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Case Study

Major Utility Company

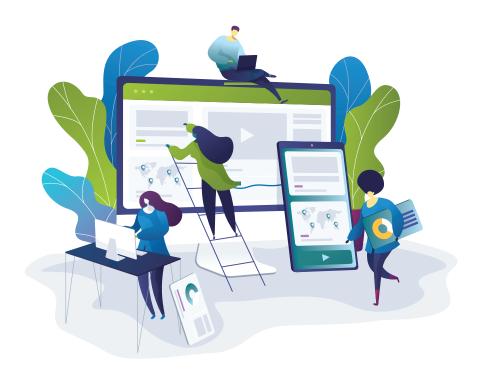## Moves Residential Customer Website to Azure Cloud

The client in this case study is one of the largest utility companies in Canada, transmitting and distributing electricity to more than 1 million residents. Datavail helped the client redesign and modernize its outdated front-facing customer website and host it in the Microsoft Azure cloud.

The Challenge

Before working with Datavail, the client was experiencing the following pain points with its customer website:

- New regulations required utility companies to bill customers monthly instead of every two months. However, only 8% of the client's customers paid their electricity bill online, dramatically below the industry average. This change would therefore nearly double the client's mailing expenses.

- The client's website had many usability issues, including mobile responsiveness and accessibility for customers with disabilities. By modernizing the website, the client hoped to improve their position in the J.D. Power rankings for utility companies.

- Due to the website's outdated technology, scalability and availability were essential concerns — especially during times of peak user activity such as storms and large-scale power outages.

The Solution

Our previous experience with companies in the utilities industry, as well as our long-standing relationship with the client, made Datavail the natural choice for this project. Datavail was able to maintain the same team members on the client's project from start to finish, dramatically increasing efficiency.

One of the biggest questions for the client throughout the project was whether to go with a solution hosted on-premises or in the cloud. There were two primary concerns around data management and security for them: (1) Meeting requirements set forth by industry regulators Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) and North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC), and (2) Data Sovereignty standards in Privacy regulations.

To address the above concerns, the client's core customer data needs to be stored on-premises, not in the cloud. The client had also historically taken a conservative stance when it came to the cloud — the project with Datavail would be the very first cloud application permitted for the organization.

Datavail provided a complete "application as a service" experience for the client's website, including a totally redesigned, interactive user interface and user experience. The new website was designed, built, and tested in the cloud using .NET and Angular, with SharePoint as the content management system.

The solution makes use of both Azure's IaaS (infrastructure as a service) and PaaS (platform as a service) capabilities. The technologies used throughout the project include:

- Azure Cache for Redis, a secure, in-memory data store and cache that enables high performance, availability, and scalability.
- Azure Virtual Machines
- Azure Virtual Networking
- Azure VPN Gateway
- Azure Storage
- Azure Key Vault
- Azure Load Balancers

The Results

Thanks to this project, the client has seen benefits such as:

- Rates for e-billing and self-service have risen from 8% to 44%, significantly above the industry average.
- The client's website is now securely within the top quartile of rankings for factors such as mobile web experience.
- Through Azure's on-demand cloud services, the client's services can scale up and down on demand based on forecast increases or decreases of use.

Datavail continues to offer support, maintenance, and management for the client's IT infrastructure, including multiple potential future initiatives.

Need assistance with your own cloud migration? As a Microsoft Gold Partner, Datavail has helped hundreds of clients migrate to the Microsoft Azure cloud. Our Azure cloud migration projects include:

- Performing a cloud readiness assessment and a total cost of ownership (TCO) analysis.
- Creating a cloud migration roadmap and strategy.
- Application development and migration, including architectural concerns, design, and software upgrades.
- Database migration and refactoring for minimal downtime.
- Cloud data analytics, including ETL, data warehouses, reporting, and dashboards.

To find out how Datavail can help with your next cloud migration project, get in touch with our skilled team of experts today for a chat about your business needs and objectives.

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