

Migrating Your Media Supply Chain to the Cloud

A Step-by-Step Migration Guide

Introduction

Media operations of all sizes are now realizing the benefits of a modern, cloud-based media supply chain. In a short time, cloud computing for media workloads has evolved from being bleeding-edge and risky to mainstream and mature. In fact, to stay competitive, media organizations must leverage the cloud to innovate faster, capitalize on new revenue opportunities, and make better decisions.

Make your supply chain a competitive advantage

Traditional, on-premises media supply chains consist of multiple different systems, from multiple different vendors, often delicately tied together with custom software. They are inherently brittle and unable to respond quickly to new opportunities, such as a new distribution agreement or a new D2C application. Once you get your infrastructure working, you don't want to touch it.

On the other hand, a modern, cloud-based media supply chain is inherently adaptive. It scales automatically, eliminating capacity barriers, bottlenecks, and idle equipment. It enables you to extend beyond managing infrastructure, applications, and processes to focus instead on more business-critical initiatives.

Once you've decided that the cloud is your future, the next question is, "How?"

Set a course for optimization

Migrating the data to the cloud is only half the battle. The real challenge is migrating to the cloud in a holistic way that will optimize your entire media supply chain. This is an opportunity to rethink the supply chain and set a course for enterprise-wide optimization of people, processes, applications, workflows, and infrastructures.

This will most likely be a dramatic change from how you've traditionally approached your media supply chain. Why? Because half of your energy has been spent on managing infrastructure.

In the cloud, you simply define the supply chain, and the platform does the rest. You end up with more time and resources to focus on the work that you have to do and the process for doing so. In this way, your supply chain becomes more of a business challenge than a technical challenge.

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to cloud migration, and every business is unique. This guide will walk you through the steps that any company can use to create their own optimal migration path.

Before you begin

Transformation doesn't happen overnight. Even though the final result will be much simpler than any current on-premises workflow, you'll want thoughtful planning and execution to get there. There are two things to keep in mind throughout this process:

Successful cloud migrations depend on dynamic leadership

Identifying cross-functional champions at the beginning of your journey helps ensure the best outcomes. Once you have a solid idea of your primary goal, communicate it, starting at the top. If you're able to obtain an executive mandate—great. If not, you can still make the move a top priority by taking a leadership role.

Think big, but start small

A supply chain management solution can integrate with your existing systems, enabling operations to begin improving incrementally. Once you have migrated your initial workflow, you can modify and adapt the methods you used to make the next one even more efficient and streamlined. These incremental improvements will provide quick gains while helping you get closer and closer to achieving your big-picture goals.

7 Steps to a Successful Migration

- 01 Map your current media workflows →
- 02 Identify pain points and/or inefficiencies →
- 03 Dream up your ideal future state →
- 04 Make an action plan →
- 05 Assemble your team →
- 06 Build your supply chain →
- 07 Measure, adapt, iterate →

01 Map your current media workflows

Start by mapping the people, processes, and technology involved in your current media supply chain. If you look at your supply chain as a broadly left-to-right process, what are your discrete workflows? Many organizations begin their transformation with the workflow that is causing the most pain or has the greatest opportunity for improvement. Even transforming one workflow can yield significant benefits for efficiency, productivity, and cost savings.



02 Identify pain points

The most common approach that companies take with migration is to begin with the workflow that would have the biggest impact on the business. With this approach, you'll identify current and future pain points, such as bottlenecks in production, underutilized resources, or repetitive, high-touch manual processes.

Once you've identified current and future pain points, focus on the circumstances around them. Don't leave any stone unturned in this process. Talk to everyone involved—from the operators performing the tasks to the people supporting them, including those delivering the content and those waiting for it.

This can be time consuming, so be clear about why you're doing it. For one thing, it will help you accurately define your challenges and requirements so that you can measure the impact of transformation. It also involves stakeholders across the business in the process of transformation so that they understand the big picture and can prepare for how their roles might change. By eliminating hours of manual effort, they're free to be more productive, focus on more strategic activities, or participate in other roles where human intervention is required.

