



Quest Aids SMU Migration to Office 365 Cloud

Every IT migration must be justified. For Marcus Walton, Director of IT Infrastructure at Samuel Merritt University (SMU), storage constraints and the need for a better collaborative environment stood out as the key drivers for a migration to Office 365.

A private, not-for-profit health sciences institution with campuses in Oakland, Sacramento, and San Mateo, California, SMU is what Marcus calls a hybrid facility.

“We have systems that we want to keep on-premises,” he explains. “But when it comes to certain applications — especially those with high storage demands or providing easier ways to communicate — the cloud is the way to go.”

Facing down migration challenges with Quest

Marcus understood that Office 365 would, he says, “make it easy to provide our 3,500 faculty, students, and staff with the mailbox, file storage, and collaboration they need, since Office 365 is a fully-integrated subscription-based solution.”

Of course, deciding to do a migration and actually getting it done with as little disruption to users as possible are two very different things.

Office 365 presented Marcus and his ten-person IT department with a number of challenges. The success of the project, he knew, depended on being prepared both technically and culturally.

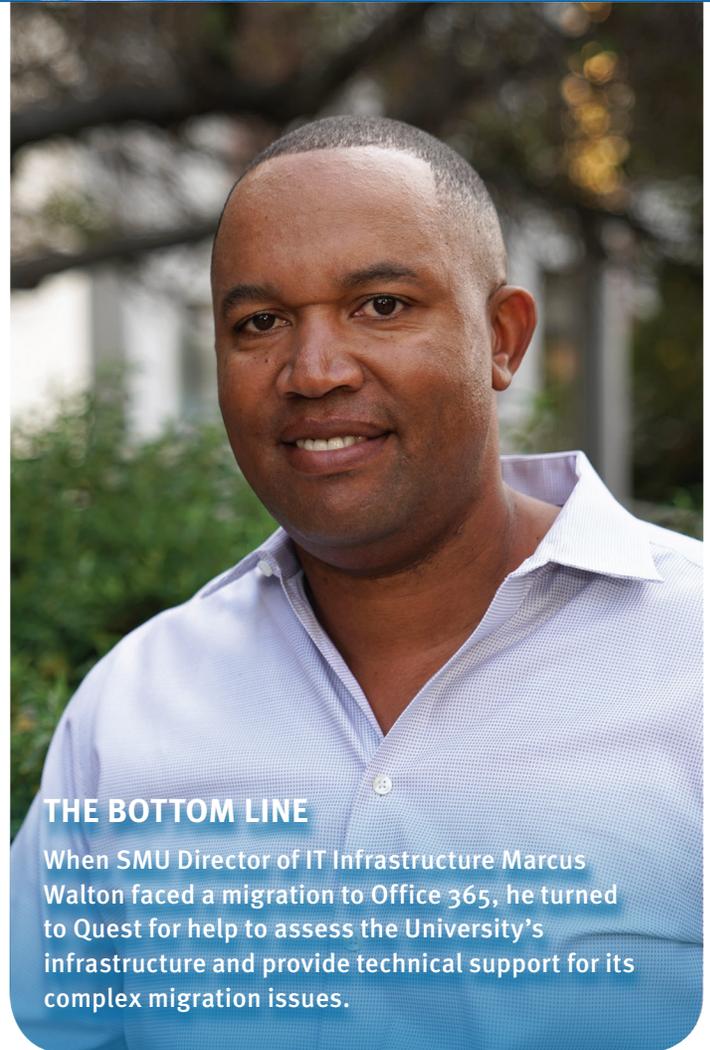
SMU began its Office 365 journey by bringing in Quest, its technology partner of 15 years, to perform a full infrastructure assessment.

Step one: is the infrastructure ready?

Although SMU stays on top of necessary enterprise upgrades, Marcus found Quest’s assessment process more than worth the effort.

“Using resources from Quest, we evaluated every aspect of our infrastructure that Office 365 would touch,” he says. “And we discovered areas we hadn’t considered that would have caused big headaches. But with resources from Quest we were able to correct, proactively plan, and execute with confidence.”

