



# How four nonprofits accelerated their missions through the cloud

See how nonprofits are driving more impact with Azure



# Introduction

Currently, nonprofits are finding that technology can help them create new ways to serve their beneficiaries, approach supporters, and empower their staff to drive greater impact with fewer resources. It is helping them expand their capabilities with deeper analysis of constituent and fundraising data, more effective direction of outreach resources and volunteers, and more timely information delivery. As a result, nonprofits are able to build strong and resilient relationships with funders, volunteers, and constituents and to squeeze higher value out of every dollar and hour they have to give.

According to the [Global NGO Technology Report 2019](#), 51 percent of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) worldwide increased spending on technology in 2019. About 64 percent accept online donations on their website. Forty percent use customer relationship management (CRM) software to track donations and manage communications with supporters and donors. Many NGOs also understand emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (74 percent), cloud computing (69 percent), and predictive analytics (51 percent).

Microsoft Azure offers hundreds of cloud services that address those and many other needs of nonprofits. And it's easier than you might think to take advantage of these new technologies, without disrupting your organization's daily operations.

## How to use this eBook

This eBook highlights how moving to Microsoft Azure has helped four nonprofits of various sizes and missions to reduce costs, reach more beneficiaries, react more quickly to changing conditions, and strengthen security. The examples are condensed versions of more detailed case studies. Just click the link on each to read the full story.



# See how four nonprofits are accelerating their mission in Microsoft Azure

Nonprofits all over the world are using Azure services to reduce costs, expand their reach, and increase productivity. Here are four examples:

- [Healthwise](#)
- [iRespond](#)
- [Save the Children](#)
- [Team Rubicon](#)



Image courtesy of Team Rubicon





# Health content company reduces costs, increases accuracy with bot technology

The Healthwise Handbook, a comprehensive self-care guide on healthcare topics, evolved over the years from paper to CD to DVD and ultimately to the internet. Today, Healthwise offers thousands of evidence-based, medically reviewed patient education resources, all housed in a massive online database. Insurers and healthcare systems nationwide use these resources to better educate their patients and members. Because of rapidly increasing demand for those resources, Healthwise needed to upgrade its IT infrastructure.



Before, every time we'd do an upgrade there was potential for disruption. Now when we're doing an update, we know it's going to work.

**DJ Holbrook**, Integration Engineer,  
Healthwise



Key challenges

- The number of times someone accessed a Healthwise resource online doubled between 2012 and 2015, and Healthwise needed a more robust content delivery infrastructure to keep up with growth
- Manually updating database content took hours or days.
- A small troubleshooting staff of five people was swamped trying to support 200 people
- Errors occurring during a manual update put the organization at risk for downtime, which could delay its clients getting important information

Solution

Healthwise embraced Azure Bot Service and Language Understanding Intelligent Service (LUIS) to automate routine update and maintenance tasks that would typically be performed by an employee.

Key benefits

- Facilitated more efficient, uninterrupted delivery of up-to-date medical information to clients in the quickest possible tim
- Automated system maintenance, increased accuracy, saved staff hours, and cut out mistake-prone steps that could cause downtime
- Decreased client call volumes, while increasing the number and technical complexity of Healthwise products
- Continuous monitoring helped ensure that internal data was not inadvertently left unprotected during system upgrades or migrations
- Automatic monitoring of VMs helped trim between \$40,000 and \$50,000 per year in unneeded VM reservations costs



LEARN MORE >



# Reduce system costs and increase good work

One of the biggest challenges for nonprofits is being able to take advantage of opportunities with limited budgets and resources. Moving to Azure can make that easier, because you pay only for what you use. It frees your organization from time-consuming (but important) tasks of system backup, network maintenance, patches, and software upgrades, because that's handled by the cloud provider. It also gives you the flexibility to scale up for a big event such as a fundraiser or volunteer recruitment drive, and to scale back automatically when the big push is over. That eliminates upfront hardware costs and saves the cost of managing a bunch of servers that you only use a few months of the year. What you save in time and money can be transformed into doing more good.





## Nonprofit iRespond creates biometric ID technology with Azure

The World Bank estimates that at least 1 billion people worldwide have no form of recognized identification. This makes them more vulnerable to exploitation, human trafficking, and slavery. It is iRespond's mission to provide refugees, displaced people, natural disaster survivors, and other at-risk groups, with reliable identification to ensure they have better access to medical care, humanitarian aid, and human rights protection.

