

Why Migrate? How to Migrate.

*Time to take
the leap?*

A data centre migration is usually regarded as favourably as a trip to the dentist. It's not a journey most representatives of enterprises and service providers want to make often or hear about much with good reason.

Data centre migrations remain complicated endeavours that, if not managed properly, may lead to additional issues they're meant to fix. That's because the relocation of a data centre often involves hardware, operating systems and software upgrades in addition to the migration of large numbers of mission-critical applications and services, factors that can make a move risky and challenging.

Migrations happen for a variety of reasons, including an organisational need to move data due to regulatory requirements, company takeovers, space restrictions or cost-cutting.

Types of Migrations

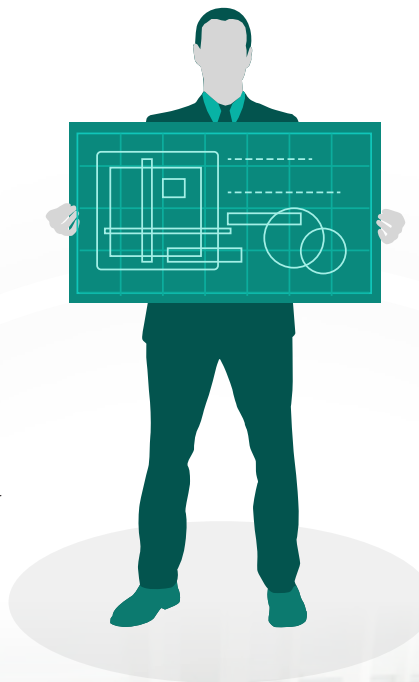
Hardware and data migrations are great examples as there are many routes to pursue. No one migration is alike. There are some commonalities, however.

A **'lift and shift'** migration of servers, for example, from one data centre to the other may be appropriate though data migration over a leased circuit is possible too. Data migration, which is particularly complex, is another factor to consider if an application is being moved to a data centre of a similar ilk as conditions are identical.

Provision of a **leased line** is preferred by most to ensure there's a dedicated connection between data centres. Tape or hard-drive based backup or backup and restore, to restore services as quickly as possible, are options too though preferred less and not always optimal because of technical restrictions.

Regardless, migrations needn't be painful or viewed with disdain. **Planning is crucial to success** though. Not only will planning save I.T. managers from unnecessary headaches and stress further down the line, but it will also show to all parties concerned that they know what they're doing.

To avoid the worst-case scenario, a **detailed plan** needs to be created. Drawing up a data centre migration plan may be time-consuming, but it's better than trying to repair a broken system



after the fact. Decision-makers need to account for a variety of factors before the migration, which can be a massive undertaking.

Whatever the reason, **availability of service** is crucial above all else during and after a migration. That means organisational decision makers need to understand when applications will be moved and what other parts of the information technology architecture, including other applications, will be affected.

It also means considering the **availability of the underlying services**; identifying the availability requirements of the business before migrations commence is an essential part of a successful data centre relocation strategy.

Often this means **identifying the host applications** that help the company operate, which is the primary purpose of the data centre. The technical solutions can be sorted after requirements are gathered.

Furthermore, risks should be assessed and steps should be put in place to ensure a proper transition





Planning Considerations

Specifically, the migration plan should include some, if not all, of the following elements.



Discovery

In a perfect world, goals of the project must be identified and stakeholders concerned should be aligned. The discovery process has to include a thorough infrastructure assessment as well so a complete picture of a company's information technology environment is obtained. It's likely to be a painful and time-consuming process, but it's crucial for a successful migration to occur.



Planning

The next phase of the migration process, is centred on the physical infrastructure involved in the data centre migration. Design, review, revisions and final review are parts of the process. Strong leadership, which is often forgotten, is required as the elements outlined during the discovery process are brought forth.



Development & Validation

The infrastructure required in the new data centre needs to be built, as do the specifications of each infrastructure element and the support processes have to be finalised. If infrastructure upgrades are correctly applied, it's essential for operations to perform as designed. Validation is another critical part of the data centre migration process. It's a final checkpoint of sorts. Storage and compliance requirements need to be met in addition to other details in advance of a move to the new data centre for example. That means the details need to be ironed out.



