



Putting Users First

Top Accounting Firm Ensures a Smooth Windows 10 Migration to Protect the User Experience

A major accounting firm needed help with migrating all of its employees to Windows 10 before its existing Windows 7 technical support expires in 2020. With 10,000 devices to update, the company needed an experienced partner that could mitigate its risk and ensure a successful migration. The company chose Capgemini and Sogeti for project management, image development, software testing and hardware refresh.

Enabling a smooth path to Windows 10

In January 2020, Microsoft will end its extended support for Microsoft Windows 7. That means the operating system will no longer receive security updates, and may over time become less stable and more vulnerable to attack. Many organizations have thousands of devices that use the operating system, which must now be migrated successfully to Microsoft Windows 10.

One such organization is a global accounting firm, offering tax, audit and consulting services. With 7,000 employees worldwide who depend on more than 300 different

applications to carry out their work, there were over 10,000 US devices using the end-of-life operating system.

With the sheer complexity of upgrading and testing so many devices and applications, the Windows 10 migration presented a substantial change management project. The company realized it was too large to manage themselves, especially given that their users would expect them to respond quickly to any issues.

The accounting business needed partners with experience in Windows 10 deployments who could help to ensure the upgrade went smoothly.

Building the base image

Enter Capgemini, and its wholly owned subsidiary Sogeti. The companies have extensive experience in digital transformation, including global Windows 10 migrations.

At the outset, four professional personas were identified, each of which matched a different part of the accounting business - tax, audit, consulting, and business technology.

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A Windows 10 build was created for each of the personas, including the specific applications needed for each profile. Someone working in the tax advisory service, for example, would get access to the specialist software required for that role, but other business units would not receive those applications.

Sogeti built the Windows 10 base image and helped establish a process that delivered the new operating system, and then delivered the mapped business applications using an automated task sequence. Sogeti was responsible for ensuring that each task deployed the correct group permissions, applications, and data scripts for a successful migration. The task sequence was designed so it could be configured and deployed as required by the business units.

Testing times

One of the priorities throughout the migration was to ensure that the user experience was positive and that there was no disruption caused by incompatible applications or other issues.

The accounting firm used its own plan for testing more than 300 applications for compatibility on Windows 10. This highlighted several issues that often required an upgrade to a newer version of the software, or code changes to the firm's bespoke applications. Sogeti was able to work with the accounting firm's software developers to fix these issues as the Windows 10 base image was developed. The testing and mitigation work continued throughout the development phase. The business owners of the applications tested them to confirm that their business requirements were being met.

The Application Team, responsible for supporting the application after deployment, seamlessly carried out testing as concurrent users used the application. This round of testing ensured that the application would be stable during use.

How Capgemini/ Sogeti helped

- Built the Windows 10 base image
- Worked closely with early adopters to refine the Windows 10 image and resolve issues
- Worked with the accounting firm to identify and test applications for compatibility with Windows 10
- Worked with the accounting firm's software developers to update the firm's bespoke applications
- Helped establish a process to deliver the new operating system to existing systems
- Helped identify potential issues during the pilot phase, and offered guidance to fix them
- Created an automated task sequence to deliver business applications
- Created a process to automate image and application delivery to new systems





A strong focus was also placed on the kind of details that users care about: Do I have the correct versions of my applications? Does my printer still work? Can I run my macros in Excel? The aim was to ensure that users could do everything on Windows 10 that they were already doing on Windows 7.

Launching the pilot program

One of the challenges with a Windows 10 migration is that applications might appear to work during the compatibility test, but other issues may arise when people actually start to use them for their day-to-day work. Before the full scale deployment, a pilot project was used to gather feedback on any shortcomings. Sogeti helped identify potential issues and provided guidance on how these could be corrected before a full-scale deployment.

Roughly 30 business users took part in the pilot, drawn from the business side of the IT organization. They received early access to Windows 10 builds and worked with the firm's IT team and Sogeti's build team to identify and resolve issues.

This phase of the project identified many more applications requiring remediation, and the teams were able to quickly respond to feedback and incorporate learnings into the ongoing development of the Windows 10 build.

Once the initial pilot phase was complete, the refined Windows 10 image was delivered to 200 business users outside the IT group for certification testing. The second phase participants represented a sample cross-section of the larger organization, enabling the organization to achieve greater confidence in its Windows 10 build prior to a full roll-out.

Throughout the pilot and the migration, users were given extensive support. The support team in Romania established a new helpline number so that users could quickly get help with issues related to the migration. Field support teams were also set up at campus locations, and many of the early adopters worked closely with the Sogeti and in-house IT teams.

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Sogeti identified and helped mitigate project issues that included ensuring that existing computers must be able to run Windows 10 with an acceptable user experience, as well as must be capable of seamlessly handling the in-place migration. In-place migration required the user data to be kept in a protected manner and for Windows 10 to be copied to the disk prior to actual installation. Pilot phase demonstrated that when there wasn't enough storage space, the installation stopped and required manual intervention. For future migrations, the company will replace older computers with new machines with a higher storage capacity to mitigate the problem.

Keeping Windows 10 updated

To keep the software as secure and stable as possible, it's important to update it regularly. Microsoft has a twice-yearly feature release cycle for Windows 10 and Office 365. The IT team's target is to update once per year, so that the company is always one release behind the latest. This release cycle minimizes the risk of introducing changes that later need to be retracted and also ensures that the company doesn't fall out of Microsoft's 18 month window to continue receiving support. In the new environment, after a feature update is released, the accounting firm's IT team downloads it and tests it. The update is then deployed using Microsoft System Center Configuration Manager (SCCM). Security and quality updates flow through SCCM to the users as they are released.

The company continues to deploy Windows 10 and has started a new plan for updating hardware. Working on a three-year refresh cycle, they chose new devices from Lenovo with the Intel® vPro™ platform to increase the manageability and security inside all new systems. Each new PC will ship directly to the user with the latest version of Windows 10 and the Sogeti-created image installed.

Working with Capgemini and Sogeti, this organization was able to get past issues blocking their Windows 10 migration and create an efficient update plan to keep their devices current.

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