



State and Local Government

Jefferson County

Overview

Jefferson County, Alabama is home to nearly 660,000 people. County Information Technology Services developed an Enterprise IT Strategic Plan to increase the effectiveness and transparency of county government. Key goals were to reduce costs, enable increased workforce mobility, and improve the experience of citizens interacting with county departments.

CIO Srikanth Karra viewed this project as a cornerstone of the Jefferson County's digital transformation efforts. Prior to launching their modernization project, the county's IT Services (ITS) organization already ranked above average in terms of customer service experience. With the sponsorship of CEO and County Manager Tony Petelos, the county made a commitment to establish itself as a technology leader among state and local governments.

Mainframe modernization and migration to Microsoft Azure were strategic pillars within the county's broader digital transformation plan to foster agility, increase efficiency, and deliver IT excellence.



ASTADIA



ASTADIAINC



@ASTADIAINC



ASTADIA.COM



Challenge

Leaders in Jefferson County sought to overcome some critical challenges that were standing in the way of digital transformation initiatives:

- An aging Unisys mainframe environment with high operating costs
- Legacy code that had grown more complex over the years and needed to be streamlined
- Limited integration capabilities that made it difficult to innovate and extend applications
- A diminishing workforce of software engineers with the necessary mainframe skills
- Prior to the mainframe modernization project, Jefferson County was running **28 legacy applications** over **11 databases**.

Their average mainframe system was over **30 years old**. By decommissioning their remaining mainframe systems, Jefferson County stood to save nearly **89% on operating costs** alone.

At the same time, it was becoming harder than ever to hire people with the necessary skills to maintain their legacy systems. Jefferson County's legacy systems lacked the flexibility and interoperability of modern cloud-based systems and prevented county ITS from implementing the kind of innovative changes necessary to improve customer satisfaction, both for internal stakeholders and for the broader Jefferson County community.

Solution

Jefferson County ITS had put forth a bold IT strategic plan to move the county into a leadership position among state and local governments. For their mainframe modernization project, Jefferson County emphasized the need for:

- A proven technology partner experienced in mainframe modernization and equipped with tools and methodologies to complete the project efficiently (Astadia).
- A secure, scalable platform on which to fulfill their strategic direction for the county's IT systems (Microsoft Azure).
- An industry-standard toolset to support their modernization efforts (Micro Focus).

