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CHRIS VAN CLEVE
Software Engineer

EMC
INSURANCE

O Downtime since migrating

O Backlog since migrating

EMC's strategic preparation enables "the smoothest migration" to Atlassian Cloud

Embracing change is challenging for any company, let alone one that's been around for over a century. Luckily, insurance provider EMC Insurance Companies is in the business of mitigating risks and planning for the unknown, so they approached their digital transformation with the same strategic preparedness that they do with their own products. As part of this transformation, EMC executed a well-planned, seamless migration to Atlassian Cloud with the help of Mumo Systems, which minimized risk, maximized peace of mind, and laid a solid foundation to serve their customers for the next hundred years.

ATLASSIAN | **mumo SYSTEMS**
Atlassian Solution Partner

Many companies that have been in business for decades are hesitant to change. Whether it's a new strategy, new products, new people, or new infrastructure, doing things differently can create uncertainty and even fear. However, as a century-old commercial insurance provider, EMC Insurance Companies knows all too well the benefits of preparing for the unknown, so they chose to embrace and plan for it rather than ignore it. "Change is a constant across the entire company. You have to be able to move really fast and keep up with the latest trends," says Software Engineer Chris Van Cleve.

Adapting to rapid change within their industry and across the market motivated EMC to embark on a digital transformation, which included adopting more modern systems, newer coding languages, agile methodologies, and a cloud-first approach. Migrating to Atlassian Cloud as part of this transformation was a logical step – one that would help the company alleviate the pains of managing their own tools so they could focus on their core business and be better equipped for the future.

After four months of planning and cleanup, EMC completed "the smoothest migration" (according to Chris) over the course of one weekend, leading to immediate and long-lasting improvements, including zero downtime incidents and a completely cleared backlog that had been accumulating for years. By offloading maintenance and moving to a more stable, secure system that is more conducive to productivity, EMC now has more time and resources to dedicate to innovation, which is absolutely key to helping their customers and their own company move forward with confidence.

All signs point to cloud

After adopting Confluence as their knowledge base around 2011, EMC migrated from a legacy service desk tool to Jira Software and Jira Service Management for better tracking and analytics, tighter integrations, and greater ease of use, especially for non-technical teams. Since then, Software Development Manager Marty Hagewood says, "Atlassian has become our single source of truth and central repository for collaboration.".

As teams across the company embraced agile methodologies with encouragement from EMC's Agile Center of Enablement, they also adopted Atlassian to power their daily work.

EMC's Jira Software system also seamlessly integrates with Bitbucket, Bamboo, and Confluence for agile development, documentation, and knowledge sharing. Jira Service Management is the go-to tool for technical and non-technical teams across the company (HR, Facilities, Security, and more) who need to invoke service from each other. "We're trying to get the Jira Service Management portal to a point where you can go there to ask for anything in the company and get your request to the right people," Chris says.

Originally, EMC chose to deploy their Atlassian products on Data Center to maximize control and availability. Over time, though, the company shifted to a cloud-first approach for more modern ways of working, higher uptime, and less maintenance. "As a company, we were thinking about how we set ourselves up for the future and what tools we need to be successful," Marty recalls. "We made that shift to cloud-first and modernized our IT so we wouldn't have to worry about it." Chris adds, "As the team that administers these tools, we wanted to be able to focus on providing customer service and solutions rather than splitting our time between maintenance and solving problems."

Coincidentally, EMC saw Atlassian leaning into the cloud around the same time, validating that their company was on the right path. "Atlassian has been direct that they're a cloud-first company and prioritizing new enhancements on the cloud. The writing was on the wall. That's where the industry and Atlassian's highest levels of product and support are going so we thought, 'Let's align with that,'" Marty explains.

> **66** Before, the joke was that we never got to address planned work because we were always doing service work. Now, after the migration, we've crushed the entire backlog twice.

CHRIS VAN CLEVE

Software Engineer

Preparation sets the stage for a smooth, fast transition

With the decision made to migrate from Atlassian Data Center to the cloud, EMC reached out to Enterprise Solutions Partner Mumo Systems for guidance and support. Both teams wanted to "optimize and shift" to make improvements along the way. "We said, 'Let's not just move it over. Let's rearrange the blocks a little bit and challenge ourselves to ask questions: Why are we doing this? What maintenance are we adding? What tech debt are we adding compared to the value we're gaining? Those questions lead to opportunities to simplify things," Marty describes. While this method may require a bit more time and effort upfront, it saves resources and improves the experience for both users and administrators later on.

