Success Story:

GCP Applied Technologies: Increasing IT flexibility for innovation in manufacturing with RISE for SAP® in the Google Cloud

RISE WITH SAP

Overview

GCP Applied Technologies is a global construction products company based in Alpharetta, GA. With over 74 manufacturing and technical sites worldwide, they are focused on the development of high-performance products, the advancement of construction technologies and delivering value to their customers in over 100 countries.

GCP Applied Technologies migrated its SAP workloads and other IT processes to Google Cloud with the help of Managecore for enhanced efficiency, security, and scalability.

Google Cloud Results

- Enables consolidation of applications through standardization and rationalization to reduce costs and drive IT efficiency

- Improves data center security by migrating from on-prem to modern cloud infrastructure

- Supports faster operating system patching and issue resolution with enhanced monitoring

- Paves way for dynamic shift toward S/4HANA on Google Cloud

Migrated entire SAP footprint to Google Cloud in 6 months

Global manufacturers must maintain lean and efficient supply chains to compete in today's market. Manufacturers serving the construction industry face even greater pressures given the high costs, material shortages, and tremendous demand for new construction projects in many countries around the globe.

GCP Applied Technologies (GCPAT) serves leaders across architecture, engineering and construction with expert technical support and services with a global manufacturing footprint. The company brings in roughly $1 billion in annual revenue through its specialty building materials, specialty construction chemicals, as well as its proprietary quality control software that leverages Internet of Things (IoT) sensors to give customers visibility into deliveries of concrete in transit.

From specialty grouts and fire protection additives to flooring and walling chemicals, large construction operations rely on GCPAT for high-quality projects to complete their projects.

"We are dedicated to simplifying the complexities of construction and delivering value to our customers," says Robyn McCall, Chief Information Officer at GCPAT. "In addition to our high-quality products and services, we're committed to standardized operating systems and transformation of the customer experience."

When the decision came to move its corporate headquarters from Cambridge, Massachusetts, to Alpharetta, Georgia, GCPAT saw an opportunity to optimize business processes and transform IT services. GCPAT chose to work with Google Cloud and Managecore, a Google Cloud specialized partner, to migrate its SAP workloads and other IT systems while improving the overall efficiency, agility, and power of its IT environment.

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Google Cloud came highly recommended, with SAP mentioning that they run their SAP environment on Google Cloud. Additionally, they brought Managecore to the table, which made a big difference. The combination of SAP, Managecore, and Google Cloud gave us confidence that we could pull off this massive transformation in a relatively short period of time.

Robyn McCall,
Chief Information Officer

More than just a Data Center Migration

GCPAT faced a hard deadline to move its data center and used the migration as an opportunity to rethink how it managed IT operations by going from on-prem to the cloud.

"When I came on board, we wanted to take a fresh look and see just how much more value we could create by going beyond just lifting and shifting our data center," says Robyn.

GCPAT realized it could strengthen security by moving from on-prem to the cloud. The migration also gave the company an opportunity to complete a full network redesign and incorporate segmentation that was not supported in its legacy environment.

GCPAT also saw opportunities to reduce IT costs while upgrading its SAP systems via a RISE with SAP solution powered by Google Cloud.

"Any time we needed to increase our storage/servers capacity, we had to buy additional backup capacity, which required additional efforts and cost," says Kishor Barde, Senior Information Technology Leader at GCPAT. "We also ran into challenges when it came to patching our operating system. When we compared what it would take to rebuild our data center in a new location or switching to Google Cloud, the decision was easy."

Once the decision was made to operate in a cloud-based infrastructure, GCPAT discussed the migration with SAP and was introduced to the RISE with SAP program, an accelerator to shift SAP systems onto cloud systems.

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Gaining Value from a Seasoned Partner and RISE with SAP

GCPAT worked closely with Managecore to define its needs, preferences, and overall roadmap of migrating its SAP applications from the on-prem data center to Google Cloud. Managecore brought the knowledge and expertise to guide the process quickly and efficiently.

