

Willamette Dental Group Reduces Project Monitoring Costs by 50% with Automation and Serverless Infrastructure



Executive Summary

[Willamette Dental Group](#) is an Oregon-based provider of oral care and dental insurance that simplifies how patients receive and pay for dental services. The organization was founded in 1970 and has since expanded across the Northwest into Washington and Idaho. After more than 50 years of operation, Willamette Dental Group continues to innovate and provide comprehensive services and coverage for its members.

In keeping with its commitment to technological excellence, Willamette Dental Group wanted to migrate away from on-premises data centers to the Amazon Web Services (AWS) cloud. As part of the migration project, the company hoped to implement a robust DevOps capability that would include efficient monitoring and automated execution. To help on the DevOps side, AWS recommended that Willamette Dental Group work with ClearScale, an AWS Premier Consulting Partner with ample DevOps implementation experience.



The Challenge

Willamette Dental Group had big ambitions for its upcoming migration, which included paving the way for DevOps on the cloud. However, the in-house engineering team had limited capacity and experience with modern DevOps tools and practices. The leadership team knew what it wanted to accomplish but didn't quite have the resources on hand to reach the destination. As a result, AWS recommended the organization consider a third-party cloud computing expert, like ClearScale.

ClearScale has an extensive history of supporting organizations through complex cloud projects, including those involving DevOps implementations. In addition, ClearScale had earned both the Healthcare and DevOps competencies from AWS, demonstrating the company's ability to generate tangible outcomes for similar projects within the client's industry. Based on these factors, Willamette Dental Group decided to engage with ClearScale to better understand the company's approach to DevOps projects.

ClearScale's cloud architects and engineers explained the organization's methodology and scoped a potential project based on Willamette Dental Group's goals. The client was impressed with the thoroughness of ClearScale's scope of work, convincing them to bring the consultancy into the larger project.

"We knew we needed more hands-on deck to optimize our new AWS cloud environment. ClearScale provided those extra hands and much more. ClearScale was the knowledgeable thought partner, reliable troubleshooter, and expert DevOps engineer we need to feel confident about our new and improved IT architecture."

Mark Taylor, IT Enterprise Systems Manager, Willamette Dental Group

The ClearScale Solution

On the DevOps side, ClearScale began by conducting a deep analysis of Willamette Dental Group's IT ecosystem and future state vision. From this analysis, ClearScale developed a step-by-step plan explaining how the team would tackle the various complexities ahead. The analysis and plan gave the client the confidence it needed to focus on the migration rather than on managing ClearScale.

Regarding the actual project implementation, ClearScale engineered and implemented the new DevOps cloud solution, keeping in mind that the client's IT department would eventually take over management and utilization. This solution consisted of automated [Amazon CloudWatch](#) monitoring capabilities and use of [Amazon EventBridge](#), a serverless event bus for deploying event-driven applications at scale. CloudWatch replaced a legacy SolarWinds-based solution that was not cloud-enabled. Without CloudWatch, Willamette Dental Group would have had to purchase a third-party monitoring solution, increasing IT expenses unnecessarily.

ClearScale also used [AWS Lambda](#) to facilitate automated workflows involving other AWS services, allowing Willamette Dental Group to optimize much of its cloud operation. Whenever issues cropped up, ClearScale would resolve them quickly – typically within one day – and transfer any knowledge that the client’s systems engineers would need in the future.

Along the way, ClearScale maintained an open dialogue with Willamette Dental Group and hosted regular meetings to discuss progress. The two organizations also created a system for addressing specific questions or ideas outside of scheduled meetings. This process enabled both sides to work in parallel, ensuring the dual migration and DevOps implementation went smoothly.

The Benefits

ClearScale helped Willamette Dental Group in several key ways. First, the ClearScale team freed up the client’s IT resources to focus on executing the on-premises to cloud migration successfully. Willamette Dental Group estimates that ClearScale saved the company 40 hours per week worth of engineering work, i.e., a full-time resource, throughout the course of the migration.

ClearScale’s implementation of Amazon CloudWatch also saved the client from needing to purchase a third-party monitoring solution to combine with the legacy SolarWinds management platform. Overall, Willamette Dental Group estimates that its new CloudWatch-based monitoring system is half the cost of what the company would have paid on an ongoing basis otherwise. In addition, CloudWatch integrates seamlessly with the rest of the client’s cloud ecosystem, reducing the maintenance workload for in-house systems engineers.

Furthermore, ClearScale helped Willamette Dental Group’s IT team build essential AWS skills for future projects. The client’s engineers now know how to leverage services like Amazon EventBridge and AWS Lambda to automate complex workflows within a broader DevOps capability. The company can refine its DevOps processes over time and no longer has to worry about maintaining hardware.

Looking ahead, Willamette Dental Group now has the cloud ecosystem and DevOps foundation it needs to continue innovating across its many locations. The company also has a strong partnership with an AWS expert in ClearScale that can step in for other cloud projects whenever the need arises.