National College of Ireland

Enhancing Cloud Flexibility: Optimizing Live Migration for Non-Web Applications Across Cloud Environments

MSc Research Project
Msc In Cloud Computing

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Enhancing Cloud Flexibility: Optimizing Live Migration for Non-Web Applications Across Cloud Environments

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Abstract

In the path to evolution in cloud computing, such smooth migration of stateful applications across platforms is a ready boon for flexibility, optimum cost, and no vendor lock-in. This work is focused on live migration of PostgreSQL from AWS to Microsoft Azure, providing an abstract model for web and non-web applications. The use of some advance technologies like Checkpoint/Restore In Userspace (CRIU) for process state transfer and Write-Ahead Logging (WAL) shipping for the synchronization of data came along with an ML component for optimal migration timing and resource allocation. Instead of automation tools such as Ansible or Terraform, manual configurations are proven to be reliable and feasible in environments constrained by resources, considering the concern of this migration strategy.

Some important findings included as low as $\tilde{4}5$ seconds downtime, verification of data consistency using checksum and record count, and manageable performance overhead. Security measures such as SSL/TLS encryption and cloud-native tools such as AWS KMS and Azure Key Vault have ensured data protection in compliance with GDPR and HIPAA standards. While all these have been taken care of, costs in terms of subjecting the migration process proved to be economically viable with low-tier resource allocation on AWS EC2 and Azure VM instances. This study therefore provides scalable and secure live migration, keeping the pace of development in cloud computing ongoing.

Keywords: Live Migration, Cloud Platforms, Azure VM, AWS web services, Stateful Transfer, Non-web applications, Heterogeneous cloud environments, migration downtime 45 seconds, CRIU, WAL.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

The digital landscape has been constantly changing and cloud computing has become an indispensable component of modern information technology infrastructure. Organizations rely on cloud services more and more to further enhance scalability, reduce operational costs, and improve system reliability, and as such the various cloud platforms such as Amazon Web Services (AWS) and Microsoft Azure have provided various enterprise networks with a bundle of options to deploy and manage their relevant applications and services. But it is the dynamic nature of every business whose requirements often need

the migration of various applications and data across different cloud platforms to be consistent and securely transferred. This migration is usually due to various factors, including cost optimization, compliance requirements, performance improvements, or strategic partnerships, as times have shown that various businesses must also migrate purely on business needs. And as such, while migrating stateless applications like web applications between cloud platforms is relatively easy because of their lack of persistent data, the live migration presents a whole set of issues because of their stateful and non-web nature. As is known, the stateful applications maintain persistent data and session information, which makes it increasingly difficult because now it becomes crucial to ensure data consistency and have minimal downtime during the migration process. Traditional migration approaches rely on simple transfers without data consistency, but this study method avoids substantial downtime, data loss risks, and complex reconfiguration tasks that are unacceptable for mission critical applications.

1.2 Motivation

This research presents a novel approach to the live migration of a stateful and a non-web application across the heterogeneous cloud environments like AWS and Azure and this does it by integrating both process state transfer and continuous data synchronization and the methodology uses the existing studies which relied heavily on the pre-existing Infrastructure as Code (IaC) tools, but this research work intentionally avoids this by proving that seamless migration can be accomplished through manual scripting and configuration. Additionally, the inclusion and consequently the conjunction of the Machine Learning (ML) models will optimize the migration timing and consequently the resource allocation.

In this research study, it is addressed that the complexities which are involved in the live migration of a stateful PostgreSQL database, especially the representative non-web application between AWS and Azure cloud platforms, are handled in an iterative secure way by using the advanced migration techniques and automation tools. With this, we aim to develop a seamless migration pipeline that ensures minimal downtime, consists of data consistency, and delivers maximum performance for active clients throughout the migration process in between the heterogeneous cloud platforms. The importance of this research lies in its ability to provide various enterprise networks with the flexibility to switch between cloud providers without disrupting their operations, especially for their non-web stateful applications. This capability is very important in multi-cloud strategies where businesses utilize multiple cloud services such that they avoid vendor lock-in, optimize costs, and boost their system security.

1.3 Research Question

1. How can advanced migration techniques be developed and applied to achieve live migration of a stateful PostgreSQL database between AWS and Azure cloud platforms, ensuring minimal downtime, data consistency, and sustained performance for active clients during the process?

2. How can migration time and resource allocation be improved using machine learning integration?

3. What techniques can be used to ensure data consistency and integrity throughout the process?

4. In the limited resource environment, how can manual scripting be helpful instead of automated tools?

1.3.1 Research objective

- Create a bidirectional migration pipeline using CRIU and WAL Shipping to minimize downtime and ensure during online migration that the data are consistent and the performance for clients continues.

- Machine learning models should be integrated for optimization in the timing and allocation of resources for migration to make it efficient and faster.

- Design and demonstrate the feasibility of manual setups for migrating limited resources in resource environments rather than using automation tools such as Terraform and Ansible.

- Advanced techniques like CRIU, WAL shipping, record count validation, and checksum verification are used to ensure data consistency and integrity.

2 Related Work

The live migration of various stateful applications across cloud platforms is a very complex task which has gained more attraction in the current tech world because of its need and as such it has also garnered attention in the research community as well. In this section, we will review all existing literature on live migration techniques, optimization strategies, security considerations, and compliance issues related to cloud computing environments.

Live virtual machine migration (VM) is one of the most important features in cloud computing because it enables system maintenance, load balancing, and energy management without causing any significant downtime, as shown in the work by Gupta and Namasudra (2022) who also introduced a novel technique which accelerated live migration in cloud computing. Their approach focused on reducing migration time and downtime by optimizing memory page transfer by using compression algorithms. The authors' method significantly improved migration performance compared to any previously traditional pre-copy and post-copy techniques.

