

Professional services provider acquires just part of another company



The migration team successfully completes the selective IT integration required by its large acquisition with help from migration tools and flexible support from Quest.

Professional Services Provider

Country: **United Kingdom**

Employees: **77,500**

Industry: **Professional services**

The most challenging migrations demand the best tools — and the most flexible partners.

The IT integration effort associated with merger and acquisition (M&A) deals today is challenging even in the simplest and most straightforward scenarios. But what if you're acquiring only part of a company, rather than all of it? And that company has a complex IT environment resulting from years of previous M&As, with both on-premises and cloud workloads, assorted legacy applications, and dozens of terabytes of data that you may or may not need to migrate?

In those situations, having top-of-the-line solutions and an experienced, flexible partner leaps from "really nice to have" to "absolutely vital," as one professional services company attests. When tasked with integrating only selected portions of another company's large hybrid IT environment, the firm's IT team delivered a successful, on-time migration, with help from comprehensive solutions and flexible support from Quest.

About this case study

When a professional services firm acquired just a portion of another company, the IT team was faced with completing a selective IT integration across a wide range of on premises and cloud systems — and with limited visibility into the specifics of the other environment.

Solution

With help from a flexible partnership with Quest and Quest's comprehensive set of migration solutions, the IT team delivered a successful, on-time IT integration, earning accolades and promotions from senior management.

Benefits

- Enabled successful integration of seven on-premises and two online environments, on time and on budget.
- Provided flexibility in choice of services, as well as in licensing to accommodate the team's limited visibility into the source environment.
- Smoothly migrated both on-prem and cloud data, including multiple data centers, 8,000 mailboxes across multiple Exchange and Exchange Online environments, and content from both SharePoint Online and legacy SharePoint versions.

Solutions at a glance

- Microsoft Platform Management

Acquiring just part of a company presents unique challenges, even for companies with lots of M&A experience.

The professional services company delivers a broad range of services that help keep the UK running, from digital transformation to security to waste avoidance. Its large customer base spans multiple verticals, including financial services, retail, healthcare, education and government.

Although the firm had made a number of acquisitions over the years, a new acquisition deal broke the mold in terms of both the nature and the size of the deal. “We signed a contract to purchase just the facilities management portion of another company,” explains a senior portfolio manager. “In previous acquisitions, we bought whole businesses; this was the first one in which we purchased just a portion of a company.

Moreover, the acquisition was orders of magnitude larger than previous deals. “The company we were acquiring had about 30,000 employees, while previous acquisitions involved as few as 300 people,” the senior portfolio manager adds. “So, we’d never done anything on the size and scale that we were now facing.”

The acquisition team quickly realized that these factors would complicate the associated IT integration significantly. “The partial acquisition was the biggest challenge because we had to rely on the company we were acquiring to give us information about what emails, file shares, SharePoint sites and other data should be migrated and what needed to be retained by the other company,” recalls the senior portfolio manager. “Normally, we would use discovery tools to identify the content to be moved, as well as understand the data flows and dependencies, such as which systems each application interacts with and how. In this case, we were unable to have the administrative permissions required for discovery tools to carry out those tasks.”

Faced with the challenge of migrating large but indeterminate volumes of data across multiple workloads, the professional services firm knew that it needed more than the point solutions it had

used in the past, and began looking for a flexible, experienced partner with a complete portfolio of migration solutions. Quest delivered on both counts.

Quest offers a comprehensive suite of migration solutions.

Quest offers proven migration tools to handle a wide range of migration scenarios. The tools the professional services firm chose included:

- On Demand Migration, a flexible SaaS solution that simplifies the process of securely migrating Microsoft 365 tenants running workloads such as Exchange, OneDrive, SharePoint and Teams, as well as on-premises Active Directory
- Content Matrix, which simplifies migration from legacy SharePoint environments to newer SharePoint versions or Microsoft 365
- Archive Shuttle, which quickly and securely migrates email archives from legacy systems to Microsoft 365 and other archiving solutions

Working with Quest was a very collegiate and collaborative endeavor.

Senior Portfolio Manager, Professional Services Firm

Quest proves to be an experienced — and flexible — partner.

Equally important, Quest proved to be a top-notch partner. Even given the very limited discovery that the integration team was able to perform to understand the project scope, the experienced Quest team was able to craft a deal that required minimal changes during the migration effort.

