INDIGO

With oXya, INDIGO performs a lift and shift to the cloud to support its critical workloads and make its infrastructure sustainable.

Challenge: Implement a more flexible data infrastructure to increase resilience and strengthen the security of the IT environment by migrating Indigo's SAP ERP applications to the cloud.

Solution: Migrate Indigo's SAP applications from their on-premise data centre to Google Cloud and IBM Power for Google Cloud (IP4G), designed to support mission-critical workloads.

Outcome: Indigo's SAP production environment benefits from increased security, resilience and performance. This successful migration represents a significant reduction in total cost of ownership (TCO).

Indigo, a Prominent Cultural Leader

Founded in 1996, Indigo Books & Music Inc. has never stopped growing, and today benefits from a brand image that is highly appreciated and recognized by Canadians. Over the years, the company, which is listed on the Toronto Stock Exchange, has stood out with its cultural product offering and its inspiring customer experience. It has also strengthened its position by acquiring several other Canadian bookstores, including Chapters. Today, the company asserts its presence thanks to a network of 176 stores in Canada and one store in New Jersey, United States.

Thanks to its 5,000 employees, including 180 in its IT department, Indigo Books & Music Inc. is committed every day to promoting culture, lifestyles and literary discovery to Canadians. Highly recognized for its company culture emphasizing the values of diversity and inclusion, the company now has sales of CAD 1.06 billion and exerts an indisputable influence in its sector.

INDUSTRY
Retail sale, bookstores, lifestyle and music

DESCRIPTION
5,000 employees
180 employees in the IT department (including more than 70 consultants)
177 stores in Canada and the United States
3 warehouses [1 in Calgary, AB + 2 in Toronto (Brampton), ON]
Revenue in 2023: CAD 1.06 billion

PLATFORM
Google Cloud & IBM Power for Google Cloud (IP4G)

SAP PRODUCTS
SAP ECC, SAP SCM, SAP EWM (x3), SAP BW, SAP GW (Fiori), SAP Solution Manager et SAP PI.

DATABASES
SAP HANA Platform 2.0 and Oracle Database

www.indigo.ca

Outcomes
- Improved cybersecurity posture
- Increased agility in updating SAP systems
- System availability, significant reduction of service interruptions
- Flexible resource management in the public cloud

Migrating All the Company's SAP Systems to the Cloud: A Complex Project

Until recently, this growing company operated with a traditional on-premise infrastructure. The need to respond to business growth and develop more efficient data exploitation, as well as to ensure better resilience and increased system security presented a challenge.

Daniel Marcotte, Chief Technology & Information Officer (CTIO) and Chief Information Security Officer (CISO) and his team set themselves an ambitious but complex goal: to achieve a lift and shift by migrating Indigo's SAP applications from their data centres to the cloud.

At the time, Indigo was running a complex IT ecosystem of more than 200 interfaces, representing more than 60 TB of data production running on IBM Power on-premises. The various SAP applications are essential to the proper functioning of the distribution centres, linking important units like finances, merchandise, inventory control, sales, etc.

In addition to their complexity, the IT systems were outdated and a significant need for maintenance was in sight. Buying new hardware alone would require a major investment of $1M.

Indigo wanted to continue its activities as before, while benefiting from the various advantages that the cloud offered in terms of security, performance and reliability. For the IT team, migrating the applications to the cloud turned out to be a more significant challenge than anticipated.

Finding the Right System: A Tricky Question

The team was ready to take action, but several challenges were lying ahead. First, the team was confronted with Google's incompatibility with the existing IBM system in the company. This dead-end forced it to explore other alternatives and implementation strategies.

To be able to use the IBM cloud, the migration of the system to the United States seemed to be the only solution in sight. However, the imperative to protect confidential data raised major concerns and discussions.

That is when the IBM Power for Google Cloud (IP4G) solution entered the equation. As it was not familiar with the Google environment, the Indigo team was going to need some help to carry out their project successfully.

oXya, A Strategic Partner for Indigo

To perform its rehosting efficiently, Indigo decided to look for a trustworthy partner that would provide the necessary expertise in the Google environment and IP4G.

Indigo got in touch with oXya, recognized as a Premier Google Cloud Partner and SAP specialist, with the required expertise to complete the project successfully. oXya's excellent credentials, as well as its experience with similar contracts obtained in the past on the international scene won the trust of Indigo's leadership.