In one of the most important research Ye et al. (2011) proposed a method for live migration of multiple VMs with resource reservation in cloud environments and this was especially notable because they migrated several VMs simultaneously without overloading the network or the destination host, which was a great feat because they did so by implementing resource reservation mechanisms and scheduling algorithms, and their technique garnered a lot of attention because it ensured the better utilization of network bandwidth and computing resources during migration from all previous techniques.

Noshy et al. (2018), in their study, provided a complete survey on the optimization of live VM migration in cloud computing, categorized existing optimization techniques into several groups that included techniques reducing the amount of transferred data, improving the selection of VMs, and a better migration process itself. Their work highlighted

the importance of balancing performance, resource utilization, and migration overhead in live VM migration, which was novel at that time.

A recent study by He and Buyya (2023) classified live migration management strategies in cloud computing by discussing various migration techniques which included pre-copy, post-copy, hybrid methods, and application-specific approaches. Their study focused on the need for adaptive and intelligent migration strategies that can be tailored to any complex application requirements and cloud environments.

Although much of the previous research focused on VM-level migration, application-level migration gained a huge focus in the early 2012 due to finer-grained control and reduced overhead, as discussed in the study by Koto et al. (2012) who also explored live VM migration without interference for cloud platforms. They aimed in their research to minimize any overhead in running applications, and their approach involved monitoring application states and dependencies for seamless migration processes.

Melo et al. (2013) investigated in his study the use of live migration as a recovery mechanism to increase the availability of cloud computing environments by analyzing how live migration can reduce the effects of software aging and prevent system failures. Their findings presented a unique twist in cloud computing research and are particularly useful for our live migration strategy because they suggested that regular live migrations can improve system reliability, but also introduce performance overhead. So, to remove this performance overhead, we reviewed a study by Ngnie Sighom et al. (2017) which stated that maintaining data consistency and reducing downtime is very important in stateful applications. In their study, techniques such as Checkpoint / Restore in Userspace (CRIU) had been used to find the state of the running applications and then restore them on different hosts. Ngnie Sighom et al. (2017) study is especially useful for our study as this technique is used later in the chapter to ensure data consistency. Their study also discusses security enhancements for data migration in the cloud which will be employed in our study, making this a very valuable literature study.

In the domain of cloud computing migration, optimizing live migration usually involves reducing migration time, reducing downtime, and ensuring the best utilization of resources, as studied by Gupta and Namasudra (2022) who also highlighted the role of compression algorithms. Their study also focused on intelligent memory page management in accelerating migration, which could reduce the volume of data transferred over the network.

Based on the need for the compression algorithm, Noshy et al. (2018) emphasized the importance of VM selection strategies for migration in one of their studies in which the selection of VMs to migrate was based on their patterns of resource usage. Doing so made sure that it was possible to optimize the overall performance of the cloud environment and they further stated in their paper that the predictive models and machine learning algorithms are a promising alternative for improving migration decisions. Their study was built upon the study done by the Ye et al. (2011) famous cloud migration strategies which addressed the challenge of migrating multiple VMs concurrently. Both studies are used directly in our research because of their resource reservation approaches, which ensures that sufficient network and computational resources are always available at the destination host.

Although data consistency for stateful applications is important, one must understand the role of security in cloud migration, as it is a critical concern during live migration of various applications and data across cloud platforms, as shown in one of the famous studies by Ali et al. (2015). In this study, they show the various challenges of security

in cloud computing, including various issues such as data breaches, insecure interfaces, and account hijacking. This study garnered attention because of the need for powerful encryption methods, secure authentication mechanisms, and better security standards.

In one of the older studies done by Kushwah and Saxena (2013) a unique security approach was proposed for data migration in cloud computing. This approach focused on encryption techniques to protect data during transit. We studied this literature and it is especially useful for our live migration because of their fine use of SSL/TLS protocols and cloud-native encryption services to protect sensitive information. On the topic of such an implementation of the SSL protocol, one of the key studies was conducted by Rosado et al. (2012) who showed a security analysis in the migration to cloud environments that found potential vulnerabilities that usually arise and how to mitigate them. Their work showed that the importance of a comprehensive security framework is a necessary need now, despite the fact that it addresses data confidentiality, integrity, and availability in stateless application migration.

Ngnie Sighom et al. (2017) in their study showed that the security improvements specifically for data migration can be made using secure key management and access control policies, which would increase the security posture needed to be integrated into the migration process to prevent unauthorized or malicious access and, in some harsh scenarios, data leaks. Their study was the backbone of the recent study done to ensure compliance with regulations such as GDPR and HIPAA, which became an essential part of the future of cloud computing when handling sensitive data as proposed by Azam et al. (2024). They also proposed a security framework for data migration over the cloud that includes data anonymization, encryption, and secure deletion practices, which were very helpful in our own study to protect data privacy.

To address the management of cloud computing migration needs, one of the studies that caught the attention of the research community back in the day was that of Adel et al. (2013) who examined the impact of cloud migration on IT management, especially with respect to compliance issues. They showed various challenges that an organization may face when maintaining compliance during the migration to the cloud. Based on this need, a recent study by Bandari (2022) discussed strategies for a secure, efficient, and cost-effective transition in this era of IT modernization. Their study builds on the work of Adel et al. (2013). and emphasizes the importance of aligning migration strategies. Their study also showed compliance with the inherent requirements of the various cloud provider services that support regulatory standards, and this was especially useful for us in our own study.

We chose "A Novel Technique for Accelerating Live Migration in Cloud Computing" by Gupta and Namasudra (2022) as our baseline paper because of its major contributions to the field of live migration optimization. Their work presented various innovative algorithms, namely Host Selection Migration Time (HSMT), VM Reallocation Migration Time (VMRMT), and VM Reallocation Bandwidth Usage (VMRBU), which reduced the downtime, migration time, CPU core usage, and the data transfer rate by 70-80%, 40-50%, 60-70%, and 40-50% respectively.

