

Taking Guidewire to the cloud

10 KEY INSIGHTS FOR PROJECT SUCCESS

A curated summary of what to take
into consideration in a cloud deployment
of Guidewire.

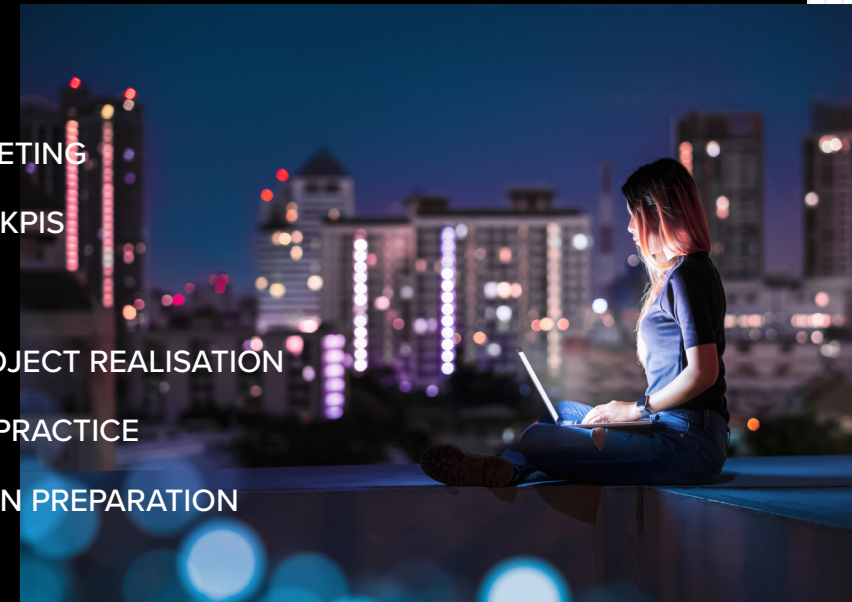


Many insurers are looking to Guidewire Cloud to help them improve time to market for new products, reduce IT management time and make it simpler to benefit from analytics insights, among others.

The move to cloud, however, might feel like an intimidating task. Here, we'll examine some of the key points that we've learned from helping customers to minimise risk and make their cloud migrations a resounding success.

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01 | RESPONSIBILITIES AND GOVERNANCE

Define key responsibilities and processes to avoid complexity and delay



Cloud migration typically involves three separate organisations: the insurer, Guidewire and a Guidewire Consulting partner. This has the potential to create complexity, so defining responsibilities and accountabilities across these organisations (including the availability of resources, reporting processes and how decision-making will work) is important to avoid project delays.

Clearly defining and communicating the scope of the project ensures that all organisations are clear on details such as whether the project only tackles technical migration, which custom features will be converted to out-of-the box features, and which of the newest Guidewire Cloud platform functionalities will be leveraged.

02 | KEY BUSINESS AND IT RESOURCES

Get the right people involved early on and make sure they're trained and engaged

Finding people with the right experience and expertise helps ensure that the correct cloud-related standards and rules are being followed. This is particularly relevant for customers that choose the Guidewire Cloud Platform, since in this case, teams across all organisations are required to have the correct skills, certifications and ratios. For example, Guidewire requires a strict ratio of one Certified Ace to three Certified Associates per workstream.

Finding the key resources for each role goes beyond simply identifying the right person for the job, however. It's also necessary to make sure they're fully available, engaged, properly trained and are involved at the earliest stages of the project to ensure their commitment.

Particularly in the first stages of the upgrade, a small, qualified team will work better than a large one to merge the code, because this task cannot be run by parallel groups of people. This team can be expanded when addressing remediation items.





03 | THE 'AS IS' STATE

Invest time in finding out the current position before making changes

Getting a clear view of the way an organisation currently works is needed before making the technological and procedural changes required to move to cloud.

This involves making sure processes, operational models, systems and technologies are fully understood. Critical questions here include where this information is documented, who holds the relevant knowledge of these systems and whether they are available to provide input to the project.

For Continuous Integration and Continuous Delivery/Deployment (CI/CD), a clear understanding of the pipeline and development processes is needed, including tools, configurations and people. Gaps are likely to be found that will need to be addressed in the new cloud-based processes.



CASE STUDY: Modernising core insurance systems to accelerate time to market

GFT has leveraged its cloud knowledge and experience to deploy one of the largest implementations of Guidewire InsuranceSuite in the Cloud for one of France's major insurance companies, helping it to bring compelling new products to market faster.

> [READ CASE STUDY](#)

04 | THE 'TO BE' STATE

Understand where you're heading so that change management is effective

Key players need to have a clear understanding of why the transformation is taking place now and what everything will look like after the project. On top of the usual change management that needs to take place with business users, the IT Operations teams will also be highly impacted.

Thoroughly analysing, understanding, schematising and testing the new CI/CD pipeline is essential so that change can be managed effectively. The process of publishing code, correcting errors and

enhancing software will be different after the project. As Guidewire Cloud Services will manage the platform after migration, management responsibilities and control of various elements are likely to change.

Any concerns like the ones described above should be anticipated and tackled head on to ensure adoption is as seamless as possible.