Questions to ask:

- Who does what? In what order? In what system? And why?
- How much effort is duplicated across teams or work units?
- Which steps are (or can be) automated?
- How long does each step take?
- How many emails, spreadsheets or manual steps are involved?



When presented with a strategic deal involving very high volumes, Rally was able to execute in 16 hours what would've taken 30-60 days. Without it, the deal could not have gone through. Our cloud-based media supply chain opens up major opportunities for the business."

David Klee
Vice President,
Media Engineering and Broadcast Operations

03 Dream up your ideal future state

Once you have a comprehensive idea of how things work today, consider how you want it to work in an ideal world. What does your ideal supply chain look like in its future state?

Think big. Get creative. Imagine the process in a system with no limitations and draw it out. Don't think within the constraints of your current system but according to the needs and demands of the operation—now, and in years to come. Sketch out how you want content to flow, what needs to happen at each step, and what you want the outcome to be. No need to go too deep; just form an overall idea that you can articulate simply.

Let this ideal be the overarching objective, but not a concrete target. Unlike legacy systems that require you to predict and prepare for every eventuality, a cloud-native media supply chain will allow you to constantly iterate and improve as you move toward this ideal future state. Just getting started is the whole point. Nailing down a quick success will generate momentum.

Results from SDVI Customers

40% reduction in media handling costs

200% increase in content throughput

33% increase in staff productivity

80% reduction in time to localize content

70% improvement in time to market

25% reduction in operating costs

04 Make an action plan

Choose your entry point

Next, you need a plan for getting from point A to point B. First, choose your entry point. Your optimal entry point will vary according to the scope, size, and reach of your media operation. Determining the optimal entry point may be a simple matter of what will have the biggest benefit or be the easiest to reach. It may also be your biggest bottleneck or your greatest pain point.

Make a change management plan

Your action plan should include a strategy for change management. Here's where you'll want to communicate with stakeholders from inside and outside the organization to make sure they're aware of the coming changes and how they can support your efforts. Over-communicate with stakeholders so that problem areas can be identified and mitigated quickly. When you engage with stakeholders, they become champions.

Define success metrics

Lastly, define your metrics for success by identifying measurable results, such as reducing manual intervention by x or increasing operational capacity by y . Perhaps you want to contain the cost of maintaining a physical infrastructure or eliminate poor equipment utilization rates and optimize capital expenditure-to-usage ratios. Or perhaps measuring and reducing carbon emissions is part of your corporate mandate. Consider what can be measured going into the project so you have a reasonable notion of your baselines.



Communicating with Stakeholders

Typically, stakeholders include everyone from producers to QC techs and support operators. The most successful transformations have embraced stakeholder feedback and the give and take that comes with these kinds of transformation efforts.

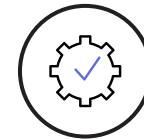
It may help to emphasize how migrating to a cloud-native infrastructure will eliminate manual tasks and free up resources for more critical objectives. Encourage people to share doubts and ask questions, so misconceptions can be curtailed early on. Have them look for the gaps in your plan and help refine it.

Let them know that this is an opportunity for operators to grow their skill-sets and advance into more strategic roles within the company as the organization eliminates mundane, manual tasks.

Choosing where to start

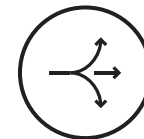
We recommend starting your migration to the cloud where you can have the greatest impact. But recognize that this is an iterative process, and you can always start again with a new workflow. The important thing is to overcome inertia and get started.

Consider the Business Impacts of Each Workflow



Content Receipt

With content coming in from dozens, if not hundreds, of suppliers, content receipt can be very complex. Modernizing manual legacy processes in this stage can result in significant efficiency gains.



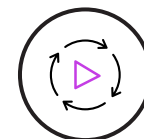
Content Distribution

Automating repetitive distribution processes, such as packaging and formatting, can result in big savings from reclaiming idle capacity and improving cost-calculation accuracy.



