

Case Study

Helping a Large Pharmaceutical Company Cut Licensing Fees in Half

A large international pharmaceutical company hosted their 110 Microsoft SQL Servers in a hybrid cloud/on-premises database system. They wanted to improve the performance of their SQL Server data environment and prepare it for future cloud migrations. During the optimization, it was imperative to prevent outages due to the regulatory and technical services they provide to healthcare product companies around the world.



The Problem

The pharmaceutical company initially sought migration assistance from a large, off-shore Managed Services Provider that was already handling their database managed services. However, several critical issues stalled the project, at which time they reached out to Fortified for expertise and support.

The experts on the Fortified team always begin engagements with an initial data tier assessment.

The assessment revealed many optimization improvements, challenges and opportunities to improve the SQL Server environment. These improvements required careful prioritization, impact analysis, and precision execution that ensured the success of the migration project while curtailing outages.

Data Tier Assessment recommendations lead to:

- Scalability
- Performance Improvements
- Reduced Cost
- Operational Efficiencies
- Capacity Planning

Fortified's Solution

Giving a holistic review of a data environment is the first step of any major project. **Typically, a data tier assessment returns many results—in this case, thousands of items.** Every data tier assessment includes data collection from the server environment, which provides representative levels of database activity, challenges, and opportunities. Another unique aspect of Fortified's data tier assessment is the utilization of machine learning to predict and detect anomalies in the data environment. The full process of establishing baseline data for complete analysis takes about six to eight weeks of data collection.

When Fortified was first engaged, the Fortified team began closely collaborating with the pharmaceutical

company through a series of meetings to understand and align their data with business strategies. Then, once the Fortified team completed the data tier assessment and analysis, the real work began. Fortified established a prioritization-led strategy and risk analysis and actionable items that provided meaningful impact to the data system performance and overall data ecosystem health. After sharing the improvement strategy with the pharmaceutical company, Fortified's team of experts led the pharmaceutical company through their data transformation journey.

Results

What were the most impactful findings?

- 50% SQL Server licensing saved per annum
- Increased availability of systems to 99.999%

Fortified's approach to optimization led to an overall marked increase in availability across the data ecosystem. After ensuring the pharmaceutical company's system was more stable, Fortified was able to focus on improving performance. Most notably, Fortified's discoveries about the design of the system meant Fortified could offer suggestions that would help reduce the pharmaceutical company's licensing costs by 50%. As part of Fortified's larger recommendations, the Fortified team suggested that they perform data tier assessments more frequently. In our experience, most enterprise organizations that create large volumes of data need semi-annual or quarterly assessments.

"We were taken aback by the improvements [Fortified Data] was able to identify—and the efficiency with which they made it all happen. We were initially leery of their recommendation to assess more frequently, but they showed us exactly how many major changes [to our environment] we were missing when we only assessed annually."