



Guidewire Upgrade Factory

Proven ways to achieve a seamless upgrade and create a foundation for innovation

Technology platforms like Guidewire InsuranceSuite™ empower insurers, their agents and their customers to communicate quickly and efficiently through digital applications. These platforms also provide access to data and analytics that can improve pricing, underwriting, customer retention and profitability.

By having a strategy and process in place for seamlessly implementing new software releases, your organization can make the most of software upgrades. This is where Cognizant can help. As one of the world's leading insurance technology advisers, we have the resources and tools to help insurers of any size implement the latest versions of Guidewire InsuranceSuite, whether on-premise, on your own private cloud or on Guidewire's SaaS. We call our approach the Guidewire Upgrade Factory.

Successful upgrades are carefully planned and incorporated into your IT roadmap and business strategy to capture value, optimize return on investment and, of course, encourage continued positive momentum and business trajectory.

At best, upgrades can be distracting to those involved. At worst, they can cause instability in the IT system backbone and introduce risk into the IT landscape due to the integrated nature of applications.

Before beginning an upgrade, we suggest you discuss and answer a few key questions:

- Why are you upgrading? What is the business case, and which new features do you desire?
- What functionality and processes are being upgraded?
- How are you upgrading?
- When are you upgrading?
- What is your data strategy?
- What skill sets, process and approach are required?

The following pages provide an overview of these considerations, guidance on how to approach them and common challenges that we can help you overcome.

Why upgrade?



Why are you upgrading?

The answers can vary, but having a keen understanding of the need to upgrade is critical to effectively communicate the benefits of doing so — and the risks of doing nothing. Typical reasons for executing an upgrade include:

- Licensing requirements mandate
- Improving the technical foundation (architecture and performance)
- Taking advantage of new features and functionality available in the latest product release(s) to improve business capabilities
- Enterprise strategy to adopt a cloud-based IT landscape
- Increasing the level of conformance by replacing configured features with out-of-the-box features to reduce maintenance and optimize future upgrade paths

Regardless of the reason for the upgrade, it's important for stakeholders to understand the business drivers to ensure the support required for success. The consensus buy-in for an upgrade starts with a clear roadmap that clarifies the path forward for IT and the business; it sets the stage for collaboration on a product that is maintainable and usable.

What functionality and processes are being upgraded?

For any upgrade, your company has a chance to review and optimize business processes dependent on the upgraded systems. This leads to new questions, such as:

Which out-of-the-box features are needed by your business?

Remember, very few upgrades are “push-button” endeavors, so establish and manage scope rigorously.

A large US insurer came to us for help replacing a heavily customized worker’s comp system that had been built over many years and contained significant technical debt. We replaced it with the latest out-of-the-box version of Guidewire Cloud. Doing so helped the insurer reduce maintenance overhead and optimize their path to future upgrades.

What current customizations will the new version render obsolete?

Some accelerators, when upgraded to the v10 version, will have a different process, interface or user interface from the old version.

For a large US carrier, we recommended reverting to the base technology for claims areas such as scheduling vendor services and litigation, eliminating previous customizations. This enabled the insurer to reduce upgrade costs in the short term and optimize ongoing maintenance and support costs in the long term.

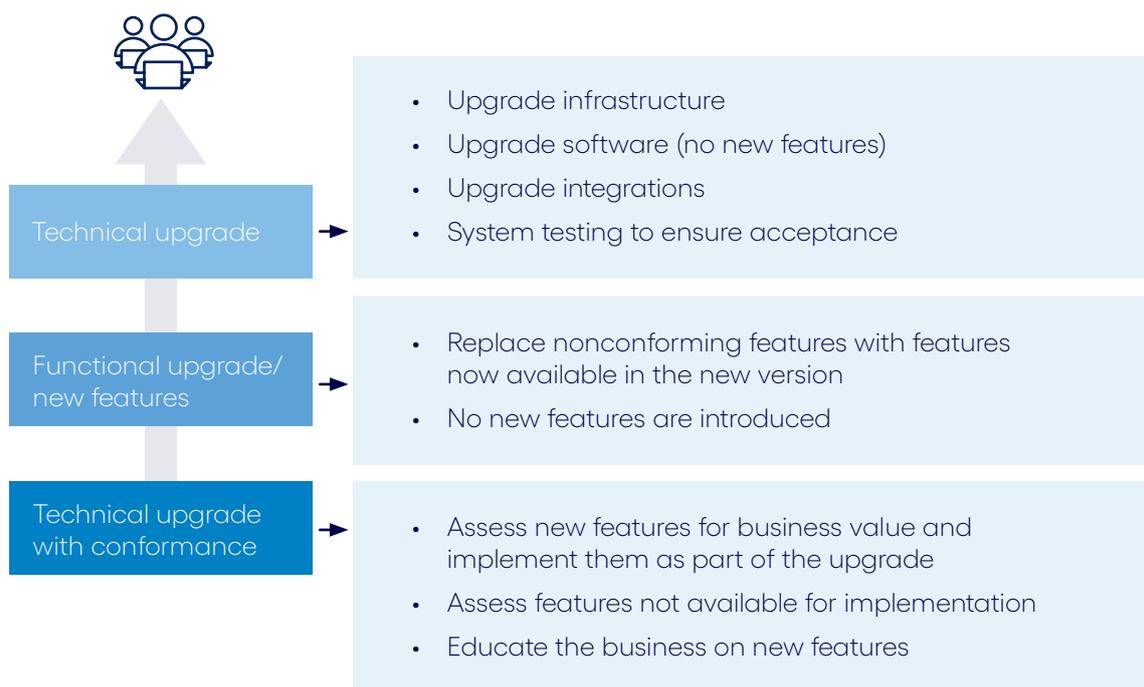
Will the upgrade include any enhancements?

