

5 Reasons to Modernize your IGA System to a Cloud IGA System

OVERVIEW

Deciding whether to upgrade your current identity governance and administration (IGA) system to a cloud IGA system is complex. The decision hinges on a clear business case reflecting the changing demands of identity security and management and the evolving needs of today's hybrid networks, non-human identities, zero-trust designs, and SaaS solutions.

This paper outlines the challenges you should consider before undertaking IGA transformation and details why you should modernize your IGA platform to a cloud solution.

MODERNIZATION CHALLENGES

When upgrading your IGA platform, it's essential to consider more than just the shift to the cloud. Thoughtful consideration must be given to how the functionality differs in a SaaS offering. SDG has found that the flexibility that on-prem solutions provide often results in highly customized solutions that mimic manual processes and handle many exceptions. Modernizing to a SaaS solution forces the use of best practices and allows you to remain focused on the primary functionality without the distraction of exceptions, which represent a much smaller percentage of your risk.

Top considerations before modernizing your IGA system include:

COST MANAGEMENT: While cloud solutions can be more cost-effective than on-prem solutions, there are initial modernization costs, including configuring the new lifecycle and governance processes while simultaneously maintaining the current processes. Careful planning and budgeting are necessary to manage these costs effectively.








- COMPLIANCE AND REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS:** On-prem solutions are typically highly customized to fit an organization's specific processes. Modernizing to include integrating today's best practice processes and configuring them in a SaaS environment does require reconfiguration and development work as well as organizational change management.
- SECURITY CONCERNS:** Migrating to the cloud shifts the security perimeter, particularly when storing enterprise's identity profiles in the cloud. Organizations must establish new security protocols for cloud-based services and ensure that identity data is protected during and after the migration.
- DOWNTIME AND TRANSITION:** Migrating to any new IGA solution requires careful planning and execution of the migration to mitigate any operational impacts. Planning the transition is crucial.
- ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE MANAGEMENT:** The modernization process involves everyone in the enterprise; with changes to how Identities request access and how managers review access, a widespread change management plan needs to be considered. Effective organizational change management requires communication, training, and support for everyone.
- INTEGRATION WITH EXISTING SYSTEMS:** On-prem solutions are often heavily integrated with various enterprise systems and applications. Re-establishing these integrations in a cloud environment can be challenging, especially if some applications remain on-premises and others move to the cloud.

REASONS TO MODERNIZE:

Despite these challenges, there are numerous reasons to consider modernizing to a cloud solution. Here are the business case advantages associated with adopting a cloud-based IGA solution.

NEW CAPABILITIES AND FUNCTIONS:

With all the benefits of a SaaS-based deployment model, including availability, extensibility, and scalability, cloud platforms also come equipped with unique identity features and capabilities not found in on-prem based solutions. Some of these features could include:

-  AI-Driven Insights and Recommendations for highlighting actionable identity data and associated potential risks. It also assists in making informed intelligent decisions to accelerate both the access certification process and the access request process.
-  Cloud Governance for IaaS decisions and SaaS Management for governing access on SaaS-based integrated applications.
-  Platforms that will continue to grow in functionality such as:
 -  Non-Employee or third-party identity management
 -  Data governance
 -  Privileged access management
 -  Machine identity governance

RISK MITIGATION:

Cloud platforms offer improved security features and a keen focus on risk mitigation compared to the on-premise solutions. These improved features include advanced analytics, AI-driven insights, and automated threat response capabilities that are continuously updated to address the latest security challenges.

LOWER OPERATING COSTS:

You may experience an upfront investment to migrate to the cloud, however, over time, the cloud-based model can be more cost-effective. It often eliminates the need for hardware investments and reduces the costs associated with software upgrades, energy consumption, and physical space.

STREAMLINE AND SIMPLIFY PROCESSES:

Organizations can reduce the burden on IT staff by moving to a cloud-based identity security solution. New services, such as introducing AI to processes, often allow for lower maintenance costs for objects such as roles and help reduce the time it takes to conduct required access reviews.

CLOUD-BASED AGILITY:

Migrating to a cloud-based solution can give your organization greater agility. Cloud services can be quickly updated with new features and capabilities, allowing businesses to rapidly adapt to changing security requirements and threats.






