



# **FUEL**

## **TRANSFORMATION**

**CLOUD FUELS REAL-TIME  
OPERATIONS AT TOWERGATE**

**accenture**

 **avanade™**

 **Microsoft**

# 1. SUMMARY STATEMENT

## TOWERGATE TEAMED WITH ACCENTURE TO TRANSFORM BUSINESS OPERATIONS AND CUSTOMER EXPERIENCES BY MIGRATING ITS IT ENVIRONMENT TO THE CLOUD.

### 2. OVERVIEW

Historically, Towergate's growth strategy has focused on acquisitive growth. But with no consistent method for integrating these acquisitions, a newly appointed management found itself with an inefficient, risky and increasingly unreliable network of systems and processes. Towergate knew they wanted to move to the cloud so the business could consume IT "as-a-service." But they knew they needed expert help to manage the transition. The company believed Accenture was the provider best suited to overhaul its sprawling IT infrastructure because of its deep experience in cloud and its collaborative approach. Together, Towergate and Accenture embarked on one of the most ambitious IT transformations and end-to-end cloud migration programs the financial services industry has ever seen.

Working closely with its alliance partner Microsoft and leveraging its joint venture with Avanade, Accenture completely transformed Towergate's IT operating model, data center, networks, telephony and end-user computing environments—all underpinned with new service management processes. Today, Towergate bears little resemblance to its former self. The operating model has been completely reimaged. Costly, fragmented IT systems and an environment that made collaboration difficult have been replaced with a much smarter, faster and more reliable IT platform, as well as cloud-based applications that are reducing costs, improving alignment between IT and business functions, driving efficiencies, enabling collaboration, and better meeting the needs of the business. With Accenture also managing service support for the entire IT infrastructure environment for the next seven years, Towergate can focus on not only delivering the insurance products and services its customers demand and deserve, but also growing its business into the industry force it knows it can be.

### 3. THE STORY

#### Client profile

UK-based Towergate is one of Europe's largest independently owned insurance intermediaries. The company offers more than 200 general and specialty insurance products to some 350,000 customers.

#### Opportunity

Having been formed in 1997, Towergate initially pursued inorganic growth via multiple acquisitions. Over time, Towergate's IT landscape mushroomed to include hundreds of IT systems and applications that were "bolted" together.

Maintaining such a fragmented, outdated and unreliable computing environment was not only expensive and unsustainable, but also made it very difficult for Towergate teams to effectively collaborate, mitigate risks, and gain a holistic view of the business and its customers. The company's leaders knew they needed a drastically different IT operating model if Towergate was going to build a sustainable business. They wanted a cloud-based model with as-a-service provisioning and a smarter, faster and more reliable IT platform.

Towergate's leaders also knew they needed help in managing the complex transition and wanted to team with a strategic service provider that could not only migrate the company's infrastructure and applications to the public cloud, but also manage IT operations with enterprise-level security standards on an ongoing basis. Above all, the company wanted to work with a provider that would act as a trusted partner and consistently demonstrate its commitment to improving IT service quality, operational effectiveness and user satisfaction. Accenture possessed all these qualities, as well as a successfully demonstrated track record in IT transformation and service management. According to Gordon Walters, Group CIO at Towergate Insurance, "We chose Accenture to help lead this program not only because of

its leadership in cloud deployment and commitment to service quality, but their commitment to our relationship. They are a true partner. Those are absolutely the qualifications we are looking for in a strategic service provider."

#### Solution

Accenture assembled a team with substantial experience in systems integration and cloud deployment to help Towergate evolve to a new vision for IT. Towergate's Group CIO, Gordon Walters, made it clear that nothing was off the table. As he put it, "We wanted to leapfrog what others in the industry were doing and go all in". With its deep systems integration and cloud experience, its ability to scale globally, its alliance relationship with Microsoft, and its ability to tap specialized experience through its joint venture with Avanade, Accenture was confident it could help deliver the transformation Towergate required.

Working as one team, Accenture and Towergate embarked on one of the most comprehensive IT reboots and ambitious cloud migration efforts the financial services industry had ever seen. With an eye toward improving IT service quality, operational efficiencies and user satisfaction, Accenture, Microsoft and Avanade zeroed in on four key areas:

- **Datacenter & hosting.** More than 2,100 of Towergate's existing servers were rationalized and 1,200 workloads from Towergate's fragmented, outdated server estate were transitioned to Microsoft Azure's secure and highly scalable cloud computing platform. When the transition is complete, Towergate's server estate will be reduced to fewer than 1,000. Additionally, approximately 2,300 applications were consolidated to just 222. The new environment helps mitigate risk, improves compliance and agility, and offers a number of new and critical features such as proactive monitoring and usage-based pricing.

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## • **Network and telephony.**

Inconsistent, expensive services were scrapped in favor of a more flexible, scalable and reliable British Telecom MPLS network and new telephony services in the form of Skype for Business. Additionally, all wired desk phones were replaced with softphone applications on employees’ laptops or mobile devices.

