



Approach Paper

# Guidewire Upgrade Factory

Proven methodologies provide seamless upgrades and a foundation for innovation.

**Cognizant**<sup>®</sup>

## 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

To make the most of software upgrades, insurers should have a strategy as well as a process in place for implementing each new software release. That 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™. We call our approach the Guidewire Upgrade Factory.

Successful upgrades are carefully planned and incorporated into an insurer's IT roadmap and/or business strategy to promote value capture, 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 that insurers discuss and answer five key questions:

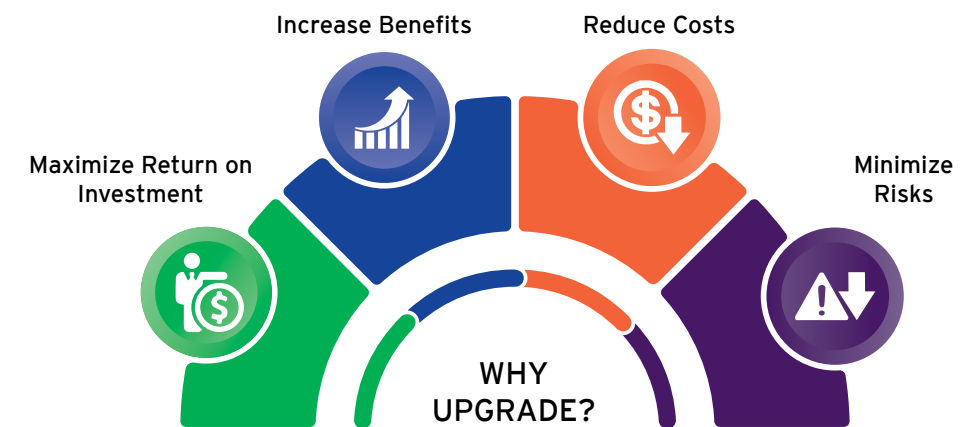
1. Why are you upgrading (what is the business case for upgrading)?
2. What functionality and processes are being upgraded?
3. When are you upgrading?
4. How are you upgrading?
5. What skill sets are required for the upgrade?

The following pages provide an overview of these factors. We hope you find it helpful, and invite you to contact us with any questions.

## Why are you upgrading?

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

- Licensing requirements mandate that you upgrade
- Improving the technical foundation (architecture and performance) requires that you upgrade
- Taking advantage of new features and functionality available in the latest product release(s) to improve business capabilities
- 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, it's important for stakeholders to understand the business drivers for the upgrade 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 business, and 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.

- Which out-of-the-box features are needed by your business?
  - » Remember, very few upgrades are "push-button" upgrades, so establish and manage scope rigorously.
- What customizations do you currently have that the new version will render obsolete?
  - » For a large U.S. carrier, Cognizant recommended reverting to the base technology for discrete Claims areas, such as Scheduling Vendor Services and Litigation, eliminating previous customizations. This allowed the insurer client to reduce the upgrade cost short-term and optimize ongoing maintenance and support costs long-term.
- Will the upgrade include any enhancements?
  - » Cognizant helped completely redefine and automate the assignment rules, which aim to reduce the amount of time claim managers spend in assigning and reassigning claims.



## WHEN ARE YOU UPGRADING?

Timing is crucial in any upgrade. Planning your upgrade to limit disruption in normal business cycles will help your team focus on and prioritize the task(s) at hand. It will also allow your end users to better absorb and adapt to process and/or application changes.