The number of people we have helped has rapidly gone from the tens of thousands to the hundreds of thousands, and we look forward to soon working on behalf of many millions of people. These Microsoft tools are helping to make it possible.

**Larry Dohrs**, Vice President,  
Asia-Pacific, iRespond



Key challenges

- At risk groups don't typically have a recognized form of identification
- They may speak a different language or dialect than caregivers, thus increasing the potential for miscommunication, misdiagnosis, and identity errors
- They may be wary of being identified by potentially hostile groups
- Caregivers for at risk groups often don't have access to consistent internet signals

Solution

iRespond developed an iris-scanning technology, based on Azure, which provides an encrypted biometric ID attached to an ID number. Unique features of a near-infrared photo of the individual's iris are extracted and written to a file. The file is encrypted, and a random 12-digit number is assigned to it, which becomes

an anonymous identity. A tiny,16-kilobyte file with this information is uploaded to the Azure cloud platform. Iris scans are the only way to unlock an encrypted identity, meaning beneficiaries must be present to access their information when receiving services.

Key benefits

- Provides always accessible identification protected behind confidential and anonymous systems
- Ensures that vulnerable people have better access to medical care and human rights protection
- Works with a weak internet signal or allows caregivers to work offline and sync to the cloud once a stronger signal is available
- Can be used on virtually any platform or software
- Reduces the risk of creating duplicate entries for the same person



LEARN MORE >



# Keep your data private, yet accessible

A November 2018 report on the [State of Nonprofit Cybersecurity](#) revealed that only about 20 percent of nonprofit organizations responding to the survey have documented policies and procedures in case of a cyberattack. That same study showed that some of the respondents' biggest concerns are keeping unauthorized people from accessing their data, while still providing the staff with reliable access. Azure is built with security at the forefront, ensuring your systems automatically have the latest security updates across on-premises and cloud deployments to help protect your organization against external threats and breaches. In fact, Azure has more security certifications than any other cloud provider and meets international and industry-specific compliance standards.








## Save the Children builds a modern data warehouse to gain real-time fundraising insights

Driven by a belief that every child deserves a future, Save the Children has changed the lives of more than 1 billion children since its founding 100 years ago. Its global mission to give young lives a healthy start through programming, emergency response, and advocacy reached 33 million children in 2017. However, because its data was siloed in disparate systems, in a variety of formats and schema, it was difficult to unify. As a result, Save the Children's analysts had to rely on old or incomplete data, which made basic tasks like meeting fundraising targets exceedingly difficult.

A photograph of a woman with dark hair tied in a bun, wearing a blue shirt, holding a young child. The child is wearing a red and white patterned shirt. They are both looking down at something in the child's hands. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be a wall with some papers or a map.

With Attunity and Azure, we're able to better integrate data from multiple sources—including our CRM and ERP systems—so that data analysts have access to the freshest data possible for real-time analytics and reporting.

**Santha Kumar**, Director of Application Architecture and Development,  
Save the Children



Key challenges

- Data was siloed, outdated, and incomplete
- Processes for moving bulk data into a unified database were ineffective

Solution

The nonprofit turned to Attunity Replicate with Azure Data Lake and Azure SQL Data Warehouse to accelerate data replication from more than 30 sources into a unified database. Analysts can run simple or complex analyses of that data using visualization tools like Power BI.

Key benefits

- More actionable insights by providing analysts with access to real-time information from all data regardless of the source or format
- Quicker reaction to address immediate opportunities and specific needs
- Strengthened ability to transform the lives of children all over the world

Partner

Attunity

LEARN MORE >





# Move to the cloud at your own pace

The prospect of making any technology change, whether to the cloud or on-premises, can be daunting when you think of the time required and the potential disruption to the important work you do. Moving to Azure reduces those worries because much of the integration has already been done for you, and you can move at your own pace. Move one workload or one system at a time, or start by developing new applications like volunteer management or donor tracking in Azure. You can maintain a hybrid environment of on-premises and cloud applications indefinitely. And you can stay with the operating system, application tools, and platform you're already familiar with, running them in Azure without extra work. Free assessment and migration tools help you move to Azure without worrying about downtime.