- **End-user computing.** Multiple, unreliable and outdated device types and programs were replaced with new, standardized hardware and software tools. By relying on the latest services such as Microsoft FastTrack to migrate mailboxes to Office 365, the team was able to deploy the new environment at an extraordinarily fast pace. The rollout of new devices and the migration to new tools such as Windows 10, Microsoft OneDrive and Citrix XenApp have enabled new levels of collaboration and productivity.

- **Service support.** Under terms of a new seven-year contract, Accenture is now providing service support for Towergate’s entire IT infrastructure. In addition to seamlessly managing this transition, Accenture has already achieved efficiency gains by deploying a new management services operating model, service catalog, and service desk with automated features and tools.

Throughout the transformation, the team relied on proprietary assets (such as the Accenture Cloud Platform) and the experienced resources from Accenture’s global delivery center network. Also, because many of the technologies used are part of Azure and related ecosystem, time to value was accelerated. In fact, the combination of the right tools, the right team and Azure, helped Towergate and Accenture execute the transformation in just 12 months, down from the 18 originally envisioned.

The success of this program is due largely to the collaborative spirit that existed between Towergate and Accenture. Working as a single team, they addressed challenges, solved problems and celebrated their joint successes. They were united in their belief that Towergate’s journey to the cloud was, at its heart, a journey to fix, build and grow the Towergate business.

## **Results**

With Accenture’s help, Towergate has rotated to “the new” by migrating its IT infrastructure to the Azure Cloud, deploying new telephony and network solutions, and establishing a digitally enabled work environment.

The transformed company bears little resemblance to its former self. What was an antiquated and unreliable infrastructure is now modern, stable and highly responsive. According to Towergate’s COO, Adrian Brown, “The transformation to the cloud really puts us into a completely different environment. It means that we are stable and responsive, so we can be there when our customers need us to be. It also means that our staff members now have all the tools and the most modern office environments to help them improve the customer experience. We have witnessed a massive improvement in the way our customers see us and—just as importantly—the way our people see us because they’ve now got the tools to do their jobs effectively.”

A large part of the program’s success is due to Towergate’s decision to embrace a new service management capability—delivered by Accenture—that improves system and application reliability, keeps the IT estate aligned to business needs, and allows Towergate to focus less on IT maintenance and more on selling insurance. The company now has a scalable environment for infrastructure, plus the added value of Azure PaaS and Microsoft’s SaaS, which give Towergate an end-to-end technology platform

capability. This is reflected through the secure integration, for example, of Azure Active Directory and Windows 10, Office 365 and Skype for Business.

The transformation has already produced significant value by enabling Towergate to:

- **Achieve approximately 30 percent annual run rate cost savings, which translate into savings of about £4 million (US\$5 million) per year.**
- **Improve user experiences with new tools, a single service desk and enhanced self-service capabilities.**
- **More easily collaborate across departments, thereby making the company more agile and responsive to customer needs.**
- **Reduce IT incidents and outages.**
- **Make better, faster decisions, based on greater visibility into its operations.**

Perhaps most importantly, the program has provided Towergate a solid IT foundation that not only accommodates new acquisitions should they be made in the future, but also enables digital and business transformations that will aid the growth of the business. As Gordon Walters explains, “Our operating model is completely different now. By transforming to the cloud, we now have service-on-demand, as well as collaboration across all our businesses. They can all see the same customers. They can see the same product sets. And they have access to real-time information that allows them to understand what we as an organization are doing. In short, we’ve moved to a world where all of our employees are connected. We’re better able to serve our customers, and we’re able to start looking ahead to what else we need to do to make Towergate the force it should be.”

## ABOUT ACCENTURE

Accenture is a leading global professional services company, providing a broad range of services and solutions in strategy, consulting, digital, technology and operations. Combining unmatched experience and specialized skills across more than 40 industries and all business functions—underpinned by the world’s largest delivery network—Accenture works at the intersection of business and technology to help clients improve their performance and create sustainable value for their stakeholders. With approximately 401,000 people serving clients in more than 120 countries, Accenture drives innovation to improve the way the world works and lives. Visit us at [www.accenture.com](http://www.accenture.com).

## ABOUT AVANADE

Avanade is the leading provider of innovative digital and cloud services, business solutions and design-led experiences delivered through the power of people and the Microsoft ecosystem. Our professionals bring bold, fresh thinking combined with technology, business and industry expertise to help fuel transformation and growth for our clients and their customers. Avanade has 30,000 digitally connected people across 24 countries, bringing clients the best thinking through a collaborative culture that honors diversity and reflects the communities in which we operate. Majority owned by Accenture, Avanade was founded in 2000 by Accenture LLP and Microsoft Corporation. Learn more at [www.avanade.com](http://www.avanade.com).

## ABOUT MICROSOFT

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