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Case Study: Leading Education Institution Seamlessly Migrates On-Premise SunSystems Application to SunSystems Cloud with Integration Continuity

Introduction: This case study showcases Eclipse's pivotal role in assisting a prominent London-based educational institution in migrating their SunSystems application to the cloud while preserving the existing integration setup with other on-premise applications. The project posed unique challenges due to the institution's extensive customisation of SunSystems and recent mergers, making the retention of integration feeds a top priority.

Challenge: The educational institute confronted several challenges while contemplating the migration of their SunSystems application to a fully managed Infor SaaS solution:

- Customisation Complexity: As long-standing users of SunSystems, the organisation has made substantial customisations in terms of SunSystems integration and built-in processes, resulting in the development of a distinct financial process framework. Due to these extensive customisations, the migration process required meticulous attention and handling, given the exceptional nature of our existing financial setup.
- Mergers and Expansion: Recent mergers and acquisitions have introduced additional complexity to the institution's IT landscape, necessitating integration with diverse systems and data sources.
- Integration Preservation: The primary challenge revolved around retaining the existing integration feeds and dataflows with the on-premise applications without disrupting the end-user experience or business operations.

Objectives and Goals: The overarching aims for this migration project included:

- Successful Data Migration: Ensuring a seamless transfer of financial data to the cloud while maintaining integrity. The project also focused on enhancing data security measures to safeguard sensitive financial information.
- Seamless User Transition: Guaranteeing a smooth shift for all users from on-premise SunSystems to cloud-based SunSystems with minimal disruption. Efforts were directed towards implementing comprehensive user training programs to empower users with the necessary skills for efficient navigation.
- Integration Continuity: Retaining all integration points and data feeds without requiring changes to other on-premise applications. The project team prioritised thorough compatibility tests to ensure existing integrations seamlessly functioned within the new cloud environment, minimising potential downtime for critical business processes.
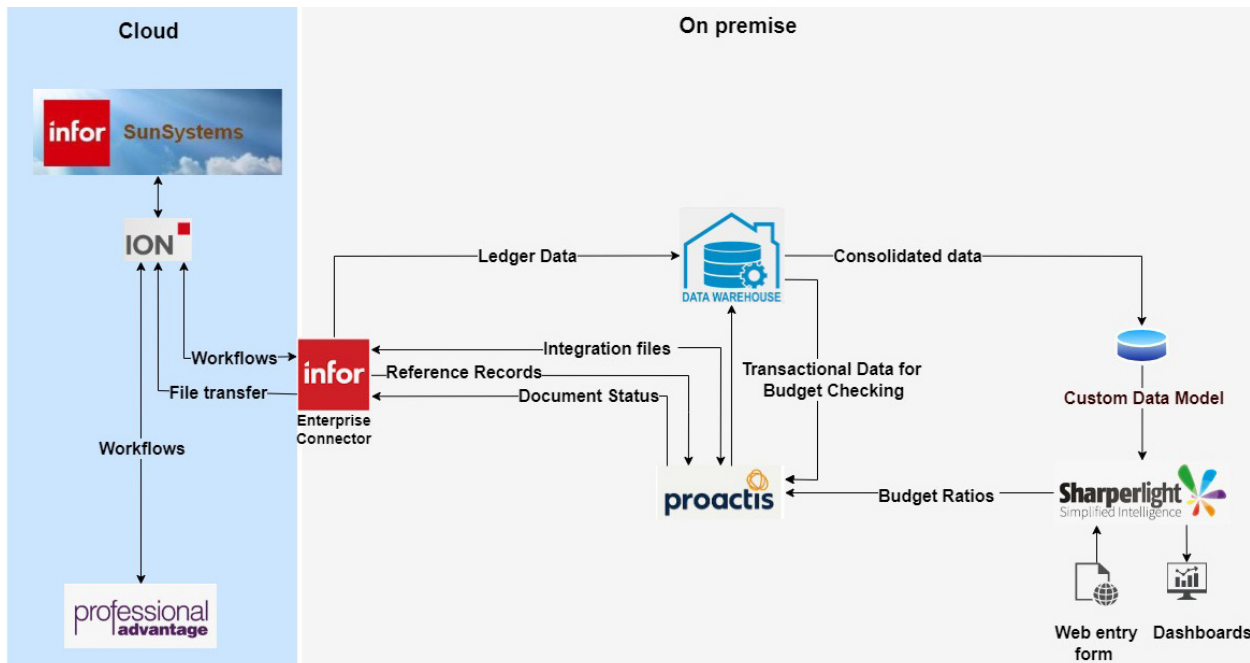
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Implementation Lifecycle: The implementation process followed a structured approach to ensure a successful migration:

- Test Migration: Eclipse initiated the process by backing up the client's SunSystems SQL databases and restoring them to a test environment. The data was then upgraded and handed over to the Infor Cloud team for deployment, all while ensuring compliance with data rules and regulations.

- User Training: Multiple training sessions were conducted to acquaint users with the new system. Users found the transition straightforward, although concepts such as ION integration and Data Lake usage required additional focused sessions.

- Integration Reconfiguration: The client's various business applications integrated with SunSystems, and these integrations had evolved with mergers and acquisitions. Notably, the directive was to avoid changes within the other on-premise applications, shifting the responsibility for all modifications to the SunSystems side.

- User Acceptance Testing (UAT): To ensure a smooth transition a dedicated environment was set up with SunSystems and other business applications. Testing was focused on multiple areas including load and regression testing, recreating all possible issues, and ensuring admin users are equipped to deal with them and be self-sufficient post go-live.

- Live Migration: On successful completion of UAT, having achieved end user confidence in the new system and integration setup, the go-live phase was carefully planned and executed. A few issues were encountered which were swiftly dealt with by the Eclipse implementation team collaborating with the Infor Cloud team ensuring a smooth delivery.

Integration Overview: The most critical integration point was the bi-directional dataflow between SunSystems and Proactis, a procurement application. It required real-time and reliable data transfer. Additionally, the institution required a data warehouse integrating SunSystems ledger data and Proactis data, which fed into a reporting/BI application called Sharperlight. This facilitated real-time dashboard updates for the finance team.

Addressing integration challenges demanded thorough planning and end-to-end testing during the go-live phase, ultimately resulting in a smooth switchover.

Another noteworthy challenge was integrating SunSystems Cloud with Professional Advantage Cloud products (B4B and Making Tax Digital). As early adopters, Eclipse addressed gaps by providing custom workarounds around data transfer between the two hosted solutions.

Results and Achievements: The migration to the cloud was an unequivocal success. Eclipse achieved the following outcomes:

• Integration Preservation: All integration points were successfully re-enabled within SunSystems Cloud without necessitating changes to other business applications.
• Minimal Downtime: Downtime was minimised, ensuring that normal operations resumed promptly after the migration.
• Challenges Overcome: Complex integration points, especially the bi-directional dataflow with Proactis and the integration with Professional Advantage Cloud products, were addressed effectively.

Conclusion: This case study illustrates Eclipse's ability to navigate complex migration challenges while safeguarding integration continuity, ultimately delivering a seamless transition to a 100% cloud-based SunSystems environment for the educational institution. It serves as a testament to the importance of meticulous planning and innovative problem-solving in achieving successful cloud migrations.

For further information, or to find out how we can help your organisation, please call +44 (0)203 866 8800, or email enquiries@eclgrp.com