



Formwize

100% availability expands opportunities



When Formwize needed to meet the more stringent demands of new customer segments, Fujitsu ensured the Formwize.io application would be 100% available. Transforming it to a cloud-native application while utilising Cloudsoft AMP mitigates any risk of downtime.

Challenge

Keeping cloud-based applications up and running has become increasingly vital. Formwize needed to ensure its application would meet the 'always on' needs of new government and banking customers.

Solution

Long-term partner Fujitsu took a cloud-native approach based on containers to transform Formwize's monolithic application running on Microsoft Azure, utilising Cloudsoft AMP to mitigate downtime.

Outcomes

- The market for Formwize has expanded to include government and banking customers
- Cloudsoft AMP eliminates any downtime in the event of a failure
- Formwize engineers can focus on higher-value tasks

“If there are issues with one hyperscaler cloud, Fujitsu's Cloudsoft AMP-enabled solution remediates failure or degradation and reports back to us in the morning.”

James Neilson, Chief Digital Officer, Formwize



100%

availability expands opportunities for ubiquitous application providers: Trifecta of cloud platforms (Azure, Amazon and private cloud)

Cloud becomes ubiquitous

The global pandemic accelerated the need for more scalable and flexible approaches and, with that, for organisations across all sectors to embrace the cloud. Even the most cautious, including governments and financial institutions, are now using cloud-based applications as the building blocks for their most mission-critical services.

The opportunity this brings application providers is immense; it opens their market to a whole new segment of customers. But as these digital initiatives expand opportunities, they also open up new risks. One of these risks is increasing complexity, which in turn impacts digital operational resilience. Application providers must ensure their applications run well, reliably and at scale, whichever environment they are deployed in. And that means ensuring a robust cloud foundation no matter which hyperscale cloud provider their application runs on, whether it is Amazon Web Services (AWS), Microsoft Azure or another.

Formwize is no exception, relying on hyperscale clouds to provide a solid foundation for its Formwize.io application. With customers ranging from the UK government to major banks, Formwize needs to ensure that the cloud foundation is reliable and performant, so Formwize.io is always available. There is no room for downtime.

“New opportunities require a high velocity of new and changed code, and that code velocity can bring instability,” explains James Neilson, Chief Digital Officer at Formwize. “Without the innovative use of automated DevSecOps and ‘always on’ technologies, we could not have guaranteed the required uptime for key major governmental projects to their demanding timescales.”

Moving to a cloud-native approach

Formwize and Fujitsu have worked together as partners for a number of years. As a proactive partner, Fujitsu shares its advice on responding to the latest trends and taking full advantage of the most recent technical developments. Formwize can also leverage Fujitsu's cloud infrastructure and cloud security expertise, application transformation and modernisation capabilities, and SI capabilities.

So, when Fujitsu approached Formwize with the idea of modernising Formwize.io, Formwize was eager to explore the idea. The monolithic traditional SaaS-based web application was solely hosted on Microsoft Azure. “Our application was bound onto a single hyperscaler cloud,” reveals Neilson. “Moving it to another hyperscaler upon primary provider failure was a manual exercise – and that’s something you don’t want to effect during the night.”

Fujitsu explained that for Formwize to take full advantage of the new market opportunities, it must deliver the guaranteed ‘always on’ service that customers such as banks and the government require. For that, it needed to move its cloud-based application to a cloud-native approach based on microservices and containers. As a result, this would allow the application to run on any hyperscaler cloud, giving Formwize the option to replace its IaaS service or even adopt a multi-cloud approach. Such flexibility is increasingly important as regulators become increasingly focussed on cloud vendor resilience and portability.

Industry:
Information & Communication

Location:
UK

Website:
formwize.io

About the customer

Formwize provides enterprise-level organisations with the ability to capture data, collate it in custom reports and share it across a wide variety of mediums. Headquartered in Perthshire, Scotland, Formwize provides a flexible, highly-integrated platform to capture insights and act upon them. It serves a wider range of customers, including the UK's Critical National Infrastructure, the UK government and major banks.

Neilson adds that combining cloud-native technologies with Cloudsoft AMP would allow Formwize to harness automatic burn and build routines, which would simplify the move between cloud providers and, critically, automatically test the move worked before re-spawning the live service.

Always on guaranteed

Fujitsu rebuilt Formwize.io as a cloud-native application that runs as containerised microservices on Azure. In addition, it leveraged Cloudsoft AMP to deliver an always-on cloud service for Formwize to run on. Cloudsoft AMP manages the Formwize.io application across the hyperscaler clouds, quickly restarting it or re-spawning it within a tertiary appointed hyperscaler cloud in the event of a failure.

Implemented as a critical resilience platform, Cloudsoft AMP ensures 100% availability by reducing recovery times to zero, enhancing customer satisfaction while helping Formwize.io to ensure regulatory compliance. With Cloudsoft AMP's blueprints and policies, Formwize.io can model its applications and effect automated policies to manage them between cloud environments and providers, and this zero-touch approach to application management frees up engineers' valuable time to focus on other activities.

"Harnessing a trifecta of cloud models, we can now meet the most stringent service availability and data durability requests our UK CNI (Critical National Infrastructure) customers need," highlights Neilson. "Without Fujitsu and its partners, we could not have achieved this innovation in-house."

Opening new doors

The Fujitsu-led initiative provides Formwize with a cloud-native deployment template that guarantees the 100% availability of its application across any hyperscaler cloud. It also enables one-click automated deployment whatever the customer environment, accelerating and simplifying the onboarding process for new customers.

With Fujitsu by its side, Formwize has enhanced its status in the highly competitive application marketplace. The application provider can offer its solution to almost any customer in any sector, no matter how demanding their requirements are. That expanded customer base ensures sustained growth and success into the future. Neilson shares: "Since our Fujitsu conversion to 100% cloud-native, we have worked further with Fujitsu as a channel partner, serving new customers in the retail sector, customers that – in the current climate – also demand extreme levels of customer service systems availability."

He concludes by voicing how well working with Fujitsu using Agile techniques suited Formwize: "The velocity of pure digital collaboration suited our developers, as did using 100% digital collaboration tools. The 'show and tell' sessions where our teams met to demonstrate progress were treated as special events. We have never worked with a partner with such an indigenous human-centric culture, and our engineering team regularly cites the project as a benchmark."



CLCUDSOFT | AMP

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