



Expand the future of your IBM Power Applications with Skytap on Azure

**Cloud Powered Digital Transformation
for Financial Services Organizations**

The cloud imperative for the financial services industry

In today's ever-evolving business climate, accelerating cloud adoption is at the forefront for decision makers, no matter the role, including business unit leaders and those involved with IT strategies. And yet for the financial services industry, the cloud transformation imperative has been further accelerated by unprecedented marketplace disruption, new market entrants and rising customer expectations for best-in-class digital experiences that demand agility, scalability and security.

Whether your financial services organization is at the beginning of its cloud journey or somewhere along the way, there are benefits to be gained at each stage and the work you are doing paves the way for modernization and rapid innovation that will continue to pay dividends for years and years to come.

Financial services organizations thrive on new advances and innovative moments to deliver value to their customers. These growth engines culminate with the people in an organization and their internal tools, data, and processes. At the core of organizational connective tissue is customized and mission-critical applications powered by IBM Power Systems, the organization's heartbeat for all lines of business.

Financial services organizations rely on mid-range servers like the IBM i (formerly AS/400) series, which have a well-deserved reputation for delivering both high performance and excellent reliability. Many have built highly customized business-critical applications on these platforms. In fact, the most recent edition of an annual survey from Help Systems found that 67% of organizations rely on home-grown applications on their IBM i servers. In addition, many organizations also depend on data center-hosted applications from the likes of SAP and Oracle.



Yet even amid a widespread trend of organizations shifting to a cloud-first strategy, many financial services organizations have yet to migrate business-critical IBM i applications to the cloud, fearing the potential disruption to their business and the cost of refactoring or rearchitecting these applications to be cloud native. As a result, these applications are often viewed as “cloud stubborn.” However, in order to enjoy all the benefits that the cloud can offer, the challenge facing many financial services organizations is how to transition investments in IBM Power-based workloads to the cloud without costly or lengthy refactoring efforts.

Skytap on Azure helps business and technical leaders do just that with a solution to quickly bring IBM Power and x86 workloads to the cloud. It's a fast and flexible alternative, aligning to digital transformation and cloud adoption initiatives, enabling business operations to experience new growth while eliminating the need for infrastructure procurement and data center management.

Expanding your cloud transformation

As financial services organizations continue to adapt, flexibility is a driving force for technology stack decisions and the implementation and pivoting of business strategies based on market changes. With Skytap on Azure, your organization's leaders and business users alike can be assured of flexibility and continue to realize your investments in IBM Power-based applications with the ability to run traditional IBM Power, IBM i (AS/400), AIX, or x86 workloads natively in Azure without costly and timely refactoring, replatforming or rearchitecting. Business units across an organization can quickly, and with minimal effort, realize the benefits of a cloud transformation for mission-critical applications with Skytap on Azure.

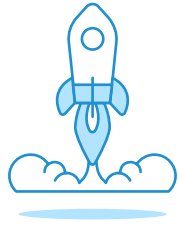
Moving traditional on-premises workloads to the cloud can involve complexity and risk. With Skytap on Azure, the migration efforts are simplified, saving valuable time and staff resources: there's no need to refactor or re-architect existing workloads and applications. Complete environments, including virtual machines (VMs)/logical partitions (LPARs), network configurations, and, most importantly, business applications, can transition in as fast as an hour, depending on the workload size. This transformation is achieved securely with ExpressRoute connectivity, the conduit from an organization's on-premises networks to Azure cloud infrastructure.

Looking at organizational finances, a cloud transformation can offer a reduction in CAPEX hardware expenses and support contracts to keep existing on-premises infrastructure moving forward with technology advances. Skytap on Azure runs within an Azure region, deployed within a low latency-defined perimeter, and connected through a dedicated regional low-latency network with hardware provisioned to Skytap's specifications, including IBM Power 9 hardware, offering best-in-class performance.



Migration efforts are
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resources





Why make the transition?

Fast and low risk

Business operations rely on continual uptime and flexibility to grow and adapt to the way people work and access the data they need to be successful. Transitioning an IBM Power platform from on-premises to the cloud, organizations are equipped to innovate at the pace needed. With 99.95 percent availability SLA, organizations can have confidence that workloads and applications will be up and running. And with Azure's backup and disaster recovery capabilities, mission-critical applications quickly adapt to a service disruption.

