Vendor Profile

SAIC Leverages Experience and Automation to Speed Federal Migration to the Cloud

Adelaide O'Brien

IDC OPINION

The benefits of migrating U.S. federal government IT infrastructure to the cloud are well known, but obstacles, such as complexity and concerns about total cost of ownership, performance, and security, are slowing down the migration. Further:

- Many of these obstacles can be lessened by a more detailed understanding of the issues that arise during the planning and research phase of a migration; an analysis of the health of applications, technical debt, complexity, manageability, and security; and the cost of variable spend multicloud operations.
- This analysis informs the appropriate migration path and enables greater cost controls and financial accountability.

IN THIS VENDOR PROFILE

This IDC Vendor Profile highlights SAIC's CloudScend suite of services. CloudScend is designed to help federal customers strategically migrate to cloud while reducing time and costs as well as gain greater insight into the performance, security, and longer-term variable operating costs of cloud operations.

SITUATION OVERVIEW

Cloud is a critical component of forward-looking IT strategy at federal agencies. Cloud is key to the future of government service delivery by enabling new delivery models, supporting innovation at scale, enabling employees to work anywhere, and prioritizing citizen service at the center of every transaction.

However, many agencies lack effective automation to streamline their application migration to cloud, as well as fortify application security and performance when their applications have been migrated to the cloud. All apps are not created equal. Some should never be migrated, and agencies should consider born-on-cloud options to replace other, older applications.

Also, operational complexity is reaching a breaking point as agencies initiate app modernization and data integration across cloud silos. ITOps, DevOps, and CloudOps teams often struggle to maintain service levels and ensure security and compliance across loosely coupled hybrid and multicloud architectures spanning private clouds, public clouds, hosted clouds, edge, and traditional datacenters. Moreover, these platforms often simultaneously support bare metal, virtual machine (VM), and container-based workloads and associated storage and network resources.

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Managing costs across all clouds is another challenge. Delivering optimum cloud innovation at optimum price requires an understanding of the complex, variable cost and the financially volatile world of cloud contracts, provisioning, billing, tagging, rightsizing, reporting, and controlling in a multicloud/hybrid cloud environment. To succeed, agencies require financial accountability of the variable spend mode of cloud, as a means to make trade-offs between speed, cost, and quality, as shown in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1

Financial Accountability of the Variable Spend of Cloud

Source: IDC, 2022

Company Overview

SAIC is a $7.4 billion technology integrator with a robust portfolio of offerings across the defense, space, civilian, and intelligence markets that includes secure high-end solutions in engineering, IT modernization, and mission solutions. SAIC is approximately 26,000 strong, driven by a mission to partner to transform government, enhancing our nation and citizens' lives, through innovative solutions powered by diverse talent and technology.

SAIC characterizes its business portfolio into Growth and Technology Accelerants (GTAs) and a Core Business:

- **Growth and Technology Accelerants:**
  - Secure cloud
  - Enterprise IT
  - Systems integration and delivery
- **Core Business:**
  - Engineering services
  - IT and technical services
  - Logistics and supply chain

Company Strategy

SAIC's mission is to work hand in hand as a trusted partner of the U.S. government to advance this nation's most critical "no-fail" missions. SAIC fosters a culture of inclusion leading to increased innovation through diversity of thought. SAIC leverages its legacy and leadership through a wide variety of capabilities such as enterprise IT systems engineering and integration to provide solutions with speed to value for clients. Additional key capabilities include secure cloud, enterprise IT, engineering expertise, and systems integration and delivery to help solve government challenges.

SAIC CloudScend

SAIC's CloudScend enables customers to securely migrate their applications to the cloud using automation tools and processes to minimize cost and maximize value. CloudScend provides an end-to-end solution that aligns with the full cloud life cycle, including assessment and planning, migration, operations, maintenance, and optimization.

Explore

The Explore pillar determines the customer's as-is cloud state. This provides measurable insights into an organization's application quality and migration readiness. This mitigates risk through preplanning to safely migrate and optimize applications to the cloud at scale.

This pillar also assists federal agencies to define a cloud strategy and target architecture and security objectives while focusing on designing the desired end state, informed by each organization's IT and strategy goals.

Migrate

The next pillar, CloudScend Migrate, makes applications and workloads cloud ready and moves them to the cloud. This can be a single application, multiple applications and databases, or a customer's entire portfolio.

