

CUSTOMER SUCCESS

Nilfisk Cleans Up its SAP Landscape with smartShift and migrates to Microsoft Azure



Project Highlights

- Intelligent Automation removed technical debt incurred from years of “break-fix” focus
- Reduce upgrade timeframe to 6 months
- Leveraged cloud economics and automation to reduce cost by 50%+
- smartShift CMS provides full-stack support on the cloud of Nilfisk’s choice, including future technical upgrades and optimization
- Nilfisk pays a single fixed monthly bill (with migration cost amortized in), resulting in a 33% reduction in total monthly expense
- Contract terms included no-risk provision in case migration solution proved to be unworkable

Nilfisk’s Evolutionary HANA Cloud Migration

Headquartered in Brøndby, Denmark, Nilfisk is a supplier of professional cleaning equipment in the industrial, commercial, and consumer markets. As a longtime SAP customer, Nilfisk was ready to migrate to SAP Suite on HANA and SAP Business Warehouse on HANA. As a prerequisite, their IT hosting provider moved them to a HANA-certified data center and performed a database migration from Microsoft SQL Server to SAP Adaptive Server Enterprise (ASE) to save on licensing fees. Nilfisk planned to do an in-place HANA migration to take advantage of SAP’s best database technology, new features, functionality, and ongoing support—but they hit some roadblocks. A year after moving to the new data center, Nilfisk was unsatisfied with the service and support they were receiving. They began looking for help to execute their HANA migration and make the jump to the cloud. Nilfisk partnered with smartShift to resolve their issues and complete a successful migration to SAP HANA. They initially migrated to a private cloud with smartShift, and we’ve since transitioned them to Microsoft Azure.

The Challenge - Help Nilfisk realize the benefits, reliability, and functionality of SAP HANA

Nilfisk’s IT hosting provider was unable to address the availability, stability and performance challenges that arose after the move to the new data center and the migration to ASE. They knew that they needed help and began to look for a partner that could offer a complete solution. smartShift offered our smartSuite solution to migrate Nilfisk to SAP HANA in the cloud with no upfront investment, one fixed monthly bill, and one vendor to take full responsibility for the end-to-end migration and ongoing support. The smartShift team outlined how they could help Nilfisk get the reliability and functionality needed from SAP HANA. One of the biggest challenges was a tight timeline. Nilfisk was pressed to find and execute a new solution, or they would incur significant cost for locked-in legacy infrastructure they didn’t need.

CUSTOMER SUCCESS

Nilfisk's HANA Cloud Migration



The Approach -smartShift helps Nilfisk overcome obstacles to make the project successful

smartShift delivered analysis and planning for the project in a tight 2-week period, preparing to migrate Nilfisk from its incumbent supplier to a private cloud.

It became clear once the project was underway that this was not going to be a simple migration. Due to technical and architectural issues in their existing hosted environment (which were not made known previously), smartShift had to adapt and redesign the migration strategy mid-stream.

Before the HANA migration was possible, smartShift had to lift-and-shift it to the cloud. The challenges were addressed with expertise, flexibility, and an unwavering commitment to the customer's success. For example, when network issues in the legacy data center threatened to delay go-live, smartShift physically transported data via airplane to the new data center in Amsterdam to keep the project on schedule. Despite significant constraints, smartShift was able to successfully complete the full migration to the private cloud in nine months, helping Nilfisk avoid hefty additional charges from its incumbent provider.

The Results -Nilfisk enjoys better performance while simplifying costs

"We required a turnkey and simple solution to modernize and manage SAP so we can focus our resources on more strategic technology challenges," said Thomas Okke Frahm, then CIO of Nilfisk, "that's why we partnered with smartShift."

smartShift's team planned and executed the project in an exceptionally tight timeframe, using their expertise and experience to overcome unanticipated roadblocks. As a result, Nilfisk successfully migrated to SAP HANA and was able to take advantage of cost savings and advanced functionality. smartShift's agile approach helped avoid critical downtime during the migration. SAP HANA provided measurable improvements, with some programs seeing 5x performance improvements. Nilfisk had the advantage of a fixed monthly cost (shifting their formerly capital-cost infrastructure to a pure operating-expense model) and single-vendor accountability for hosting its SAP solution, as well as a subscription model that provides ongoing upgrades and support for years.

"We required a turnkey and simple solution to modernize and manage SAP so we can focus our resources on more strategic technology challenges," said Thomas Okke Frahm, then CIO of Nilfisk, "that's why we partnered with smartShift."

CUSTOMER SUCCESS

Nilfisk's – moving on to Azure



Even More Results... - moving on to Azure

In early 2020 smartShift proposed moving Nilfisk's SAP infrastructure from the private cloud to Microsoft Azure. This would offer Nilfisk considerably lower infrastructure cost, and would also give them the higher elasticity and scalability afforded by public cloud infrastructure to meet the growing business demands.

smartShift gave Nilfisk a 14-weeks plan, including an Azure proof-of-concept to identify any potential challenges and performance bottlenecks. The PoC was completed in 4 weeks, and the outcome was very promising. smartShift identified opportunities to automate the Azure infrastructure deployment (via Terraform) and configuration (via Ansible) to minimize time on the actual lift and shift of higher environments.

Due to parallel projects which required Nilfisk's SAP system to be fully available there was a very limited window of opportunity to carry out the migration. Lessons learned in the PoC were applied to optimize our plan, and the use of automation ensured that infrastructure was quickly and consistently deployed. Development, Quality and Production systems were all migrated beginning in mid-August of 2020. The Production system went live in October, 8 weeks later.

On Azure, Nilfisk has realized a considerable improvement in system performance (which was already vastly improved when they went to the private cloud). They've seen up to a 30% runtime reduction in many business-critical jobs! Since the migration, Nilfisk's SAP landscape has been stable, performant, cheaper, and capable of supporting their need for ad-hoc flexibility.

From here, Nilfisk's path to the clean-core S/4HANA paradigm espoused by RISE and smartSuite—including side-by-side extensions and microservices—is clear. As a company already innovating in robotics and IoT, the ability to more seamlessly integrate their ERP system into how they trade and provide customer service is a natural evolution for Nilfisk.

Project Highlights

- Fast and smooth migration to Microsoft Azure powered by smartShift Intelligent Automation
- Cost reduction realized due to smartShift Right- and Tight-Sizing
- SAP Infrastructure performance increased
- Supporting customer's strategy and migrate to an enabling IT platform (Microsoft Azure) to ensure tomorrow's success

Project Scope

- Migration of SAP Systems from private cloud to Microsoft Azure
 - ECC on HANA
 - BW on HANA
 - CRM on MaxDB
 - SCM on SYBASE
 - PI on MSSQL
- Business Objects and Data Services
- Cloud Connector
- Disaster Recovery Setup
- Azure Infrastructure Setup