

US Signal

US Signal cuts cloud migration windows in half with PlateSpin Migrate.



Overview

With over 14,000 miles of fiber and eight fully owned and operated data centers, US Signal offers one of the largest, fully deployed networks in the Midwest. US Signal entered the cloud computing market by introducing infrastructure-as-a-service and other cloud-based offerings to complement its already robust data networking product suite. US Signal is now the premier provider of networking, cloud computing, and managed services in the Midwest.

Challenge

As a result of the increase in global demand for cloud computing, US Signal wanted to optimize the way it moves customer server and application data into the US Signal cloud, from

almost any physical or virtual environment. The US Signal moving service includes destination environment configuration, migration process monitoring, and confirmation of connectivity once migration has concluded. A migration typically involved customer downtime and the desire was to minimize this.

Some US Signal customers have only a very narrow window available to do their migration, based on their business requirements, as Adam Kessler, Director of Professional Services at US Signal, explains: "To accommodate our customer's migration window, we always try to use the right tool for the job. We used a standard backup solution which would make a full backup of the customer's virtual or physical machines. The backup data was stored in the cloud and we would then do an incremental update on cut-over night and restore the full customer data into our cloud infrastructure before making the switch. This whole process added time and complexity and we found ourselves struggling to meet some migration window requirements. This was mainly because we were using a very manual process. Using a spreadsheet we would do the discovery exercise, resulting in a server list with IP addresses. We then had to connect to each individual server and install an agent on it to support the backup process."

"Our customers just want us to safely move their servers and data into our environment, with a minimum of downtime. PlateSpin Migrate enables us to do this and provide a positive customer experience."

AMANDA REGNERUS

VP of Professional Services
US Signal



At a Glance

■ Industry

Software & Technology

■ Location

USA

■ Challenge

While managing its customers' data center migration projects, US Signal had to minimize application downtime.

■ Products and Services

PlateSpin Migrate

■ Success Highlights

- + Migration windows decreased by 50%
- + Reduced migration preparation work by hours using automated discovery
- + Integrated automated testing ensured minimal downtime and successful "go-live"

"The increased automation during the actual migration phases has enabled us to cut our typical migration window in half, which means a dramatic reduction in service downtime for our customers."

ADAM KESSLER

Director of Professional Services
US Signal

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With a migration of over 350 servers on the horizon, Kessler's team realized they needed a better solution to help them manage this project.

Solution

Market research highlighted OpenText™ PlateSpin Migrate as a potential solution. PlateSpin Migrate automates each step in the migration process, from the discovery of applications and services running on source servers, all the way through the creation and configuration of virtual machines, physical servers, or servers in the cloud.

The US Signal team decided to test PlateSpin Migrate. After a successful evaluation, it was added to their service offering, integrating it into their process with support from OpenText™ Professional Services. Kessler comments: "We felt PlateSpin Migrate was an intuitive solution; we understood its architecture and the way it worked made sense to us. It was easy to implement and whenever we needed it, Micro Focus (now part of OpenText™) support was great and any reported issues were usually resolved that same day."

Testing is vital during a migration process, and US Signal has this baked into its process. "Each customer is different and has different testing requirements," Kessler explains. "We have templates to guide them through the process to make sure nothing is missed. PlateSpin Migrate has been a great help here with features such as Server Sync and live transfer which allow us

to run the data migrations in the background without shutting down source servers. We're then able to test the target workload, and run a final synchronization and cut-over to ensure up-to-date data—all while minimizing downtime for our customers."

Results

By using PlateSpin Migrate, US Signal was able to automate the discovery of their customer's network and server environment, which has reduced the migration preparation work by many hours. Kessler: "Manual execution of a large-scale migration project involving hundreds of servers would have taken us weeks. With PlateSpin Migrate we managed to complete it in mere days. The increased automation during the actual migration phases has enabled us to cut our typical migration window in half, which means a dramatic reduction in service downtime for our customers."

Amanda Regnerus, VP of Professional Services at US Signal, concludes: "Our customers just want us to safely move their servers and data into our environment, with a minimum of downtime. PlateSpin Migrate enables us to do this and provide a positive customer experience. We're excited about the future, and can see some great new features and integration opportunities in the upcoming PlateSpin Migrate releases."

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