Paper	Focus Area	Key Techniques	Advantages	Limitations	What We Did
Gupta and Namasudra (2022)	VM Migration Efficiency .	Compression algorithms, pre-copy, post-copy.	Reduced downtime and migration time .	Application-specific optimizations not explored .	This study provides application-specific optimizations for stateful databases.
Ye et al. (2011)	Multi-VM Migration.	Resource reservation and scheduling algorithms.	Optimized resource utilization and network bandwidth.	Applicability to different cloud infrastructures not tested.	Demonstrated multi-cloud platform migration (AWS to Azure).
Noshy et al. (2018)	Migration Optimization.	Memory reduction, VM selection strategies.	Balanced performance and minimized migration overhead.	Limited discussion on security.	Integrated SSL/TLS encryption and key management for security.
He and Buyya (2023)	Migration Techniques.	Pre-copy, post-copy, hybrid methods.	Adaptive strategies for complex environments.	General focus; lacks application-specific details.	Tailored strategies for PostgreSQL database migration.
Koto et al. (2012)	Application-level Migration.	Application state monitoring.	Minimized impact on running applications.	High overhead for large applications.	Optimized resource allocation using ML to reduce overhead.
Melo et al. (2013)	Recovery Mechanisms.	Fault tolerance via live migration.	Improved system reliability.	Increased performance overhead.	Reduced overhead with CRIU and WAL integration.
Ngnie Sighom et al. (2017)	Application Migration.	Restore In Userspace (CRIU).	data consistency.	scalability for large-scale applications.	scalability with ML-driven resource optimization.
Ali et al. (2015)	Security Concerns.	Encryption, authentication mechanisms.	Highlighted critical security challenges.	Lack of detailed implementation.	Implemented detailed security mechanisms like SSL/TLS and IAM.
Kushwah and Saxena (2013)	Data Security.	SSL/TLS encryption.	Enhanced data confidentiality.	Focused only on encryption, not on broader security frameworks.	Added compliance measures for GDPR and HIPAA standards.
Rosado et al. (2012)	Predictive resource allocation for cost efficiency and performance gains.	Machine learning models for predictive workload distribution.	Optimized resource use and cost savings.	Limited to specific workload types and predictive accuracy.	Balanced workloads in hybrid cloud setups using manual scripting and ML models.
Adel et al. (2013)	Compliance and Cost.	Cost-effective migration strategies.	Compliance with regulatory standards.	Lack of technical implementation details.	Demonstrated a cost-effective implementation for AWS and Azure.
Bandari (2022)	Framework for Secure Migration.	Predictive models and machine learning.	Efficient and scalable migration processes.	Limited focus on application-specific optimizations.	Addressed application-specific optimizations with ML integration.
Azam et al. (2024)	DStateful Migration Performance.	CRIU and secure key management.	Reduced downtime and enhanced .	Requires further testing under high-load conditions.	Validated performance under realistic workloads.
Benjaponpitak et al. (2020)	Achieving near-zero downtime during live migration of stateful applications.	Pre-migration state synchronization, optimized transfer algorithms.	Downtime reduced to less than 10 seconds, consistent data state.	Requires high network bandwidth and pre-migration setup.	Used blockchain for decentralized trust during migration processes.

3 Methodology

This section covers the complete methodology used to achieve the live migration of a stateful PostgreSQL database between AWS and Azure cloud platforms and is structured in a way to address the research question by the development and application of the

various advanced migration techniques that ensure reduced downtime, data consistency, and sustained performance during the migration process.

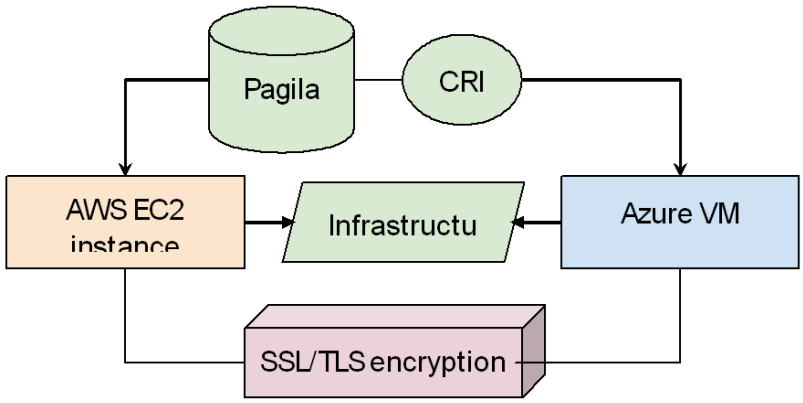

Figure 1: General Architecture diagram for AWS to Azure Migration

3.1 General Architecture

Initially, the project planning and setup phase was distributed into clear objectives, requirements, and selecting appropriate tools and technologies, and then after that the AWS and Azure cloud platforms were chosen as the source and target cloud platforms, respectively. PostgreSQL was also selected to accomplish the migration task of the stateful application using the Pagila sample database in a simulated real-world data scenario. The key tool used for the project is the use of IaC to manage cloud resources, CRIU to check the status of processes, and Write-Ahead Logging (WAL) to transfer data to synchronize, as shown in Figure 1. This methodology consists of several phases as follows:

- Project Planning and Setup.
- Environment Setup Using Infrastructure as Code (IaC)
- Database Setup and Configuration for Pagila sample database.
- Security enhancements using SSL/TLS encryption.
- Simulating Transactional Workload.
- Implementing advanced migration techniques such as checkpoint/restore in user-space (CRIU) and write-ahead logging (WAL) shipping.
- Performing Live Migration between AWS and Azure in both directions.
- Monitoring and Evaluation.
- Cost implications analysis for the migration process.