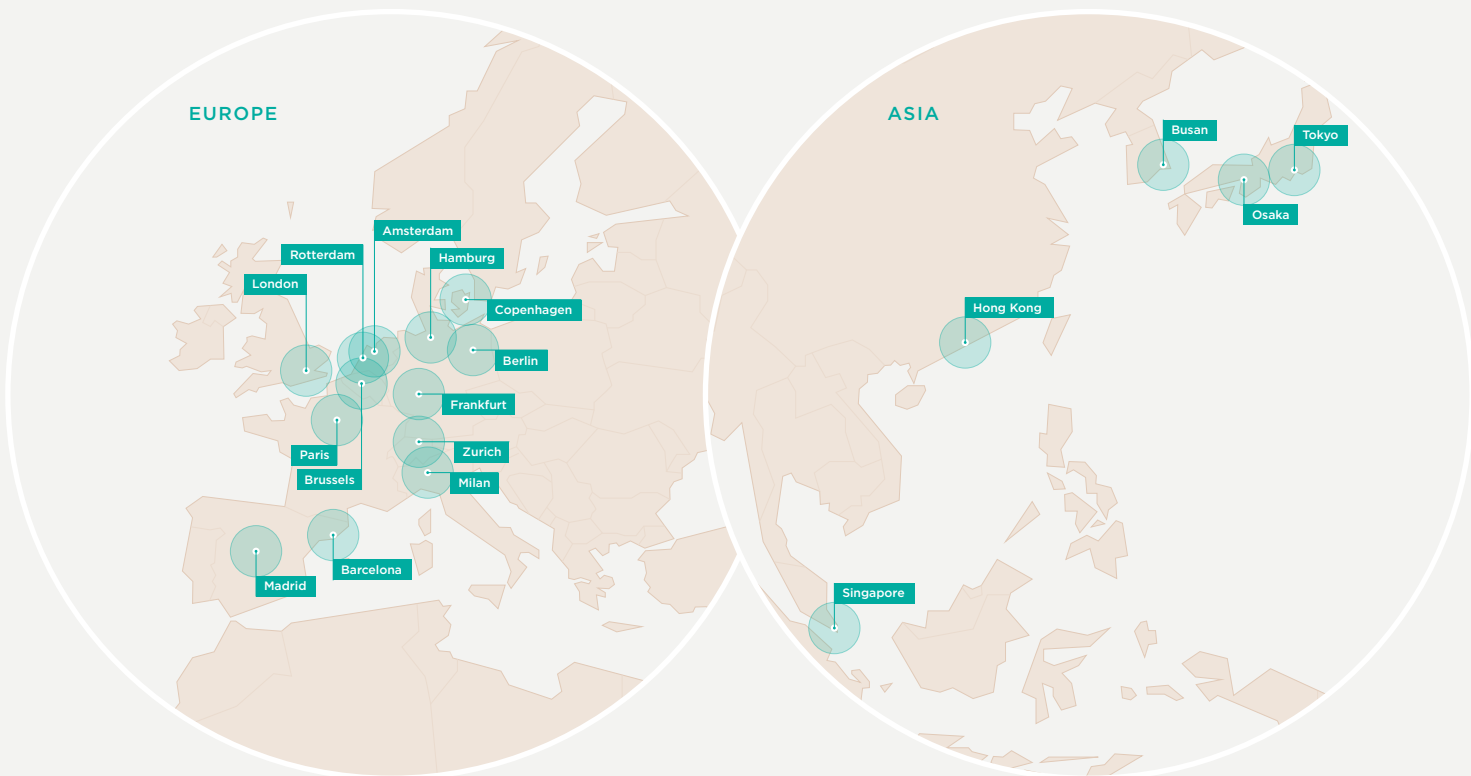
Migration Management

The hard work of the migration is complete. Time to relax? Nope. Operations need to revert to the pre-migration state. As such, any planning should take into account the state of operations on a daily basis as well as post migration monitoring and response possibilities.

There are many elements to any successful data centre migration process. However, data centre migration processes vary.

There is no 'one size fits all' model

This list of migration factors and considerations is far from exhaustive. But overall, ensuring data are moved from one data centre to the next without issues is imperative.



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