

Consultancy completes 20 successful IT migration projects in less than 3 years.



The company realizes its divestment strategy with help from On Demand Migration and a robust partnership with Quest.

Country: **UK**

Employees: **43,000**

Industry: **Professional services**

New business strategy leads to multiple divestitures.

Over two decades, an international professional services company had grown dramatically through multiple acquisitions. At that point, the board made a strategic decision about the company's future. "They wanted to get the company back to its roots, to focus on what we're good at as opposed to spreading ourselves so thin," explains the divestment project manager. "They identified nearly two dozen businesses within our company that weren't part of what they wanted the organization to look like. The goal was to return a billion pounds to the bottom line and slim the organization down — all within a five-year timeframe."

The business development team began to engage with potential buyers, go through the due diligence

Challenges

After decades of growth through acquisitions, a professional services company decided to focus more tightly on its core mission and identified nearly two dozen sub-businesses to divest. As each deal was inked, it was up to the IT team to migrate out the appropriate data and workloads from Microsoft 365 and Active Directory.

Solution

Using On Demand Migration, the IT team completed the 20 divestment projects in less than 3 years, quickly, accurately and securely. Plus, Quest experts helped them find innovative approaches to tricky requirements, master new product functionality and more.

Benefits

- Enabled 20 IT divestment projects in just 3 years
- Covered all Microsoft 365 workloads plus AD
- Minimized disruption for users with flexible features and quick migrations
- Delivered a true partnership with collaborative problem-solving and process refinement

process and sign contracts. Each new deal meant carving out a variety of business functions for the buyers and then migrating all the associated workloads and data out of the company's hybrid IT ecosystem.

Only Quest could migrate all Microsoft 365 workloads.

To prepare for the multiple divestment projects coming their way, the IT team began looking for the right migration tool. One key consideration was the breadth of workloads they would need to cover: all Microsoft 365 workloads, including SharePoint, OneDrive, Teams and Exchange, as well as on-premises Active Directory for some projects. In addition, the tool needed to support remote work across multiple countries, since everyone on the team worked from home.

The technical lead had been through multiple IT migration projects before. He briefly considered using native tools but quickly dismissed the idea. "I'd done several SharePoint migrations natively," he notes. "It was so bloody slow and painful that I knew purchasing a third-party tool was definitely the right choice."

Accordingly, the team looked at multiple vendors, outlining the costs and trialing the solutions to assess their functionality. One option was a pair of tools that the technical lead had used before, CloudM and ShareGate. And since the team had already used Quest tools for domain migrations with great success, they also made sure to evaluate the Quest solution for tenant migrations, On Demand Migration.

The Quest solution proved superior across multiple dimensions, including workload coverage, quality, flexibility and value. "On Demand Migration was the only solution capable of migrating all Microsoft 365 workloads as well as Active Directory. Plus, its functionality was the best of all the tools we evaluated," reports the technical lead. "In addition, the cost for the Quest solution was a lot less than purchasing the two other tools we would have needed to get the necessary workload coverage."

“On Demand Migration was the only solution capable of migrating all Microsoft 365 workloads as well as Active Directory. Plus, its functionality was the best of all the tools we evaluated.”

Technical Lead, Large Professional Services Company

The right partner is just as important as the right tool.

On top of the power and versatility of On Demand Migration, there was another key factor in the professional services company's decision to go with Quest: confidence. "Purchasing a software solution is like getting a car but not knowing how to drive — even when the tools are great, you need to learn how to drive them," the technical lead says. "Quest has a very large and very knowledgeable professional services division with critical skills that we didn't have. They helped us master those skills for ourselves and ensure that we were using On Demand Migration the best way possible."

20 successful divestments in less than three years.

Partnering with Quest has paid off with one successful migration after another. "We've completed 20 divestment projects in less than three years," reports the project manager. "We have migrated all types of Microsoft 365 workloads, including Teams, Exchange, OneDrive and SharePoint. We have established a very repeatable process. I'm not going to say it's rinse and repeat, but it's pretty close to that."

"We wouldn't have been able to achieve that aggressive goal without the help of the Quest professional services team," adds the technical lead. "For example, for a few projects, we needed to migrate a large number of Active Directory objects from our environment, and we had to do it very quickly. We'd done that for one of our early

divestments using Microsoft ADMT, and it was extremely time-consuming. We did not have time in this project to do that, nor did we want to. So we spoke to Quest Professional Services and learned that On Demand Migration includes support for Active Directory. With their help, that functionality made the on-prem migration quick and painless.”

