Cloud Services and Your Legacy Software Applications

Application software does not last forever. At some point, some combination of challenges and opportunities make it clear that it’s time to retire, replace or retrofit.

In this article of a continuing series, we’ll make the case for considering integrating cloud services with your existing business software.

Cloud Services – Mature and Complete

Cloud-based servers and services have come a very long way in a short amount of time. Here in 2017 you have an almost overwhelming number of choices, from very low-level services like file storage and identify management, to complex servers for data and applications, all the way to full virtual machines that exactly mimic the physical servers you presently may have.

You can now make incremental changes to your existing line of business applications and gain the benefits of cloud-based computing without the risks and costs of starting completely from scratch. See the first topic in this series for a complete discussion about risks and costs.

Evaluating the Cloud

When evaluating a customer’s legacy application for cloud services potential, we make a matrix of all key aspects of the application and map them to cloud-based equivalents.
Their first attempt at a solution involved deploying a VPN and configuring client software on staff devices. While this worked, it was a challenge to configure and support and performance was often not acceptable.

Alto’s solution was to migrate the database portion of the app to the SQL Azure cloud database. The existing user interface was left intact. Staff now use the application securely without a VPN, and improved performance is as easy as selecting the SQL Azure configuration that fits their needs, providing more memory, CPU cycles and bandwidth with the click of a mouse.

An added advantage is that with a cloud-based database it became possible to offer customers a self-service portal. This offloads some of the routine tasks, allowing staff to focus where they add value for customer service.

**Summary**

When application software reaches (or exceeds!) its end-of-life, you have many options for how to proceed. This is a golden opportunity to make the right investment in the right technology, and a perfect time to consider integrating cloud services. Contact Alto if you’d like to learn more about these options and get some help getting started.