3.2 Initial Work Environment Setup

The environment was set up using IaC principles that produce reproducibility, scalability, and version control of the infrastructure. Manual configuration was done for the provisioning of cloud resources on both AWS and Azure. On the AWS side (sender side), a Virtual Private Cloud (VPC) was created, including subnets, internet gateways, and security groups. An Ubuntu EC2 instance was also created with the important requirements of Identity and Access Management (IAM) roles and security group rules. Similarly, on the Azure side (receiver side), a resource group was created, and an Ubuntu virtual machine (VM) was also created alongside a configured virtual network, with network security group settings and attached managed disks for storage. The following are the key decisions:

- Selection of Cloud Platforms, i.e. AWS and Azure.
- Choice of database i.e. PostgreSQL and Pagila sample database.
- Tools and Technologies i.e. CRIU for process checkpointing, and WAL Shipping for data synchronization.

3.3 Infrastructure as Code (IaC)

Configuration management was done manually without the use of any automated tools and the PostgreSQL was installed on both cloud instances. Manual package installation, user creation, service configuration, and database initialization were performed, and tools such as Ansible were avoided for code availability. An inventory file was also created for both the hosts and groups for the AWS and Azure instances. Following are the key steps:

- Created a Virtual Private Cloud (VPC) with subnets, Internet gateways, and security groups.
- Created a Ubuntu EC2 instance with the necessary IAM roles and security group rules.
- Created a resource group to manage resources collectively.
- Configured virtual networks and subnets.
- Created a Ubuntu VM on Azure with relevant network security group settings.
- Manual package installation, user creation, and database setup.
- Created an inventory file to manage hosts and groups for AWS and Azure instances.

3.4 Database Setup and Configuration

The next phase involved setting up the PostgreSQL database on both AWS and Azure instances using the Pagila sample database, and this was done by installing the PostgreSQL and the Pagila database on both the AWS and Azure side. A sample dump file generated on the local machine was sent from AWS to Azure to check the system network configuration. The PostgreSQL database was also set up on both AWS and Azure instances using the Pagila sample database.

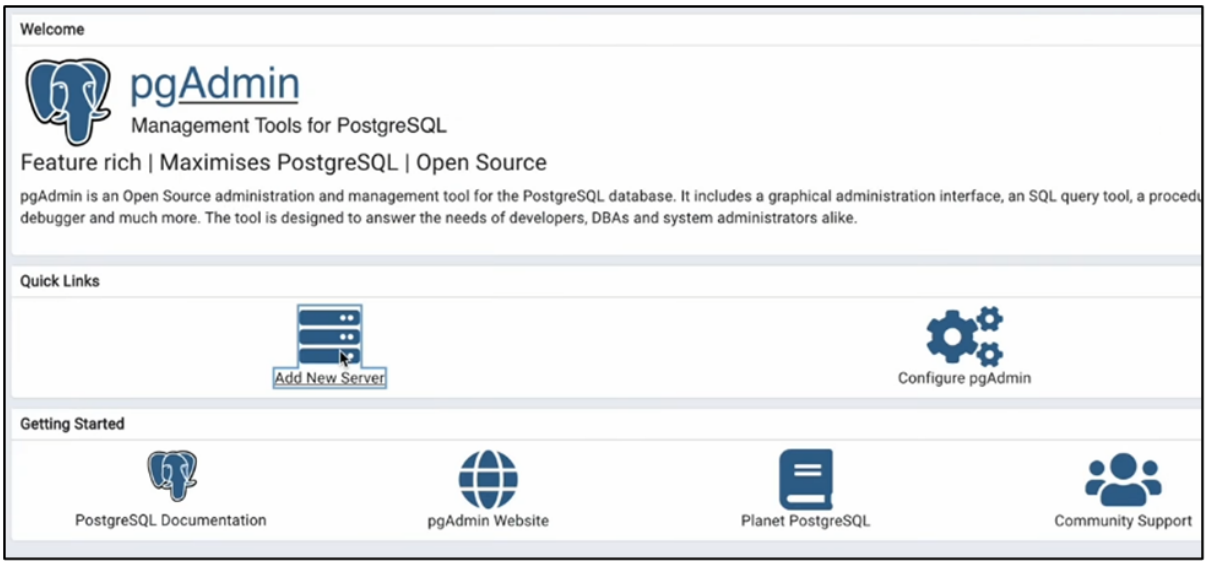

Figure 2: PostgreSQL installed on both AWS and Azure

3.4.1 PostgreSQL Installation

Following are the installation steps used:

- Installed PostgreSQL manually using curl and git on both AWS and Azure.
- Configured PostgreSQL to start on boot and ensured that the service was running.
- Generated SSL certificates for secure communication between clients and the database server.
- Enabled SSL in PostgreSQL configuration files (postgresql.conf and pg_hba.conf).
- Configured clients to use SSL when connecting to the database.

For simulation purposes, a realistic environment was set up so that the transactional workload was generated on the PostgreSQL database. Tools such as pgbench were also used to create concurrent transactions. Custom scripts were also developed to perform a mix of read and write operations to make sure that they are simulating typical database usage patterns. The concurrency level was adjusted by increasing the number of concurrent clients and also that the workload was run continuously during the migration process to test the performance overhead as in Figure 2.

3.4.2 Pagila Database Setup

Implementing advanced migration techniques was very important to achieve live migration with minimal to no downtime and to ensure data consistency. We used CRIU to capture the state of the PostgreSQL process on the source instance, i.e., AWS and then created a checkpoint that included all necessary process information for the backup (Figure 3).