Carriers should study and understand the new features available in the latest Guidewire version and decide which would bring value to the organization.

We helped a carrier completely redefine and automate assignment rules, which reduced the amount of time claims managers spend assigning and reassigning claims.

How are you upgrading?

When considering an upgrade, there are different approaches, as well as some additional steps when upgrading to cloud, especially on Guidewire SaaS. In all cases, the infrastructure is updated to support the new Guidewire product version.



Technical upgrade considerations when moving to Guidewire Cloud

When moving to Guidewire Cloud, some additional processes should be taken into account, including:

- Set up environment and database upgrade owned by Guidewire
- Upgrade software with no new features or replace nonconforming features with features now available in the new version
- Adopt new features available in the new version
- Upgrade integrations, accelerators, etc. and perform necessary remediation on the Guidewire software, as well as on-premise/external integrations
- Upgrade database to Guidewire Cloud by collaborating with Guidewire
- Conduct system testing to ensure acceptance, performance testing of designated functions, etc.

When are you upgrading?

Timing is crucial with any upgrade. By planning your upgrade to limit disruption to normal business cycles, you can help your team focus on and prioritize the task(s) at hand. Doing so will also allow your end users to better absorb and adapt to process and application changes.

Consider the following when determining upgrade timing:

- With Guidewire Cloud being the platform of choice, there is an onus to migrate to the Cloud version so as to avail the latest offering from the Insurance suite.
- Are there other dependent software products or infrastructure that is not supported by the target version of the Guidewire product being upgraded (such as specific versions of Java, Oracle and Microsoft SQL Server)?
- Are there current, planned or ongoing projects for other systems or applications (such as database upgrades or interfaces) that would impact the upgrade functions, etc.
- Upgrades involve far more than just installing new products. Before you deploy your upgrade, you must identify a rollout strategy and contingency plan, and understand whether the upgrade will require changes to the data model. It's also important to track any systems and vendors related to the upgrade and assess how they will be impacted.
- From the initial stages of an upgrade, don't forget to plan for end-user training and support after deployment. By communicating clearly and often to business users and providing dedicated support after the initial deployment, you can smooth the transition to a new version and help ease the change from old to new processes.

What is your data strategy for moving to Guidewire Cloud?

If you're moving to Guidewire Cloud, determine what data you need from Guidewire Cloud, why you need that data, and the frequency of that data. Decide how you want to use this data for further analytics, reporting and reconciliation requirements.

What skill sets, resources and approach are required for the upgrade?

Upgrading to any new version requires specific roles and skills. Having successfully executed Guidewire upgrades for multiple clients, our experience suggests that successful upgrades require a range of talents and roles. These include business analysts, functional consultants, integration consultants, testers, project managers, data conversion specialists, data architects (for cloud data access and Guidewire DataHub and InfoCenter), reporting analysts, analytics specialists and data management and delivery specialists.

While the depth and breadth of each role are largely based on the scope of the upgrade, it's essential to have the right people in the right locations with the right skills.

Resource model

Cognizant delivers upgrades using our onshore/offshore delivery model, which relies on a proven, high-quality, streamlined offshoring process that uses standard interaction models.

Upgrade approach

We offer property and casualty insurers our continuous Guidewire InsuranceSuite™ Upgrade Factory methodology, a cyclical approach to the upgrade process.

Standard Guidewire steps are typical actions that Guidewire would recommend as part of any upgrade process. During the upgrade assessment phase, Cognizant will use accelerators and tools to speed up analysis activities, such as a conformance assessment. We will also review the remediation backlog created by Guidewire as part of the assessment to help prepare a timeline.



