TUI

TUI Musement migrated their services to Amazon Web Services

The benefits of becoming a 100% cloud-based company

SECTOR: Tourism

SYNTAX

![TUI logo]

TUI Musement is a key business area for TUI Group, one of the world's leading tourism groups. TUI Musement became the first company within the German TUI Group to operate entirely from the cloud, an IT model that the multinational firm has chosen a global level. **It has been operating its business systems on the AWS public cloud platform since 2021. Throughout this journey, the company's technology partner has been Syntax. Today, Syntax operates TUI Musement's infrastructure in a managed services model.**

TUI Musement is the TUI Group company dedicated to in-destination tours and activities. It was created in 2020 with the merger of TUI's Spanish subsidiary TUI Destination Experiences, and Musement, a travel tech start-up acquired by the Group in 2018. The digital transformation of TUI Musement has driven forward the company's digital transformation strategy, enabling the provision of personalized local services to millions of people in more than 100 destinations.
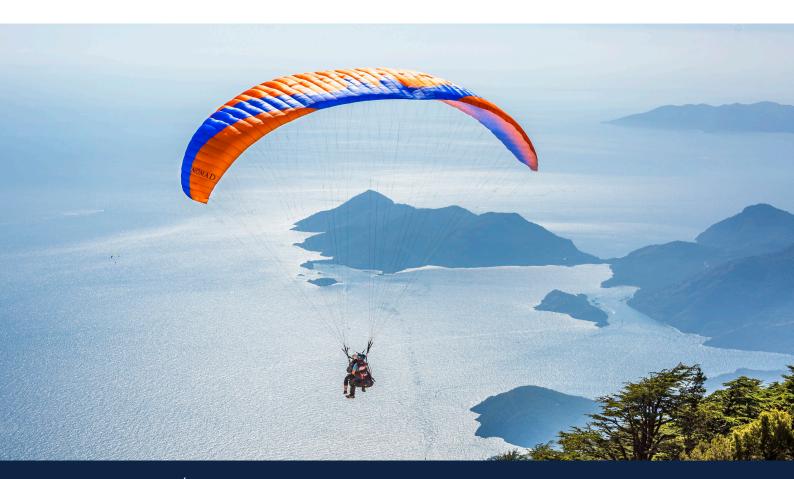
The Challenge

In 2018, **TUI Group decided to migrate its corporate systems to the cloud as a model aimed at improving flexibility and promoting the Group's digital strategy.** Up to that point, the Spanish company had its on-premises systems and applications hosted in the data center of a colocation provider.

In line with the new digital policy, the IT team at TUI Musement migrated a range of services to the AWS cloud, with the aim of investigating the process and requesting bids from different providers to begin the migration process, starting with the least critical services and working up to the most critical ones. **The partner selected to carry out the migration to the cloud model was Linke, which became a part of Syntax.**

"We based our decision on three factors: the company's prior experience in migrations and its extensive knowledge of the SAP universe, because part of our core systems use SAP, and the competitive bid the company submitted"

Victoriano Francisco
Head of Technology
TUI Musement

The Solution

Throughout 2019 and early 2020, a total of 25 satellite services were transferred to the AWS cloud. These included reservation and fleet management services, which interact with the core of the company's infrastructure but which operate separately. **The process applied in each case was to migrate the development systems, then the pre-production systems, and lastly the production systems.** When the pandemic broke out in March 2020, resulting in the paralysis of TUI's business, TUI Musement was able to reduce to a minimum all of its resources that were already migrated to the cloud infrastructure, successfully cutting costs.

The pandemic, a turning point for the project

Nevertheless, the pandemic changed everything. The company decided to make the most of the situation brought about by lockdown and the sudden freeze in global tourism to speed up the migration and increase the scope of the project. In the words of Victoriano Francisco, "We saw this as an opportunity to migrate all of our services, including critical services, without affecting our business operations – because our business operations had ground to a halt".

Between April 2020 and January 2021, **the company's most critical systems were migrated to the AWS cloud. This tailored solution provided support to all of the company's operations, and two SAP ERP modules: SAP FI, for finance, and SAP HR, for human resources.**

This system is based on Oracle databases that underpins critical business processes such as contracting and preparing accounting entries, which are key for collections and payments. It also supports the two SAP ERP modules and the company's sales portals, which have been developed in Oracle WebLogic. This was the first core system to be transferred to the cloud, with the process taking just eight months.

