Shining a light on ERP:

How Lumenpulse remade its operations in Azure

lumenpulse™

Founded in 2006 and based in Quebec, Lumenpulse designs, develops and manufactures high–performance, specification–grade LED lighting solutions for use in a wide range of applications in the architectural, commercial and institutional markets. Lumenpulse's focus on optical performance and unique and sustainable industrial design has enabled it to continuously innovate its product line and stay ahead of competition.

As a result, each of its product families embodies a unique identity while delivering practical lighting for both interior and exterior environments.

The Client

Lumenpulse, which is part of the Lumenpulse Group, provides specification–grade LED lighting solutions for commercial, institutional an urban environments.

The Original Ask

Lumenpulse needed to move on from the legacy infrastructure supporting its ERP system, and do so without jeopardizing the business continuity of its 24/7/365 global business operations. The end-of-life of Windows Server 2008 and SQL Server 2008 and an aging Dynamic AX provided the impetus for making a public cloud upgrade.

The Softchoice Value

A certified Microsoft Managed Service Provider, Softchoice guided Lumenpulse's journey to Azure. Multiple Azure services were deployed, in tandem with the Softchoice Keystone Network Operations Center for around–the–clock support and management.

Softchoice

Illuminating the path to an IT upgrade

As Lumenpulse grew aggressively through the expansion of its product families increasing flexibility and configurability, they became concerned about their legacy ERP system, and in particular the ability to scale the underlying infrastructure and integrate the specific technologies necessary for digital transformation.

These concerns became urgent as two of the pillars of the company's ERP, Microsoft Windows Server 2008 and SQL Server 2008, approached end-of-life in January 2020. Another key system component, Dynamics AX 2009, was also already in extended support at the time, with less than two years of security hotfixes remaining.

Overall, Lumenpulse needed to transition to a more agile and futureproof solution, without causing any interruptions to ERP access for its manufacturing operations. Company leadership prioritized this high level of business continuity in any upgrade because of the global and 24/7 nature of Lumenpulse's business—everything flows through its ERP applications.

Turning on the lights in Microsoft Azure

Lumenpulse considered an upgrade to the public cloud, to replace its existing and less scalable Infrastructure-as-a-Service arrangement with a third-party vendor and managed service provider. Building on its existing relationship of trust, Lumenpulse chose Softchoice as its new technology partner for the project.

The Softchoice team began its work with a workload assessment of Lumenpulse's environment, including a manual mapping of its virtual machines, to understand the company's readiness for a public cloud migration. The final recommendation: A move into Microsoft Azure to provide superior support and scalability for Lumenpulse's ongoing growth.

This proposed transition to Azure would enable Lumenpulse to take advantage of an additional two years of free Extended Security Updates from Microsoft, giving it more time to formulate its long-term technology strategy. Meanwhile, the deployment of multiple Azure services would help it modernize its ERP and business operations.

After Lumenpulse agreed to the Azure upgrade, Softchoice assisted in the implementation of a wide range of Azure offerings, including but not limited to:

✓ Azure Site Recovery—both VMware-to-cloud and region-to-region—for business continuity.

✓ Azure Migrate for centralized management of on-prem to cloud migrations.

✓ Azure ExpressRoute for secure private connections between Lumenpulse's networks and the cloud.

✓ Azure Security Center for comprehensive cloud management and threat protection.

✓ Azure SQL Database (PaaS) for a fully managed database engine with patching, monitoring and other services included.

The full migration of the Lumenpulse production environment took 10 months, resulting in it being hosted in Azure under the provisions of the Softchoice Cloud Service Provider (CSP) Program. The 10-month professional services engagement finished on time and was supplemented by a five-year contract with Softchoice for Keystone end-user support, along with managed cloud and infrastructure monitoring and management.

Indeed, the Keystone Network Operations Center from Softchoice was key to the project's success. Through Keystone, Lumenpulse had 24/7/365 access to technical engineers via phone, an essential point of contact in light of the global, around-the-clock nature of the company's business. The flexible monthly billing of the Softchoice CSP Program helped keep the Azure deployments on track and economically feasible, while an Azure Reserved Virtual Machine Instance yielded additional savings.

A brighter future in the cloud

By upgrading to Azure, Lumenpulse got the scalable modern infrastructure it needed to support its growth. More specifically, it saw clear-cut gains in performance, cost and competitive advantage across its IT environment.

Performance

The finance and operations teams at Lumenpulse benefited from the ERP system being run via Azure instead of rooted in legacy tech. Particular tasks such as daily lookups of inventory by floor personnel, order processing and fulfillment and end-of-month reporting are now much faster and easier, with everything at each user's fingertips.

Cost

Lumenpulse reduced its number of file servers from six to only one and is now using the Azure File Sync service to tier usage and storage of files and economically manage seldom-used data. This rightsizing, coupled with Azure File Sync, significantly reduced Lumenpulse's monthly costs. Azure File Sync is much simpler to maintain and scale than the managed disk setup Lumenpulse previously had in place. Additionally, the Azure Reserved Virtual Machine Instance lowered Lumenpulse's monthly consumption costs by 33%.

Competitive Advantage

Leveraging the Azure environment allows Lumenpulse to focus on developing programs and initiatives that will help it become best in class.

"We've built a foundation for technological transformation at Lumenpulse. We're anticipating many gains in productivity, efficiency and scalability."

— **Alexandre Azevedo |** IT Director, Lumenpulse

Support from the Softchoice team has been invaluable, especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Lumenpulse's small IT team relies significantly on Softchoice making it an important, go-to resource for assistance with getting 24/7/365 technical support and ensuring overall business continuity.