Secureworks’ Journey to Build a Successful Cloud Financial Management Practice

A leader in software-driven cybersecurity services, Secureworks has, through machine learning and telemetry, reduced the multitude of events they process on behalf of their global client base per day (up to 3 billion) into a handful of security events, providing the security information that matters most to their clients. Secureworks uses CloudHealth to provide reliable data to advance their cloud financial management practice and promote visibility across all business units.

The importance of an outstanding company culture
Secureworks is in the process of migrating 100 percent of their infrastructure from on-premises to the public cloud. This decision came after IT was slowing down operations and the team realized that cost alone should not be the driving force behind cloud adoption. “Culture change is slow, and this set the stage with all IT and development employees that we were changing our culture and behavior,” said Dave Bushell, senior IT director, cloud and infrastructure services at Secureworks.

Secureworks believes it’s crucial for a company to learn and understand the links between all business units to curate an outstanding company culture. If a company has issues during migration/adoption, the operations could be impacted. “Having a good culture helps to mitigate those risks and helps the company make the best decisions for the business,” Bushell shared.

Advancing Secureworks’ cloud journey
The Secureworks team is now operating a hybrid cloud model as part of a phased approach to be fully in the public cloud. The team is quickly migrating workloads to Amazon Web Services (AWS) because of services such as Amazon Elastic Compute Cloud (EC2) and Amazon Relational Database Service (RDS).
With the rapid progression of the migration, the team also started a new governing body of cloud experts, responsible for creating the organization’s cloud center of excellence. This cross-functional team of leaders work together to determine smart financial practices, enabling the business to choose the best solutions.

**Working with CloudHealth**

Secureworks’ teams drive the financial practice and use CloudHealth to provide cost reporting and educate other business units. “Financial management is about driving the business value of cloud, optimizing usage, reducing underutilization, and increasing efficiency. The most important and obvious way to drive successful cloud financial management is a financial operations team,” explained Steve Dion, IT director, cloud and infrastructure services at Secureworks.

Functionality provided by CloudHealth allows Secureworks to automate the execution of their cloud strategy. Periodic assessments on idle resources and utilization patterns, and the implementation of start/stop schedules will greatly help increase cloud efficiency. Automating these tasks with CloudHealth allows Secureworks to take their cloud journey to the next level.

With the help of the VMware team, Secureworks has also started looking at KPIs to measure success, including cost per instance hour, which tracks the average cost after unused Reserved Instances (RIs) of each hour of instance usage within the public cloud.

The VMware team has also helped Secureworks see what other companies with similar AWS spend and utilization look like. “It’s really given us a unique way to understand how well we’re actually doing,” Dion shared.

Both CloudHealth and AWS provide a tremendous amount of data that allows Secureworks to create consolidated reports to present to leadership teams that allow them to make educated decisions.

“We’ve been able to not only educate our users, but really start changing the way Secureworks thinks about designing and deploying its workload in the public cloud,” Dion explained.

**Next steps for Secureworks**

The Secureworks team plans on implementing AWS Savings Plans into their cloud strategy, which will help close current cost gaps and maximize savings potential. Instance scheduling is another goal, and the team will use CloudHealth to avoid the use of AWS Lambda functions. The team will also rely on CloudHealth APIs to build custom dashboards and reports that will further optimize their cloud infrastructure.

Check out Secureworks’ full CloudLIVE session to learn how the team built a mature cloud financial management practice.