

GUIDE

Cloud Migration Guide

A step-by-step framework for planning a low-risk, cost-optimized migration to the cloud.

Why Migrate

Moving to the cloud is rarely just an infrastructure decision — it's a foundation for scalability, resilience, and future AI adoption. Done well, migration reduces operating cost and risk. Done poorly, it creates outages, budget overruns, and stalled projects. This guide lays out the phased approach we use with clients at 4S IT Solutions.

Phase 1 — Assess

- Inventory current workloads, dependencies, and data flows
- Classify applications: rehost, replatform, refactor, retire, or retain
- Baseline current infrastructure cost and performance
- Identify compliance and data residency requirements

Phase 2 — Plan

- Choose target cloud platform(s) — AWS, Azure, GCP, or multi-cloud
- Define target architecture and landing zone design
- Build a migration sequence based on risk and business dependency
- Set a cost model and guardrails to avoid budget surprises

Phase 3 — Migrate

- Stand up the landing zone: networking, identity, security baselines
- Migrate in waves, starting with lower-risk, high-learning workloads
- Validate data integrity and application performance at each wave
- Run parallel operations before cutting over production traffic

Phase 4 — Optimize

- Right-size compute and storage based on real usage
- Implement cost monitoring and automated scaling policies
- Harden security posture and finalize compliance documentation

- Establish ongoing cloud governance and FinOps practices

Common Pitfalls to Avoid

- Migrating everything at once instead of sequencing by risk
- Underestimating data transfer time and network costs
- Skipping a proper cost model, leading to unexpected cloud spend
- Treating migration as a one-time project rather than an ongoing capability
- Ignoring security and compliance requirements until late in the process

A Simple Readiness Checklist

Area	Ready?
Workload inventory complete	■
Target architecture defined	■
Cost model and budget guardrails in place	■
Security & compliance requirements mapped	■
Migration wave sequence agreed	■
Rollback plan defined for each wave	■

Need a second opinion on your migration plan? 4S IT Solutions' Cloud Managed Services team can assess your environment and build a migration roadmap tailored to your business.