



Moving Apps to the Cloud: 5 Steps to Success

For business-critical application migration, prepare up-front and keep the control you need throughout the process.

Business applications are headed to the cloud in record numbers, bringing users and IT teams into a new model of accessing services and resources. It's a big switch from traditional apps, both for users and for their IT support teams. SaaS buying is growing quickly. SaaS product spending is expected to reach \$50 billion by 2024.

And even very large enterprises are moving core applications to the cloud, adopting G Suite and Office 365, along with ERP, finance, help desk and HR applications. These projects can involve thousands of users, hundreds of locations and lots of complexity and unknowns.

But with the right tools in place, moving an app—even a high-stakes business-critical app—to the cloud doesn't have to be a shot in the dark. Here, find the five steps you need to prep for and move apps to the cloud—ideally using your performance monitoring tool.

1. See What's Already In Use

Before you move another big, important application to the cloud, see which applications are already in use by your organization, in all locations. Shadow IT app use can make this task difficult, but performance monitoring tools can help. You'll want as much information as you can get on applications being used currently. Understanding your current applications and their use is the baseline that's needed to gauge SaaS and cloud adoption. Try to get information on how much capacity is being used by each app, whether there are spikes in usage, whether streaming video apps are taking resources from more important ones, and whether there are unused or duplicate applications in use.

From there, classify your apps into categories based on business necessity—from very necessary to not at all. Once you can see which apps are in use, by who and why, you'll have a better sense of how to manage bandwidth accordingly. It may make sense to change user behavior and usage policies for recreational SaaS apps or even block some to free up bandwidth for business-critical apps.

2. Find Out How Apps Are Performing Now

Before migrating a business-critical application to the cloud, figure out how its current counterpart and other important applications are performing. This part is crucial: Introducing an app to an already congested network could lead to an unsuccessful migration. It's possible to do every tactical infrastructure step successfully and by the book—properly preparing for directory synchronization, provisioning users, creating a hybrid environment as needed for your business, and so on—and still have the migration fail. You might launch successfully on day one, but by day two have your team overwhelmed with usability and performance issues.

To avoid that, plan for performance as much as you do for your tactical launch. If your apps are classified by business importance, then you can use performance monitoring to get metrics like traffic volume, latency and data loss for each app. If any app has a crippling performance issue, you'll know before the new app deployment wreaks havoc on your network.

3. Get a Handle on the Network

Before migrating any business-critical app to the cloud, make sure you're getting what you pay for from your network and Internet service providers. Take a look at other SaaS applications as well to ensure there's enough bandwidth for all of them. If you're aware of every important SaaS app throughout the organization, that will help you classify them and bring good end-user experience for critical applications like Office 365, Salesforce and others.

Consider how you measure the network now, and how that might change once you're managing network connections to SaaS providers. The network will be more important than ever once applications are off-premises, since it can affect performance and end-user experience a lot. Networking is complex in a cloud world: IT needs to manage all networks, whether the WAN, the public internet or WiFi.

4. Remember the Users

There's no point in deploying a SaaS app if users aren't using it, and part of IT's job is paying attention to adoption rates. Once deployment is complete, start investigating how many users are using the new SaaS service, how much capacity they're using and which departments have adopted the service. If one team is sticking with their on-premises software but another is enthusiastically on board with SaaS, encourage collaboration and sharing of best practices.