Suppose the business requires a new environment for testing or a training department. Skytap on Azure cloud connectivity allows the organization to accelerate provisioning times and increase infrastructure utilization by managing templates of complete application environments. This streamlined approach enables IT teams to configure a Skytap environment on Azure, with the options to self-service and get up and running faster. Because Skytap on Azure is consumption-based, organizations pay only for the compute and storage they use.





Migrating to Azure is just the beginning

With Skytap on Azure, financial services organizations can tap into the power of Azure-native services to expand the value of existing applications. Moving IBM Power platforms to Azure opens a new world of growth opportunities—microservices, analytical services, robust automation, and more. Business users of applications and the teams responsible for building and maintaining those applications can make high-impact modifications with advanced analytics and machine learning services. Teams can embrace modern and agile application development methods throughout the entire development lifecycle. Financial services organizations will even be able to establish automated continuous integration and continuous delivery (CI/CD) pipelines to deliver new features faster.

One of the biggest impacts of this can be seen in how Skytap on Azure can support your organization's data modernization strategy. Today, as much as 80% of a company's data resides in legacy systems. When you migrate your on-premises IBM Power workloads to Skytap on Azure, you de-silo this data. Then, you can connect your data to Azure native analytics services to support advanced data analytics, data visualization and reporting, AI and machine learning and more.

Financial services success story

Multinational insurance and wealth management company migrates IBM Power production workloads to Azure

Challenge

Facing a data center exit as part of its broader digital transformation, a multinational health and life insurance and wealth management company looked to migrate its business-critical AIX and IBM i production workloads to Azure. The company wanted to move these workloads to the cloud because leaving them on-prem and not including them in its broader cloud transformation efforts meant the company would not be able to fully realize the cost and agility benefits of its cloud migration.

Because the IBM i and AIX workloads host the company's core insurance policy management systems, the company needed to find a low-risk, proven path to Azure and looked to do so with little to no business disruption. Microsoft recommended the company use Skytap on Azure to run its IBM Power workloads in Azure given the solution was purpose-built to run IBM Power in the cloud. Doing so would provide a proven, simple path to Azure for the company's IBM Power production workloads without incurring the cost to re-write, refactor or re-platform the applications.

Solution

The company selected Skytap on Azure to migrate its business-critical insurance policy management applications running on IBM Power to Azure. Doing so would accelerate its migration path for these core applications with minimal change and risk while allowing it to benefit from the global availability and scalability of Azure.

Working closely with Skytap Cloud Solutions Architects and Azure Product Engineering, the company created and implemented a proof-of-concept (POC) to validate the Skytap on Azure solution. Following a successful POC, the company formalized plans to complete the broader migration.



Outcomes

The multinational insurance and wealth management company successfully migrated its IBM i and AIX production workloads to Azure.

The company was able to eliminate data center costs while gaining cloud scalability and agility. The move also affords the company the opportunity to extend the value and application of its existing IBM Power investments.

Skytap credits the successful implementation to the close collaboration with the company, Microsoft and Skytap. Further, testing throughout the implementation ensured a smooth transition.

Run with confidence

The recipe for a cloud transformation initiative is a mixture of organizational readiness and the right technology, along with an experienced and trusted partner. Skytap on Azure checks the boxes both for technology requirements and deep experience with the IBM Power platform, with a broad range of deployments supporting migration of thousands of LPARs to the cloud.

As the only service provider on Azure with support for AIX, IBM i, Linux on Power, and x86s VMs, organizations can have confidence to advance their cloud journey with Skytap on Azure.

