CliQr is now part of Cisco.

Cut Costs and Simplify Licensing by SaaS-Enabling PZFlex

> "CliQr took a lot of time and risk out of the migration and made choosing the right cloud obvious."

Dr. Robbie Banks
PZFLEX DIRECTOR
WEIDINGER ASSOCIATES

PZFlex® Virtual Prototyping

BUSINESS

Founded in 1949, Weidlinger became a leading U.S. structural engineering firm that focused on solutions to model and simulate physical elements in building and transportation design, applied science research, and physical security.

CHALLENGE

PZFlex, one of the Weidlinger software solutions, required expensive desktop hardware and a dongle-based licensing system to realize the full value of the solution. This slowed market adoption and limited their return on investment.

USE CASE: SaaS-enabling Enterprise Software

SOLUTION

CliQr's CloudCenter platform provides Enterprise-class security, flexibility, and scalability that allowed PZFlex to deploy its software on any supported public, private, or physical cloud. Multi-tenant provisioning, metering, and advanced financial controls eliminated the need for hardware-based licensing, expanded their target market and even let Weidlinger customize CliQr's solution to match their branding.

BENEFIT

PZFlex greatly accelerated its implementation with access to unlimited cloud compute capacity and provided more flexible purchasing options. PZFlex customers now run simulations within hours instead of days on the best cloud as determined by CliQr's benchmarks.

Business

For more than half a century, Weidlinger Associates has held a leadership position in structural engineering and applied mechanics, designing and rehabilitating buildings, bridges, and infrastructure using their advanced analysis software. Weidlinger is the driving force behind such notable engineering efforts as the CBS Building, the Georgia Dome, and the signature suspension span of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge.

> “The faster we run simulations, the more quickly we can get information into the hands of those that need it.”

PZFlex, one of Weidlinger’s commercial software packages, was initially developed to model ultrasonic probes and applications. Over time, the capabilities of PZFlex were extended to enhance design cycles of all kinds: commercial, esoteric, fully developed, or other ideas still in the dream stage.

These simulations help shape the world around us, modeling wave behavior for scientific study or simulating entire system performance to bolster everything from product yield to overall safety.

Challenge

PZFlex required expensive desktop hardware and a dongle-based licensing system to realize the full value of the solution. This slowed adoption of a narrow market and limited return on investment.

The computing resources required to perform these simulations were considerable. But running simulations are more cost effective than physically testing every possible scenario or design. The trick was to optimize the design after every completed iteration. Accelerating those iterations results a better product, sooner.

“In order to take advantage of our PZFlex solution, customers used to

have two options,” said Dr. Robert Banks, Director at PZFlex. “They could download our software and run it on a 4- or 8-core machine in their offices or they could engage with our services team and outsource the jobs to us. We used to maintain a massive datacenter and keep it on standby, waiting for these jobs to be submitted. This allowed us to deliver fast turn-around time on complicated simulations.”

However, maintaining their in-house datacenter was costly and the inability of customers to directly access this compute power was an inhibitor to their growth.

“We wanted to find a solution that would allow our customers to run their simulations as quickly and cost-efficiently, as they wanted, without requiring any help from our teams,” Dr. Banks continued.

The elasticity of public cloud seemed like a perfect fit, with its on-demand resources, but the challenges the PZFlex team faced in migrating their software to the cloud made it a difficult decision.

“We were worried that this migration would require massive recoding of our application to allow it to run on a cloud infrastructure,” Dr. Banks explained. “We also weren’t sure which cloud provider would be the right choice for us. We have customers all over the world, so ensuring high-performance simulations in every geography is very important.”

And thinking beyond the initial migration, Dr. Banks had concerns about licensing, “Our desktop licensing model, complete with a hardware-dongle for entitlement, was very effective for us. But, how do you attach a dongle to the cloud?”

Solution

Weidlinger chose CliQr CloudCenter to migrate, govern, and manage PZFlex on cloud infrastructure. This solution provided enterprise-class security, flexibility, and scalability that allowed PZFlex to deploy its software on any supported public, private, or physical cloud. Multi-tenant provisioning, metering, and billing eliminated the need for hardware-based licensing and even let Weidlinger customize the look and feel to match their branding.

"The initial migration was completed in record time," recalls Dr. Banks. "We anticipated nearly 12 solid months of application re-architecting and development to move PZFlex into the cloud—and we had no idea how the solution would perform once we had finished."

With CliQr, PZFlex was up and running in the cloud, including a customized VNC based viewer to access the fat-client GUI in less than two weeks. In addition, within hours of the migration, CoudCenter benchmarked the performance of PZFlex on several CliQr-supported clouds and found that HP Helion Cloud delivered the best price-performance for their needs.

Benefit

By turning PZFlex into a SaaS-based, on-demand product, Weidlinger changed the way companies, both large and small, access their sophisticated simulation and modeling software.

- **More resources are always available**. The migration to CliQr, and the ease with which CliQr can access any number of cloud resources, allows PZFlex users to take advantage of almost infinite computing resources to accelerate simulations and deliver products to market, faster.
- **Easy installation**. PZFlex can now be accessed anywhere in the world via a web browser, eliminating the need for expensive workstations and complicated installation procedures that previously had to be manually followed each time.
- **Licensing is simpler**. Instead of locking the software to a single desktop machine, users are able to scale-up compute resources during intensive workloads. Integrated metering, reporting, and billing processes ensure that users are always aware of their consumption and are charged appropriately for what they use.
- **Prices are cheaper**. Weidlinger no longer needs to maintain an expensive datacenter full of servers to run large-scale simulations for high-end customers. Benchmarking ensures workloads are run on the most cost-efficient cloud, and savings are passed on to users.

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