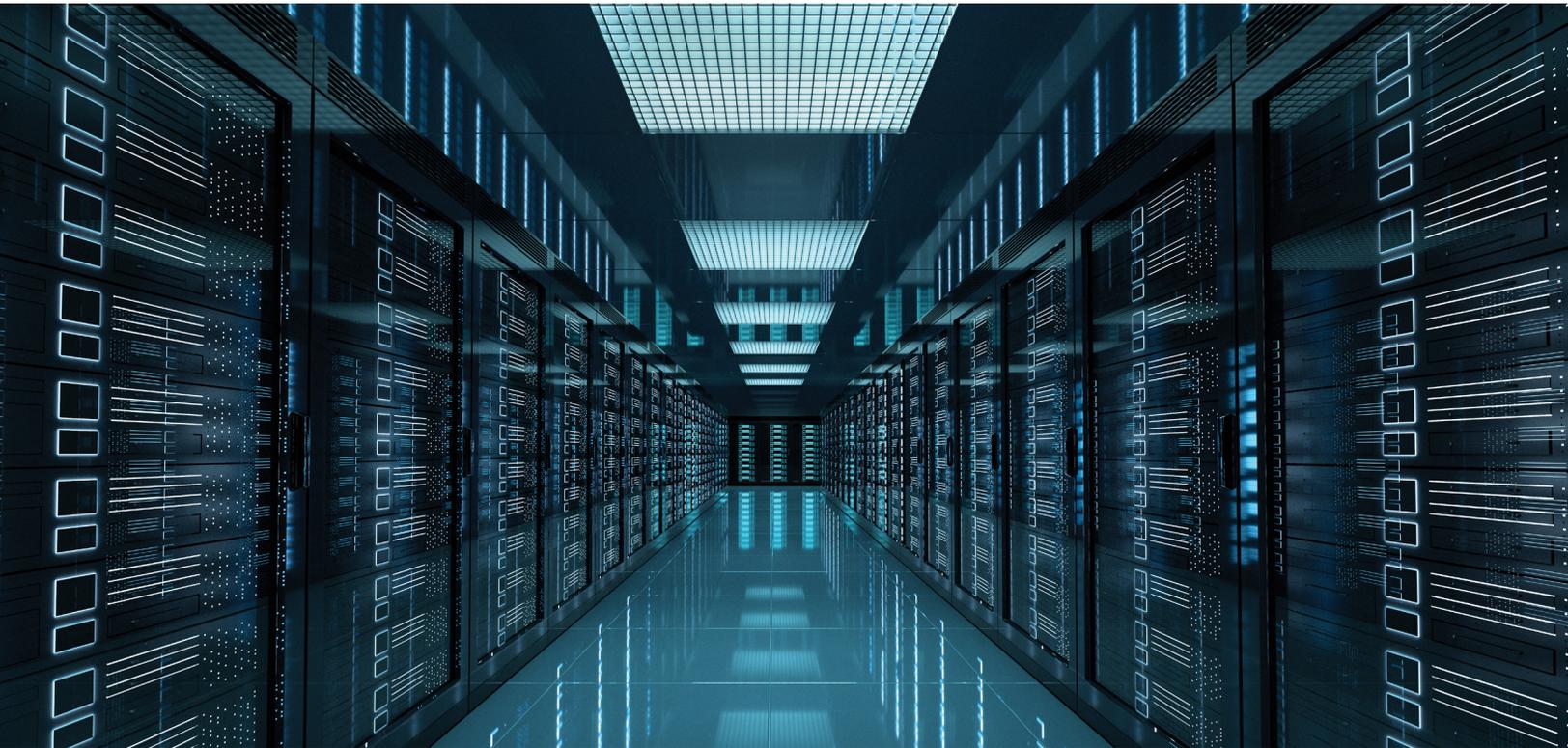
Jefferson County ITS selected [Astadia](#) because of the company's outstanding reputation and its expertise in mainframe-to-cloud migration. Astadia has completed numerous Unisys modernization projects and has built a set of tools and project management methodologies to ensure that the process runs smoothly and efficiently.

Jefferson County chose [Microsoft Azure](#) for its scalability and superior performance in the Platform-as-a-Service (PaaS) category. In addition, the selection team appreciated Azure's unparalleled security, especially with respect to virtual machines (VM) and Azure SQL Managed Servers.

The project team also leveraged Visual COBOL and other tools from [Micro Focus](#), expanding the features and capabilities available to Jefferson County's development team.

Jefferson County ITS has embraced a “customer service” approach to citizens and other departments within the county government. Project leaders placed a high priority on confidence and buy-in from stakeholders throughout the process.

Constrained by contractual obligations and motivated to achieve ongoing cost savings as early as possible, Jefferson County ITS set an ambitious timeline for the project. To make matters even more challenging, onset of the COVID-19 pandemic occurred midway through the project, producing significant headwinds that threatened to cause delays. Nevertheless, Jefferson County ITS and Astadia were able to successfully complete the project **ten months ahead of schedule**.



Results

Jefferson County has successfully implemented a cornerstone project as part of its strategic vision for IT, becoming the first SLG (state and local government) organization in the country to migrate their Unisys systems to [Microsoft Azure](#).

Jefferson County CIO Srikanth Karra describes the result as a “seamless” transition for stakeholders. Not only is the county saving over [\\$500,000](#) per year in license and maintenance costs; services have continued without disruption. This project serves as a valuable proof point for ITS’s long-term vision:

- Modernized systems now provide a foundation for continued digital transformation
- Annual system operating costs have been reduced by [88.9%](#).
- Additional cost reductions were achieved by eliminating licensing costs for legacy applications and replacing end-of-life hardware with less expensive off-the-shelf peripherals.
- The project was completed [ten months ahead of schedule](#), despite hardships brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Jefferson County ITS have established a platform from which they can execute on their broader strategic technology vision. By partnering with [Astadia](#), Jefferson County was able to lay the foundation for interoperability, efficiency, and increased innovation for the years ahead.