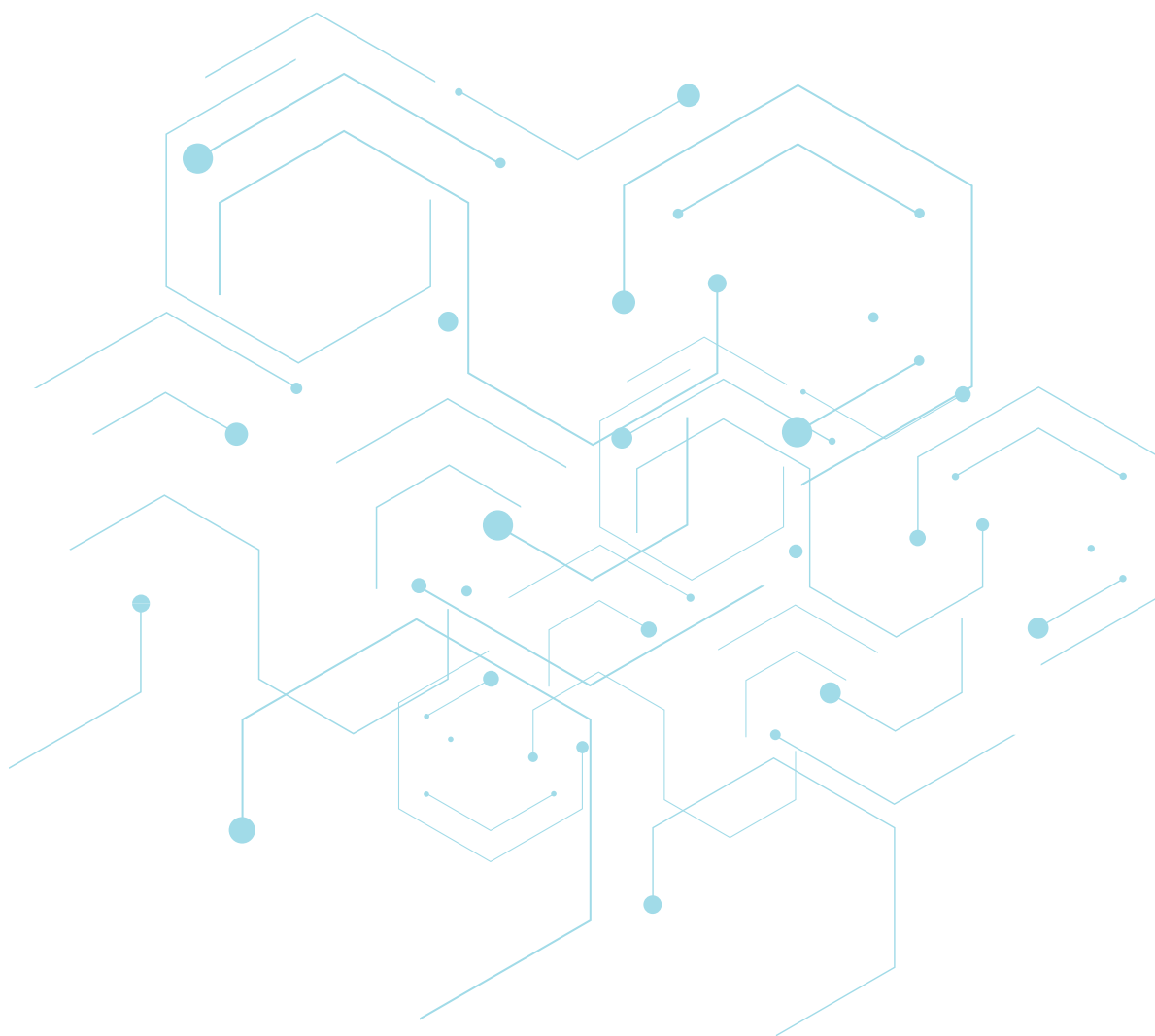
User experience has risen to the top of the heap in the world of measuring and quantifying app usage. Modern performance monitoring tools can allow IT to see what kind of experience every user is having, wherever they are. Metrics like latency and data loss can give an important view of where issues may exist. APM can help pinpoint user experience issues, reduce troubleshooting time and prevent finger-pointing between departments, as well as between your IT team and the app vendor.



5. An IT Team's Work is Never Done

That business-critical cloud app, while it's served up and managed in a different way than before, is still part of IT's domain. Prevent service tickets, or worse yet, the silent complaints and whispers of your workforce that never make it into your service queue, with performance monitoring. Stay proactive by continuously monitoring applications in the background, and set up alerts for metrics like jitter, QoS, available bandwidth or packet loss so you can stay ahead of problems. You can also set up synthetic web tests for your critical SaaS apps, and set up alerts on Apdex score or whatever metrics you choose to make sure users are happy. IT teams will also need to stay on top of ISP performance to avoid or solve any issues, and manage SaaS and cloud provider relationships to make sure SLA targets are met.

It's possible today to see from the end user, through the network, into the application—even cloud applications, even in remote locations—with the right monitoring tool. Complete visibility will let you keep the control you need and make those SaaS investments worth the time and resources you put into them.



ABOUT APPNETA

AppNeta is the only network performance monitoring solution that delivers deep, actionable, end-to-end network performance data from the end-user perspective. With AppNeta's SaaS-based solution, IT and Network Ops teams at large, distributed enterprises can quickly pinpoint issues that affect network and business-critical cloud application performance, regardless of where they occur. AppNeta is trusted by some of the biggest Fortune 1000 companies, including 3 out of the 5 largest corporations in the world, as well as 4 out of the 5 largest cloud providers. For more information, [visit www.appneta.com](http://www.appneta.com).

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