05 | FUNDING AND BUDGETING

Budget for the new requirements of cloud and for unplanned work

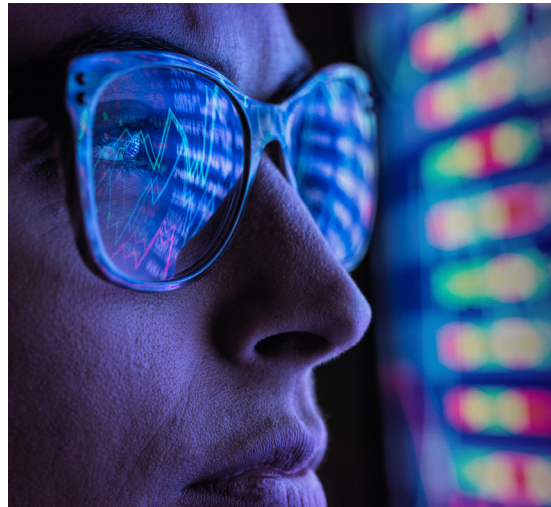
Proper budgeting for the project is absolutely essential, including a clear view of the budget structures and project funding mechanisms. Business requirements should be precise enough to anticipate and properly size infrastructure usage to support peak performance (such as the number of AWS resources and environments). This will prevent under-evaluation at the budgeting stage. There may be other new requirements and costs involved in using the cloud (as opposed to on prem) which should also be taken into account.

Once the project has started, the continuous Cloud Assurance Assessments will validate proper use of the coding standards and highlight issues. This can generate additional unplanned work, and proper funds should be set aside to accommodate these.



06 | MEASUREMENT AND KPIS

Measure and track value to help with planning and prioritisation



Being ready to measure value is essential for realising the benefits outlined in the project business case. To achieve this, the relevant people must be committed to the business case and the appropriate KPIs need to be agreed.

All cloud transition activities should be tracked at both an overview and a detailed level, and KPIs must be shared with all parties to ensure transparency and raise awareness. The remediation backlog requires particular attention and separate tracking, as it evolves along with the development process. Since the remediation backlog is updated cyclically by Guidewire after an initial assessment, new remediation items may emerge that weren't detected in previous cycles. Tackling this may require an increase in team capacity.

If code has not been developed in a way that is compliant with Guidewire's best practices, there may be significant work to bring it up to standard. Custom

code may need to be reverted to out-of-the-box features, and functional processes may need to be enhanced with the new features available with cloud. A clear view of the business value associated with each of these tasks or new elements allows for an effective prioritisation of the backlog.

In-depth tracking and communication of each step in the test cycles is also key, making sure that all potential combinations of the processes and behaviours of the pre-cloud version of the code have been tested in the new application.



FURTHER READING:

Interested in digital transformation that delivers on its promise? Download our white paper

> [“Maximising value and avoiding pitfalls”](#).



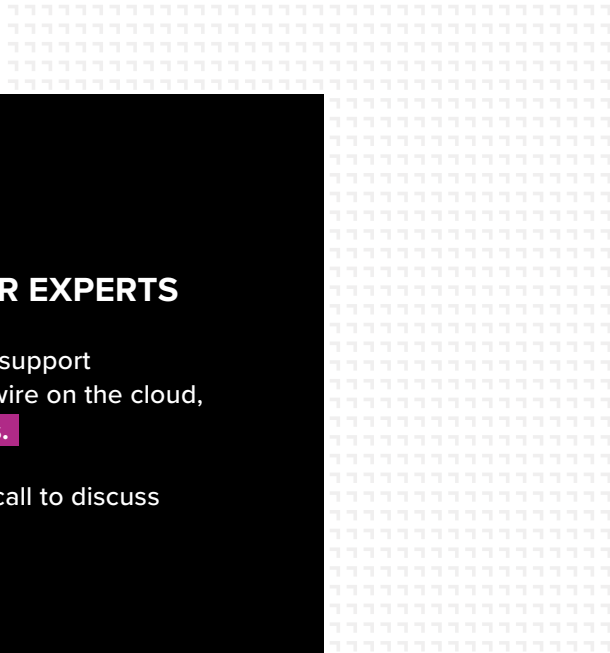
07 | MITIGATING RISK

Put emphasis on tabletop testing to make recovery processes more efficient

Risk assessment and mitigation is an essential part of any project. Relevant parties involved in the production support should take part in tabletop testing, so the processes and procedures required during an issue or failure can be optimised regardless of which team detects or handles the incident. This ensures that the recovery process is as fast and effective as possible if that incident ever actually occurs.

08 | STRATEGIES FOR PROJECT REALISATION

Create space for the preparation phase



TALK TO OUR EXPERTS

If you would like support
to deploy Guidewire on the cloud,

[▶ reach out to us.](#)

We'll give you a call to discuss
your needs.

The final phase of the deployment – the preparation phase – involves a variety of activities that are needed before go-live, such as documentation development, knowledge transfer, communication and tooling.

