



# Making the cloud connection

Air India SATS takes flight with SAP Business One on IBM Cloud

by Kristin Fern Johnson  
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Enjoyable air travel is as much about what happens on the ground as in the sky. Easy, fast check-in, a clean airport environment, reliable baggage claim—accompanied by exemplary customer service throughout—are essential for a positive flying experience.

Air India SATS Airport Services Private Limited (AISATS) understands this through and through. A joint venture between Air India Limited, India's flag carrier airline, and SATS Limited, a major gateway services and food solutions provider in Asia, AISATS provides



ground and cargo services for five major airports in India, from baggage handling to interior aircraft cleaning to passenger services for Indian and international airlines.

Shortly prior to the pandemic, AISATS launched an initiative to migrate all of its IT operations to the cloud. “Like every other tech-savvy organization, AISATS is on a digital transformation journey to stay a step ahead in our client services,” says Sanjay Gupta, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of AISATS. “Cloud adoption is one of our strategic technology goals in this journey and

moving our SAP platform to the cloud is a critical step.”

The company's [SAP Business One](#) implementation serves as a backbone for several critical business functions, integrating the company's finance, procurement and management information systems throughout the entire company.

At the time of the transformation, IBM was managing the complete infrastructure for AISATS's SAP Business One implementation out of IBM data centers in India. AISATS was

looking for a cloud provider for its SAP migration. The IBM team was eager to convince AISATS that IBM Cloud® was the right choice.

In fact, migrating the SAP solution to IBM Cloud made a lot of sense. AISATS already had extensive investment in its on-premises implementation in IBM's data centers, including capital expenses for hardware and licenses. With IBM Cloud, the company could retain its investment in those assets and reissue expiring software licenses at low cost.

What's more, IBM Cloud is certified to run SAP infrastructures—equipped with built-in compliance and security capabilities—and its performance received high marks from the SAP technology team. And finally, while some cloud providers offered enticing upfront pricing with additional charges that accumulate over time, IBM offered one-time, all-inclusive pricing, with no hidden or additional fees.

Reduced hardware costs, maintenance costs and energy expenditure contributed to

35%

lower costs

Enhanced system accessibility, ease of usage and execution speed helped deliver an

80%

performance improvement

# Teaming for fast, flawless delivery

After considering multiple providers, AISATS chose to host its SAP Business One solution on IBM Cloud. “Based on the available options, it was clear that IBM was the right choice for us,” says Gupta. “AISATS had the advantage of picking the right provider that could cater to our requirements at optimal cost and provide relevant expertise during and after the implementation.”

IBM Cloud runs on [IBM Cloud Bare Metal Servers](#), dedicated servers that deliver high performance in a security-rich, single-tenant cloud infrastructure. To optimize its network, the IBM team installed [IBM®](#)



[networking services on IBM Cloud](#), including network gateway appliances, which come with five terabytes of free bandwidth per month for significant cost savings. And [IBM cloud storage services](#) provided both file and block

storage for backup services and data storage.

The migration launched in earnest in November 2020, with many players from both companies participating.

On the IBM side, the IBM Cloud and [IBM Consulting](#) teams worked together to manage and implement the infrastructure, network and security components. AISATS handled writing and migrating the SAP application.

The teamwork paid off. By the end of January 2021, the SAP Business One solution was fully migrated to its new home on IBM Cloud, and it was up

and running by the end of February. “IBM’s implementation planning and delivery were flawless,” says Gupta. “The project implementation and delivery teams were prompt and were always one step ahead in providing relevant information at every stage of the process.”

For the short term, the SAP Business One solution resides in a hybrid

cloud environment, with the primary implementation running in the IBM Cloud data center in Chennai, India, and the disaster recovery implementation running on premises in a data center in Singapore. This construction enables AISATS to protect its existing hardware investments while enjoying the benefits of a cloud environment. In time, the company will transition fully to IBM Cloud in both locations.

“This transformation journey has resulted in significant cost optimization for our organization. By migrating the SAP solution to IBM Cloud, AISATS saw a 35% reduction in its costs due to reduced hardware costs, lower energy expenditure, optimum space utilization and lower maintenance costs. Our performance improved by 80% due to better system accessibility, ease of usage, improved execution speed, etc.”

**Sanjay Gupta**, CEO, Air India SATS Airport Services Private Limited

# A future in the cloud

AISATS is already reaping many benefits from running its SAP Business One platform on IBM Cloud. End users experience faster access times when using the platform. The company also has much greater visibility into who is doing what in its cloud environment due to greater monitoring capabilities and access control. And if there is a hardware failure, replacing parts or making configuration adjustments is much faster and more flexible on IBM Cloud, with far fewer dependencies. What's more, the implementation is protected by the many compliance and security features that are built in to IBM Cloud.

“Moving our SAP platform to the cloud has monumentally improved ease of access, performance and



scalability,” says Gupta. “This transformation journey has resulted in significant cost optimization for our organization. By migrating the SAP solution to IBM Cloud, AISATS saw a 35% reduction in its costs

due to reduced hardware costs, lower energy expenditure, optimum space utilization and lower maintenance costs. Our performance improved by 80% due to better system accessibility, ease of usage, improved execution speed, etc.”

In the future, the company plans to expand upon its existing cloud implementation, incorporating AI, and possibly blockchain and IoT technologies. “We are looking forward to moving other on-premises services onto the cloud, making the integration between multiple products seamless to our user,” says Gupta. “Automation and high availability are key to our

business operations, and we will continue to focus on enhancing these technological capabilities. We also plan to implement business solutions using AI in IBM’s future product offerings.”

Overall, AISATS is highly satisfied with both its IBM Cloud implementation and—especially—the expertise and collaborative teamwork it has received

from IBM. “The key takeaway for us was the high level of professionalism displayed by every single member of the IBM team,” says Gupta. “IBM followed a process-driven approach, which included providing the necessary subject matter expert intervention and support, from architecture design through implementation. This really helped address all our needs.”

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**Sanjay Gupta**, CEO, Air India SATS Airport Services Private Limited



### About Air India SATS Airport Services Private Limited (AISATS)

[AISATS](#) (external link) is a 50:50 joint venture between Air India Limited, India's flag carrier airline, and SATS Limited, a leading gateway services and food solutions provider in Asia. Since the start of its operations in 2008, AISATS has carried out world-class ground handling and cargo handling services at airports across India. AISATS is known for providing seamless customer experiences to its client airlines and their passengers throughout India. With capabilities achieved through years of servicing world-class clients and a deep understanding of the aviation ecosystem, AISATS offers passenger services, ramp handling, load control and flight operations, baggage handling, aircraft dressing services and cargo handling services.

### Solution components

- IBM Cloud®
- IBM Cloud Bare Metal Servers
- IBM® Consulting
- IBM networking services on IBM Cloud
- IBM cloud storage services
- SAP Business One