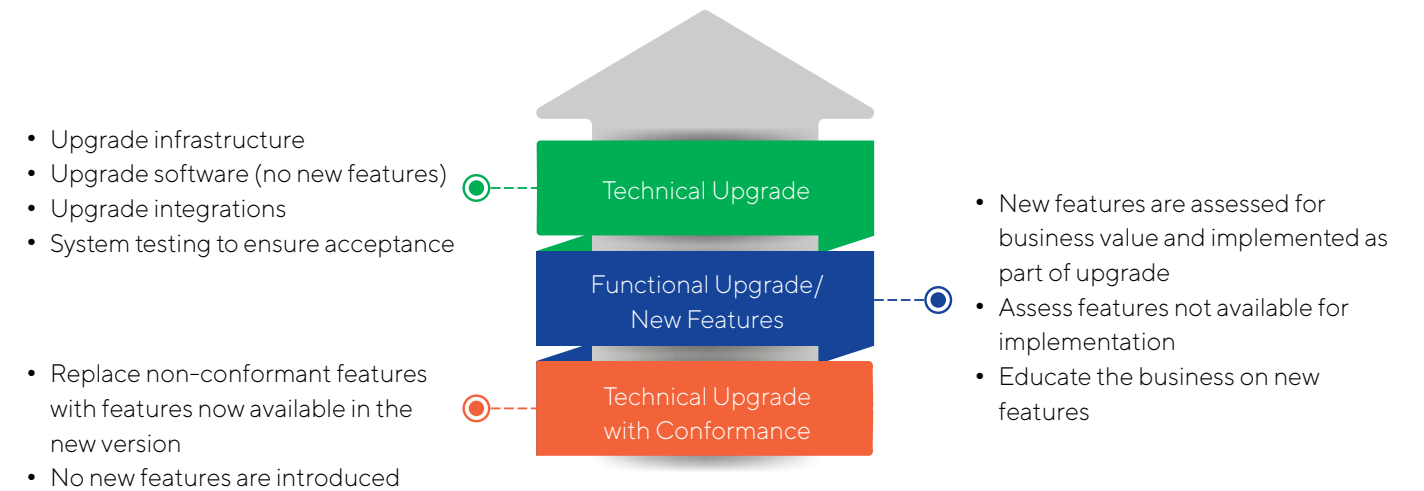
Consider the following when determining when an upgrade should be performed:

- Guidewire Software has traditionally supported two versions from the current released version (for example, Guidewire will support v7 applications given that the current major release available in the market is v9).
- 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 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?

## HOW ARE YOU UPGRADING?

There are different approaches when considering an upgrade.

- In all cases, the infrastructure is updated to support the new Guidewire product version.



- 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 the impact on them.
- From the initial stages of an upgrade, don't forget to plan for end-user training and support after deployment. Communicating clearly and often to business users and providing dedicated support after the initial deployment can smooth the transition to a new version and help ease the change from old to new processes.

## WHAT SKILL SETS ARE REQUIRED FOR THE UPGRADE?

Upgrading to any new version requires specific roles and skills. Having executed Guidewire upgrades for a number of clients, our experience suggests that successful upgrades require a range of talents. These include such roles as business analysts, functional consultants, integration consultants, testers, project managers, data conversion specialists, reporting analysts, analytics specialists, and data management and delivery specialists. While the depth and breadth of each role is largely based on the scope of the upgrade, having the right people in the right location with the right skills is essential.

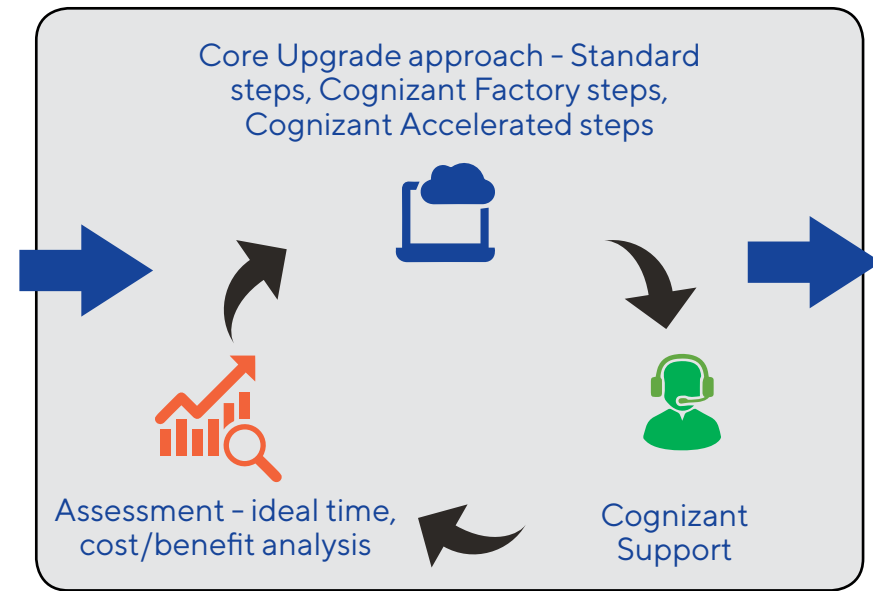
## RESOURCE MODEL

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

Cognizant offers property and casualty insurers our continuous Guidewire InsuranceSuite™ Upgrade Factory methodology, a cyclic 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 bring accelerators and tools to speed up analysis activities, such as a Conformance Assessment.