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THE BOTTOM LINE

When SMU Director of IT Infrastructure Marcus Walton faced a migration to Office 365, he turned to Quest for help to assess the University’s infrastructure and provide technical support for its complex migration issues.

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FROM TIM BURKE...

Keeping Your Infrastructure Real-World Competitive

No matter where you locate your IT infrastructure or who hosts and manages its increasingly hybrid elements (your staff and/or service providers), *you* remain responsible for its interoperability, performance, resilience, compliance, and a good deal else you tend not to think about much — until an IT infrastructure problem slams the business.

Consider Office 365. As a cloud-based service that provides subscribers anywhere/anytime access to a broad swath of office productivity, communications, and collaboration capabilities, it seems to cover all the bases. But it doesn't.

Office 365 will not, for instance, back up your Office 365 data. If you want to protect that data from accidental deletion, security threats, and gaps in your data retention policy, you'll need to bring in an additional service and integrate it with Office 365.

This same dynamic repeats many times over as you find yourself having to adapt your IT infrastructure to an ever-changing competitive environment that is, in turn, mightily influenced by quickly evolving technologies.

An overarching, forward-looking IT strategy can counter this dynamic — but such a time-consuming theoretical exercise tends to be underappreciated and can be overtaken by events in today's hybrid IT universe.

Instead, I suggest you forge a solid relationship with a trusted IT partner that has technological depth, business experience, commitment to clients — and the ability to conduct a real-world assessment of what your IT infrastructure requires to keep your business real-world competitive.



CHECK OUT MORE OF TIM'S THOUGHTS AT www.questsys.com/CEOBlog/

Quest aids SMU migration to Office 365 (continued from page 1)

Easing migration complexities

Quest also worked with SMU throughout the migration itself, providing support for complex initiatives like deploying Microsoft's Active Directory Federation Services.

"Quest helped us in so many ways, providing technical expertise as well as acting as an intermediary with Microsoft," says Marcus, who points out that SMU's Office 365 migration took its complete email infrastructure to the cloud, alleviating pain points in the on-premises infrastructure.

"We needed someone we could trust to let us know the full impact on the migration, different ways we could approach issues, and what we could do versus what we couldn't," he recalls. "Quest's people were excellent guides on our journey, from the technical crew to Account Manager Sam Samms."

“ Quest helped us in so many ways... I sincerely believe in the value of a partner like Quest. ”

Successful transition

With the technical aspects of the migration well in hand, Marcus and his team developed a rollout plan to introduce Office 365 to the SMU community, starting with a pilot group of power users, including the IT department.

"Each group we migrated provided us with feedback on pain points that we addressed before engaging the next group," he explains. "This put us in a better position to understand users' challenges and extend the appropriate support."

SMU's migration to Office 365 was an important milestone, Marcus notes, and its success depended on several factors.

"Of course, you must have a great IT team," he says, "and at SMU we're fortunate to have excellent people."

Advice from the migration trenches

Marcus advises sticking to your schedule. If groups postpone their rollouts, your ability to respond can be compromised. Also, make communication and training a priority. It's critical for users to feel comfortable with the new environment. And if you don't have a trusted technology partner, find one.

"I sincerely believe in the value of a partner like Quest," Marcus says. "We effortlessly migrated over 2,500 users to Office 365. We're saving money on physical hardware and resource management, and we've gained a robust and stable environment with a key resource in the cloud, which means a lot to our user community."

Quest's Office 365 Capabilities: Why Choosing Quest to Deploy Office 365 Pays Off

Since Microsoft sells Office 365 directly, why not directly buy a subscription to this cloud-powered portfolio of productivity tools?

Answer: Because the choices you make about setting up and managing your Office 365 subscription can determine:

- › The speed of your deployment;
- › How effectively your IT resources are used both up front and long term;
- › The efficacy of your data protection;
- › The cost of your license; and
- › The nature of your end-users' experiences.

Planning, designing, and deploying Office 365 in your enterprise without expert help can result in needless pain and suffering. Here's why:

Moving to Office 365 takes planning

Plenty of discovery and decision-making precedes an Office 365 deployment.