A Big Bang Project Completed Ahead of Schedule

The data migration to the cloud was going to require a proven methodology to execute a secure and effective transfer of a large quantity of data.

The possibility of carrying out a Big Bang implementation was raised and the teams moved ahead to ensure the implementation would occur in one-stop. The Go-live date was set for March 17, 2023.

From that moment on, things started to get rolling at oXya. An agile and solution-oriented project team was appointed to implement the project, named Project Aurora, and to carry out a tried-and-tested methodology to fluidify the SAP rehosting project.

The IP4G platform was selected to carry out the migration. It was the perfect solution for Indigo's goals, since it made it possible to perform a quick and simple lift-and-shift, which then offered to Indigo all the necessary agility to perform major upgrades.

The key steps were completed and the migration was carried out successfully in the test environment. Then came the quality assurance stage (QA). The migration recipe and the tests showed proper functioning, and by January the Aurora Project was at an advanced stage. At the beginning of February, Indigo and oXya got together and came to an agreement to move the Go-live 4 weeks ahead of schedule! During project cutover, the switchover was executed with minimum downtime to bring the SAP systems as quickly as possible to end users.

Partnership

oXya has built a strategic partnership with Converge Technology Solutions to offer its customers the "IBM Power for Google" (IP4G) offering, thus completing its service offering.

Google Cloud | CONVERGE TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS | IP4G
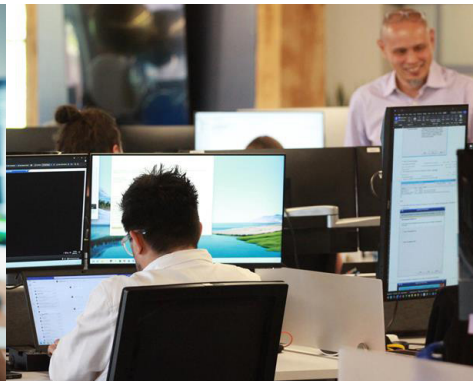
Significant Gains in Security, Agility and Performance

The latest generation of IBM Power CPUs on the IP4G platform, as well as an optimized architecture have enabled SAP applications to make performance gains, with processing speeds up to twice as fast. On the cloud, resources that were previously limited are now abundant and allow Indigo to continue its business growth smoothly. It is a solution based on the long term that will make it possible for the company to reduce the total cost of ownership and optimize in obvious ways its maintenance costs in operational conditions.

Thanks to Google Cloud's robust network, the largest database of the company, totalling 20 TB, can now be backed up in less than 5 hours on IP4G, while formerly it took 48 hours on-premises. This constitutes an undeniable gain in terms of security and information technologies, significantly reducing the risk of information loss.

Resilience is another substantial gain for Indigo, which now benefits from additional peace of mind with a backup site in a secondary region of Google Cloud. "Environment reliability, downtime reduction and performance gains are major assets," says Daniel Marcotte

Transparent Communication Between the Teams and Continued Support

oXya's role in this large-scale project was not limited to data migration. In addition to its technical expertise, oXya, being a good partner, has shown its capacity to bridge the gap between the teams in place. Important changes like a migration to the cloud inevitably lead to adjustments in the in-house team, and oXya was able to navigate skillfully throughout the ambitious Aurora project. According to Daniel Marcotte, oXya provided sustained support to the in-house team, which had the task of understanding the systems and ensuring their proper functioning.

Indigo expressed high level of satisfaction toward the quality of support provided by the oXya team, as well as the regular and transparent communication supplied throughout the project. The technical team was able to detect the flaws and weaknesses of the system and communicate them clearly. These fruitful interactions continued even after the start-up phase, and a real partnership was born between oXya and Indigo.

In short, oXya's expertise and the quality of its relations with Indigo have allowed them to continue their cooperation, which is now based on the oXya Managed Services over the entire SAP scope.

It offers Indigo with the peace of mind and level of expertise necessary to continue its digital transformation project.

Customer Testimonial

« Without hesitation, I recommend oXya's professional services for your future migration projects. The quality of communication and availability of the team made a real difference in the success of our project. »

Daniel Marcotte
CTIO, CISO, Indigo Books & Music Inc.

About oXya

oXya offers managed cloud services and technical consulting for SAP business critical applications. Our unique expertise and experience in supporting major SAP projects results in a more reliable and cost-effective information system (IS).