

Change, even one for the better, comes with risk. Migrating to a Colocation Datacentre – or any new datacentre – should be accompanied by careful supervision and a well-devised and executed strategy. Data and IT functionality are a critical element of any modern enterprise. While adopting a new datacentre strategy holds the promise of efficiency and leaner ongoing costs, the transition can also result in negative disruptive outcomes, if it is enacted badly.

Migrating a datacentre can be a formidable task at the best of times. While its advantages may be readily apparent as a strategy, the transition itself needs to be conducted with due process and proper planning. Datacentres, especially those optimised to the requirements of the business they serve, are a central pillar of functional efficiency. However, most legacy datacentres are sub-optimal in one way or another. The fact is that, as the role of data-driven business processes evolves rapidly, most legacy datacentres are found wanting in either capacity, computational power or other limitations on throughput.

### Elements of best practices in datacentre migration:

A task as complex and multifaceted as datacentre migration requires a comprehensive and detailed plan for successful execution. A rollout of any new IT technology or approach is fraught with unexpected outcomes. As a rule, IT professionals expect some unforeseen elements to any such change. This is



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especially true for a restructuring as fundamental as a datacentre migration. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance that a good transition plan is devised and adhered to. Some essential elements and best practices that can help mitigate any downsides to datacentre migration, are:

- **Inventory of resources and analysis of existing system:** It is important that the legacy system being replaced is thoroughly assessed and tabulated. Several layers of technology – both hardware and software – are likely to be components in an existing system. Their interplay and co-dependence is a complex system that should be understood and accounted for prior to any migration.
- **Creating a strategy for the migration:** Different enterprises have different functional priorities. A careful and detailed strategy not only reduces

the chance of a nasty surprise, it also helps to identify the basic elements that the new system needs to address as a priority, so that the least amount of disruption is experienced and the migration can be measured against expectations on an ongoing basis.

- **Identify risks and have a risk management plan:** Nearly any modern-day IT infrastructure is complex. Identifying likely sources of risk and making sure to create strategies to minimise and mitigate them is essential to any datacentre migration. While it is likely to prove very difficult to identify every vulnerability, the process of listing likely risks does help in focusing the migration strategy.
- **Creating a comprehensive and detailed testing plan:** Testing, both pre and post migration, is an important element in maintaining the highest level of confidence in the integrity and capabilities of the IT infrastructure. It is important that a thorough and painstaking testing process is in place so that the migration can be assessed on a continual basis, so that bugs and contingencies can be isolated and addressed.
- **Audit and documentation:** It is extremely important that the migration is well audited and documented. The future functional integrity and capabilities of a migrated system should be measured against both, pre-migration capabilities and post-migration expectations. A thoroughly audited migration also minimises the risk of vulnerabilities that are not apparent during initial test runs.
- **Involve experts and value experience:** A successful datacentre migration can revitalise and empower businesses. However, the process itself is a complex challenge. In order to enhance the possibilities of a positive outcome, it is advisable to involve individuals and entities who have proven credentials and relevant real-world experience. As in any other walk of life, experience is a valuable and hard-earned resource. Enterprises looking to undertake a datacentre migration are well served by seeking out and involving experienced hands to assist with the process. ■

# Setting your datacentre migration strategy

A datacentre migration is an empowering strategy that can often create wonderful synergies and efficiencies within an organisation, but it needs careful anticipation, planning and the involvement of experienced hands. Sachin Bhardwaj, Director Marketing & Business Development, eHosting DataFort, tells us more.