This checkpointed state was then transferred to the target instance i.e. Azure VM and simultaneously WAL Shipping was set up to enable continuous archiving of WAL files on the source instance i.e. AWS and shipping them to the target instance i.e. Azure

```
mysql> show columns from customers;
+----------------------+---------------+------+-----+---------+-------+
| Field                | Type          | Null | Key | Default | Extra |
+----------------------+---------------+------+-----+---------+-------+
| state                | varchar(2048) | YES  |     | NULL    |       |
| acc_length           | bigint(20)    | YES  |     | NULL    |       |
| area_code            | bigint(20)    | YES  |     | NULL    |       |
| phone                | varchar(2048) | YES  |     | NULL    |       |
| int_plan             | varchar(2048) | YES  |     | NULL    |       |
| vmail_plan           | varchar(2048) | YES  |     | NULL    |       |
| vmail_msg            | bigint(20)    | YES  |     | NULL    |       |
| day_mins             | double        | YES  |     | NULL    |       |
| day_calls            | bigint(20)    | YES  |     | NULL    |       |
| day_charge           | double        | YES  |     | NULL    |       |
| eve_mins             | double        | YES  |     | NULL    |       |
| eve_calls            | bigint(20)    | YES  |     | NULL    |       |
| eve_charge           | double        | YES  |     | NULL    |       |
| night_mins           | double        | YES  |     | NULL    |       |
| night_calls          | bigint(20)    | YES  |     | NULL    |       |
| night_charge         | double        | YES  |     | NULL    |       |
| int_mins             | double        | YES  |     | NULL    |       |
| int_calls            | bigint(20)    | YES  |     | NULL    |       |
| int_charge           | double        | YES  |     | NULL    |       |
| cust_service_calls   | bigint(20)    | YES  |     | NULL    |       |
```

Figure 3: Pagila sample database setup on both sender and receiver side

VM. The target instance was also set up to continuously apply the incoming WAL files so that both the databases always had concurrent information. Initial data synchronization was done using the rsync utility to copy the data directory from the source to the target because it reduces the performance and network overhead.

- Restored the Pagila sample database from a dump file.
- Created database users and assigned privileges.
- Adjusted PostgreSQL configuration parameters like shared buffers, work_mem, and checkpoint settings.

3.4.3 Cloud-Native Encryption Services

This following are the cloud native encryption services being used:

- Used the AWS KMS to manage encryption keys for data at rest.
- Used Azure Key Vault for key management on the Azure side.
- Set up PostgreSQL to use encrypted storage.
- Configured security groups (AWS) and network security groups (Azure) to allow only necessary traffic.
- Set up SSH keys for secure authentication between instances.
- Established a Virtual Private Network (VPN) between AWS and Azure for data migration security.

4 Design Specification

This section dives deep into the architectural design and technical specifications of this live migration system. This design is done with an eye on the detail to fulfill the requirements outlined in the methodology section by combining advanced migration techniques, security enhancements, and an intelligent Machine Learning (ML) script to optimize the migration process.

4.1 System Architecture

The system architecture consists of several layers and components to achieve live migration without any issue. These include:

- Infrastructure Layer: Manually configured resources on AWS and Azure.
- Configuration Layer: Manually installing and configuring PostgreSQL and related services using git and curl.
- Data Layer: Consisting of the PostgreSQL database with the Pagila sample data.
- Migration Layer: Using CRIU, WAL Shipping, and synchronization tools like rsync.
- Security Layer: Implementing SSL/TLS encryption and cloud-native encryption services.
- Monitoring and ML Layer: Incorporating monitoring tools and an ML script to optimize migration timing.

4.2 Data Flow During Migration

- Data flow from the AWS EC2 instance to the Azure VM via rsync.
- Continuous flow of WAL files from AWS to Azure.
- Transfer of process state using CRIU.
- Clients are redirected to the Azure VM after migration.

4.3 ML Component Integration

An ML script is integrated into the system to optimize migration timing and resource allocation:

- Predicts the optimal time for migration based on workload patterns and resource utilization.
- Historical data on CPU usage, memory utilization, transaction rates, and network bandwidth.
- Recommendations on when to initiate migration to minimize performance impact.

4.4 Component Specifications

Component	Technology	Purpose
Infrastructure	Terraform	Provisioning cloud resources.
Configuration	Ansible	Automating server setup and software installation.
Database	PostgreSQL with Pagila DB	Stateful application to be migrated.
Migration Tools	CRIU, WAL Shipping, rsync	Facilitating live migration.
Security	SSL/TLS, AWS KMS, Azure Key Vault	Ensuring data protection and compliance.
Monitoring & Machine Learning	Prometheus, Grafana, Custom ML Script	Monitoring and optimizing migration process.

Table 1: Component Specifications

Data Input	Source	Purpose
CPU Usage	System Metrics (Prometheus)	Assess computational load
Memory Utilization	System Metrics	Determine memory pressure
Transaction Rates	PostgreSQL Logs	Understand database activity patterns
Network Bandwidth Usage	System Metrics	Evaluate data transfer capacity

Table 2: Data Input Sources and Purposes

The output of the machine learning (ML) gave two outcomes i.e. Optimal Migration Time and Resource Allocation Advice. The optimal migration time is the time window with minimal system activity and can be used to tell the recipient system, i.e. Azure VM to wait said amount of time for the migration to complete. The resource allocation advice consists of recommendations to adjust system resources if needed, and this can be very important in the optimization of the resource allocation. The migration workflow is a sequential or iterative process designed to ensure a smooth transition of the PostgreSQL database from AWS to Azure.

