Unisys speeds government's Google cloud migrations

Summary: *The integrator stages each project in three distinct phases for optimal results.*

By Heather Clancy for Next-Gen Partner | August 5, 2013 -- 16:29 GMT (09:29 PDT)

As Unisys wraps up its fourth major migration to Google Apps for the federal government, the general manager for the integrator's cloud business services practice has this observation: there's no such thing as a vanilla deployment.

"There isn't one environment that we have seen where we haven't had to do some measure of systems integration," said Steve Kousen, vice president of cloud email and collaboration services, Unisys.

The integrator's latest project, a 4,500-seat migration for the National Archives and Record Administration (http://googleenterprise.blogspot.com/2013/05/the-national-archives-has-gone-google.html) , is a great example. The implementation involved updated the agency's email and collaboration tools, but there was a twist: it also integrated the Google environment with a cloud archiving and records management service from ZL Technologies (http://www.zlti.com/) . And it accommodated ExchangeMyMail.com (http://www.exchangemymail.com/) , a service for extending applications to the BlackBerry.

What made the National Archives integration particularly tricky was ensuring that strict security parameters were upheld for records while enabling federal employees to do much more with the digital records, Kousen said. "As a systems integrator, we like these sorts of challenges," he said.

Aside from the National Archives project, Unisys has managed massive cloud migrations for the U.S. Department of Energy, for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Agency, and for the General Services Administration.

Unisys stages its cloud migrations in three distinct phases.

In the first wave, the integrator works with about 100 hand-selected, technically savvy users for about three weeks to test ease of use parameters and eliminate obvious bugs. In the second wave, 10 percent of an agency's workforce is added -- usually early adopters, who represent all divisions of an agency from administration to senior-level employees. Then, after several weeks, the rest of the employees are added, after most of the major kinds have been worked out.

"You can't overcommunicate to users what is coming down the pike," Kousen said. "You constant need to tell them what is coming, what just happened and where they can go for help."

Topics: Cloud, Channel

About Heather Clancy

Heather Clancy is an award-winning business journalist specializing in transformative technology and innovation

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