

How Samana Group Supported Azamara Cruises' Vision to Optimize VDI Performance and Cost by Migrating Citrix to AWS EC2

Executive Summary

Azamara Cruises faced challenges with a split of Citrix and infrastructure across Azure and AWS. To address this, Azamara partnered with Samana Group to consolidate their Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI) into AWS. This strategic migration resulted from a comprehensive assessment by Samana Group, which identified key issues such as high cross-cloud data transfer costs and application latency, validated by user complaints.

Building on an established partnership, Samana Group swiftly designed, configured, and deployed the Citrix infrastructure on AWS EC2, along with all necessary business applications. The entire process was completed in less than three months, positioning Azamara Cruises for improved VDI performance, reduced operational complexities, and a more streamlined IT environment.

Takeaways

Challenge

Azamara Cruises experienced significant operational inefficiencies and rising costs due to a hybrid cloud architecture, where their Citrix VDI infrastructure was hosted on Azure, while critical business data and databases resided on AWS. The separation of data across cloud platforms led to several challenges:

- **Increased Data Transfer Costs:** The movement of data between Azure and AWS resulted in substantial, recurring costs.
- **Application Data Latency:** The physical and network distance between the VDI environment and the core business data caused noticeable delays and performance issues for end-users, triggering complaints.

Approach

Samana Group's solution involved a detailed design followed by the rapid deployment of the Citrix infrastructure in AWS. The team configured new virtual machines on AWS EC2, integrated essential Citrix components with Azamara's business software, and ensured a seamless transition through a comprehensive testing phase with both internal and end-user validation.

Results

- **Improved Data Proximity & Performance** by consolidating the VDI infrastructure and business data within AWS resulting in lower application latency and a more responsive user experience.
- **Optimized Operational Costs** by elimination of cross-cloud data transfer charges, coupled with a more efficient VDI setup in AWS, led to optimized operational expenses.
- **Rapid Project Completion** with the entire migration, from assessment to full deployment, was completed in under three months, minimizing disruption and delivering the benefits of the AWS-based VDI solution swiftly.



About Azamara Cruises

Azamara Cruises is a recognized leader in Destination Immersion experiences, connecting guests more deeply with the places they visit. Azamara specializes in longer stays, more overnights, and docking at smaller, less-accessible ports to allow travelers to explore unique destinations around the world.



About Samana Group

Samana Group is a leading provider of IT Consulting and IT Managed Services, specializing in End User Computing, Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI), Application/ Infrastructure Management, Networking, and Cloud solutions.

SOLUTION IN DETAIL – SAMANA GROUP IN ACTION

Having already provided Service Desk and VDI managed services for a year, Samana Group was a trusted partner for this critical migration. The key activities included:

- **Environment Assessment & Pain Point Identification:** A detailed assessment of Azamara's existing environment revealed the issues of cross-cloud data residency, latency, and associated costs. Direct feedback from end-users further reinforced these challenges.
- **Performance & Cost Analysis:** A detailed comparison was made between the performance of VDI on Windows 11 clients in Azure and Windows Server 2022 in AWS, alongside an in-depth analysis of potential cost savings from consolidating the VDI infrastructure in AWS.
- **Rapid Infrastructure Deployment:** Samana Group quickly facilitated the deployment of the Citrix infrastructure in AWS, ensuring minimal disruption.
- **Configuration & Software Integration:** The team meticulously configured new virtual machines on AWS EC2, integrating essential Citrix components and Azamara's critical business software.
- **Rigorous Testing & Deployment:** A comprehensive testing phase, including internal validation and extensive end-user testing, was conducted to ensure a seamless transition and optimal functionality before the final deployment.



BUSINESS VALUE DELIVERED

The strategic partnership between Azamara Cruises and Samana Group, along with the migration to Citrix on AWS EC2, yielded significant benefits:

- **Improved Data Proximity & Performance:** By consolidating the VDI infrastructure and business data within AWS, the distance between data and users was drastically reduced, resulting in lower application latency and a more responsive user experience.
- **Optimized Operational Costs:** The elimination of cross-cloud data transfer charges, coupled with a more efficient VDI setup in AWS, led to optimized operational expenses.
- **Enhanced VDI Environment:** Transitioning to Windows Server 2022 on AWS EC2 provided a scalable, high-performing VDI solution.
- **Rapid Project Completion:** The entire migration, from assessment to full deployment, was completed in under three months, minimizing disruption and delivering the benefits of the AWS-based VDI solution swiftly.
- **Strengthened Partnership:** The successful and efficient execution of this complex migration further solidified the long-term, trusted partnership between Azamara Cruises and Samana Group.

ONGOING SUPPORT: A DECADE OF TRANSFORMATIVE PARTNERSHIP

Since 2011, Samana Group has been a trusted partner, helping customers like Azamara to archive technological evolution in VDI Solutions.

Samana's partnership has delivered:

- A consistently high-performing environment.
- Strategic Guidance and ongoing, forward-thinking advice.
- Agile Problem-Solving to tackle emerging challenges head-on.
- Continuous Improvement to proactively enhance the environment and stay ahead of industry trends.

Our collaboration has not only met but exceeded initial goals, helping support Azamara's mission to be at the forefront of its industry.



AWS, CITRIX, and SAMANA GROUP: A CLEAR PATH TO VDI SUCCESS

This is just one of many client success stories Samana Group is proud to publicly share.

If this story resonates with you, we welcome the opportunity to connect.

With Samana Group as your strategic End User Computing Services Partner, you and your customers will be equipped to:

- Navigate migrations and implementations with ease.
- Optimize overall operating expenses and performance with our ongoing managed services & support.
- Adapt swiftly to new industry challenges.
- Achieve and surpass business objectives.