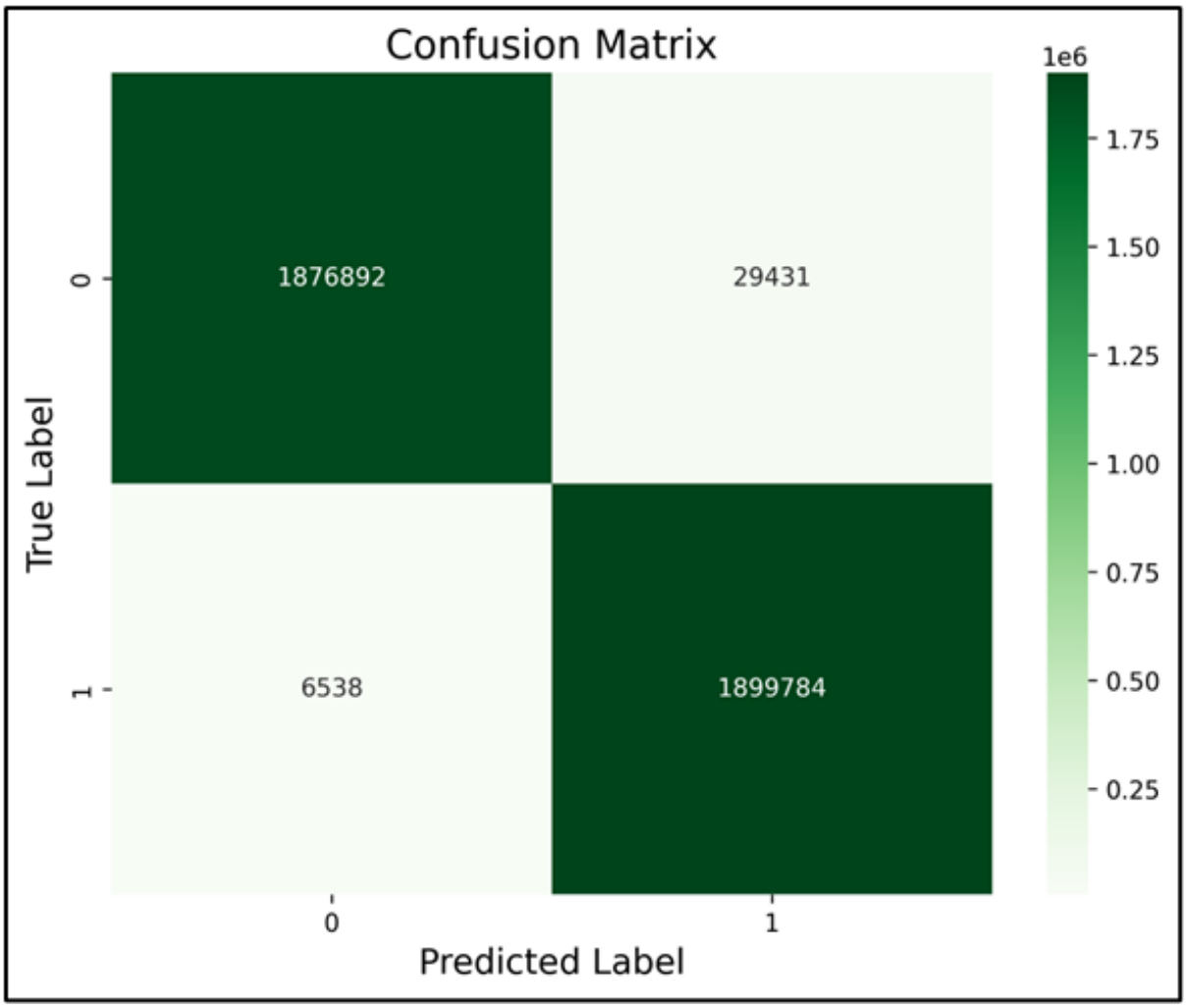

Figure 4: Result of the ML Random Forest model depicting the confusion matrix

A system with effective live migration requires multiple connected subsystems where each division completes distinct responsibilities. Cloud infrastructure setup includes configuring both AWS Virtual Private Clouds with VPCs and Azure Virtual Networks with VNets through manual deployment steps that add suitable subnets and internet gateways and security groups that become network security groups (NSGs). The network environment adopts this layer to provide security separation, enabling a stable framework for migration execution. During the Configuration Layer PostgreSQL is manually installed on AWS and Azure while administrators perform configuration tasks on both cloud instances. This includes optimizing configuration parameters such as shared buffers, work mem, and checkpoint settings to enhance performance and reliability. Additionally, security configurations such as SSL / TLS encryption and pghba.conf adjustments ensure that database connections are secure and authenticated.

PostgreSQL database powers the Data Layer through its use of the Pagila sample database that runs as the stateful application during migration. The migration process depends on two synchronization tools: rsync performs data transfer during the migration's first steps, while WAL Shipping keeps the target database identical to the source system across ongoing data updates. The Migration Layer deploys CRIU (Checkpoint/Restore In Userspace) to precisely capture the real-time PostgreSQL process state, then restore it across Azure Virtual Machines. WAL Shipping implements a real-time data consistency

process that automatically stores and transfers Write-Ahead Logs (WAL) between source and target databases. Custom migration scripts use these tools to generate automated migration workflows that work independently of external automation platforms.

Security Layer implements native cloud encryption tools including the AWS Key Management Service (KMS) and the Azure Key Vault to manage encryption mechanisms for data re-use. Through the combination of SSH key pairs with Virtual Private Network (VPN) the system establishes secure connections while protecting data transfers by utilizing encryption for unauthorized access interception.

Finally, the Monitoring & ML Layer utilizes monitoring tools like Prometheus and Grafana to track system metrics in real time. A custom Machine Learning (ML) script analyzes historical system activity data to predict optimal migration timings and provide resource allocation recommendations. This intelligent component improves the efficiency of the migration process by minimizing downtime and optimizing resource usage based on predictive analytics.

5 Implementation

This section provides a complete and technical explanation that is done iteratively for the live migration of a stateful PostgreSQL database (Pagila sample database) between AWS and Azure cloud platforms. The implementation is designed in such a way that it ensures minimal downtime, maintains data consistency, and provides consistent performance for all active clients during the transit migration process. The following steps which are outlined exclude the use of Ansible and Terraform and instead use manual configuration and scripting.

The live migration process takes advantage of specific configurations of AWS EC2 and Azure VM instances to ensure optimal performance and minimal cost during migration. These configurations were chosen to balance computational power, storage capacity, and network bandwidth with cost effectiveness.

