

CASE STUDY

Dunedin City Council



INDUSTRY
Public Sector

KEY OUTCOME
Migration to Public Cloud

Dunedin City Council's transition to public cloud on Azure is already paying dividends for Otepoti residents, and best of all, they're none the wiser.

Otepoti Dunedin might be best known as the home of Otago University and its 21,000 students, but it's also New Zealand's only UNESCO City of Literature, a growing urban centre with a vibrant creative heart.

Dunedin City Council (DCC) presides over the city's core infrastructure, including many private and public properties such as residential homes, libraries, pools and art galleries.

The Council holds and maintains a broad set of data, which needs to be stored, protected, and used effectively to deliver value to private and public sectors.

Faced with a growing mountain of data, and increasing costs for its existing tech infrastructure, the Council needed to modernise its enterprise and decided that a 'cloud-first' approach would be the most efficient solution.



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Graeme Riley

CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER

Dunedin City Council

THE CHALLENGE

DCC was looking to transition to a new and more reliable way of working, providing ratepayers with modern digital services, and employees with the flexibility to work from anywhere on any device. This was even more important as the Covid pandemic has become a constant disruption to the workplace.

“It’s about being able to use any device, any place, any time,” says Graeme Riley, Chief Information Officer at DCC. “We wanted to future-proof ourselves by transitioning our physical infrastructure and we wanted to make sure we got it right.”

THE SOLUTION

Public cloud, done right

Public cloud can provide solutions for all these issues, but it’s important to make sure the transition is done correctly and with as little disruption as possible. Without the proper guardrails and systems, migrating to public cloud can be an unnecessarily difficult, expensive, and insecure exercise. DCC doesn’t have a full IT team, so it reached out to the experts at Microsoft Partner CCL, and our cloud transformation business unit Leaven, to develop a strategy to move its workflows over to Azure.

“We used Microsoft’s Cloud Adoption Framework to help identify workloads and steer the migration project,” says Elizabeth Kirby, Head of Strategic Alliances at CCL. “Migrating to the cloud effectively requires a solid foundation, and that’s what we wanted to build for the Council. Having access to state-of-the-art resources from the Microsoft team means that we are getting that process right and building an effective platform for DCC.”

CCL and Leaven took a full stock of the Council’s systems and where efficiencies could



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be made and developed a strategy for moving them over to Azure. The first part established a landing zone in Azure for the Council, moving ten of their non-production apps into Azure Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS).

This meant that the testing and pre-production process could now take place on virtual machines sitting in the cloud. This has already benefitted the council's geological and asset management systems, by helping Otepoti residents looking for information in a civil emergency, or about the council's recreational facilities.

This transition also set the stage to transfer the Council's files into the public cloud, switching from traditional file services to the feature-rich, low-management services and benefits in Azure.

The best kind of upgrade

The Council's transition to Azure is just getting started and it's already paying dividends. Moving non-production applications from private to public cloud hosting on Azure IaaS has cut costs by 49%. By taking advantage of the scale of Azure, and most notably, without any major changes to the way that work gets done, the council are thrilled to be making such a significant saving.

One of the key benefits has been the ability to quickly ramp up and down server capability as needed. In its previous private cloud environment, scaling up and down its infrastructure was a lengthy process, but on Azure, it's nearly immediate.

For example, costs are reduced by "switching on" Azure virtual machines during the work day, then switching them off overnight, and repeating this every day, something that would be impossible on the private cloud. That speedy scaling can also be used for one-off events, like a civil emergency, where residents need access to information from a trusted source.

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Matt Bostwick

PARTNER DIRECTOR

Microsoft New Zealand

THE RESULTS

“Stuff like that sounds minor, but it has made a big difference for our costs and capability,” says Graeme. “We’ve been able to make a huge improvement to our efficiency, but everything works the same for us, and for residents. Being able to provide improved services without any disruption to the way things work is exactly what we wanted from this project”.

The project has proven to be a great achievement for CCL, Leaven and DCC, seeing fantastic team collaboration. It’s been such a success that we took home the Azure Migrate Award at the Microsoft Partner Awards in December 2021.

Turning the dial up to 11

Now that they’ve proven that the cloud works, CCL, Leaven and DCC are getting ready to embark on the next phases of the migration. “The end goal is to have all of our systems in Azure, and we’ve seen that it’s possible,” says Graeme. “We can’t wait for Microsoft’s New Zealand data centre in region to come online, which will allow us to move over applications which rely on really low latency.”

As they say, good things take time, but Dunedin City Council is well on its way to their any device, any place, any time future on Azure.

“For organisations that have to handle a lot of data, there’s no better solution than the public cloud,” says Matt Bostwick, Partner Director at Microsoft New Zealand. “The experience of Dunedin City Council, ably assisted by the teams at CCL and Leaven, goes to show how crucial it is to build a strong starting point to unlock the benefits that Azure can bring.”

About CCL & Leaven

CCL enables Aotearoa to adapt and thrive in a digital future by bringing home the best of global technology, delivered with true tech expertise and a Kiwi touch. Leaven is CCL’s cloud and business transformation business unit, helping organisations accelerate and succeed with cloud adoption, digital innovation, and business transformation.

Spark Business Group