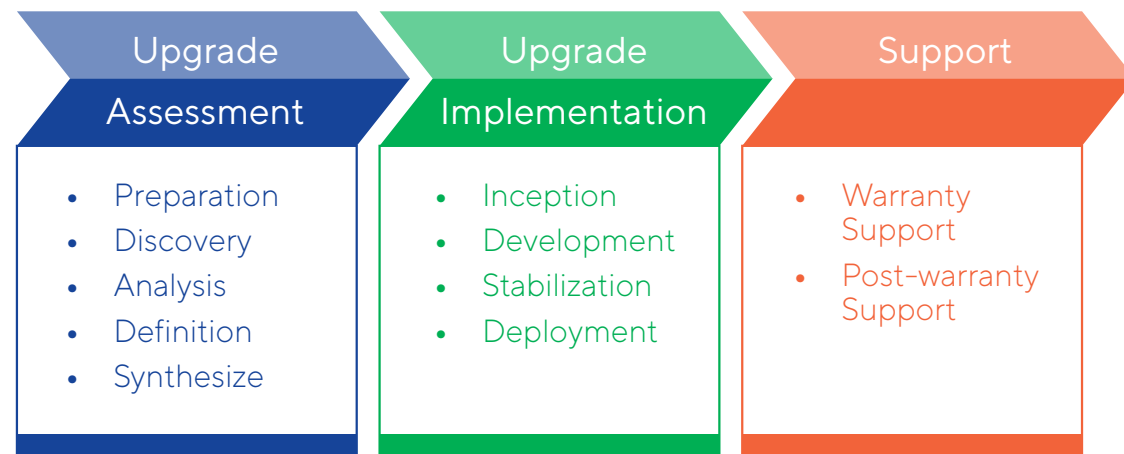
Cognizant Factory steps are repetitive measures that Cognizant has added to the overall upgrade process. These provide gap analysis, prepare inventory and define additional tasks for custom code changes.

Cognizant Accelerated steps involve the use of Cognizant’s proprietary tools and accelerators. G-SCAN is an example of the kind of proprietary tool Cognizant will use to increase the overall code quality of the delivery.

## UPGRADE PHASES

### Assessment

The upgrade life cycle starts with the assessment. Cognizant’s core team of upgrade professionals performs a thorough assessment of the client’s existing Guidewire implementation. The output of the assessment includes:

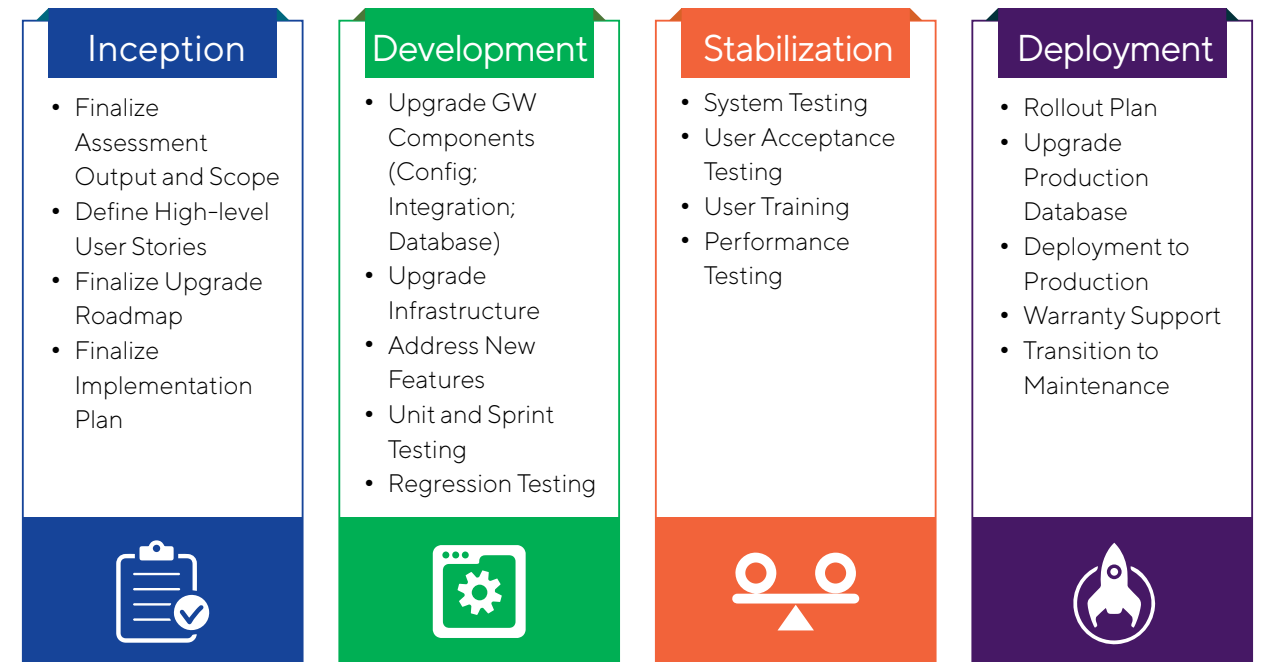


Accelerators and templates used during this phase:

- Gap Assessment – Identify current pain points and feature gaps (what is available in new version that can provide benefits, etc.)
- Conformance Assessment – Determine the level of conformance (what has been configured/ customized and to what extent, and what is available in new version)

### Implementation

Our Implementation approach and methodology has been proven, tested and industrialized on upgrade initiatives of varied sizes and complexity. It comprises four discrete phases (Inception, Development, Stabilization and Deployment).



Accelerators and templates used during this phase include:

- Data migration tools and audit tools (balancing)
- Testing – Test 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.

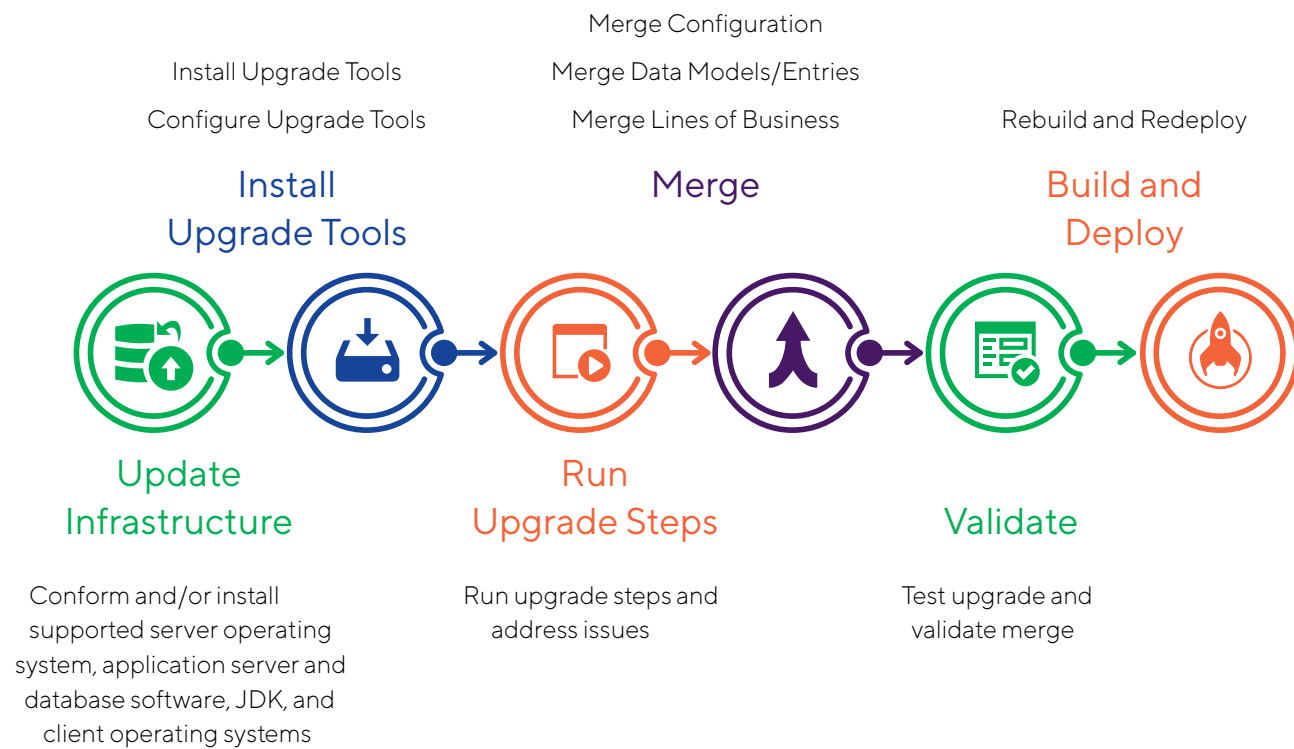
Performance testing will be done to validate the overall performance and security of the upgraded product(s).