“Quest provided very professional services and solid tools, and they were very flexible about what licensing we needed to purchase,” the senior portfolio manager notes. “We were told by our counterparts in the company being acquired that we’d need to migrate 80 terabytes of data. But we didn’t really believe that, since during our previous migrations, we had migrated only around 20–25% of the available data

because the rest was rubbish that the business didn't need. With Quest, we purchased only the licensing we needed, which was really good and saved us a lot of money."

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Senior Portfolio Manager, Professional Services Firm

Moreover, Quest was able to deliver exactly the services that the firm wanted, rather than offering only all-or-nothing choices. "Quest gave us the flexibility to choose a contract in which they provided the tools, a first-pass pilot to get things going, migration of a complicated mail archive and knowledge transfer to our teams to actually do most of the work," explains the senior portfolio manager. "At first, we planned to use one strategic partner to perform the IT integration, but then we switched to another company that had more experience. The enablement approach provided by Quest enabled us to make that transition quite seamlessly."

In addition, Quest professional services was always ready and able to help the team work through issues during the migration project. "Working with Quest was a very collegiate and collaborative endeavor," the senior portfolio manager recalls. "In particular, there were a lot of challenges around getting the permissions that the tools needed. And it worked — we were successful as a team."

Handling unexpected complexities

The source environment was both large and complicated — but the team was nevertheless able to deliver a successful IT integration. "The company we were integrating had itself acquired many businesses over the years, and it had only partially moved to the cloud," notes the senior portfolio manager. "As a result, we had to deal with multiple data centers,

various cloud services up through Microsoft 365, and even boxes under desks in offices running everything from SharePoint 2003 to SharePoint Online. But even though the source environment ended up being far more convoluted and complex than we thought, with the Quest toolset, we were able to bring the data across in a way that made it useful to our company. After all, it would have been no good to bring over content if we couldn't use it once we'd gotten it."

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Senior Portfolio Manager, Professional Services Firm

Integrating nine on-premises and cloud IT environments — on time and on budget

In the end, the firm successfully migrated seven on-premises and two online environments into its own IT ecosystem. For example, the SharePoint migration included both SharePoint 2007 and SharePoint Online, with some 300 SharePoint Online sites being migrated and most on-prem data being moved as archive.

The email migration was especially complex, involving more than 8,000 mailboxes across multiple different Exchange services in four domains, and requiring the team to selectively extract the email for specific single contracts into its Exchange Online. "Over the course of 12 months, we migrated users over in groups," explains the senior portfolio manager. "Timing was critical: In any acquisition, you lose people, both through the business deal and because people choose to leave. We didn't want to spend unnecessary money creating Exchange Online accounts for everyone on the first day of the project,

knowing that by the time we actually did the migration, some of them would have left the business.”

Moreover, the IT integration effort needed to fit in cleanly with the larger acquisition effort. “One key thing was to make sure we paid people,” the senior portfolio manager notes. “Quest helped us ensure that everything fit together like a jigsaw puzzle. We were able to make sure that we brought users over as they were put into our SAP system for payment of their wages, and that we left behind everyone who was staying with the other company.”

A successful project enables the IT team to shine — and even helps earn a promotion.

Partnering with Quest and taking advantage of the vendor’s comprehensive suite of migration solutions helped the IT team deliver a successful migration despite the enormous challenges. “The CEOs were extremely pleased with the way the acquisition went,” the senior portfolio manager reports. “We finished everything in line with the TSAs and were able to cut off cleanly and smoothly from the other company. Huge pats on the back were passed out, and personally, I got promoted.”

Asked what advice he would give to another IT team facing an IT integration effort, the senior portfolio manager was clear about the value of partnering with Quest: “Success breeds success. Having the right tools to be able to do the job within the required timeframe and within budget is essential.”

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PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

Software

- On Demand Migration
- Content Matrix
- Archive Shuttle

About Quest Software

Quest Software creates technology and solutions that build the foundation for enterprise AI. Focused on data management and governance, cybersecurity and platform modernization, Quest helps organizations address their most pressing challenges and make the promise of AI a reality. Around the globe, more than 45,000 companies including over 90% of the Fortune 500 count on Quest Software. For more information, visit www.quest.com or follow Quest Software on [X \(formerly Twitter\)](#) and [LinkedIn](#).