Quest Professional Services also helps the consultancy’s IT team take full advantage of new features and enhancements to the product. “In the three years that we’ve been using On Demand Migration, it has expanded so much that it’s almost a completely different tool set,” says the technical lead. “But the Quest experts keep us up to date. They are always happy to help us master capabilities that we’re not yet familiar with.

“We’ve completed 20 divestment projects in less than three years. We have migrated all types of Microsoft 365 workloads, including Teams, Exchange, OneDrive and SharePoint. We have established a very repeatable process. I’m not going to say it’s rinse and repeat, but it’s pretty close to that.”

Project Manager, Large Professional Services Company

Tip: To reduce impact on users, consider a big-bang approach.

Migration projects are inherently disruptive, but using the right strategies can minimize the impact on users. In performing 20 successful migrations, the consultancy’s IT team developed a process that works well, and they graciously shared their lessons learned.

“My number one piece of advice is this: Do not attempt to move all of your users and data and

domains at the same time,” says the technical lead. “Whether the migration involves 20 users or several thousand, we use a two-weekend approach. We first migrate Exchange and OneDrive in parallel, and then we move on to Teams and SharePoint. The very last thing we bring over is the user archives because they can take a long time; people can work without their archives for a few days.”

Tip: Segregating the migration data can be the hardest part of a divestiture.

Another valuable insight from the IT team may seem obvious but is all too often neglected: Get your arms firmly around what data is — and is not — in the scope of the migration. “I recommend identifying your migration data as far in advance as you can,” the project manager advises. “For economies of scale, everyone in the organization tries to use the same systems, such as the same email platform and a single SharePoint environment. Trying to break data out for a divestiture can actually be quite difficult, especially when people have moved from one division to another during their tenure with the organization.”

Indeed, segregating even one portion of the data can be extremely complex and time consuming. “Some of the organizations that we were divesting had been intertwined with us for years,” continues the project manager. “As a result, it was a big job to determine whether the data in our SharePoint sites, Teams, shared mailboxes and so on should remain with us or be transferred to the buyer. For example, to assess a particular SharePoint site, we had to look at its ownership, membership and content — in some cases, getting an accurate assessment required talking to hundreds of people.”

The upshot is clear: “Do not make the mistake of thinking you can complete a Microsoft 365 migration in one weekend,” the project manager says. “For a medium-size project, plan for at least 12 weeks. Once you’ve identified what you’re going to migrate, however, On Demand Migration will get it moved accurately and efficiently.”

Having a true partner can reap benefits you didn't expect.

As much as the consultancy's team appreciates the On Demand Migration solution, they also emphasize the enormous value of partnering with the experts at Quest. "In working with Quest, I don't think we've come across a problem that we haven't resolved by working together," the project manager states. "We've always had access to very senior and very technical resources, even in middle of the night — a 15-minute conversation and the problem just goes away. Having ready access to those experienced experts is invaluable."

This value is illustrated by a situation that required resolving a sensitive point of contention with a buyer. "We had one client that was very security focused, so they wanted to come into our tenant and claim the data," recalls the project manager. "We are also security focused, so we said 'No, we'll push the data to you.' That put us at an impasse. We got the techies from Quest involved and quickly found a solution: using a man-in-the-middle approach with a lifeboat tenant. It was brilliant, and it worked. That commitment and that partnership makes all the difference."

"In working with Quest, I don't think we've come across a problem that we haven't resolved by working together. We've always had access to very senior and very technical resources, even in middle of the night — a 15-minute conversation, and the problem just goes away. Having ready access to those experienced experts is invaluable."

Project Manager, Large Professional Services Company

About Quest Software

Quest Software creates technology and solutions that build the foundation for enterprise AI. Focused on data management and governance, cybersecurity and platform modernization, Quest helps organizations address their most pressing challenges and make the promise of AI a reality. Around the globe, more than 45,000 companies including over 90% of the Fortune 500 count on Quest Software. For more information, visit www.quest.com or follow Quest Software on [X \(formerly Twitter\)](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

Products

- [On Demand Migration](#)

Solutions

- [Microsoft Platform Management](#)
- [Migration and Modernization for Microsoft Platforms](#)
- [Quest Professional Services](#)