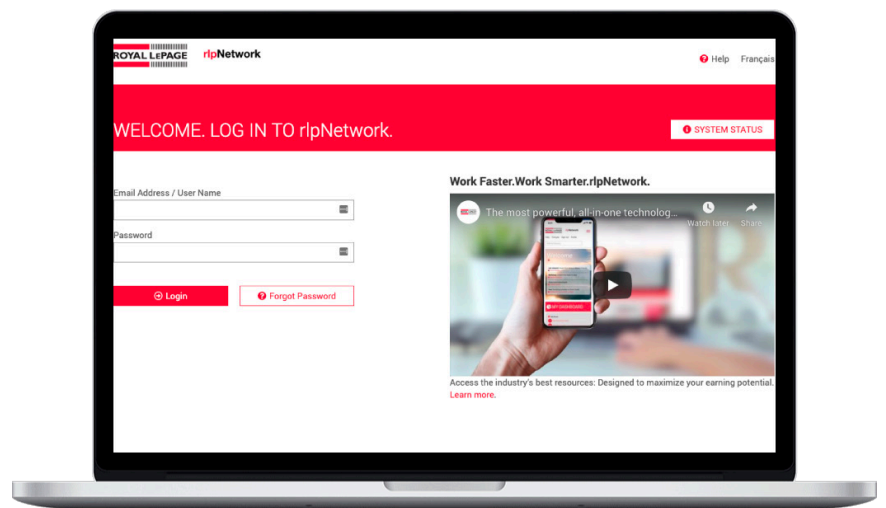
The portal’s responsive design works across multiple form factors, allowing agents to access the portal anytime, anywhere, on any device. With Azure allowing the portal to auto-scale to accommodate user demand, realtors have uninterrupted, consistent access to the portal and third-party services from a single starting point.

For RLP’s IT team, partnering with WatServ to modernize the portal:

- **reduced hosting costs by 50% by moving to Azure**
- **removed 10 hours per week** of manual work needed to monitor and rebuild indexes

Most importantly, outsourcing on-going monitoring and maintenance of the portal to WatServ’s Managed Services team allowed RLP to redeploy about one-third of their infrastructure team to support additional internal business lines.

Today, WatServ continues to act as Royal LePage’s trusted advisor and has several more projects underway.



WatServ

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

For more information, visit www.watserv.com