Upgrade Phases

Assessment

The upgrade lifecycle starts with the assessment. Our core team of upgrade professionals performs a thorough assessment of the client's existing Guidewire implementation. The output of the assessment includes:



Accelerators and templates used during this phase include:

- **Gap assessment** – identify current pain points and feature gaps (i.e., what is available in the new version that can provide benefits).
- **Conformance assessment** – determine the level of conformance (i.e., what has been configured/customized and to what extent, and what is available in the new version).



Implementation

Our implementation approach and methodology has been proven, tested and industrialized on upgrade initiatives of various sizes and complexity. It comprises four discrete phases: inception, development, stabilization and deployment.

Inception

- Review remediation backlog and assessment output created by Guidewire and determine scope
- Review Guidewire components (configuration/integration) and define high-level user stories
- Finalize upgrade roadmap
- Determine data replication strategy for on-premise in case of Guidewire SaaS (DataHub/Cloud Data Access, etc.)
- Finalize implementation plan
- Create environment plan in case of Guidewire Cloud



Development

- Set up environments, processes, guidelines, etc. in alignment with Guidewire SurePath methodology
- Upgrade Guidewire components (configuration, integration, database (in collaboration with Guidewire in case of Guidewire SaaS to Guidewire Cloud))
- Upgrade infrastructure
- Collaborate with Guidewire on code assessments and remediation in case of Guidewire SaaS to Guidewire Cloud
- Address new features
- Conduct unit and sprint testing and regression testing



Stabilization

- Conduct system testing
- Complete user acceptance testing
- Conduct user training
- Conduct performance testing
- Upgrade database (in collaboration with Guidewire in case of Guidewire SaaS to Guidewire Cloud)



Deployment

- Prepare go-live in case of Guidewire Cloud
- Upgrade production database (in collaboration with Guidewire in case of Guidewire SaaS to Guidewire Cloud)
- Deploy to production
- Ensure warranty support
- Transition to maintenance

Accelerators and templates used during this phase include:

- **Data migration tools and audit tools** (balancing)
- **Testing** – Automated testing suite (version-based)
- **Integrations** – Pre-built common integrations, tools to test out integrations, pre-built architectural designs

Stabilization

During stabilization, end-to-end testing of the upgraded product(s) will be done using automated regression test scripts.

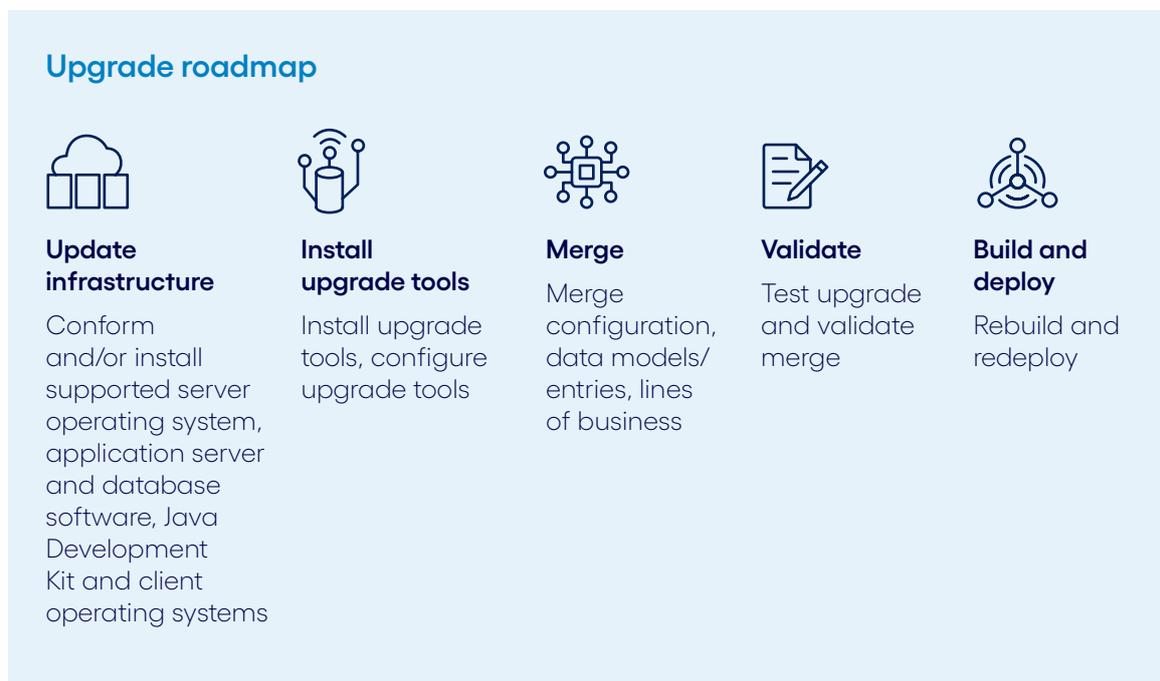
Performance testing is done to validate the overall performance and security of the upgraded product(s). In the case of Guidewire SaaS, performance testing will primarily focus on designated functions as per guidelines. It can be expanded based on customer needs.

