

Guide to a Successful Data Center Consolidation



A data center consolidation is an important, but not necessarily easy, project for an organization. A consolidation is the shedding of contracts and other materials unnecessary to the efficient operation of your IT environment. In order to maximize the effectiveness of your consolidation efforts, there are some best practices that need to be followed and tasks completed. Data Canopy data center experts have created this guide based on our experience in consolidating numerous data centers for organizations of all sizes. If you require further assistance in your consolidation efforts, please do not hesitate to reach out to us at 703-594-5200 or contact@datacanopy.com We'd be happy to help.

Step 1: Inventory

When beginning any sort of consolidation, it's imperative to understand what you have. Take an inventory of your complete IT environment as a starting point.

Server Name:

Make and model:

Memory:

CPU:

Hard Disk Space:

OS:

Files Stored:

Applications Processed:

Cost of Downtime:



Inventory of your network and documentation of its topography is also essential as you prepare for consolidation.

Firewalls:

Gear:

Network Topography

Management VLANs:

Production VLANs:

Storage Devices

Make:

Model:

Configuration Notes:



Step 2: Evaluate Current Environment

After your inventory, you should be able to create a clear picture of where redundancies exist and what hardware is reaching end of life. There are other considerations to assess when embarking on a consolidation, including storage, data use, and current virtualization efforts. Gathering all of this information will help to make the consolidation a smooth process.

Virtualized Servers:

Current Storage Requirements:

Historical Chart of Data Growth (three years is preferred):

Step 3: Identify Your Goals

Consolidating shouldn't be done without clear goals in mind. You need to understand what consolidation looks like for your organization and what you want to accomplish by undertaking the effort. It seems like a no-brainer, but it's essential to take time to seriously consider what you want to accomplish beyond just "consolidation."

Take that into consideration as you discuss your service requirements with the business to get a clear picture of where your IT environment is now and where it needs to go.

Major service initiatives to support business in coming 6 months:

Major service initiatives to support business in coming year:

Long-term strategic service initiatives:

Goals to achieve with consolidation:

Step 4: Evaluate Needs

In determining the best way to conduct a consolidation, the true needs of the organization must be documented. From there, you can determine what technical solution will provide the service required for the budget available.

Budget:

Cost of Downtime:

Uptime Requirements:

Acceptable Downtime for Backups:

Server Location Requirements:

Once you have followed these steps, you will have the information you need to identify the right solution for your organization. Often, a compromise is required between the gold standard technology solution and budget restrictions. If you have all of the information outlined above though, you will be able to identify the areas where requirements can be minimized without greatly impacting service.

Improve Performance and Limit Impact

With careful planning, you will be able to consolidate your environment for your organization to improve service with limited impact during the transition. The right partner can help you make it happen. Call Data Canopy today at 703-594-5200 or email contact@datacanopy.com to learn more.