Quest professionals, who have much experience with Office 365,

can help you deal with such issues as user identity management and authentication and review various deployment options with you to help you avoid costly surprises.

Tailoring your Office 365 deployment takes expertise

How should you go about deploying Office 365 as part of a hybrid IT infrastructure? Do you want to move all of your end-user data into the Microsoft cloud, or should some remain on-premises? What's the best way to use your existing Microsoft licenses?

Quest brings the deep technical expertise you need in order to explore the implications of these sorts of questions, and we know how to help you hone in on the solutions that work best for your organization.

Supporting the Office 365 environment takes work

Quest offers Office 365 support that ranges from routine email and user

administration to issues around cloud integration to ensuring the security, backup, and recoverability of your Office 365-resident data.

Backing up and securing your Office 365 data takes a bit extra

Office 365 has several shortcomings, chiefly relating to backup and security.

Quest addresses these with its cost-effective service, Backup for Microsoft Office 365, which protects Office 365 data from accidental deletion, internal and external security threats, and retention policy gaps.

Backup for Microsoft Office 365 can quickly restore individual Office 365 items. And its eDiscovery-grade backup archiving of Office 365 files meets legal and compliance requirements.

Maximize the communication and collaboration capabilities of Office 365 by trusting Quest's planning, design, and deployment expertise.

DID YOU KNOW?

Hybrid IT Now Appearing on the Near Horizon

Multi-cloud environments are now in use at 84% of enterprises, while one in four have deployed some sort of hybrid environment and 63% have created a formal strategy to take them to a hybrid IT infrastructure.* Specifically:

- 16%** Focus primarily on a single cloud rather than multiple clouds
- 22%** Operate multiple different cloud environments with little/no interoperability
- 38%** Operate a hybrid multi-cloud environment that migrates workloads or data between clouds
- 24%** Operate a hybrid multi-cloud environment with seamless delivery across clouds

Among the many factors driving the move to hybrid IT infrastructures, the top four cited by enterprises undertaking the effort* are...

- 52%** Improving the deployment speed of applications and services
- 37%** Reducing IT costs through competitive cloud pricing applications
- 35%** Enhancing overall business agility
- 28%** Providing choice while keeping control and maintaining security

* http://info.us.ntt.com/451-Research-Hybrid-Cloud.html?LS=BL_CRC_451_Hybrid_Cloud_2Q18

What's New...

A Look at What Hybrid IT Architectures Are Good For

More and more organizations are stepping from multi-cloud implementations to truly hybrid IT architectures that enable workloads to run in concert as part of a seamless business function.

Multi-cloud vs. hybrid: it's about interoperability and automation

While *multi-cloud* environments deploy different workloads in a mix of public, private, and hybrid settings, individual cloud interoperability remains limited — so cloud workloads may be entirely isolated, not fully integrated, and/or have only informal or ad hoc interactions.

Hybrid IT architectures, by contrast, are designed to deliver high degrees of interoperation between clouds as well as on-premises environments. The result is an ability to combine functionality and integrate IT management, including automation and single-console service management.

Four leading hybrid use cases

Among the use cases to which a hybrid IT architecture is best suited are:

- **Controlling where important data is stored.** Because hybrid IT architectures power an ability to share apps, data, and workloads across cloud and on-premises environments, you can decide the best places (for, say, compliance purposes) to securely store your various streams of critical enterprise data.
- **Disaster recovery/business continuity.** In a hybrid IT architecture, your on-premises data center can fail over to a public cloud during a disruption — an affordable option that enables you to flexibly shift operations as-needed to a geographic location sufficiently distant from the disruption.
- **Archiving data.** Placing data-at-rest in a hybrid cloud for extended periods can be very affordable, which is why archiving data in a hybrid IT environment is frequently undertaken alongside implementing disaster recovery.
- **DevOps application development.** Although cloud environments are often used for application development because of the speed and flexibility the cloud provides, once the app is ready to deploy, it often gets moved back on-premises. But with a hybrid IT architecture, you can seamlessly deploy your apps directly from a cloud without sacrificing stability, easy management, security, and low production costs.



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