Support

Cognizant provides application maintenance support post-warranty. The transition to the support team includes not only knowledge transfer, but also the transfer of some percentage of resources who worked on the upgrade.

Upgrade Roadmap

The Cognizant Upgrade Roadmap shows high-level components and the planned steps required to complete a carrier's Guidewire InsuranceSuite upgrade. The roadmap's ultimate goal is to provide a guiding document for the execution of the Guidewire InsuranceSuite upgrade. This approach helps provide clear communication and better transparency throughout the upgrade process.



Common Upgrade Challenges

Experience and expertise are always important on IT projects, and upgrades are no exception. Leveraging lessons learned and best practices from previous projects can help you manage a successful upgrade even if your team has limited experience. Areas that are most significantly impacted during Guidewire upgrades include requirements, testing, conversion, remediation, business rules updates, data integrity and integration.

Understanding the who, what, where, when and why of your upgrade can help you overcome the following typical challenges and smooth your company's transition to a new software version:

Challenge	Description
Workarounds introduced	Upgrade issues with non-confirming customized code may require workarounds.
Environment upgrade issues	Current infrastructure cannot support the new Guidewire version, requiring changes in desktop configuration, environments (testing, production) and database.
Production/project in-flight changes	Changes from current production or project in-flight—merge schedule and impacts.
Performance issues	Batch jobs performance may be impacted. User interface response time may be impacted with customized screens.
Multi-browser issues	End-user browser may need to be upgraded to support the new product version, which may impact other applications.
Interface connectivity trouble	Interface connectivity may not be fully in place.
Downstream application impact	Issues due to WebSphere Application Server and Java API upgrades.
Functionality mapping issues	Certain features available in new version need to be “turned off.” This increases the amount of regression testing to validation done appropriately.
Version coexistence	Two different sets of environments will have to be maintained for the older and the newer versions of the environment.
Data upgrade and archival	Business transactions created before the upgrade and any modifications using data update tools may have data upgrade issues.
Code quality/database consistency	Upgrade may identify poor code quality issues and/or database consistency issues that need to be addressed.
Quality assurance (testing) impacts	Automated test scripts revisions depend on the amount of change.

Why choose Cognizant for your upgrade?

Cognizant's upgrade strategy provides you with important advantages that go well beyond technology, including:

- A business-led, consultative approach to help you make informed decisions on your upgrade strategy, structured to optimize the business benefits and time to value
- A track record of successful technical and functional upgrades (for on-premise, private cloud and Guidewire) for clients of different sizes, countries and business cases
- A proven capability around upgrade teams who are experienced, global and cost-effective
- Our “factory approach,” which is standardized, accelerated and repeatable
- A value-added maintenance and support unit that will support you after the upgrade, often with the help of team members from the original engagement

Cognizant's Digital Difference

Cognizant is one of the world's leading professional services companies, transforming clients' business, operating and technology models for the digital era. Our industry-based, consultative approach helps you envision, build and run more innovative and efficient businesses.

We take an advisory-led approach to help simultaneously boost your operational efficiency and ensure that vital business functions work better, faster and less expensively, and enhance their overall effectiveness with next-generation IT services, modern platforms and digital models that unleash new market potential and deliver ever-higher levels of performance.

As a customer-centric, relationship-driven partner, we are redefining the way companies experience and benefit from global services. Our unique delivery model is infused with a distinct culture of high customer satisfaction.

For details on a Guidewire Cloud platform (SaaS) upgrade, please refer to [Cognizant's Guidewire Cloud Enablement Overview](#).

Talk to us today about how Cognizant's approach to Guidewire Cloud migrations can help you transform your organization to compete in today's challenging environment. Reach us at Guidewirecenter@cognizant.com.

About Cognizant's Insurance Practice

Cognizant is a leading global services partner for the insurance industry. In fact, seven of the top 10 global insurers and 33 of the top 50 US insurers benefit from our integrated services portfolio. We help our clients' businesses run better by driving greater efficiency and effectiveness.

Simultaneously, we help their businesses run differently through innovation and transformation for the future. Cognizant redefines the way our clients operate, from increasing sales and marketing effectiveness, to driving process improvements and modernizing legacy systems, to sourcing business operations. To know more, please [visit our website](#).



Cognizant (Nasdaq-100: CTSI) engineers modern businesses. We help our clients modernize technology, reimagine processes and transform experiences so they can stay ahead in our fast-changing world. Together, we're improving everyday life. See how at www.cognizant.com or [@Cognizant](#).

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