This part of the project relied on close cooperation between TUI Musement's internal IT team and Syntax consultants. The TUI Musement team was essential for its inside knowledge of the system that had been developed in-house and the internally designed applications running on it, while the Syntax team brought essential cloud expertise to the table.

This was a complex migration involving the movement of large numbers of loads, processes and services, and required an excellent understanding of the internal TUI Musement system in order to define the architecture and to automate the infrastructure as code. Francisco notes that **"we were able to overcome any problems that arose without impacting the speed of the project thanks to the skills of the Syntax team and our own internal team."**

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Victoriano Francisco
Head of Technology
TUI Musement

"The fact that we could deploy our entire IT team to support the migration, checking that the applications created in-house worked seamlessly, enabled us to speed up the project. When we look at it in this way, the project was a total success, with no major issues during its execution, and the go-live was problem-free, taking just 18 hours".

After the system was migrated to the cloud, the SAP FI and SAP RH modules were then migrated. This is one of Syntax's areas of expertise – the company had the knowledge and good practice to allow it to move these applications to the cloud in record time. The project was completed in January 2021, at which point there were no services left in the on-premises environment.

Once the migration initiative was completed, TUI Musement contracted for managed services by Syntax, and the company's consultants now provide TUI Musement with first-level infrastructure maintenance support 24/7, a model that guarantees technological assets are monitored and its systems are continually updated. This frees up time so that IT staff can focus on development work that brings greater added value for the company.

The Benefits

From the start, the project exceeded expectations at TUI Musement because, as Francisco notes, "first of all, **we wanted a model that enabled us to be more agile, that allowed us a high level of flexibility, and that helped us move forward in the digital world and to catch the wave of migrations that was taking place".**

However, in the early days of the pandemic, **the company was also able to rapidly reduce its cloud resources, which meant cutting costs by 65% in comparison to the 10% reduction for systems using the traditional model.** Increasing and reducing capacity in the new infrastructure was a constant, critical advantage during that period when the company saw its business directly affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. "Just when it looked like things were starting up again in 2021, along came the Omicron variant. Operations were reduced and then resumed later. If we had remained in an on-premises environment, our costs would have stayed the same, because we would not have had the flexibility to scale up or down," explains Francisco.

In addition, the development teams have been empowered by the increasingly dynamic nature of proof-of-concept tests, since the need to purchase hardware has been removed. **The ease of sourcing infrastructure and taking it out of circulation when it is not required creates considerable value for the business, reducing rollout times and accelerating time to market, cutting the latter by some 25%.**

This has also been possible because the cloud migration has served as a catalyst for adopting agile methodologies and launching a cycle of continuous improvement and constant rollout.

On the other hand, the machines on which AWS systems operate are no more than two years old, a sharp contrast to a hardware life cycle in the on-premises model of four or five years, necessary to amortize the investment made. **This has led to an increase in performance of around 30% and a reduction in the number of licenses required.**

"In a straightforward comparison of the recurring costs of the platform, these were reduced by 30 %, leaving aside the amortization costs that we would have to bear if we were to renew the physical infrastructure," adds Francisco.

Another of the advantages to the company from this project is the ability to develop its 'digital +' platform more quickly. This platform is at the heart of the company's market growth strategy, allowing TUI Musement to establish a business model that stands out from the competition, offering its own in-destination services (both in tourist destinations and in cities) not only through traditional sales channels, but also collaborating with other companies in the B2C and B2B markets.

Having entrusted infrastructure maintenance to Syntax within a managed services model, the company points out that its operational systems are fully updated on an automatic basis, which means potential security patches can be applied rapidly. This improves the protection of its assets.

Outsourcing infrastructure maintenance also means that the company easily passes the different system audits carried out each year by the TUI Group. "Visibility has improved drastically, which allows for simple monitoring of all our infrastructure. The application of new rules at Group level has also been simplified," adds Francisco.

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Head of Technology
TUI Musement

The Future

Today, the relationship between TUI Musement and Syntax is completely entrenched, and it is the company's intention to expand this collaboration, with an emphasis on process automation and on moving the structure of the business towards a product-based model.

SYNTAX

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