

# CloudWay assists the Norwegian Digitalisation Agency to become the most progressive governmental agency

Digitaliseringsdirektoratet  
Norwegian Digitalisation Agency

In 2019, the Norwegian Government decided to merge Difi (direktoratet for forvaltning og IKT) with Altinn. By shedding digital legacy, the new system emerged on January 1, 2020 as Norway's most forward-looking public agency. This is in line with this statement from the Norwegian Digitalisation Agency's website:

*"The Norwegian Digitalisation Agency will be the government's agency for a faster and more coordinated digitalisation of the public sector."*

Nikolai Astrup, Minister of Digitalisation, commented upon the creation of the new agency as follows:

- *My ambition is that for Norway to be a global leader within the digitalisation of public services. Our goal with digitalisation is to make public services better and more accessible, to simplify processes, to increase value creation for businesses and to make everyday life easier for most people. In order to achieve this, the Norwegian government has decided to merge our spearheads within digitalisation – Difi and Altinn – into a new Digitalisation Agency.*

To practice what they preach, the agencies themselves will have to digitalise.

- *We had a ten-year-old infrastructure and wanted to take the opportunity to move over to a modern platform and get rid of technical debt. We have set ourselves a goal of taking the lead in the public sector in adopting new technologies, says Tommy Harjo, IT Manager at The Norwegian Digitalisation Agency.*

The Norwegian Digitalisation Agency has a very competent IT department. But they lacked the capacity to simultaneously operate and maintain their own solutions, and at the same time build up a new system.

- *We started the project in April 2019, our deadline was New Year's Eve, as we were to be operational by day one, 2020. In other words, we had no time for "trial and error", we had to get it right on the first go, says Harjo.*



Consequently, they needed to hire highly qualified experts.

- We posted an offer. We knew exactly what we were looking for, and let different suppliers make suggestions, says Harjo.

And based on this, you choose CloudWay?

- CloudWay were the only ones who qualified. We were looking for cutting edge expertise, and it was pretty clear to us that only CloudWay could deliver at the level we wanted, Harjo says, elaborating:
- We didn't need any more "hands", we needed someone who could lift us; give us the answers we were looking for, give us good advice.

From the start, CloudWay showed that they understood the task and had the skills to solve it.

- We had to get it right on the first go, and CloudWay were fabulous in many areas right from the start. They immediately understood what we were looking for and gave us relevant advice, says Harjo.

The agency also wanted to build an environment that could be scaled quickly and efficiently. By January 2020, the system was to be scaled to include Altinn.

- Although the organisations Difi and Altinn in and of themselves are not that large, we have the same complexities as a large organisation, says Harjo.

Ståle Hansen, CEO of CloudWay, says:

- Me and Jan Ketil served as technical project managers. When it comes to large and complex projects, like this, it is especially important to understand dependencies, and to do things in the right order.

## Effective distribution of tasks

CloudWay and The Norwegian Digitalisation Agency held workshops together where they agreed on deliveries, progress and the distribution of tasks.

- Sometimes our clients can do things themselves. Other times, projects can be so complex that we either sit down with them or implement the changes ourselves based on what we agreed on in the workshop, and then show the client how it works, explains Ståle Hansen.
- CloudWay is an incredibly efficient company, with a huge drive. In addition, they are skilled and honest. They are open about their expertise, and about the fields where they are not experts. Similarly, they are open about whether a goal is achievable or not. This means that we can always go straight to the point and not have to spend time chasing impossible goals, says Harjo.

CloudWay consists of a group of consultants who are all experts in their fields. They involve more people from the CloudWay team if they see that there are tasks that require more expertise.

- It was great to see how more of CloudWay's own people came into the project when new needs emerged. They also hired a new person during the process who quickly met the needs of the project. We got everyone at CloudWay onto the team in the end, says Harjo.



## The migration

Many of the tasks had to be put on hold until some decisions were made in early September 2019. Therefore, we had to work fast in the last quarter of 2019 to get everything in place.