## Support

Cognizant provides Application Maintenance Support post-warranty. The transition to the support team includes not only Knowledge Transfer but the transfer of some percent of resources who have 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 our Guidewire InsuranceSuite™ upgrade. This approach helps to provide clear communication and better transparency throughout the upgrade process.



## COMMON CHALLENGES TO UPGRADES

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. At Cognizant, we have found that six areas provide the largest challenges to Guidewire upgrades: requirements, testing, conversion, business rules updates, data integrity and integration. Understanding the who, what, where, when and why of your upgrade can help you overcome these challenges and smooth your company's transition to a new software version.

## Area

Workarounds Introduced

## Challenge

Upgrade issues with nonconformant/customized code may require workarounds.

Environment Upgrade

Current infrastructure cannot support new Guidewire version – changes in desktop configuration; environments (testing, production); 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

End-user browser may need to be upgraded to support the new product version, which may impact other applications.

Interface Connectivity

Interface connectivity may not fully be in place.

Downstream Application Impact

Issues due to WAS and JAVA API upgrades.

Functionality Mapping

Certain features available in new version need to be “turned off.” Increases 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)

Automated test scripts revisions depend on the amount of change.

## WHY COGNIZANT SHOULD DO YOUR UPGRADE

Cognizant has ...

- A track record of successful technical and functional upgrades for clients of different sizes, countries and business cases.
- A true capability around upgrade teams who are experienced, global and cost-effective.
- The Factory Approach, which is standardized, accelerated and repeatable.
- A value-added maintenance and support unit that will be able to support you after the upgrade and will often include 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 clients envision, build and run more innovative and efficient businesses. We take an advisory-led approach that helps clients simultaneously boost their operational efficiency; 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.

Talk to us today about how Cognizant's approach to Guidewire implementations can help you transform your organization to compete in today's challenging environment.

Reach us at: [Guidewirecenter@cognizant.com](mailto:Guidewirecenter@cognizant.com).



# Cognizant



## 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 U.S. insurers benefit from our integrated services portfolio. We help our clients run better by driving greater efficiency and effectiveness, while simultaneously helping them run differently by innovating and transforming their businesses for the future. Cognizant redefines the way its clients operate – from increasing sales and marketing effectiveness, to driving process improvements and modernizing legacy systems, to sourcing business operations. Visit us at [www.cognizant.com/insurance-technology-solutions](http://www.cognizant.com/insurance-technology-solutions).

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# Cognizant

### World Headquarters

500 Frank W. Burr Blvd.  
Teaneck, NJ 07666 USA  
Phone: +1 201 801 0233  
Fax: +1 201 801 0243  
Toll Free: +1 888 937 3277

### European Headquarters

1 Kingdom Street  
Paddington Central  
London W2 6BD England  
Phone: +44 (0) 20 7297 7600  
Fax: +44 (0) 20 7121 0102

### India Operations Headquarters

#5/535 Old Mahabalipuram Road  
Okkiyam Pettai, Thoraiakkam  
Chennai, 600 096 India  
Phone: +91 (0) 44 4209 6000  
Fax: +91 (0) 44 4209 6060

### Cognizant Digital Business

55 Hudson Yards  
New York, NY 10001 USA  
Phone: +1 212 879 6911