Project Planning, Tracking and Execution Management for Data Center Transformations

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What Are Data Center Transformation Projects?

In today’s dynamic world, the need for cost reduction and the desire to increase operational efficiency have a constant impact on the organization of IT resources.

Enterprises are relentlessly looking for better ways to manage infrastructure, systems and applications, and this often leads to the execution of projects where large numbers of workloads are moved from one platform or data center to another. Typical examples include the migration of physical servers onto a virtual platform, the migration of virtual machines from one virtual platform to another, the migration of on-premise workloads into a public or managed cloud, and traditional data center consolidations.

Migrating Workloads with PlateSpin Migrate

In this white paper, we’ll use the term “workload” as the aggregate term for an operating system with all the applications installed on it, all the patches and configuration settings, and also all the data files or blocks that reside on its data volumes. In the context of data center transformation projects, rebuilding a workload from scratch on a new platform is rarely a desired migration methodology. This is because rebuilding is a manual, slow and error-prone process that requires a vast amount of expensive testing to ensure that the new workload is built in exactly the same way as the original workload. A true workload migration, as performed by PlateSpin® Migrate from Micro Focus®, streams the blocks or files of the original workload into a replica on the new (target) platform. Using PlateSpin Migrate ensures that the new workload is created rapidly and automatically, and that it is 100 percent identical to the original workload. Workload migrations are an important element in many, if not all, of today’s data center transformation projects.
Introducing PlateSpin Transformation Manager

PlateSpin Transformation Manager is designed from the ground up to properly plan, track and execute data center transformation projects. It features a client-server based architecture, and allows multiple people with different roles to access and update the same data at the same time safely, via a web browser. It can handle multiple projects for multiple end customers, with built-in multi-tenancy to ensure that all customer data is properly contained and cannot be accessed by other customers. Information about the project workloads can be imported via spreadsheet or API, and added to a project. Once all workloads are imported, the project can be planned. Project managers can assign different people to different projects, and split up large projects in smaller chunks (called waves and batches), to organize the execution of the project in more manageable pieces. For each workload, the final state and destination can be described long before the actual transformation takes place. Once the workload’s final state is sufficiently described, it can be submitted for transformation (migration) in the planned time frame. Because all information is centrally managed in the PlateSpin Transformation Manager database, the status of the project can be consulted at any point in time, and visualized in a dashboard, which can optionally be exposed to any third party with view-only rights.

Because all information is centrally managed in the PlateSpin Transformation Manager database, the status of the project can be consulted at any point in time, and visualized in a dashboard, which can optionally be exposed to any third party with view-only rights.

PlateSpin Transformation Manager allows multiple people with different roles to access and update the same data at the same time safely, via a web browser.
PlateSpin Transformation Manager Roles

PlateSpin Transformation Manager features the following roles:

- **Administrator.** Installs the product. The administrator can be the first project manager and/or can create other project managers.

- **Project Manager.** Typically creates new projects, and creates project architects and migration specialists (see below). The project manager has all rights on a project, but cannot execute workload transformations.

- **Project Architect.** Has all rights on projects to which he has been assigned, but cannot create new projects. The project architect can also create migration specialists and can execute workload transformations himself.

- **Migration Specialist.** This role has no planning privileges. Migration specialists typically resolve problems that occur with ongoing migrations.

- **Dashboard Viewer.** Can only see the project dashboard.

PlateSpin Transformation Manager Transformation Types

PlateSpin Transformation Manager features the following transformation types as part of the planning:

- **Workload Migrations:**
  - Physical to Virtual (P2V)
  - Virtual to Virtual (V2V)
  - Virtual to Physical (V2P)
  - Physical to Physical (P2P)
  - Virtual to Cloud (V2C)
  - Cloud to Virtual (C2V)
  - Physical to Cloud (P2C)
  - Cloud to Physical (C2P)

- **Lift and Shift.** Physically moving a server from one location to another.

- **Decommission.** Removing a server that’s no longer needed in the new environment.

- **Virtual File Move.** Moving virtual machine disk files from one hypervisor to another, e.g., from vSphere 6.0 to vSphere 6.0.
Working with Waves and Batches

A single data center transformation project can contain up to tens of thousands of workloads, but even a thousand workloads can be a daunting number to tackle without the ability to categorize and group workloads in manageable pieces. PlateSpin Transformation Manager features three levels of grouping:

- **Batch.** A batch contains one or more workloads. Typically these workloads belong to one or more applications, and will be cut over in the same time frame. Cutover is the point in time where users are moved from the old server (source workload) to the new server (target workload). Typically this involves shutting down or decommissioning the source workload.

- **Wave.** A wave contains one or more batches.

- **Project.** A project contains one or more waves.

While planning the project, workloads can be easily grouped into waves and batches with advanced search and bulk edit tools.

PlateSpin Transformation Manager grouping levels:
- Batch
- Wave
- Project

Groups of workloads can easily be identified via the powerful advanced search form.
Tracking Project Progress

As workloads are being transformed (migrated), the information in the PlateSpin Transformation Manager database is constantly kept up to date to reflect the latest state of the project. If workload transformation deadlines are missed, a warning is displayed to capture the attention of the project architect or project manager. They can choose to add that workload to a future batch, create a new batch for it, or take any other corrective action.

The most important project information can at any time be consulted by all roles that have rights to the project, in the project dashboard. Optionally, this dashboard can be exposed to any third party via a view-only role.

Fig. 3

The project dashboard shows the most important project information at a glance.
Workload Transformation States

As a workload moves through the transformation process, PlateSpin Transformation Manager will update its status accordingly. The most important states are:

- **Imported.** The workload has been imported into a project via a spreadsheet or via the API by the project manager or the project architect, but no modifications have been planned for it yet.

- **Needs Additional Information.** Some planning has been done for the workload by the project manager or the project architect, but more planning is needed for a proper execution of the transformation itself.

- **Ready to Submit.** All information for a transformation execution has been provided, and the workload is ready to be handed off for transformation at a later point in time.

- **Submitted.** The workload has been formally handed over for transformation, which will start when the start date of the workload transformation is reached.

- **In Progress.** The workload is being transformed.

- **Testing.** The workload is being tested in its target state.

- **Completed.** The workload transformation had been completed.

Up to 50% Faster Time to Value

Especially when used in combination with PlateSpin Migrate, PlateSpin Transformation Manager allows you to execute data center transformation projects up to 50% more efficiently, with near-zero application downtime, elimination of all risk, flexible testing, less human error, and a dramatic reduction in overall project execution time.
PlateSpin performs up to 50% better, allowing you to migrate more workloads, in less time, with better results.