## The cloud connects **Team Rubicon** and volunteers to rebuild disaster-devastated communities

Team Rubicon utilizes the skills and experiences of military veterans with first responders to rapidly deploy emergency response teams to help communities prepare, recover, and rebuild from natural disasters. They turned to technology to create a more effective way to track and manage the efforts of its 100,000+ volunteers to deploy in the most effective way to help impacted communities.

Now, with the integration that Microsoft presented to us, we are able to cut out multiple steps—in fact, hours out of our day. And that equates to having more families in their homes.

**Elliot Rios**, Clay Hunt Fellow,  
Team Rubicon, Veteran U.S. Marine Corps

Image courtesy of Team Rubicon



Key challenges

- Responding quickly in chaotic environments that may lack basic services
- Eliminating inefficiencies and duplication of resources
- More effective tracking of events and volunteers’ unique skills and experience to apply to the area of greatest need

Solution

Working with Microsoft, the cloud-based platform sitting on the Nonprofit Common Data Model connects Microsoft 365, Dynamics 365, Azure, Teams, and AI capabilities within a seamless user experience, which allows Team Rubicon staff to work more efficiently, tracking volunteer efforts, costs and outcomes for each operation.

Key benefits

- From awareness of event to event close out, provides a single pane of glass to manage all events, volunteers, skills, activity and deployment status
- Provides a seamless experience that helps staff identify and eliminate inefficiencies, maximize resources, and then apply them where needed most
- Leveraging AI to build the right teams with the right skills to deploy more highly customized and diversely experienced teams quickly and efficiently in a fraction of the time

LEARN MORE >



Image courtesy of Team Rubicon



# Mission continuity

Whether from a natural disaster or an act of armed conflict, a major system outage can paralyze your mission. When you move critical applications to Azure, you don't have to worry about outages because each Azure region is paired with a second region that shares data residency requirements. Your users will seamlessly be moved to the second region if an outage happens, allowing you to stay protected and compliant regardless of what's happening in your local area. Your staff can pick up where they left off without worrying about trying to rebuild systems and infrastructure, so your mission can continue.



# Your journey to the cloud may be shorter than you think

Thousands of nonprofits across the globe have already embraced the hundreds of cloud services available through Azure. Some run their entire operation on Azure. Others use it to extend their data center. Still others use Azure services to integrate end-to-end data intelligence to gain deeper insights across on-premises and cloud infrastructure so they can better understand needs, improve programs, and increase impact.

Regardless of how they use Azure, they all benefit from: not needing to manage infrastructure; having more secure information access across multiple platforms, devices, and locations; and being able to scale immediately to meet their needs.

Microsoft is committed to making it easier for you to join them with several offers and resources that can make the cloud more affordable, accessible, and relevant to your mission.

- **Donations and discounts** exclusively for nonprofits. These include US\$3,500 annually in donated Azure services credits to apply to any of the available Azure cloud solutions and services. See the [step-by-step-guide](#) with instructions on how to access the Azure donation.
- **Azure Training:** Microsoft provides [learning opportunities](#) that can help you develop, implement, and architect Azure solutions for your nonprofit.
- **Azure Blueprints** enables the creation of an Azure native package of artifacts that can be dynamically deployed to subscriptions to create consistent, repeatable environments.
- **A growing ecosystem of nonprofit-focused partners** who know the challenges that nonprofits face and focus specifically on providing relevant technology and services to help your organization scale and drive greater impact

around the world. Their services include **migration assessments** to help you determine which workloads can be moved to the cloud and the potential cost savings of those moves.

Our goal with all these offers is to ensure that you have the resources you need to continue your good work as cost-effectively and efficiently as possible. We want to help you do more with the resources you have to work with. Please contact us with any questions you may have about how your organization can take benefit from Azure and the related nonprofit offers.





[BACK TO TOP](#)

## Contact us

You're changing the world and Microsoft is committed to helping you make a greater impact. Contact us today to learn about nonprofit offers that can help further your good work.

[VISIT MICROSOFT.COM/NONPROFITS](https://www.microsoft.com/nonprofits)

**Talk to a Tech for Social Impact sales rep** at 1 (800) 258-6149 to learn more about nonprofit offers and to get help finding the right product for your organization. Available Monday – Friday, 7 AM – 7PM Central Time.

**Submit an inquiry** at [aka.ms/nonprofits.contact](https://aka.ms/nonprofits.contact)

**Find a partner** at [aka.ms/nonprofits.partners](https://aka.ms/nonprofits.partners)

**Follow us** on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#)