- We created the routines for migration, and the plan was for the agency to carry it out. But since there was time pressure, we helped with the migration process. We are always available to assist if something unforeseen happens or if they need additional help, says Ståle Hansen of CloudWay.

The migration itself was carried out over the weekend from 22nd to 25th of November 2019. It was important to have the systems ready by the 1st of January 2020. The team needed enough time for testing and error correction after the migration.

- CloudWay were available around the clock the weekend of the migration. Since they have employees located around the world, they have resources available 24/7. When we woke up, something had been completed and we could move on to the next task. Because we were under time pressure, it was critical for us that we could work 24/7, says Harjo.

## Home office runs smoothly

The effort has produced good results and The Norwegian Digitalisation Agency is satisfied with the solutions.

- *We have the most modern infrastructure in the public sector in Norway right now, thanks to CloudWay, says Harjo.*

As a result, everything was in place when the corona “situation” in March 2020 required that all employees had to work from home.

- *The transition to home offices has gone well. Everyone on the team could work from home, and everyone seemed satisfied. This would never have been possible with the old platform, so if the new platform had not been ready before the corona outbreak, we would have had a huge problem. But everything worked out well, Altinn and Id-porten work as normal, even in this time of crisis, says Harjo.*

Harjo is situated at a farm in western Norway when we speak to him. He is home-schooling his three children, while continuing in his role as IT manager in The Norwegian Digitalisation Agency.

Prior to the home office situation, some of the staff were somewhat reluctant to use Teams. But when everyone moved into the home office, we were pushed to adopt Teams. Everyone got the access they needed from home without significant problems.

- *We have put in place an incredibly good network infrastructure. Wherever you are, you get the access you need - and access to the groups you are going to, based on your role. CloudWay has also helped us with this, says Harjo.*

CloudWay is also left with only positive experiences from the project.

- *The Digitization Directorate was a very good client, and the right kind of project for us. They have a competent organization and quickly understood our recommendations. This enabled us to use our expertise where needed and the Directorate was good at implementing the plan,” concludes Ståle Hansen.*

### FACTS

The Norwegian Digitalisation Agency is subordinate to the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation. It's Norwegian government's foremost tool for faster and more coordinated digitalisation of the Norwegian public sector. As of 1st September 2020, the Norwegian Digitalisation Agency will have approximately 300 employees located in three offices, in Brønnøysund, Leikanger and Oslo.

## CloudWay helped implement the entire Microsoft 365 stack

- Microsoft Teams governance, meeting culture og phone system via SBC in Azure
- OneDrive and SharePoint tenant to tenant migration
  - ShareGate was used as it gives the files the correct timestamp on folders and files
  - CloudWay helped define how to work smarter with OneDrive Files on Demand since they have a lot of users working offline
- Exchange tenant to tenant migration
  - Quest migration tool was used as it works well and was preferred by the customer
- Planner tenant to tenant migration
  - Implemented a new way to migrate planner tasks, documented by our MVP Alexander Holmeste in the below blogpost
  - <https://alexholmeset.blog/2019/10/14/planner-tenant-to-tenant-migration/>
- Implementation of new best practice Active Directory with new PKI with migration of machines and enabled Hybrid Azure AD Join for single sign on to Microsoft 365 services and conditional access
- Windows and Mac clients managed through Microsoft Intune which also manages mobile devices
- Conditional access for PC og mobile using Intune and Hybrid Azure AD join as criteria
- Privileged Identity Management
- Modern Zero Trust network infrastructure
- Auditing and reporting on security alerts via Azure Sentinel and Microsoft Threat Protection
- Windows Defender ATP for endpoint detect and response
- Azure Security Center for Hybrid Server Patch Management
- Azure ATP og Azure AD Identity Protection for monitoring identities and risk based conditional access
- Azure AD Hybrid Password Protection for a modern password management with dynamically integrated bad password block lists from Azure AD