

## CASE STUDY

# Partners Life



## INDUSTRY

Financial and Insurance  
Services

## KEY OUTCOME

Cloud Operating  
Framework

## Partners Life adopts a Minimum Viable Cloud framework to bring best practice to the public cloud.

Giants of the cloud have consumerised once complex business IT. But it's one thing to spin up a virtual server and another to smoothly migrate, launch, and run critical applications in the cloud.

As more businesses embrace public cloud platforms, governance models for operating frameworks and deployment methodologies are proving to be as valuable as the technology itself.

Partners Life is blazing a trail in New Zealand's hyper-competitive insurance sector, amassing the fourth biggest paid-up life book in the industry.

Free from legacy technology issues and distractions associated with merger and acquisition integration, the insurer has flourished on the back of a cloud-first approach to drive continued development of its innovative suite of electronic tools, including adviser sales tool EVINCE and electronic application and underwriting tool MUM.



“Many companies call themselves cloud providers, but very few are. Leaven is one.”

**Mark Lewis,**

**GM SYSTEMS AND ARCHITECTURE,**

Partners Life

## THE CHALLENGE

### Organic cloud adoption traps the unwary

Using the Microsoft Azure cloud platform to develop and launch the lion's share of its core applications, Partners Life is familiar with the ins and outs of scalable cloud services and how they support new operating models.

However, organic adoption of Azure, while providing affordable and easily accessed IT capacity, came at a cost.

Without minimum entry criteria or enterprise guardrails to enforce practices used by its software vendors, the insurer's Azure platform was becoming difficult to manage. The absent controls obscured a view to costs, complicated security, and stifled the insurer's agile development model.

## THE SOLUTION

### Minimum Viable Cloud (MVC) sets stage for new order in cloud

Looking to establish a cloud operating framework to take things forward, Partners Life engaged CCL's cloud transformation services business unit, Leaven, to codify delivery and management processes for applications and foundation infrastructure in Azure, using pipeline-driven continuous deployment.

Delivered as Minimum Viable Cloud (MVC) framework, Leaven's approach applies templates and orchestration facilitated by Azure DevOps to automate the deployment of an Azure environment with auditable source control to maintain consistency.



“The CI/CD pipeline for continuous application deployment has literally shrunk the process, from checklists, finger-crossing, and developers standing by, to pressing a single button. The entire process is silky smooth.”

**Tim von Dadelszen**

**GM DIGITAL INNOVATION**

Partners Life

The move established a security-hardened and policy-enforced Azure platform, prescribing operating standards and governance for infrastructure supporting the insurer’s core applications.

Leaven also worked with partner CCL to aggregate cloud services and deliver 24/7 support to third-party vendors, managing incidents, service requests, and change and release processes for individual applications.

## THE RESULTS

### **Push button control takes the load off people**

With EVINCE now running in Azure, and with eight applications to follow, Partners Life likes what it sees. Leaven’s MVC framework has transformed software development and release, with a push-button process replacing developer checklists.

“The CI/CD pipeline for continuous application deployment has literally shrunk the process, from checklists, finger-crossing, and developers standing by, to pressing a single button. The entire process is silky smooth,” said Tim von Dadelszen, the insurer’s GM Digital Innovation.

The achievement is especially pleasing given the narrow line between providing an environment with standards enforcing consistency across deployment, security, and naming conventions, and an environment so rigid that it restricts individual development styles.

“Software development is analogous to air travel – passengers can wear what they like, but they’ll need a boarding pass and to follow procedures,” said Mark Lewis, GM Systems and Architecture, Partners Life.

“Leaven does an awesome job of architecting cloud platforms – and they’re good guys to work with, too. They really gel with our team.”

**Mark Lewis**

**GM SYSTEMS AND ARCHITECTURE**

Partners Life

“Developers are artistic – you don’t want to strangle that talent. But when you are releasing software to production you need to proceed cautiously. Leaven’s approach allows developers to work with flare but introduces the right structure and controls with each step closer to production.”

Subsequent software deployments are likely to run just as smoothly, thanks to reusable automation and infrastructure code libraries. And as more applications take flight on the new Azure platform, CCL can focus on guiding cost management and service optimisation, while Partners Life can focus on innovation, using the foundation established by Leaven.

“Leaven does an awesome job of architecting cloud platforms – and they’re good guys to work with, too. They really gel with our team,” said Lewis.

## 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