Localization and Compliance

Growing global demand has put massive pressure on media companies to localize content for audiences all over the world. Using cloud-based AI/ML tools to automate repetitive localization and compliance processes can dramatically improve the throughput and productivity of your human localization teams.



Content Normalization and Logging

Modern tools enable you to more granularly select the right content normalization tool for each job and provide new opportunities to orchestrate and integrate transcoding into your supply chain.



Modification

In this stage, cloud-based AI/ML tools can be used to help teams accelerate modification by quickly identifying scene changes, slates, credits, and other aspects of content that might need modification for different markets and distribution platforms.



Content Archiving

By building supply chains that make it more efficient to deliver archived content to new delivery services, you can more easily monetize your archive—turning it from a cost center into a source of revenue.

05 Assemble your team

Now that you have a vision, a starting point and measurable objectives, it's time to put together an implementation team to help you achieve those results.

First, remember your stakeholders. They're important to decisions, and you need their support. This is a large group that includes traditional media operations, engineering, finance, consumer experience, and IT (networking, security, etc.). Each of these groups has a hand in setting requirements and designing the solution. After deployment, they will come back into the picture for testing and validation.

Security is particularly notable, so don't forget your InfoSec team. They will want documentation of policies and procedures to ensure that all requirements for data privacy and content protection are being met.

When it comes time for action, a smaller team of builders and operators from IT is required to provision the supporting cloud infrastructure. This is often little more than setting up a storage bucket and setting access policies. The provisioning of infrastructure and resource management will be handled by the platform in the cloud.

Stakeholders



06 Build your supply chain

Define the process

Document your ideal workflows, tools, and expected results. Establish a realistic timeframe for deployment. The good news is that deployment is likely much simpler than what you're doing today because you're not managing infrastructure—only processes.

Select the right solution

SDVI Rally is the world's leading cloud-native media supply chain management platform. Rally orchestrates all supply chain actions, including the activation and deployment of third-party vendors—from a single platform.

Pilot your solution

Route content through both existing and new processes and observe the difference. This dual-workflow phase allows for fine-tuning while de-risking the initial migration, plus it demonstrates proof-of-concept internally and creates a reference system for the continued roll-out.

Go live

Back up existing servers and data. Test connections, individual components, and the system in total to confirm reliability before launching in production.

07 Measure, adapt, iterate

Measure

Sketch out data-sourcing protocols for capturing metrics. Don't base these protocols on the available data but rather the data necessary for establishing metrics and achieving your desired outcome.

Once the migration is complete, revisit your primary goal, measure your key metrics, and get feedback.

Iterate

A cloud-native ecosystem allows you to constantly evolve and adapt as your business requirements change. This unprecedented visibility into near real-time processing costs will enable data-informed business decisions.

Expand

At this point, you can identify the methods and practices that worked well and determine how to apply them to other areas of the media supply chain. In rolling out cloud-native content receipt supply chain, for example, you may discover a technique that would have a transformational impact on content delivery. The beauty of this migration model is that it's iterative. Once you have migrated your initial workflow, you can modify and adapt the methods you used to make the next one even more efficient and streamlined.

Now return to Step 1, identify the next area of the workflow for migration, and go from there.

Sample Metrics to Measure Success



Time to process 1 hour of content



Number of manual interventions required



Difference in overall supply chain cost



Growth in ingest capacity



Growth in output volume



FTE hours freed to focus on more strategic tasks



CO2 reduction and offsets



How can we help?

The best way to ensure success is to partner with a proven leader in cloud-based media supply chain management.

The SDVI Rally platform for cloud-based media supply chains can help you transform the way you work—from content ingest and processing to delivery. With Rally, your media supply chain becomes a competitive differentiator, enabling you to:

- Capitalize on new revenue opportunities faster
- Optimize operator efficiency and infrastructure utilization
- Gain enterprise visibility of the end-to-end supply chain
- Operate entirely net-zero supply chains

Are you ready to see how SDVI can help you migrate your supply chain to the cloud?

→ Learn more about Rally

→ Contact us today

