

Ensuring a Successful Migration, Consolidation or Restructuring

The Right Tools Can Reduce Risk and Help Ensure Success.



Abstract

More and more companies are facing infrastructure consolidations, restructuring, and migrations. These projects may be necessary due to an acquisition or merger or to achieve specific business goals. Regardless of the drivers, transitioning or consolidating data can be one of the riskiest Windows management projects. Good preparation and seamless execution ensures that you reap the benefits while mitigating the risks.

This brief explores the benefits and risks of migration, consolidation, and restructuring, and discusses how the migration expertise and solutions from Dell can help you simplify even the most complex project.

Introduction

Business drivers for migrations, consolidations, and restructuring

A successful migration, consolidation or restructuring has significant rewards. The budget and time commitment, as well as the risk to corporate data, can be easily justified in many cases, including:

- **A merger or acquisition** – In the case of a merger and acquisition, a migration or consolidation may be necessary to fully integrate two or more formerly independent companies. The benefits of the merger or acquisition can't be realized until the two IT infrastructures merge.
- **Reducing operational overhead** – Consolidation can be used to reduce operational overhead. Rather than managing duplicate instances of Active Directory, Exchange Server or SharePoint, consolidating onto fewer systems reduces management points, increases security, and reduces maintenance overhead.
- **Upgrade** – A migration is required to upgrade to new versions of many technologies, including Active Directory or Exchange Server. These new versions can offer enhanced security, improved man-

ageability and useful features, as well as enhanced reliability and usability. A migration can also be a way of consolidating and standardizing, such as migrating from GroupWise or Notes platforms into a consolidated Exchange or SharePoint platform.

- **Improving manageability** – Restructuring can improve manageability, often by allowing administrators to delegate key administrative tasks and intelligently distribute management overhead. Restructuring can also improve security and compliance; for example, Active Directory may be restructured to take advantage of desktop manageability improvements in components such as Group Policy.

Risks

Although most businesses can benefit from a migration, consolidation, or restructuring project, many fear that they can't properly assess and mitigate the project risks. Any time you start manipulating core infrastructure components—including Active Directory, Exchange Server, and other mission-critical technologies—there are significant risks that must not be underestimated or ignored. The key risks include:

- **You miss something** – With complex infrastructure technologies, it's extremely easy to overlook some seemingly minor detail that later ends up blocking the entire project.
- **Users are offline too long** – When users are moved from one system to another, it's usually assumed that at least some users are going to be "offline" for a period of time. That's not always acceptable, especially if unforeseen problems cause that period of time to become unduly long, preventing users from doing their work.
- **You break something** – In any technically and logistically complex process, there's a serious concern about what might go wrong—and whether you'll be able to fix it. What if an administrator selects an incorrect setting during a migration? You could easily take your entire environment offline, especially when you're dealing with something as core as Active Directory or as mission-critical as SharePoint.

- **The project requires too much time and effort** – A migration, consolidation, or restructuring project is no easy thing. Multiple systems are almost always involved: for example, an Active Directory consolidation might also involve Exchange Servers, file servers, end-user client computers, service accounts, and more. A Lotus Notes-to-Microsoft migration could involve moving Notes email and applications, some of which were custom built on the Notes platform. Coordinating and manually performing migration tasks can involve a lot of effort being heaped on to an already overburdened IT staff.
- **You don't have an expert** – Migration, consolidation, and restructuring projects require skills beyond those needed for day-to-day operations, and many IT professionals don't have enough experience to ensure the projects will be successful and efficient. This is especially true in the case of a merger or acquisition involving disparate systems, such as Lotus Notes, Novell GroupWise, or Exchange. Without the right skills and experience, your team will have difficulty anticipating and mitigating risks.

The right tools can mitigate risk and help ensure success

The risks associated with migration, consolidation, and restructuring are serious and can seem insurmountable, but the right tools can help you mitigate and manage these risks. Quest Software, now a part of Dell, has the expertise in migrations that can help you compensate for missing experience in a particular technology (such as Notes or GroupWise) with solutions that enable you to automatically anticipate risks and avoid them.