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Managecore felt like the perfect fit for us, and their approach made this big set of goals we had in mind achievable. We added a lot of layers into this project, such as a HANA upgrade and other value-added efforts, while not having any internal experience with moving from on-prem to the cloud. Managecore, combined with RISE with SAP, put us on the right path.

Robyn McCall,
Chief Information Officer

Managecore helped to bridge all of the various gaps with respect to process and technology integrations that are relatively standard when shifting from on-prem to the cloud. As the project took shape with Managecore's help, the benefits of optimizing SAP systems on Google Cloud became clear.

GCPAT now runs ECC on HANA on Google Cloud and upgraded its system to Enhancement Pack 8, which gives them the flexibility to start using S/4HANA in the future with ERP and other required capabilities. Post migration, business processes including Order-to-Cash, Finance, and Operations Manufacturing will be a focus for improvement.

As part of its SAP workload migration, GCPAT also standardized all of its non-SAP workloads from a legacy cloud provider to Google Cloud. In all, GCPAT successfully exited its on-prem data center and moved all SAP and other IT systems to Google Cloud in only six months.

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We were able to help GCPAT complete this migration so quickly thanks to the power and ease of using Google Cloud. A lot of people will think these timelines are not feasible or projects of this scope can't be done quickly and correctly, but Managecore's knowledge and Google Cloud's flexibility makes anything possible.

Frank Powell,
President/Partner

Stability for the Start

"One of the biggest markers of success for us was really that none of our end users or the business at large even noticed the change," says Robyn. "Our SAP workloads and other IT processes were stable on Google Cloud from the start. We had no disruptions despite the massive scope of this migration. Everyone we speak to is amazed by what we've been able to accomplish in such a short time, dramatically improving our IT flexibility and allowing us to move forward in the ways we need to create value for the business."
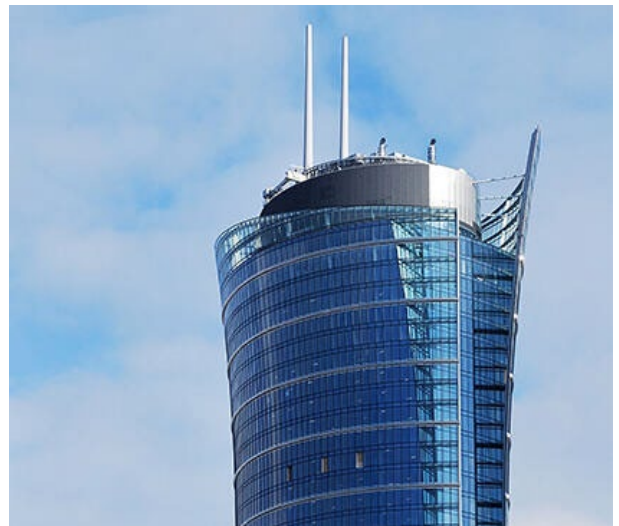
When the migration project commenced, GCPAT had more than 100 applications of varying sizes and on different platforms. The successful completion of this migration to Google Cloud puts it into a position to consolidate and rationalize this footprint through business transformation with S/4HANA. This will translate to more standardized, streamlined processes as well as savings from having to manage fewer applications powering the business.

"The migration to Google Cloud immediately improved our business agility. We can now instantly increase CPU, storage capacity, or memory for any workload to respond to changing needs," says Kishor. "We have a lot more visibility across the environment through system monitoring tools.

"This means we can take a more proactive approach to addressing IT issues before they impact our everyday operations. We have seen major improvements in carrying out Infrastructure changes, OS patching and application alerts/monitoring."

In the future, GCPAT plans to go all-in with S/4HANA while continuing to transform its business to be more flexible, scalable, and efficient. Given the ever-increasing strain on the global supply chain and demands of the construction industry, these internal improvements will position GCPAT to remain as a trusted provider of products and services for decades to come.