SDG'S APPROACH

Modernizing your IGA system or processes to a cloud system demands meticulous planning and execution to facilitate a smooth transition of identity governance and lifecycle capabilities. At SDG, we view this modernization as a significant business transformation and approach it accordingly. It necessitates the development of a clear strategy and a thorough assessment of the value this modernization will deliver to your organization. Upon acceptance of the business value and a decision to proceed, SDG can guide you through the final phase of achieving a successful business transformation by defining the operating model, which outlines how to deliver the value proposition effectively.

BUILDING THE STRATEGY AND A BUSINESS CASE FOR MODERNIZATION

SDG conducts a comprehensive cost-benefit analysis of your existing environment and evaluates the potential benefits of transitioning to a SaaS solution. We present a detailed comparison of both scenarios and offer a clear business case to inform your decision-making process. This business case outlines the tangible value that modernization will bring and serves as a focal point for the modernization efforts.

SDG approaches modernization by addressing the five dimensions outlined in the operating model canvas. Navigating these dimensions along the value chain ensures alignment with business objectives and ultimately achieves the desired business value. These critical dimensions include:

-  **GOVERNANCE:** How the program is to be managed as well as managing the involvement of the rest of the enterprise;
-  **PEOPLE:** The skills, culture, organizational structure, and performance expectations to deliver the IGA services;
-  **PROCESS:** How the functionality will be carried out and the interdependencies of the organization to do so;
-  **TECHNOLOGY:** Data and systems that will be involved in providing the services including support systems;
-  **METRICS:** What are the KRI and KPIs that need to be tracked and how will they be reported?

THE DELIVERY STAGES OF THESE FIVE DIMENSIONS:

CONCEPT:

To begin the modernization process, SDG works with you to fully grasp the business value you expect from the transformation. We then align this understanding with the envisioned future state across all 5 dimensions of the operating model. With these considerations in mind, SDG collaborates with you to establish priorities, define scope, set timelines, and allocate resources for the modernization initiative.

This entails evaluating and addressing the training and retooling requirements of personnel, redesigning processes to align with best practices in SaaS implementation, determining the future support model, and establishing governance, measurement, and reporting mechanisms for the program.

Throughout this process, attention is given to people, processes, technology, governance, and metrics. This comprehensive approach ensures that the modernization effort is strategically planned and effectively executed to realize the desired business outcomes.

VALIDATE:

After the operating model is defined, SDG finalizes user stories, design details are drafted, and plans for construction and deployment are laid out. SDG has found that the greatest challenges for modernizing IGA are data clean-up and process redesign. Data clean-up helps alleviate process interruptions and ensures trusted results. Redesign of the processes affects the organization to a much greater extent. On-prem IGA systems often do not function the same as cloud IGA system, so SDG provides extra care to ensure that controls and functionality are not lost in the transformation.

CONSTRUCT:

Implementation is conducted in this stage. SDG adheres to a disciplined DevOps process. Playbooks are written, staff is trained, systems are tested, and end users are made aware of the changes to come. Construction is agile, and priority follows a line that delivers the target business value quickly and repeatedly.

DEPLOYMENT:

As components of the migration program progress, user acceptance testing (UAT) is conducted, migration plans are exercised, and organizational change management tasks are invoked. Having defined metrics for success that align with the business objectives, those metrics are now tracked to ensure the value is being realized.

CONCLUSION:

Organizations across the globe understand the need for comprehensive IGA programs. While risk and automation have long been the primary drivers for these programs, organizations often overlook modernization because they do not believe it enhances their organization's business objectives enough to justify the transformation. In these instances, we assume that the five reasons to modernize were not discussed during the decision-making process.

SDG is an experienced and respected IGA integration provider that works with organizations to modernize their IGA systems swiftly, safely, and securely. Our experienced team can guide you through the process and assist you in determining if the value of a modernized program is right for you.

ABOUT SDG

SDG is a leading provider of technology, consulting, and managed services that enable organizations to confidently execute cybersecurity, cloud, identity, and risk management solutions to mitigate risk, protect assets, and grow securely. To learn how SDG can help your organization, visit [SDGC.com](https://sdgc.com) or call us at +1 203.866.8886.



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