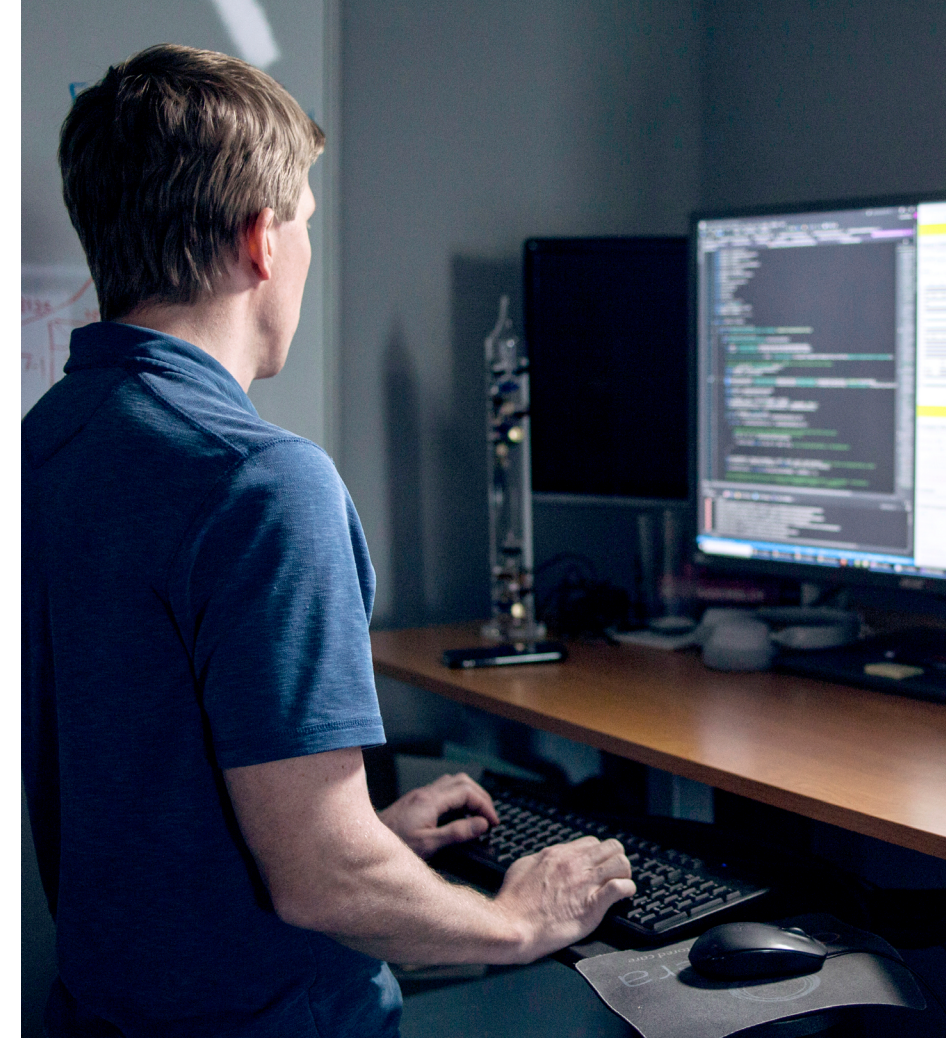
Top use cases:

Skytap on Azure for Production Workloads:

Run production AIX, IBM i (AS/400), Linux and Windows with 99.95% availability and secure connectivity to on-premise apps.

Skytap on Azure for Disaster Recovery:

Run cold, warm or hot disaster recovery environments to ensure business continuity.



100s

OF CUSTOMERS

already use Skytap for IBM
Power and x86 workloads

99_{MILLION}

VMS/LPARS
DEPLOYED

4.1

EXABYTES
OF STORAGE

About Skytap

Skytap is a cloud service purpose-built to run specialized workloads in Microsoft Azure and IBM Cloud. As the best cloud service to support AIX, IBM i, and Linux on IBM Power together with x86, Skytap makes it easy to evolve traditional workloads by rapidly migrating them to the cloud. Enterprises around the world use Skytap for production workloads, disaster recovery, virtual training labs, and application development. Skytap's cloud environment simplifies management, reduces IT costs, speeds up application development, and allows organizations of all sizes to modernize at the pace of their business. Skytap is a Kyndryl company. To learn more or schedule a demo, visit www.skytap.com

Learn more

Take a tour of Skytap on Azure at:

<https://www.skytap.com/contact-us/>



Get hands-on today

Sign up in [Azure Marketplace](#) and spin up your first Power LPAR in under five minutes.