



Education case study



OUP reduces risk and gets future-ready with modern IT estate

As technology partner to the one of the world's leading university press, Cognizant delivers a global IT estate modernization that mitigates risk and drives operational efficiency.

At a glance

Industry
Education

Location
United Kingdom

Challenge
Modernize and rationalize a legacy global IT estate to increase resilience and generate efficiencies by leveraging new technologies.

Success Highlights

- 75% reduction in the volume of end-of-life equipment
- 978 legacy on-premises servers decommissioned
- 66% of workloads migrated to the cloud for scale, performance and flexibility

The challenge

Oxford University Press (OUP) is the one of the world's leading university press in the world, producing its first printed book in 1478 and receiving a royal license to print books in 1586. With over 500 years of experience at the forefront of knowledge and learning, today OUP publishes high-quality academic and educational resources and research around the globe.

OUP has operations in more than 50 locations globally and is organized into three publishing divisions: English Language Teaching (ELT), Academic and Education. Its titles range from academic monographs and textbooks to children's books and music. It also goes beyond traditional publishing, finding innovative ways to support learners in its mission to make knowledge accessible to all.



A sprawling technology estate in urgent need of modernization

OUP's technology estate had grown organically and was managed by multiple IT teams across the business. When OUP introduced a new Global Technology function with oversight and responsibility for the entire IT estate, the new team discovered that much of the infrastructure was end-of-life and no longer vendor-supported. There were many single points of failure, exposing risks to business continuity and recoverability. Maintaining the aging estate also required significant investment.

OUP Global Technology saw an opportunity to mitigate risk and to modernize the IT infrastructure and applications while restarting some stalled digital transformation initiatives.

This required the help of a trusted technology partner. OUP had already established a long-standing, strategic partnership with Cognizant for infrastructure service operations, application development, testing and support. With a proven track record of delivering transformation programs, we were selected to undertake the IT transformation and modernization project.

Our approach

Cognizant had an in-depth understanding of OUP's business and a wide range of relevant technology expertise. OUP also needed a flexible and adaptable partner, as the modernization would be delivered as multiple discrete projects, each with its own scope, goals and resourcing needs. We were able to meet this requirement for adaptability with our flexible 90% offshore resourcing model.

Our approach placed us as an extension of OUP's teams, with executive sponsorship on both sides, a joint steering committee and a governance framework to monitor and address any risks. We implemented a change delivery framework to ensure each project was appropriately resourced for on-time completion and established a demand management function with the required organizational backing to manage and resource projects coming through the pipeline.

For each project, Cognizant established a high-level demand brief and desired outcomes. This allowed a dedicated solution architect to propose a way forward for the project and create a blueprint for delivery.



Multiple projects contributed to a multi-year transformation program:

UK data center migration and modernization

Cognizant managed the migration of OUP's Oxford data center to a new facility capable of securely hosting critical on-premises services. This involved strengthening disaster recovery capabilities, decommissioning unused infrastructure and simplifying the local area network (LAN) to make it modular and scalable.

Device refresh and Microsoft 365 rollout

We took over a stalled rollout of Microsoft 365, incorporating a device refresh with virtual desktops and Microsoft Teams to allow OUP employees to transition to a remote and hybrid working model.

Americas infrastructure transformation

We conducted a full modernization and partial cloud migration of OUP's primary US-based data center, which serves sites in North America and Latin America. Data storage was migrated from an end-of-support on-premises solution to a Microsoft Azure landing zone with enhanced reliability. A legacy Citrix platform was also migrated to a Microsoft Azure virtual desktop solution to enable work anytime, anywhere. A business-critical Trunk Media Gateway (TMG) was replaced with a modern software-defined networking (SDN) solution from Cisco, delivered as a cloud service. A new software asset management (SAM) system was implemented to ensure effective license management and utilization.

IT spend management

OUP wanted to gain granular insight into its spend on services, licenses and support from IT suppliers so it could be more efficiently managed. For this, Cognizant designed and built a software solution to monitor and manage third-party IT spend, which paid for itself (and more) in six months.

Facilities management

Some projects required facilities and digital transformation expertise. To showcase our flexibility and adaptability, we were able to fully resource projects that involved, for example, preparing an unused floor of OUP's New York office for leasing to a third party, and managing a transition to a new warehouse services provider.

"Cognizant provided us with subject matter expertise to ensure we implemented the best approaches and technologies. They supported us from a thought leadership point of view as well as from a people and tools perspective in delivering a sequence of projects globally. We really couldn't have achieved the outcomes we have without them."

Graham Marsh, Portfolio Planning and Delivery, Oxford University Press

Business outcomes

Through this program, Cognizant has significantly strengthened OUP's disaster recovery capabilities, mitigating business risk while modernizing the technology estate. Additionally, the program advanced OUP's cloud initiatives and resolved persistent bottlenecks in network bandwidth. As a result, OUP now benefits from a stable, modern IT estate that enables more efficient operations and faster change delivery.

Significant outcomes to date include:

- **Increased resilience:** The volume of high and critical vulnerabilities has been reduced by 20% across the OUP estate, and the volume of end-of-life equipment has been cut by 75%.
- **Improved performance:** The implementation of internet breakouts from various sites has removed bottlenecks and improved latency, manageability and supportability.
- **Cost savings:** We decommissioned nearly 1,000 on-premises servers, which accounted for approximately 70% of OUP's IT estate. This, combined with the transition to software-defined networking, has delivered significant cost savings.
- **Agility and scalability:** Around two-thirds of OUP's on-premises workloads have been migrated to the cloud, enabling OUP to take advantage of flexible scalability when needed.
- **Enhanced compliance:** The introduction of a new software asset management solution has led to a 30% reduction in license exposure.



A flexible, resilient platform for OUP's future success

To realize its digital transformation plans, OUP needed a modern, resilient and high-performance IT and network infrastructure. Through its partnership with Cognizant, it has brought a legacy IT and connectivity estate up to date, reducing business risk, optimizing costs and creating a strong, flexible foundation for future innovation. With a large-scale business applications transformation on the horizon, OUP can confidently leverage modern, cloud-based software and services in its mission to help more people around the world achieve their potential through knowledge and learning.

75%

reduction in the volume of end-of-life equipment

978

legacy on-premises servers decommissioned

66%

of workloads migrated to the cloud



From legacy to cloud agility: OUP's transformation journey

Watch video :

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dl4GT21ySBg>

About Oxford University Press

Oxford University Press publishes for three primary markets across the world: research, education, and English language teaching. OUP's mission is to further the University of Oxford's objective of excellence in research, scholarship, and education by publishing worldwide. For more information visit <https://corp.oup.com/>.



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