

Best Practices for Migrating to SQL Server 2014

SQL Server 2014 offers a litany of great, new features. There's an improved alternative to database mirroring, new opportunities involving cloud integration and SSDs, backups that are smarter and more manageable and new advantages with speed since memory-optimized tables can be up to 30 times faster than disk-based tables. But smart organizations aren't blinded by features, especially if you won't be using all of them. Instead, go into the upgrade process with eyes wide open. Researching risks, costs and which path works best for your organization makes good business sense and allows IT associates to proactively mitigate any potential missteps down the road.

Consider compatibility

Some software you're running today might not work with SQL Server 2014. Or if it does, will it work the same way? Consider changes and depreciations that may occur and talk to in-house application developers.

Take inventory

In a worst-case scenario, retracing your steps post-upgrade can be nearly impossible if you aren't exactly sure where you started and what that snapshot in time looked like. Solid documentation shared with the whole IT team is a valuable investment and acts as a roadmap. Baseline your current environment so you can be confident all applications are running as well or better in SQL Server 2014.

Make tough decisions

Your organization must choose one of two upgrade paths (in-place or data migration install). DBAs usually make that decision. Both involve some downtime, but in-place requires the database be down for the whole install. A data migration install requires your database be down during the cutover only. Openly discuss both choices and their distinct advantages with your team.

Let ScaleArc help with Always On

Many organizations are using AlwaysOn to take advantage of improved database availability. But it requires your organization to support it with application changes or by using third-party software. Application changes are potentially risky, painful and time-consuming. But third-party software acts as a trustworthy partner and helps smooth the transition. ScaleArc's load-balancing solution sits transparently between the applications and the database servers and can be installed in minutes. You'll realize upgrade value faster, never make an application change and enjoy these benefits from Day 1:

- Automated support for read/write splits for more effective queries
- Geo-aware load balancing for more efficient hardware utilization
- Replication lag monitoring for assuring accurate data return every single time
- Auto-failover across multiple datacenters for increased flexibility
- Perform maintenance at any time without taking servers down

[Read more about ScaleArc's tips for migrating to SQL server 2014 in the full white paper. »](#)