With a strategic plan laid out, EMC and Mumo began a four-month collaboration of cleanup and optimization. The preparation phase consisted of planning, process modifications, validation, and rollout.

During this stage, plugin and user cleanup were big priorities. EMC relied on Marketplace apps heavily for automations and efficiencies, including Elements Connect, X-Ray Test Management for Jira, Automation for Jira, Scriptrunner,

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and Chat for Jira Service Management. The team worked with Mumo to evaluate which apps were no longer required (such as Automation for Jira, which is native in Atlassian Cloud, and Elements Connect, whose data wasn't being used much) and which ones needed to be migrated.

Mumo also collaborated with Atlassian to clean up EMC's data and simplify complex workflows. For example, they aligned the whole company on a single priority scheme, eliminating the need to go into Jira Software and update the priority every time a project is created. Mumo and EMC also noticed an unusually high user count in the system and analyzed whether it was necessary to migrate the entire set. After double-checking the database with Atlassian, Mumo's team eliminated 40,000 users from the environment before migrating. They also worked together to spot-check other data for accuracy and troubleshoot challenges that arose. "Atlassian was a big help in coordinating everything, making sure we had dotted our I's and crossed our T's, and bouncing ideas off one another," says Kian Stack, Lead Solutions Consultant at Mumo.

With all data, users, and apps cleaned up, EMC and Mumo moved into the next stage: migration planning and testing.

During this stage, Mumo planned not only the migration itself, but also post-migration work to minimize issues, correct workflows, relink knowledge bases, set up tags in Jira Service Management, and import custom configurations. Meanwhile, EMC provided early access to a group of 30 power users and managers so that they could test the system and get acquainted with the new interface. The testers' feedback helped resolve bugs and informed change management efforts, including discussing the cloud migration and training employees in the company's quarterly meeting, internal newsletter, and Confluence forums. Marty says, "Communication was key – understanding their questions, giving answers, getting them as prepared as possible so there weren't any surprises."

EMC's testing and communication left them feeling ready and cautiously optimistic as the big day approached. Migration and modifications were completed over the course of one weekend. Come Monday morning, the teams were pleasantly surprised at the response – or lack thereof – from EMC employees. "We were expecting a lot of tickets, but that didn't happen," Marty recalls. Chris adds, "In 25 years in IT, this was the smoothest migration I've ever been part of."

The team attributes the success of their migration to their in-depth preparation and partnership with Mumo. "Having such a long prep period and documentation paid off," Kian says. EMC believes Mumo was a critical piece of the puzzle, too. "My initial thought was, 'We got this. We can do it ourselves.' In hindsight, working with Mumo was key to getting us there," Marty says. "Our Collaboration Services team, which manages Jira, Jira Service Management, and Confluence, is awesome. But to have someone to partner with and lean on like Mumo, who understands the system and has experience that we don't have, was vital to making this happen successfully.".

"When you're not fighting outages, it's amazing what you can do"

With a smooth, successful migration behind them, EMC is already reaping the rewards of working on Atlassian Cloud and looking forward to expanding their use of the tools in the future.

Now that the Collaboration Services team has offloaded maintenance to Atlassian and eliminated downtime incidents, they have more time and energy to focus on work that adds value to EMC's customers and the business.

"Before, our team would have service work and planned work. The joke was that we never got to planned work because we were always doing service work," Chris explains. "Now we've crushed the entire backlog twice. Working on the cloud and shifting some of our duties to

> 66 With automatic updates, we always know the system is up to date. We don't have to worry about security and vulnerabilities or spend resources on them. The peace of mind is a big deal.
>
> **MARTY HAGEWOOD**
> Software Development Manager

Atlassian has created huge efficiencies and allowed us to focus on customer service." Marty and Kian agree. "The service level that we're offering because of the freed-up time is substantial," Marty says. Kian adds, "When you're not fighting outages, it's amazing what you can do!"

In addition to time savings, Marty says the team appreciates not having to worry about security anymore. "With automatic updates, we always know the system is up-to-date. We don't have to worry about security and vulnerabilities or spend resources on them. The peace of mind is a big deal."

For an insurance provider like EMC, that's what it's all about: minimizing risk and maximizing peace of mind. With the support of Atlassian and Mumo, EMC's well-planned, seamless cloud migration has helped transform their company and lay a solid foundation to serve their customers for the next 100-plus years.

Explore Atlassian's Cloud products today.
Click here to get a free migration trial

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