



Skytap on Azure Case Study

Global apparel company moves IBM Power disaster recovery to the cloud with Skytap on Azure

Summary

Facing a data center exit, a global apparel holding company used the opportunity to modernize its IT infrastructure and applications running on IBM Power hardware. With Skytap, the company successfully migrated its AIX and IBM i platformed applications as-is to Azure and set up a cloud-based disaster recovery (DR) solution.

Challenge

As a result of being spun off from a large global apparel holding corporation, a global lifestyle apparel company needed to exit the prior company's data centers and implement its own IT infrastructure in the United States, United Kingdom, and Singapore to best support operations. The company viewed this as an opportunity to modernize its infrastructure, eliminate technical debt, and further its cloud journey.

At the time of the spin off from the holding corporation, the company was using IBM Power hardware on-premises to run its SAP ERP system and supporting applications running on IBM i and AIX to operate its distribution centers. It also relied on an on-premises disaster recovery solution for these business-critical workloads. Because several of these applications ran on legacy platforms, the company saw its data center exit as an opportunity to modernize applications. Specifically, it was interested in evaluating a cloud-based disaster recovery (DR) solution to replace its on-premises DR solution. Doing so would eliminate technical debt while providing the company with exposure to running IBM Power systems in the cloud. With the deadline for the data center exit looming, the company was under critical time pressure to quickly find and validate its selected IBM Power cloud-based DR solution.

Background

INDUSTRY:

Retail

OBJECTIVE:

Move disaster recovery to the cloud

USE CASE:

Disaster recovery (DR)

About the Company

A multi-billion dollar global lifestyle apparel company with over 15,000 employees globally that was recently spun off from a large global apparel holding corporate entity.



We initiated a cloud-first strategy and evaluated what could be in the cloud. We discussed our legacy platforms – the AIX and A/S 400 that run on IBM Power hardware – and whether or not we could run these in the cloud. Skytap was the only real viable option.”

– Director of Global Infrastructure and Cloud Services

Solution

The global lifestyle apparel company viewed its pending exit from its former holding corporation's data center as a unique opportunity to evaluate its current technology stack and build a new global infrastructure in the cloud. In considering a cloud service provider, the company researched several hyperscalers and ultimately selected Azure as its destination.

The company selected Skytap on Azure as its disaster recovery solution because Skytap allowed it to migrate its IBM Power applications to Azure without refactoring or replatforming. This would not only accelerate the company's cloud-first strategy with minimal change and risk while allowing it to benefit from the global availability, scalability, and flexibility of Azure, but it would also provide the company with an opportunity to further explore its IBM Power in the cloud journey.

"The migration was very smooth. Kudos to the Skytap support team who were always there for us. It was seamless. Skytap was there to help us move everything from US East to the permanent location in US South Central." - Principal Systems Engineer

Outcomes

Using Skytap on Azure as its cloud-based IBM Power disaster recovery solution, the company was able to complete the following in less than 18 months:

- Migrate its business-critical distribution center applications as-is and natively run IBM Power AIX and IBM i platformed applications in Azure
- Prove a pilot light DR environment with minimal RAM, scalable on demand to full production capacity to support a DR event
- Restore application environments from back-ups maintained in Azure Blob Storage and meet RPO and RTO requirements
- Integrate with an Express Route for high-speed low-latency bandwidth connection back to on-premise systems
- Integrate with Commvault software to restore backups maintained in Azure Blob Storage

Utilizing Skytap's template and "copy to region" capabilities, the company was able to easily copy one region and move it to another when transitioning from one Azure region to another. The company uses a backup and restore-based strategy with its IBM Power estate to restore production LPARs directly into Azure. These activities are synchronized with Azure Site Recovery and result in the company's ability to have failover for its entire production infrastructure in a business region into Azure.

After the successful migration and DR configuration, the company is continuing its cloud-first strategy with Azure and Skytap. In a few years when its IBM Power hardware is due for a refresh, it is hoping to move production workloads into Skytap on Azure as well for increased agility and performance. The company also shared how the move to Azure was a positive experience for its internal team to learn a new technology and system while utilizing the many benefits the cloud has to offer.



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**Learn more about how
Skytap can support your
organization's IBM Power
modernization efforts.**

Skytap is a cloud service purpose-built to natively run traditional systems in the cloud. Our customers use Skytap for running production, disaster recovery, virtual training labs, and development workloads. We are the only cloud service to support AIX, IBM i, and Linux on IBM Power together with x86 workloads, enabling businesses to accelerate their journey to the cloud and increase innovation. Skytap is a Kyndryl company. To learn more or schedule a demo, visit www.skytap.com.