Transforming ERTU into a Digital Broadcaster Using Azure OSS over IAAS

ERTU
اتحاد الإذاعة والتليفزيون المصري

ERTU envisioned a long awaited transformation towards digital broadcasting to introduce new services and gain new revenue streams from online streaming and video on-demand (VOD). In partnership with MCIT, ERTU chose Link Datacenter (LDC) and Link Development, the sister companies, to consolidate, host and manage the giant's complex infrastructure on Azure and develop critical solution components. In few months, ERTU was ready with new engaging and operational customer experience on Azure in utmost security, stability and effectiveness; with a whopping 80% less cost thanks to running on Azure with world-class IAAS.

Customer	ERTU
Industry	Government
Solution	ERTU IAAS on Azure
Technology	Azure, Open Source

ERTU, the Middle East's Veteran Broadcaster

The Egyptian Radio and Television Union (ERTU) is the public broadcaster in Egypt and one of the oldest and most important broadcasters in the Middle East. Operated by the Government and a member of the European Broadcasting Union, ERTU's ecosystem covers eight local and regional channels in addition to number of leading media companies such as: Voice of Cairo for Audio and Video, Egyptian Media Production City, Nile Sat and Nile Radio in addition to multiple global partnerships.

The Vision of Digital Broadcasting

Since its first broadcast in 1939, ERTU has been crafting the minds and hearts of Arab speakers worldwide with the captivating Egyptian culture, music, arts, drama and heritage. The giant beacon has retained regional leadership and global status for as long as the broadcasting history existed.

In response to the vibrant and competitive broadcasting landscape, ERTU has long planned to repackage its products and services to meet the non-linear consumption patterns of today's digital audience on social media, mobile devices. The big player wanted to introduce streaming, VOD services among many others.

The veteran broadcaster needed to restore its regional leadership and put a stop to a revenue hemorrhage from customer churn as well as end leakage of advertisers to other broadcasters.

The immense challenges of a fluctuating economy, devaluation of the local currency and the costly integration of complex infrastructure of different technologies for the move into the simplicity of the new digital were showstoppers.

Hats off Link family! On one hand, they were able to deal with one-of-its kind digital mix of new technologies. They recruited new, gap-filling solutions to satisfy our business requirements. They moved us to Azure smoothly. We are happy!

Eng. Mohammed Salama,
General Manager, Computing & Digital Media, ERTU

www.linkdatacenter.net
www.linkdev.com

ERTU, Ready for Digital Eruption

Recently, the digital landscape has offered an unbeatable opportunity for ERTU to take the long awaited digital leap. The capacities and cost-effectiveness of Azure made it possible.

In light with the nation's strategy to grow a strong digital economy, the Egyptian Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT) was tasked to avail resources to facilitate the transition.

With a huge, first-of-its kind move to Azure, Link Datacenter (LDC) and Link Development (LD) were the partners of choice. LDC is long known with its digital mastery in cloud and Azure solutions on local and regional basis. Link Development is a mulit-award winner and a global finalist in developing Open Source solutions on Azure.

On Azure Opposites Attract, Complexities Dissolve!

Link Datacenter team worked thoroughly with its sister company Link Development along with Microsoft consultants and architects to detangle, consolidate and reconstruct a complex infrastructure.

The solution provided a hybrid architecture that uses ERTU's IBM WebSphere portal with DB2 as a data base backend; Red Hat Enterprise Linux, on demand, as the operating system; along with many Azure network services, such as CDN and Traffic manager.

For platform security, the team scanned Microsoft ISV security appliances marketplace to hand-pick Palo Alto and Barracuda as the best fit to customer needs that would stop any risks and threats in such a hybrid mix of technologies.

With Azure OSS over IaaS, ERTU Lays the Foundation for Sustainable Presence & Broadcasting

In a harmonious journey, the development, staging, and live production environments were consolidated deployed and hosted on Azure with a disaster recovery mechanism that acts immediately in case of any risks.

The step up, security, performance, and backup of the entire infrastructure are managed by Link Datacenter who is also acting as a second layer support for the entire project.

The next milestone is set to dockerize the existing solution and re-architect it for micro services.

The Benefits: Azure, a Platform for Digital Broadcasting

- Offering audience a broad choice of software solutions without lock-in to the vendor
- Optimizing the cost of release, management and delivery of services
- Monetizing media services and generating new revenue streams

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Technologies

- WebSphere
- DB2
- Open Source (Red Hat Linux)
- Palo Alto and Barracuda
- Azure IaaS
- Azure Media Streaming
- Akamai CDN

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Our digital economy is growing strong. The government is undertaking critical digital transformation initiatives across the board.

We have succeeded in affecting a disruptive change in ERTU with the help of Link family who refreshed a complex infrastructure from scratch and implemented new mission-critical solutions. Now running on Azure, ERTU can roll out new media services and products anytime through internet, smartphones and tablets.

Link Datacenter impressed us with digital mastery on Azure, proactiveness and flexibility in managing customer needs, and innovation in face of technical challenges.

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Khaled El Attar,
Head of IT Infrastructure Sector, MCIT

Open Source on Azure, Video-on-Demand Made Easy!

Link Development team concluded the journey with developing a custom video on demand (VOD) platform.

The platform acts as a backend that, together with the portal, receive encoded content from a big number of radio and television channels for thousands of concurrent users with inclusive protocols and video formats, with round the clock monitoring.

The cost of Link Datacenter encoding services was 7 times lesser than a previously recommended Turkish provider.

ERTU, an Agile Digital Broadcaster!

The power of Azure helped ERTU to offer a more thrilling experience to its global audience when watching television programs or streaming movies.

The Azure IAAS solution combined with multiple ISV solutions helped in building an agile infrastructure that helps ERTU to:

- Engage viewers by providing secure digital content, that is easy to access and share
- Create a new stream of revenue by launching new video and audio on demand services and sell more advertisement
- Reach new customers over the globe
- Achieve about 80% of cost saving compared to the old on premises solution.

Digital Partners Laying Grounds for Customer Satisfaction!

Link Datacenter and Link Development are sister companies. Both have digital mastery in their own space and both are regional expert partners for Microsoft.

The success of ERTU digital transformation is largely attributed to the extreme collaboration and synergy between the two teams to deliver the customer a harmonious experience on Azure with ultimate satisfaction.

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In ERTU, we are taking a strong digital leap aiming to grasp regional leadership with broadcasting refined, engaging and high-quality digital products.

This mega transformation primarily depends on the quality and efficacy of the digital infrastructure that will carry our message and services to the world.

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On Azure and with Link Datacenter managed services, we have laid the grounds for solid, sustainable and scalable digital growth and competitiveness.

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Eng. Mohammed Salama
General Manager, Computing & Digital Media, ERTU