Anticipating what will be needed for this stage and allowing some contingency helps to make sure that employees do not get overwhelmed at this point of the project, leading to mistakes and delays. Preparing the elements needed for support and post-production before the preparation phase is reached allows employees to focus purely on delivery during this stage.

Deciding in advance on an appropriate length of time for code freezes is important to keep the project stable and on track before go-live.

09 | ESTABLISHING BEST PRACTICE

Ensure consistent high standards with cross-functional roles

The project requires a dedicated multi-disciplinary support group covering all practice areas. Cross-functional members or technical staff with a good overview of development activities can help to make sure good practices and high standards are uniformly applied, which avoids errors such as duplicates or misalignments.

This is particularly important considering there will be changes in responsibilities once Guidewire is involved in the day-to-day operations. Developing and implementing efficient testing methods also means that less time and resources are taken up during the stabilisation phase or when rolling out new features.



HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT GFT AND GUIDEWIRE?



13
SPECIALISATIONS

3
GUIDEWIRE
INNOVATION
AWARDS



400
CONSULTANTS



11000+
CERTIFICATIONS



Visit our site to discover
what makes GFT unique
when it comes to
implementing Guidewire!

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10 | PROGRAM EXECUTION PREPARATION

Define standards and identify affected systems at inception

The inception phase is foundational in the success of a migration project.

The applicable standards for the project should be validated and shared across all teams at the end of the inception phase. Then, when changes inevitably happen later in the project, there will always be a standard set of guidelines in force for all work from inception to go-live.

At this stage, all the systems that will be affected by the cloud migration must be taken into account, since a perfect upgrade will still fail if the integration with other systems isn't fully addressed. A clear view of all the integration points, dependencies, legacy systems and satellite systems should be held in a High-Level Design (HLD) document, allowing all the relevant components to be considered, tracked and prioritised.

ABOUT GFT

Helping you transform for growth

GFT has been a Guidewire partner since 2011 and currently holds the status of Consulting Advantage partner. GFT's Guidewire skills, knowledge and competency have led to the achievement of several specialisations in the EMEA and the Americas regions, including cloud and **> Global Delivery partner.**

Working with us allows you to take advantage of the learnings that come from many years of implementation experience on-premise and in the cloud, helping you to realise the business benefits of Guidewire quickly and within budget. Our Guidewire project expertise spans twelve countries and seven languages – a strong local footprint that allows us to design solutions that meet specific regional requirements, languages and regulations.



If you're thinking of moving to cloud and would like to discuss how GFT could help you achieve the full potential of your upgrade, contact us at **insurance.coe@gft.com**

About the authors



Andrea Cordoni
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Andrea Cordoni currently leads GFT's Guidewire Practice in Italy. He has over 30 years of experience in the IT industry, in roles ranging from software development to IT services delivery and systems integration. For the last decade, Andrea has been dedicated to project management with a particular focus on transformation projects for the insurance sector. His extensive technical knowledge coupled with a strong business acumen, enables him to advise customers on the best solutions to meet their business objectives.

Andrea has earned a number of industry certifications, including Project Management Professional (PMP), Agile Scrum Master and Guidewire InsuranceSuite 10.0.



Jérôme Isabelle
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Jérôme Isabelle has more than 20 years of experience in IT, including ten years in the insurance sector. During the last decade he has worked with some of the world's largest insurance companies to develop transformation strategies and implement innovative solutions, particularly those based around the Guidewire software suite.

Jérôme has experience across major digital transformation projects, in both the American and European markets, with multidisciplinary teams. This – along with his high-level management and technology skills, his understanding of the evolution of international markets, his clear vision of each individual organisation's issues and his Guidewire expertise – combine to give him a unique know-how which allows him to help his clients address their own particular business challenges.



Jocelyn-Alexandre Michel
Delivery Manager, GFT

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Jocelyn-Alexandre Michel is a delivery manager and cloud practice expert at GFT Canada. In addition to his B.A. in Marketing and his MBA in e-Business, he has 7 years of experience in the insurance industry, mainly with Guidewire software. Jocelyn-Alexandre has worked as a key player on several major digital transformation projects for Canadian and European insurers.

His experience with the Guidewire product suite for all core modules and digital products combined with his knowledge of the Guidewire ecosystem of solution partners around the world make him an authority on the subject. This expertise in cloud migration and cloud implementation/development projects has led him to manage a major project for one of France's largest insurance companies.

**Would you like to speak to the authors?
Reach out to them on LinkedIn.**

ABOUT GFT

Shaping the future of digital business

As a pioneer for digital transformation GFT develops sustainable solutions across new technologies – from cloud engineering and artificial intelligence to blockchain/DLT.

With its deep technological expertise, strong partnerships and comprehensive market know-how GFT offers advice to the financial and insurance sectors, as well as in the manufacturing industry. Through the intelligent use of IT solutions GFT increases productivity and creates added value for clients. Companies gain easy and safe access to scalable IT-applications and innovative business models.

Founded in 1987 and located in more than 15 markets to ensure proximity to clients, the GFT team consists of over 9,000 determined talents. GFT provides them with career opportunities in all areas of software engineering and innovation. The GFT Technologies SE share is listed in the SDAX index of the German Stock Exchange (ticker: GFT-XE).



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