To achieve the benefits of a migration, consolidation, or restructuring project with markedly less risk, Dell offers solutions that:

Evaluate your infrastructure

Dell can help you find the little details that might otherwise be overlooked. Dell's tools for automated assessment and discovery can catch every last

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component involved in the project, such as unused data that does not need to be migrated.

Minimize impact on users

You need a solution to help coordinate the migration or consolidation tasks to ensure that users remain online and productive throughout the project. Dell's automated tools, along with our embedded knowledge and experience, will help you take the right steps in the correct order, in far less time than your IT team could do manually. Dell can also help two systems coexist during a lengthy migration or consolidation project, ensuring that users can always reach the resources they need.

Undo mistakes

Dell's migration and consolidation solutions offer the ability to "roll back" changes almost instantly, bringing your environment back to a known good state and significantly reducing downtime. This enables you to investigate the problem and rework your plan.

Provide consistency and workflow

Dell offers migration and consolidation solutions with customizable, pre-built workflows that define the appropriate migration tasks and execute them automatically, assuring a consistent multi-phase migration.

Automate time-consuming tasks

In most cases, performing migration tasks manually is too much work. Dell has solutions to enable your team to direct the project's progress while automating the actual labor, including coordinating the necessary changes to multiple infrastructure components.

Embedded skills and experience

A mere tool may automate a few tasks; a migration/consolidation solution brings the embedded experience of multiple migration/consolidation experts. Dell solutions provide in-depth migration expertise, including prescriptive guidance, automated planning features,

pre-built optimal workflows, and more. Dell software helps your team complete the migration as if an experienced consultant were standing beside them the entire time.

Get the tools and expertise you need

With the right solution, you can enjoy the benefits of a migration, consolidation, or restructuring without the massive risks to your business. Dell is a recognized leader in Windows infrastructure management, and particularly in migration, consolidation, and restructuring expertise. With award-winning, proven solutions, Dell can help reduce risk, automate projects, and help you successfully manage your Windows infrastructure.

Dell has the experience you need: 20 million mailboxes migrated to Exchange, 45 million users migrated to Active Directory, thousands of desktops managed virtually, and gigabytes of data migrated to SharePoint. Industry experts around the world agree that Dell is the undisputed leader in migrations, restructuring, and consolidations.

Case study: Barbon Insurance Group's seamless Active Directory and Exchange migration

Barbon Insurance Group needed to disconnect its legacy infrastructure in just six months, including migrating to new Active Directory and Exchange environments. With only 650 users, it seemed like a straightforward task on paper, but there were actually layers of complexity. The migration needed to be smooth, with limited impact—tough to do when 650 users are dealing with 25,000 email messages each day. The existing domain structure was complex, opening the way for errors and oversights. The IT staff had limited resources and little experience with migrations of this scope. Worse, the six-month deadline was absolute and fixed—there could be no delays.

Dell software helps your team complete the migration as if an experienced consultant were standing beside them the entire time.



Quest Software (now a part of Dell) assisted by providing migration tools and technologies that helped Barbon's old and new environments coexist for a low-impact migration. Automated migration tools helped ensure a smooth, phased migration, even on the aggressive schedule required. Synchronization technologies helped ensure that users could continue working, and kept their old and new passwords synchronized. Quest's Professional Services Organization provided experience and expertise, navigating Barbon away from migration pitfalls and ensuring nothing in the environment was overlooked. Barbon's IT Manager, Bruce Jefferies, said, "The solutions were flexible enough to allow us to work at our own pace, and prevented calls to our help desk," which kept both end users and management satisfied with the migration project.

For more information

To learn more about Dell solutions for migration, restructuring, and consolidation, visit www.quest.com/migration-consolidation.



For More Information

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Dell Software

5 Polaris Way
Aliso Viejo, CA 92656
www.dell.com

Refer to our Web site for regional and international office information.