Operate

The third pillar is Operate. CloudScend Operate provides a single-pane-of-glass view with a control panel that provides details on all cloud infrastructure and apps deployed and costs — all by day, by month, by cloud provider, by department/agency, by application, and by region. This dynamic total cost to operate not only enables agencies to understand whether they are on plan with their cloud spending, and reduce the risk of overspending, but also highlights where there are variances in spend.

SAIC leverages its experience with federal requirements and the federal work environment to help remove obstacles in cloud migration and operations, assisting agencies in deploying optimum innovation at the optimum price and speed, securely.

Conclusion and Recommendations

As a systems integrator serving to the U.S. federal government, SAIC meets the needs of its client base by:

- Leveraging history and expertise in the federal space to design offerings to mitigate federal pain points with prebuilt solution elements that speed time to value

- Embedding security at the outset of planning as well as supporting secure cloud for ongoing operations (The multiple applications, tools, data streams, and analytics each has complex and unique cybersecurity needs that an after-the-fact fix will struggle to address.)
- Developing tools to automate the expensive and time-consuming aspects of cloud migration (The development of automation tools often requires a large data set and experience, and SAIC used its experiences in federal cloud migration to help automate future projects.)
- Providing a single pane of glass to manage and project cloud costs for optimum operations, particularly in hybrid, multivendor cloud environments

FUTURE OUTLOOK

IDC expects agencies to continue to migrate to cloud for efficiency, scale, and innovation. As federal organizations expand their cloud footprint beyond initial use cases and adopt additional workloads, ad hoc methods for cost containment are no longer good enough; agencies need cloud cost management strategies that are programmatic and supported cross business and technology stakeholders. These solutions may come in the form of management tools like usage dashboards, billing visibility tools, or automated tiering capabilities to identify non-utilized or inefficient compute and storage resources.

The result is IT teams will deliver more optimized operations and enable more efficient use of cloud resources, resulting in an increased propensity to select the right cloud for new projects and initiatives. Growth of focus and investments in cloud resource management will result in increased visibility into spending, improved organizational controls, and better governance. And organizations will start to make cloud cost management a critical and early pillar in major digital transformation or digital business initiatives.

ESSENTIAL GUIDANCE

Advice for Federal Agencies

To ensure agility, agencies need tools that enable the enterprise to transform rapidly and effectively, migrate mission-critical applications to the cloud at scale, and lower risk. Consider tools that:

- Rationalize apps within a portfolio-level migration strategy.
- Estimate budgetary migration efforts and costs.
- Develop a migration road map.

Once an agency's strategy, budget, and road map are developed, look for tools that can also:

- Analyze the health of apps including technical debt, complexity, manageability, and security.
- Determine best migration disposition (rehost, relocate, replatform, refactor, repurchase, retain, or retire).
- Perform deep analysis to identify containers and microservice candidates.
- Continuously assess apps' health and discern trends.

During the operate phase of cloud, managing multicloud costs over time and creating financial accountability become the focus. Explore tools to:

- Provide visibility of all cloud instances across vendors, applications, regions, and departments as well as associated costs, compute power, utilization, and quality and cost anomalies by day and by month.
- Quickly identify uses, patterns, and applications that are running over budget and make course corrections.
- Accurately project costs based on real-world use and perform scenario analysis to make trade-offs between reserved instance and pay as you go.
- Support the need for senior management and finance insight into variable cloud costs and performance against budget.
- Enable a change management perspective that goes beyond the lowest cost and more toward a balance between cost, speed, and quality.

LEARN MORE

Related Research

- *Cloud and AI Enable Scale and Intelligent Benefits/Case Management Administration for Government Agencies* (IDC #US48920022, March 2022)
- *Cybersecurity, Cloud Smart, and AI: Government's Toolkit for Thwarting Cybercriminals* (IDC #US48346721, November 2021)
- *Federal Agencies Are Innovating and Developing Apps Through Low Code* (IDC #US48330421, November 2021)
- *IDC FutureScape: Worldwide National Government 2022 Predictions* (IDC #US47241921, October 2021)

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Global Headquarters

140 Kendrick Street
Building B
Needham, MA 02494
USA
508.872.8200
Twitter: @IDC
blogs.idc.com
www.idc.com