



Case Study - Rivus

Rivus takes control and drives growth with a timely IBM Power migration to Azure

Snapshot

Industry: Automotive

Business: Commercial vehicle fleet management

Focus: IBM Power to Azure, cloud migration

Challenges:

- Support integration between Rivus and a new acquisition
- Migrate applications from on-premises infrastructure to the cloud
- Reduce risk by completing the project within a fixed deadline
- Maintain nonstop access to applications for operations teams

Overview

A major acquisition offered Rivus the chance to transform its market coverage and service capabilities—but the clock was ticking to extract the acquired company's IT systems from its previous owner's data centre. Meridian IT helped Rivus migrate IBM Power to the Microsoft Azure cloud, on time and with minimal disruption—while accelerating system performance and boosting user productivity by 25%.



Business Challenge

Rivus manages and maintains some of the UK's most critical fleets from a range of sectors such as utilities, infrastructure, emergency services, and retail. Already well established in light commercial vehicle (LCV) management, the company has recently expanded into the heavy goods vehicle (HGV) space through the acquisition of Pullman Fleet Solutions, the UK's largest independent provider of HGV servicing and repairs.

As part of the merger, Rivus was tasked with moving Pullman's IT systems out of the data centre of the company's previous owner, and into a new environment within a 13-month window. The Pullman applications, which included a bespoke ERP solution called "Carfacts" along with legacy HR and finance systems, ran on the IBM AIX operating system on IBM Power Systems hardware.

Jason Evans, Chief Information Officer at Rivus, explains the challenges: **"There was limited information available on the current infrastructure, and internally we had little knowledge of IBM AIX or Power Systems. We needed to maintain access to the ERP system at all times to keep our operations running efficiently, and we knew that if we missed the deadline for moving out of the previous owner's data centre, the costs would be significant."**

Rivus considered developing a new ERP system or moving to a different pre-built platform. However, the company recognised that these strategies would send costs soaring and take far too long to execute. Rivus therefore decided to lift and shift the existing applications into a Microsoft Azure cloud environment and looked for an expert partner to manage the project and minimise risk during the migration.

Solution

Based on a recommendation from its parent company Aurelius Equity Opportunities, Rivus engaged Meridian IT to lead the cloud migration. Meridian IT showed how the company could use Skytap on Azure to reduce the complexity and time needed to move the current IBM Power applications from the on-premises servers to a fully supported Microsoft Azure environment.

"When we consulted Meridian IT, we quickly realised that they had the expertise to handle the migration," continues Jason Evans.

"Completing a project of this scale and complexity ahead of schedule and in the midst of the pandemic was a huge achievement, and Meridian IT and Skytap on Azure were key to our success"

Jason Evans, Chief Information Officer,
Rivus

"Meridian IT offered a proven, ready-made, and scalable solution that would help us to hit our deadline—and at an excellent price-point."

The pandemic added extra pressure. Many Rivus clients, such as major supermarket chains, were classified as critical infrastructure, because they were responsible for distributing essential supplies. Preventing downtime during the migration was now vital to help Rivus maintenance teams keep client LCVs and HGVs on the road at all times. Initially, Rivus worked with Meridian IT to complete a discovery phase, documenting the intricacies of the current infrastructure, and identifying areas where changes would be required. For example, Meridian IT helped Rivus map out and implement the complex interfaces that would connect Carfacts to the company's finance and HR systems.

To reduce risk, Rivus and Meridian IT migrated peripheral and support services in several separate waves, each with its own pre-testing and user acceptance testing steps. However, as the company's garages needed non-stop access to Carfacts, only a big bang approach would do for the core system.

To ensure this major cutover went smoothly, Rivus and Meridian IT decided to deploy all the Carfacts services in an Azure environment one week ahead of the go-live. This allowed them to run comprehensive tests before completing the data cutover and releasing the system to users.

"Meridian IT provided a very safe, robust migration process, including tools to ensure secure data transfer and extensive testing of interfaces and capabilities," adds Jason Evans. **"From planning to execution, Meridian IT displayed exceptional expertise in IBM AIX and Power infrastructure."**

Customer Benefits

Using Skytap on Azure, Rivus and Meridian IT successfully migrated the Pullman applications out of the former owner's data centre and into the cloud in just 12 months—one month ahead of schedule and without disruption to users. For Rivus, the project represents a crucial step in its transformation into an integrated business with comprehensive expertise in both LCV and HGV fleet management.

Following the go-live, Meridian proactively monitored the IBM Power Skytap on Azure environment, adding processing and storage capacity to support initial demand peaks, and then scaling back resources to prevent over-provisioning and reduce costs once the system achieved a steady state.

Jason Evans continues: **"Skytap on Azure proved an excellent solution for running the IBM Power migration and ongoing infrastructure management. The Skytap service gives us real**

flexibility for matching cloud server capacity to our workloads, helping us to operate as cost-efficiently as possible."

The move of IBM Power to Skytap on Azure has also increased infrastructure performance. Stability has improved and applications are much faster and more responsive, enabling garage teams to access contracts and other documents quicker and provide better customer service. Senior Operations Managers at Rivus estimate that productivity has risen by 25 percent as a result.

"Completing a project of this scale and complexity ahead of schedule and in the midst of the pandemic was a huge achievement," concludes Jason Evans. **"Meridian IT and Skytap on Azure were key to our success. Working with Meridian IT has helped us to build a stronger market presence and to develop more agile and efficient fleet management services."**

About Meridian IT Limited

Meridian is a proven leader in the UK's enterprise technology sector, with over 40 years' experience of helping clients build powerful, reliable IT solutions that create real value. Today, Meridian is one of very few technology partners with the skills to provide true end-to-end solutions across a full spectrum of domains, including Infrastructure, Cloud, Security, Software and Artificial Intelligence. Meridian delivers projects in the UK and worldwide as a member of Meridian Group International, a network of skilled resources that combines global reach with local expertise.



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