

## CUSTOMER SPOTLIGHT

# Migrating Blackbaud CRM to Microsoft Azure with the Australian Conservation Foundation



**AUSTRALIAN  
CONSERVATION  
FOUNDATION**

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—Benedict Chiu, Head of Data and Technology, ACF

The Australian Conservation Foundation (ACF) has been a powerful voice for the environment for more than 50 years. The donor-funded organisation has built a dedicated community of 700,000 members all working together to protect Australia’s natural beauty for today, and for future generations.

In 2021, ACF became the first Australian organisation to migrate their instance of Blackbaud CRM™ (BBCRM) to the Microsoft® Azure platform. In this case study, we’ll explore why ACF committed to moving to the cloud, how they successfully migrated to Microsoft Azure with the help of Blackbaud, and recommendations for other organisations interested in following in their footsteps.

### The importance of finding a cloud-first solution

“ACF is adopting a cloud-first approach for a lot of its systems and services as the opportunity arises”, says Benedict Chiu, Head of Data and Technology at ACF.

Australian Conservation Foundation is powered by:

Blackbaud CRM™

Microsoft Azure

“So when the opportunity came along to modernise our Blackbaud



instance by migrating to the cloud, that dovetailed really well with our strategy”.

Benedict says ACF’s commitment to moving towards cloud-first technology is driven by a number of factors.

“It’s fair to say that like lots of other organisations, the opportunities presented by the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting disruption drove a lot of that thinking”, says Benedict.

“But from a longer-term perspective, there is a certain amount of cost and resource management required for on-premise environments like BBCRM.”

“Moving to Microsoft Azure reduces that management burden and offers us a greater level of flexibility and opportunities for the future”.

## Ensuring ‘feature parity’ and security in the cloud

Rebecca Gardiner, Donor Services and CRM Manager at ACF, says the organisation only considered the move to Azure once they were certain the experience of donors and staff wouldn’t be disrupted.

“One of the key considerations was feature parity, making sure that we don’t lose any of the existing core functionality of BBCRM”, says Rebecca.

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To help achieve those goals, Benedict and Rebecca were given full support from the Blackbaud Services team including Gregory Dellas, CRM & Managed Services Practice Manager, and Christina Smith, Senior Enterprise Project Manager, Blackbaud Pacific.

“We had confidence that we’d be able to meet all of ACF’s challenges, and we partnered closely with Blackbaud’s Azure team in the US, who led the technical rollout and were always available for conversations throughout the migration”, says Gregory.

## Going live on the cloud with world-class support

With ACF piloting the move to Azure in Australia, Benedict was grateful to have Gregory and Christina’s support, as well as the expertise of the US Azure team, who had already successfully migrated many other organisations to the cloud in the States.

“It was really good to have their support. Because we were the first in Australia, there were a few local differences, like working with the BSB system for Australian banks.”



“We had lots of catch-ups to work through any issues that arose. Blackbaud always helped us find a solution, which has then been applied to other Australian organisations who have now also migrated to Azure”.

Rebecca says having support from the Australian and US teams gave her a lot of confidence, especially on the day ACF’s instance of BBCRM went live.

“Having Blackbaud Pacific’s project manager Christina as our main linchpin here in Australia was crucial to the success of the project”, she says.

“And the US team were just as important. On the day we launched, we were talking on the phone to make sure that any issues were successfully resolved before we started. They wanted the best outcome for us and went above and beyond to help achieve that.”

## A new range of opportunities and benefits

Now, four months after going live with Azure, Rebecca says the migration has proven to be a big success.

“From a front-end perspective, everything is working perfectly. Because of the testing and the support that Blackbaud provided, we were able to provide a seamless transition for donors and members.”

Benedict is equally happy with the migration, and is now looking forward to the new possibilities that have opened up as a result of moving to the cloud.

“The migration to Azure has kicked off a new cadence of upcoming work that will significantly benefit us as an organisation by streamlining our operations, enabling more advanced data analytics, gaining better insight on our donors and the opportunity to utilise additional services”, he explains.

“It will also mean some potential savings for us financially and operationally. Moving onto the cloud enables us a new range of opportunities and benefits that previously weren’t possible.”

## Interested in moving to the cloud with Blackbaud CRM?

For other organisations that are considering following in ACF’s footsteps, Rebecca says migrating to the cloud is easier and less daunting than you might expect.

“With the expert support of Blackbaud, you’ll be able to take it one step at a time and get the guidance you need at each stage of the process. In the end, it was no more difficult than a normal upgrade or any other process you normally run a couple of times a year. Definitely nothing to be daunted by!”

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To discuss moving your instance of BBCRM to the cloud, please contact your Account Executive, or email [info@blackbaud.com.au](mailto:info@blackbaud.com.au).

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### About Blackbaud

Leading uniquely at the intersection point of technology and social good, Blackbaud connects and empowers organisations to increase their impact through software, services, expertise, and data intelligence. We serve the entire social good community, which includes nonprofits, foundations, corporations, education institutions, healthcare institutions, and the individual change agents who support them.

