

Food Standards Agency and CoreAzure: IT Disaggregation and Managed Service

Background

The UK Food Standards Agency (FSA) is responsible for food safety and food hygiene across the UK. It works with local authorities to enforce food safety regulations and its staff work across the UK to ensure standards are being met. It operates a highly diverse range of services. Internal and external collaboration and information dissemination to the UK public are critical aspects of their services portfolio.



The Challenge

The problems faced by the FSA were mainly centred on an aged and in many cases out-dated infrastructure and traditional data center hosting model, causing operational and business-related challenges and increased levels of information risk. These included:

- Difficulty in realising IT savings targets
- Lack of joint architecture between the FSA and Meat Hygiene Service creating difficulties in working as one, systemic organisation
- C.250 Food Business premises experienced poor connectivity and performance
- Lack of infrastructure flexibility and scalability to meet future and unexpected demand

In 2017, FSA suffered a major outage when their York Data Centre was flooded. The resultant loss of key systems impacted the delivery of services across the UK, creating a trigger for action, and an aging and complex application estate and traditional contract for data centre hosting made the situation even more challenging. Julie Pearce (Director of Openness, Data & Digital) took this opportunity to support digital transformation across FSA, enabling important improvements to front line services and organisational productivity.

The aim was to:



Enable improvements to front line services and organisational productivity



Support digital transformation across the FSA



Achieve suitable levels of risk mitigation

Why CoreAzure?

As part of an open tender process involving several delivery specialists basing solutions on Azure, AWS, Google and private cloud hosting, CoreAzure set out a strong case to respond the FSA's challenges by migrating the IT infrastructure to Azure.

CoreAzure was contracted to support the organisations "Evolve IT" project the aim of which was to radically re-shape all aspects of IT within the FSA including the infrastructure itself, but also, via an eco-system of individual suppliers working together, to improve end-user experience and information handling capabilities.

The contract was awarded to CoreAzure because, according to Craig Thomas, Commercial Manager - FSA

"The quality and value for money of the solution recommended by CoreAzure was noticeable in their submission and ultimately lead to their selection as preferred delivery partner"

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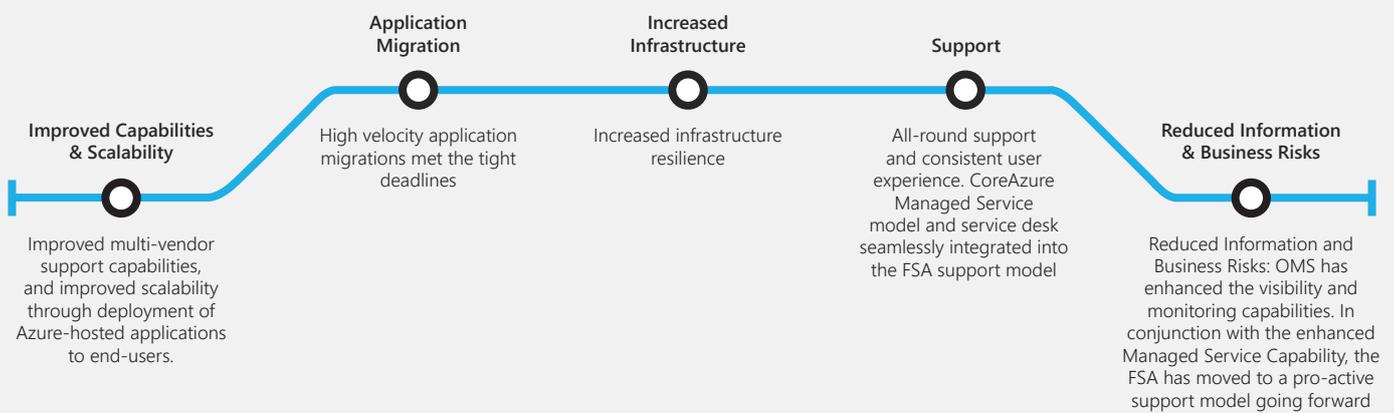
The Solution

After clarifying a full range of requirements, CoreAzure designed and built the Microsoft Cloud Platform capable of responding to the risks and pain points identified and delivering the FSA's improvement and change agenda. With immovable contractual deadlines imposed by the incumbent data centre provider, CoreAzure successfully undertook the

migration of FSA's application estate to Azure, basing the migration on a combination of techniques including ASR and the Velostrata migration product.

During the transition CoreAzure provided the support to the hybrid environment via its Managed Service practice, working alongside the migration delivery teams.

Microsoft Cloud platform - additional benefits



Results

12 months on, CoreAzure has migrated the two maintained data centres to Azure. The exposure to risk has been significantly reduced and via an ongoing process of continuous improvement and optimisation, an IT platform has been established that is continuing to drive down costs whilst at the same time establishing the commercial and technological environment needed to underpin a range of business improvements and transformational change.

CoreAzure is currently focussing on the optimisation of the infrastructure estate and continue to provide the FSA with a fully Managed Service for all MS Cloud infrastructure support.

"We have proven that traditional large IT contracts can be successfully disaggregated and that moving to the public cloud can deliver real improvements in a safe and secure manner. CoreAzure has worked alongside our staff, our partners and our service representatives to deliver this change on time and with no detrimental impact on our front-line services."

Craig Thomas, Commercial Manager - FSA

"We are in the process of formulating plans to exploit our new Microsoft Cloud platform to enable our future transformation projects"

Phillipa Tasselli, Head of IT Services - FSA

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