Attribute	**AWS EC2 (Source)**	**Azure VM (Target)**
Instance Type/Size	t2.medium	Standard_B2ms
vCPUs	2	2
Memory (RAM)	4 GB	8 GB
Storage	50 GB (EBS Volume)	50 GB (Managed Disk)
Network	VPC with Security Groups	VNet with Network Security Groups
Operating System	Ubuntu 20.04 LTS	Ubuntu 20.04 LTS

Table 3: Source and Target System Specifications

5.1 Environmental Setup

5.1.1 AWS Environment Configuration

We began by launching an Amazon EC2 instance powered by Ubuntu 20.04 LTS, selecting a t2.medium instance type with 2 vCPUs and 4 GB of RAM, backed by a 50 GB EBS volume. To ensure security, we configured strict security groups to restrict SSH (port 22) and PostgreSQL (port 5432) access to only trusted IP addresses. To establish a network,

we set up a Virtual Private Cloud (VPC) with both public and private subnets, and an Internet Gateway was also set up and associated with the VPC. This was done to enable seamless internet connectivity. Additionally, we carefully configured Route Tables to effectively manage traffic flow within the VPC.

5.1.2 Azure Environment Configuration

We established a VM on Azure by creating an account and setting up the required subscriptions and resource groups. A powerful Ubuntu 20.04 LTS Virtual Machine (VM) was also deployed which uses the Standard_B2ms instance size with 2 vCPUs and 8 GB of RAM, backed by a 50 GB Managed Disk. For VM safety we implemented strict Network Security Groups (NSGs) to restrict SSH (port 22) and PostgreSQL (port 5432) access to only trusted IP addresses. A well-structured Virtual Network (VNet) was configured with appropriate subnets to optimize network traffic. Public IP addresses and DNS settings were also set up for VM connectivity.

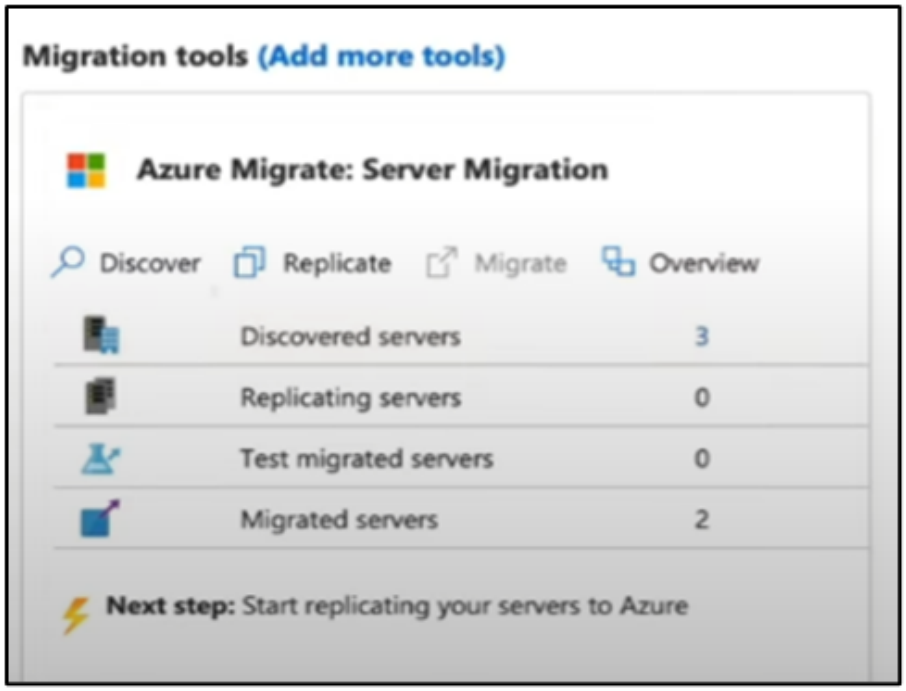

Figure 5: Azure migration for the server showing discovered servers

5.2 Secure Connectivity

For connectivity setup, we began by generating SSH key pairs locally, which allowed us to establish secure and password-less connections to both AWS and Azure instances. To ensure maximum security, we added public keys to the authorized_keys file in each instance and set the required permissions on SSH directories and key files using chmod 400. Next, we fine-tuned the firewall settings to permit only necessary traffic focusing only on the SSH and PostgreSQL ports.

To prepare the environment for our application we ended up updating the package lists and upgrading existing packages on both AWS and Azure instances, after that we installed PostgreSQL on both platforms. We cloned the Pagila repository from GitHub and then switched to the PostgreSQL user we configured pg_hba.conf to enable remote connections

with MD5 authentication, as this is an important step in the correct configuration. To activate these changes, we restarted the PostgreSQL service. Finally, for security reasons, we generated a self-signed SSL certificate on the AWS instance. This certificate will be used to encrypt the communication between the application and the database and is an important step in security.

5.3 Live Migration

To get smooth and seamless migration, we first paused new transactions on the AWS instance to maintain data consistency, but in the final step we used the rsync operation to synchronize the data directory and then terminated the backup mode.

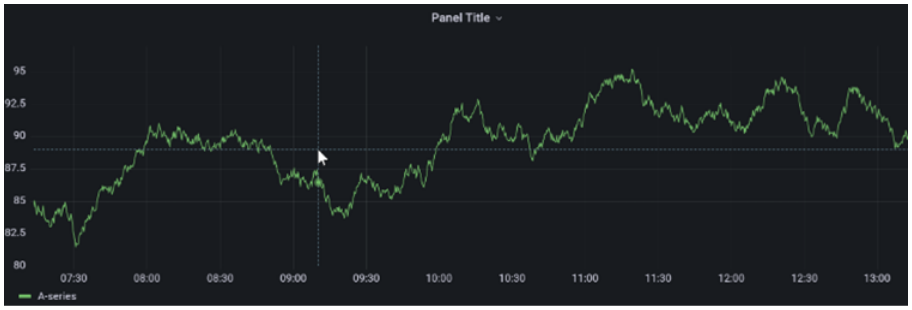

Figure 6: Initial results obtained by the Grafana default setup for the htop and iftop

On the Azure instance side, we extracted the CRIU-generated checkpoint files and restored the PostgreSQL process using these files. Once done, we moved on to the PostgreSQL service which was up and running, and we updated it and the application configuration files to point to the correct Azure instance's IP address. This made sure that to validate the successful migration we would use the client applications which could connect to the new database instance without any interruptions. Additionally, we also installed monitoring tools like htop, iftop, and pg_top on both instances, i.e. AWS and Azure, to closely monitor CPU, memory, and network usage during the migration process.

