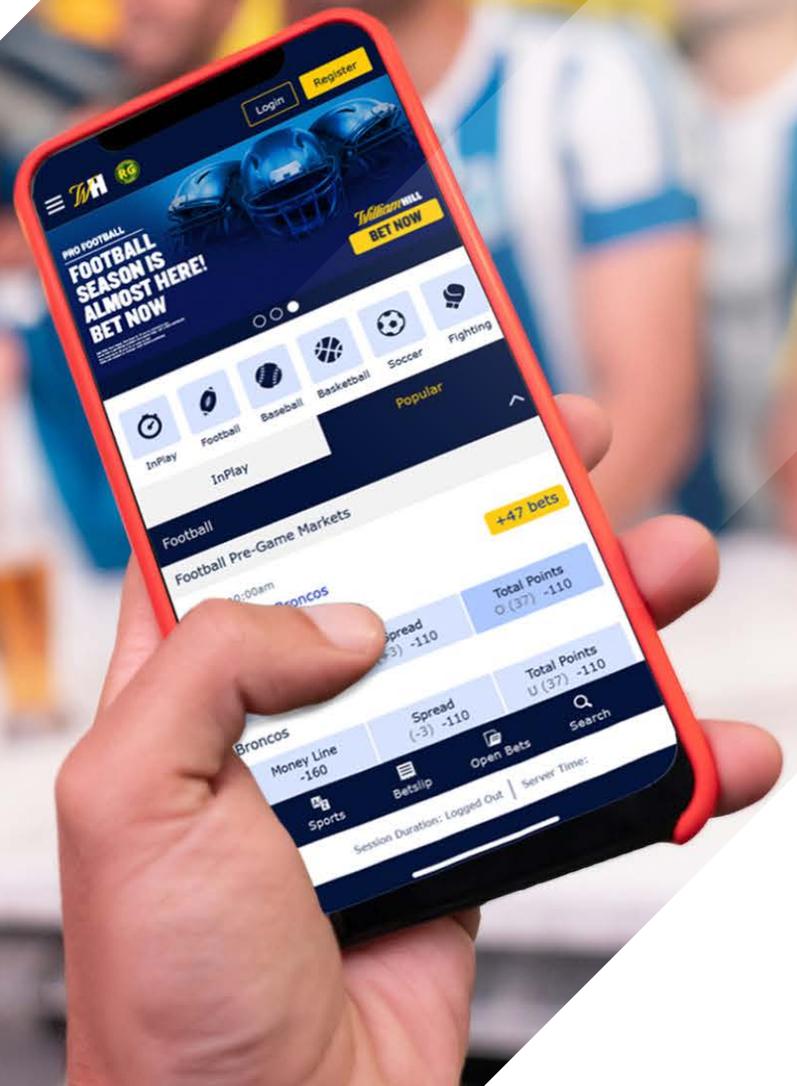


How Online Betting Giant William Hill Stacked the Deck with VMware Cloud on AWS

Alan Alderson, Director of IT at William Hill, shares why he placed his bets on migrating to the cloud with VMware Cloud on AWS—and how well it's paying off.





“We can pick up our VMware platform and put it in the cloud, which means we’re on the path to realizing the cost savings and agility we’re after.”

NAME

Alan Alderson

TITLE

Director of IT Operations

RESPONSIBILITIES

Platforms

Digital and retail (1,500+ locations in the U.K.) infrastructure

- 4 data centers across the globe running 12,000 VMs
- End-user computing
- Service desk

TEAM

240 people in 7 locations across the globe

GOAL

Become more agile in order to delight customers with a great experience



For William Hill—one of the world’s most trusted and responsible betting and gaming brands—keeping up with increasing customer demand and getting new products to market faster meant moving on-premises data centers to the cloud.

“We wanted to migrate to the public cloud to get the agility, scale and cost savings that we weren’t getting from our on-premises environment,” said Alan. “There’s always something to bet on, and always someone, somewhere, wanting to place a bet, and our team has an important role to play in making sure customers are delighted, 24x7. We needed to move to cloud quickly, and the stakes were way too high for a misstep.”





The Path Forward for Cost Savings, Business Agility



ALAN'S CLOUD MIGRATION GOALS

- Build a highly secure, easy-to-manage, cost-effective infrastructure
- Maximize the usage of existing investments in VMware environments
- Provide engineers with a runway to learn AWS

Today, the public cloud is helping Alan and team make it happen. “Our motivation for migrating to the public cloud was two-fold: business agility and cost savings.”

