Transforming With Visibility and Agility

An interview with Brandon Shopp, Group Vice President of Product, SolarWinds

Moving to the cloud doesn't mean having clouded vision.

In fact, it should mean the opposite — more visibility into what's happening in your system, more ability to monitor data and user activity. That's where the observability company SolarWinds comes in.

Brandon Shopp with SolarWinds has seen agencies struggle to migrate from on-premises systems to the cloud, and he has four suggestions to help them transform responsibly and with agility.

Plot the Course and the Pace

An agency that enjoys system visibility can measure its workloads, before and after the transition. Directors can understand the resources and storage they need, the costs involved and how quickly change can take place.

"Go at a pace that makes sense for your organization. In digital transformations, it's not a race — it's a journey," said Shopp. "And you can't go from zero to 100 in two seconds flat. It's going to take time to get up to higher speed. If you take shortcuts or you're going too fast, you're going to miss something."

Plan to Prioritize

Some workloads are primed for transformation and the cloud, whereas others might not be ready.

Shopp recommended having agencies look deeply at what they aim to accomplish to determine what to include in their initiatives. Start with easier applications, before doing something more challenging, said Shopp. He urged organizations to focus on tool consolidation, which can reduce workloads and costs, as well as unnecessary risk.

SolarWinds helps clarify agency options, so that organizations can understand the challenges, priorities and efforts involved in each move.

And, as Shopp said, "we're making sure you have your eyes on the ball, that you always know whether something is on premises, in the cloud or in the midst of going to the cloud."

Build New Skills for New Tools

Staff working their way through a digital transformation, such as a cloud migration, will need new skillsets. They're going to use new services and capabilities — and none of them will be the same, Shopp said.

SolarWinds helps users build knowledge, intelligence, configuration smarts and cloud awareness, he explained. "Intelligence in a box," as Shopp called it, is codified into SolarWinds products and helps agency employees monitor workloads.

"When it comes to understanding your infrastructure and your workloads, no matter where they reside — on premises, the cloud or hybrid — we've got you covered," Shopp said.

Make Data Accessible

For agencies with large amounts of sensitive data, such as the Department of Veterans Affairs, visibility and agility are crucial. The goal is to make constituent services and data as accessible, efficiently maintained and secure as possible, and available from anywhere in the world.

As Shopp said, moving to the cloud is not the Holy Grail that will solve all problems, but it is a large part of many agency transformations, and it's important to do it the right way so that agencies — and constituents — benefit.

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