



CUSTOMER STORY

# Building a cloud future

A fast lift and shift of Adabas & Natural applications keeps nonprofit connected to donors

 software<sup>AG</sup>

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# Meet our customer hero

This organization has been conserving wildlife and protecting natural habitats for almost 100 years. It now operates with the support of hundreds of thousands of global members. A large part of its funding is generated by thousands of auctions and volunteer-led events.



## Challenges

- A shift from on-premises infrastructure to a cloud-first strategy
- Need to prepare IT organization for future technologies
- Empowering a distributed and remote team of IT staff and volunteers



## Outcomes

- A lift and shift of trusted Adabas & Natural applications to the cloud with zero disruption
- Simpler management of a consolidated IT landscape
- Ability to rearchitect and scale applications quickly to meet future needs
- Easy use of DevOps processes and toolchains



## Solution

- Adabas & Natural on Azure
- NaturalONE

“ We’ve been incredibly happy with the availability of our applications built on Adabas & Natural since moving to the cloud. There has been zero downtime in the past year. Overall Azure\* has been extremely reliable.”

– Director of Information Systems, nonprofit organization

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## The foundation for donor engagement

Wildlife and public lands need a champion who will help steward natural spaces for future generations. This organization, one of the world's largest and most effective conservation nonprofits, derives its strength from a global membership that share its values.

Large-scale fundraising, retail and advocacy campaigns are one of the most effective ways this organization raises donor funds and connects with millions of supporters. For more than 30 years, Adabas & Natural has provided the backbone of its fundraising capability, delivering reliable performance perfectly suited for the high-volume transactions these global initiatives generate.

When the organization planned to consolidate all its applications from an in-house server to Microsoft Azure, it needed to make sure its core fundraising applications built on Adabas & Natural could run on the cloud as well. This would help it continue vital fundraising operations without interruption, as it simplified its IT infrastructure and looked to enable integration of future technologies.

## A fast lift and shift to the cloud

Through virtualization and the portability of Adabas & Natural, organizations have the freedom to choose any cloud provider or cloud architecture they decide. This nonprofit chose the fastest way to the cloud: a lift and shift of its Adabas & Natural fundraising applications. Without changing the architecture, the organization moved from Linux to a virtual machine running on the Microsoft Azure hyperscale cloud infrastructure.

The lift and shift process was fast and smooth: The nonprofit got the production environment up and running in less than two months. As part of this process, it copied all its existing programs, backed up the databases, and set up the Azure environment. Much of the start-up time was spent testing different configuration options on Azure to determine how to get the greatest value from the range of virtualized systems Microsoft offers. With Microsoft managing the cloud service, the nonprofit's IT staff can focus on enabling new ways to engage with volunteers and donors instead of managing in-house hardware.

## Easy access around the world

The nonprofit has more than 4,300 users accessing applications for fundraising and donor engagement. These staff and volunteers contribute from around the world, so the organization had already modernized its application to enable easy access via the web or a mobile app. The move to Azure enables them to keep this interface with virtual private network gateways providing secure and encrypted connections. The distributed nature of the cloud helps them scale services up or down to match demand whenever and where it spikes, such as during events, auctions or other periods of elevated use.

## DevOps friendly

The organization has long been a champion of DevOps for the ability to quickly build and deploy new capabilities. Using NaturalONE, an Eclipse-based application development environment, the programming team can integrate Natural with DevOps toolchains and processes to improve application delivery and quality.

A lift and shift to the cloud leaves the nonprofit's effective DevOps practices in place, including use of Eclipse plug-ins (Subversion, Git, Wireframe Sketcher, SQL, Remote System Explorer, PHP, Web, Database Development), version control (Subversion, Git), process mapping (Kerika) and Atlassian application lifecycle management tools (Fisheye/Crucible, Bamboo, Stash).

## Architecture optimized

The nonprofit chose to lift and shift to a single-instance architecture running on a cloud-based virtual machine, which matched the previous on-premises architecture. After testing various hardware configurations, the organization chose a 16 processor, 32 GB memory Azure machine with premium SSD drives.

The move to the cloud presented an opportunity to recreate the environments and optimize their architecture. Previously, each database had four logical volume managers (LVMs); the organization reduced that by 75%, down to a single LVM per database, helping IT run applications more efficiently. The nonprofit also reduced the total number of disks in production by 90%, which greatly simplifies management moving forward.

## Reliability for the future

Since the fast lift and shift to the cloud, the nonprofit has been extremely happy with uptime and availability. In the past year, it has experienced zero downtime and has found Adabas & Natural on Azure to be extremely reliable. Azure's disaster recovery service replicates the nonprofit's system with a hot standby, ready to complete a failover process to a new machine in just minutes. Azure backups create a snapshot of all the disks daily, with a 30-day retention window, to recover files or the whole disk if it's ever needed.

Software AG is proud to support this organization's move to the cloud and a more adaptable, responsive IT environment. The nonprofit has invested decades in building effective fundraising applications built on Adabas & Natural. As the Director of Information Systems says about the longevity of its solutions, "If it didn't work, it wouldn't be legacy." Now, the organization can build on this success while positioning itself for greater agility and innovation with a cloud-first strategy.

## Take the next step

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