SOLUTION BUILDERS®

CLIENT CASE STUDY
ARCHITECTURE · 60 USERS

CASE STUDY · ARCHITECTURAL FIRM · 60 USERS

Cut infrastructure costs 38% with a cloud native migration and seamless remote work.

A multi location architecture firm needed collaboration to work as smoothly across three offices and dozens of job sites as it did within one building. A cloud native migration retired every on premises server, cut infrastructure cost by more than a third and made the home office as capable as the headquarters.

38%
reduction in annual infrastructure cost

3x
remote productivity, measured in billable hours

0
on premises servers left running

AT A GLANCE

INDUSTRY
Architecture and design

SIZE
60 users, 3 offices, field staff

SERVICES
Cloud migration, Microsoft 365, managed IT

TIMELINE
16 weeks, four waves, no lost workdays

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Three offices, three sets of files, one frustrated team.

Each office had grown its own server room, its own file structure and its own way of working. Large design files crawled between sites over a VPN, project teams emailed drawings back and forth and anyone working from home or a job site was a second class citizen.

THE CHALLENGE

Where collaboration broke.

Three aging server rooms meant three refresh cycles, three backup systems and three single points of failure. A six figure hardware refresh quote was on the table when leadership asked whether there was a better path.

Design software and large files pushed the VPN to its limits, so remote work was technically possible and practically painful. Field staff waited minutes for drawings to open, then worked from stale copies.

The firm wanted to win larger regional projects, so teams spanning all three offices had to work as one.

STARTING POINT
3 server rooms, 11 servers, 3 backup systems

REFRESH QUOTE
Six figures, due within 12 months

REMOTE WORK
VPN only, slow for design files

LICENSING
Mixed Office versions, no central identity

The cloud native decision

Rather than lift the servers into a hosted data center, Solution Builders designed a cloud native environment: Microsoft 365 for identity, email and documents, SharePoint and Teams for project collaboration, Azure for the design file workloads that needed it, and a modern network with local internet breakout at each office.

Four waves in sixteen weeks

WEEKS 1 TO 3

Design and model cost

Discovery, application inventory, a five year cost model of refresh versus cloud, and a wave plan.

WEEKS 4 TO 7

Identity and email

Single identity in Entra ID with MFA and conditional access, email migrated office by office over weekends.

WEEKS 8 TO 13

Files and projects

Project libraries rebuilt in SharePoint with a shared structure, design workloads moved to Azure, Teams rolled out with training.

WEEKS 14 TO 16

Decommission and tune

Servers retired, backups consolidated, cost alerts and right sizing applied, hypercare for every office.

One firm, one set of files, any location.

The cost savings were the headline for the finance team. For the architects, the bigger change was that where you sat stopped mattering. Here is what changed in the first year after the migration.

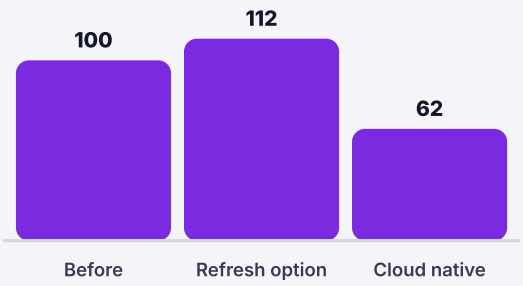
38%
lower infrastructure cost per year

3x
remote billable productivity

0
on premises servers

16
weeks from design to decommission

Annual infrastructure cost, indexed



Indexed to the pre migration run rate of 100. Includes hardware amortization, hosting, licensing, backup and support. Illustrative, from the client cost model.

> **Our Duluth office used to feel like a satellite. Now a project team can be spread across all three offices and nobody can tell from the work.**
>
> PRINCIPAL, ARCHITECTURE FIRM CLIENT

Before and after

AREA	BEFORE	AFTER
Servers	11 on premises	0, cloud native
Files	3 structures, VPN access	One SharePoint structure, anywhere
Remote work	Slow, stale copies	Same experience as the office
Backups	3 systems, 3 schedules	One policy, immutable, tested
Identity	Per office accounts	Single identity, MFA everywhere
Spend	Six figure refresh pending	Predictable monthly, alerts on waste

What made the difference

Modeling the cost before the move turned the migration from a leap of faith into a finance decision. Rebuilding the file structure once, instead of copying three messes to the cloud, made the collaboration gains real.

Figures reflect the client cost model and the first year after migration. Client details anonymized at the client's request.

Cloud migration, built on the RISE framework.

Solution Builders has guided Minnesota firms through technology change since 1995. This migration followed the framework we bring to every client: resilient cloud foundations, integrated collaboration, security built in from day one and a platform that keeps evolving.

R

Resilient

Cloud native infrastructure with consolidated, immutable backups and no single site of failure.

I

Integrated

One identity, one file structure and one collaboration platform across every office.

S

Secure

MFA, conditional access and managed detection from the first day in the cloud.

E

Evolving

A roadmap that now includes Copilot and automation for proposals and project documentation.

01

Cloud Readiness Snapshot

A 30 minute conversation about your servers, your refresh timeline and what the cloud would really cost.

FREE · 30 MINUTES

02

Cloud Migration Assessment

Two weeks of discovery and cost modeling, ending with a wave plan and a five year comparison.

FIXED FEE · 2 WEEKS

03

Managed Cloud Program

Migration, optimization, security and support, with cost alerts so the savings stick.

MONTHLY · ONGOING

What would your refresh money buy in the cloud?

Book a free Cloud Readiness Snapshot with a Solution Builders solution architect and see the five year math for your firm.

Book my readiness snapshot