

A photograph of a resort pool area with palm trees, lounge chairs, and umbrellas, reflected in the water. The image is framed by a large, downward-pointing triangle with a blue-to-green gradient.

Travel & Hospitality case study

IHG Hotels & Resorts embraces Google Cloud Platform

A modern cloud-based data platform helps IHG Hotels & Resorts streamline data processes while reducing licensure costs by 30%

IHG Hotels & Resorts is a leading hospitality company headquartered in Windsor, United Kingdom. Globally, IHG has more than 6,000 hotels across 19 brands including the renowned InterContinental Hotels & Resorts, Kimpton Hotels & Restaurants and Holiday Inn Hotels to name a few. IHG has experienced rapid growth in recent years, which is largely attributable to an aggressive acquisition and franchising strategy. This growth, however, has contributed to ongoing infrastructure and data management challenges including difficulties sharing datasets across business units.

The challenge

IHG's existing data landscape was split between a cloud-based platform and Teradata. This hybrid data landscape presented several challenges, including:

- The need to utilize intricate data integration mechanisms to enable seamless data movement between the cloud and Teradata
- A lack of standardization among generated and syndicated data, resulting in redundant reports and overlapping functionalities
- Complexities in ensuring consistent security measures and compliance standards

IHG[®]

HOTELS & RESORTS

At a glance

Industry

Travel and Hospitality

Location

United Kingdom

Challenge

IHG wanted to modernize its systems by migrating to a cloud-based platform to streamline its data processes, reduce costs and support future growth. The company engaged Cognizant to assist with the end-to-end design and implementation of a robust solution on the Google Cloud Platform.

Products and services

Cloud Platform services

Success highlights

- Reduced licensing costs by 33%
- Reduced data redundancy and achieve better governance
- Accelerated analytics platform availability for IHG to embark on an AI/ML journey
- Realized a reporting performance improvement of 30% to 40%
- Streamlined data sharing across business units while enhancing security through targeted authorization

- Difficulty performing cross-system analytics to gain comprehensive business intelligence and insights
- Limited scalability given Teradata's infrastructure requirements, limited native support for unstructured data sources and integration challenges

IHG also faced the impending expiration of licenses for Teradata, Informatica PowerCenter, SAS and SAP BusinessObjects (BO). It was necessary to assess the criticality of these tools and develop a comprehensive plan to consolidate their functionality within the new technology stack.

The company also sought to modernize its data systems. The goals for the program (known as Project Ace) were to:

- **Modernize:** move Teradata to Google BigQuery and develop an enabled cloud platform for future architecture
- **Rationalize and migrate:** current BusinessObjects reports will be migrated to Tableau
- **Empower:** create a one-stop-shop enterprise consumption layer for shared datasets across business units with improved ease of access and enhanced security through targeted authorization

- **Automate:** solid execution to monetize effort, cost and risk—and enable an accelerated schedule
- **Reduce:** lower overall total cost of ownership by 30%

Our approach

After a comprehensive RFP process, IHG selected Cognizant as its technical implementation partner while IHG maintained responsibility for project management, governance and change management. Cognizant assembled a robust team of Google Cloud experts and performed a thorough analysis and identified options that would allow IHG to realize its objectives without experiencing any delays or disruptions in its normal business activities. The team focused on achieving an end-to-end implementation using the Google Cloud Platform (GCP) technology stack. This included leveraging Google Cloud Data Fusion, which is a new fully managed, cloud-native tool that is used to build ETL data pipelines for integration.

The Cognizant team successfully delivered on a multi-year, cross-functional program that included:



“This is a massive achievement and a major milestone on our Data and Analytics journey.”

Dan Blanchard, CTO, IHG Hotels & Resorts

- Migrating and redesigning 320TB of data from Teradata to Google Cloud Platform BigQuery to create a modern cloud-based platform to support future growth.
- Rationalizing BO reports onto Tableau and streamlining and centralizing the reporting process across business units, making it more efficient, consistent and user-friendly.
- Leveraging Cognizant's proprietary data conversion accelerators (CDIT) to enable faster time to market and reduce costs.

Business outcomes

Despite project delays due to the pandemic, the team spread throughout the United States, India and the Philippines delivered all program outcomes on time and within budget using a fixed price engagement model. The implementation of a cloud-based unified data landscape with best-in-class data visualization dashboards earned the distinction of being the first project to achieve data integration using the Google Cloud Platform Data Fusion tool.

Dan Blanchard, Chief Technology Officer at IHG Hotels & Resorts says, "This is a massive achievement and a major milestone on our Data and Analytics journey. The foundation established with the ACE project is already unlocking insights from our own data that have previously been opaque to us and this is only the beginning. Many thanks to everyone who made this tremendous cross-team effort a success."

Our solutions helped IHG:

- Achieve faster time-to-market and save 30% effort by leveraging our CDIT conversion tools
- Reduce licensing costs by 33%, or over \$5 million, by removing Teradata, BO and SAS licenses
- Accelerate analytics platform availability and enable AI/ML capabilities
- Realize a reporting performance improvement of 30% to 40%
- Standardize both generated data and syndicated data, ensuring that all stakeholders utilize the same system of record/reference and follow the same definitions for non-standard metrics
- Reduce data redundancy and improve data governance
- Facilitate exploratory data analysis to identify opportunities for combining multiple different but relatable datasets generated by different domains, helping to identify new business opportunities

The new solution also reduced dependency on technical teams and increased compliance with ever-evolving data privacy guidelines.



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](https://twitter.com/Cognizant).

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