When they made the decision to adopt public cloud, Alan’s global team of 240 people across seven locations was managing four data centers and a whopping 12,000 VMs. They were struggling to keep up with the daily demands of managing a massive, complex architecture, and needed a way to enable developers to be more autonomous and self-sufficient, so they could bring ideas to market quickly.

Additionally, supporting large-scale betting events such as the U.K.’s Grand National Horse Race, which is as popular as the Super Bowl in the U.S., meant spending far too much time and money essentially building additional data centers for 1 day of the year.

“We need to scale out hundreds of applications in seconds and give customers a safe, reliable, responsive experience every time,” said Alan. “Growing and reducing capacity as needed is vital to providing our customers with the experience they deserve at a cost our business could manage.”

After choosing AWS as their public cloud provider, the team planned to move their applications and associated data to the cloud, but soon realized that would take too much time and would require hands-on AWS knowledge—and application refactoring—in order to be successful. At the time, Alan’s team of savvy VMware administrators weren’t as skilled in the ways of the cloud.



LEARN MORE

Hear Sarah Lucas, head of platforms and infrastructure at William Hill, talk about their 2-year plan to move all applications to the public cloud.



RESULTS FROM VMWARE CLOUD ON AWS

- **Elastic scale** – Increasing capacity to meet increasing requirements, on demand
- **Time to market** – Hundreds of applications migrated in short amount of time
- **Cost savings** – 3,000+ VMs and counting migrated to the cloud; more than 800 on-premises servers decommissioned in first 12 months, significant savings expected during the next 2 years

VMware Cloud on AWS: The Best of Both Worlds

A better path forward presented itself at VMworld in Barcelona, where Sarah Lucas, William Hill's Head of Platforms and Infrastructure, learned about VMware Cloud™ on AWS. Sarah saw that it could allow them to move applications to the cloud without the need to refactor them, and without having to immediately reskill the team. In her words, "VMware Cloud on AWS could be a safe landing zone for our applications with the aim of getting to the public cloud quickly."

Alan agreed, but he still needed to get the rest of the organization on board. It wasn't about stakeholders not seeing the value in moving to the public cloud, or about the benefits of selecting VMware Cloud on AWS. Rather, it was about not having a detailed understanding of the thousands of applications and their infrastructure dependencies.

"We have a massive shared infrastructure supporting multiple platforms across the business, and figuring out which platforms had applications on which servers was difficult," said Alan. "We didn't fully understand at a granular level how our systems connected, so we couldn't easily identify all the system dependencies across business platforms. So, before we could get started, we had to do the discovery work necessary to build the business case we needed to be able to move forward."

"Before beginning a cloud migration, whether using VMware Cloud on AWS or another public cloud solution, get your discovery work done. You need to be able to show all of your stakeholders the real value of moving their applications to the cloud in order to get their buy-in."

William Hill has hundreds of applications to move, and if they took every single application on a single-path journey, it would have taken far too long. Alan's team had an opportunity to provide the company with an infrastructure that would enable them to develop new products faster than ever before—and stay one step ahead of the competition.

With VMware Cloud on AWS, they are moving workloads without refactoring, and meeting their aggressive data center exit and cloud migration timelines.

"We can pick up our VMware platform and put it in the cloud, which means we're on the path to realizing the cost savings and agility we're after," Alan said.



Value for the Business, Opportunities for the Team

For Alan, nothing is more important than providing meaningful value to the company and opportunities for his talented team.

“My team and I aren’t here to run data centers. We’re here to provide support for the applications and platforms that support our business, not spend our days upgrading firmware on servers,” said Alan.

By moving to the public cloud, the team can focus on delivering best-in-class service to their internal stakeholders, and ultimately provide a better and safer experience for online gamblers across the globe. The team feels more fulfilled and the business feels better supported. And by choosing VMware Cloud on AWS, Alan ensured that engineers could rely on the same skills they gained from working in the data center while learning the AWS environment.

Accelerate Cloud Migration and Meet Enterprise Workload Needs

With VMware Cloud on AWS, organizations can accelerate cloud migration without complex conversions, and run applications with a consistent and enterprise-class cloud service that brings the best of VMware technologies to AWS. It enables a true hybrid cloud platform that maximizes existing on-premises investments and leverages consistent infrastructure and operations from the data center to cloud environments.

Learn more about how VMware Cloud on AWS provides the scale, performance and availability that’s needed to meet the demands of a broad range of enterprise workloads, and give organizations the confidence that they are making the cost-effective choice in terms of TCO and support.

[Learn more about VMware Cloud on AWS](#)

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