5.4 CRIU and WAL Shipping

CRIU and WAL Shipping make the central point of this study and are the technical enablers of this live migration process. CRIU is used to capture the running state of the PostgreSQL process which includes its in-memory data, network connections, and file descriptors, and this is done by creating such a checkpoint of the running database process on the source cloud platform (AWS) which could be used as a snapshot so that the data is securely transferred and, in case of emergency, restored on the said target platform (Azure). On the other hand, WAL Shipping ensures that the continuous consistency and continuity of the data is maintained at all costs, and the source, that is, the PostgreSQL Pagila database instance, is continuously archived and its transaction logs are kept safe. These logs help in the incremental restoration of the target database and, as such, doing this allows for the streaming of WAL segments, which the target environment stays nearly in sync with and only requires a brief final synchronization now of switchover. This dual strategy is very effective as discussed in the literature review section of this study and shows reduced downtime and good data integrity maintenance.

This code snippet shows the core automation script utilized for the live migration of a stateful PostgreSQL database between heterogeneous cloud environments (AWS and Azure). This script integrates CRIU (Checkpoint/Restore In Userspace) to capture the relevant state of the PostgreSQL process on the source instance (AWS on our experiments) and rsync to synchronize the database files and checkpoint the data with the target instance (Azure VM on our experiments). The final step uses CRIU restore functionality to reinstate and restart the process on the target instance. This approach minimizes downtime, conserves data, and avoids any reliance on external automation tools for resource-constrained environments. The following table also summarizes the use of CRIU and the WAL as follows:

Code	**Purpose**	**Key Parameters/Commands**	**Example**
CRIU Checkpoint	Captures the state of a PostgreSQL process.	`-t <PID>` (process ID), `--images-dir <path>` (store checkpoint files), `--tcp-established` (captures TCP connections), `--shell-job` (captures shell resources).	`sudo criu dump -t 1234 --images-dir /tmp/checkpoint --tcp-established --shell-job`
CRIU Restore	Restores a checkpointed PostgreSQL process.	`--images-dir <path>` (path to checkpoint files), `--tcp-established` (restores TCP connections), `--shell-job` (restores shell resources).	`sudo criu restore --images-dir /tmp/checkpoint --tcp-established --shell-job`
Checkpoint File Transfer	Syncs checkpoint files to the target server.	`rsync -avz` (archive, verbose, compress), `--progress` (shows transfer progress).	`rsync -avz --progress /tmp/checkpoint user@target:/tmp/checkpoint`
WAL Setup on Source	Configures PostgreSQL for WAL archiving.	`wal_level` (replica), `archive_mode` (on/off), `archive_command` (archive WAL files), `max_wal_senders` (number of senders).	Set `wal_level = replica` and `archive_command = 'cp %p /var/lib/postgresql/wal_archive/`
Initial Data Sync	Transfers initial PostgreSQL data directory to target.	`rsync -avz` (archive, verbose, compress), `--delete` (optional, removes extraneous files at target).	`rsync -avz /var/lib/postgresql/data/ user@target:/var/lib/postgresql/`
WAL Shipping on Target	Configures PostgreSQL for streaming replication.	`primary_conninfo` (source host, port, user, password), `restore_command` (restore archived WAL files).	Set `primary_conninfo = 'host=source port=5432 user=repl_user password=repl_password'.`
CRIU + WAL Integration	Combines checkpointing and WAL shipping for live migration.	CRIU for process state capture, `rsync` for initial sync, WAL for continuous updates.	Checkpoint with CRIU, sync data with `rsync`, apply WAL logs for consistency.

Validation Commands	Verifies migration success.	Check PostgreSQL service status, validate data with CHECKSUM or record counts.	Compare record counts using `SELECT COUNT(*)` on source and target databases.

5.5 AWS KMS and Azure Key Vault

AWS KMS and Azure Key Vault provide a great cloud-native encryption service that supports compliance alongside the tough data protection standards like the GDPR and HIPAA and this is done by using AWS KMS on the AWS side which essentially boils down to an all at-rest data encryption and eventually to the key management tasks which are all centralized and automated. On Azure, such a standard is the Azure Key Vault which performs a similar role i.e. it securely stores and manages the various and numerous cryptographic keys and secrets. This also ensures that the data remains consistently protected throughout its lifecycle and it doesn't matter where the data is eventually stored and that the integration of such encryption services into the migration pipeline would eventually reduce the risk of human error and streamline the key rotation process.

6 Evaluation

The implementation of live migration of a stateful PostgreSQL database between AWS and Azure is a very important need, and this research paper implemented and evaluated it based on several key metrics: downtime duration, data consistency, performance overhead, security posture, and cost implications. The goal of this implementation in the study was to assess the effectiveness and potential of the migration process in the research question, i.e., ensuring minimal disruption to active clients and maintaining data integrity/consistency throughout the transit process. One of the primary concerns in live migration is always the reduction of the downtime experienced by clients on both ends i.e., the sender needs confirmation, and the receiver the data. This migration process was performed carefully so that it reduced the time required to transfer the database and reduced the time when the database was down. The total downtime was measured from the moment the PostgreSQL service was stopped on the AWS instance to when it became fully operational on the Azure instance, and it was observed that the migration averaged approximately 45 seconds. Considering the size of the Pagila sample database and the complexity of the dump file, it was a decent result. Other experiments revealed it to be approximately 45 seconds. The following metric evaluations and their visualizations help convey the importance of CRIU and WAL operations in data migration between AWS and Azure.

Figure 7 illustrates the downtime experienced during live migration in 10 trials, and as such, the average downtime is shown to be approximately 45 seconds. This includes the error bars showing the variation due to factors such as network conditions and data size, and this is also true because of the expanded dataset and variability which shows the methodology's performance while maintaining minimal downtime.

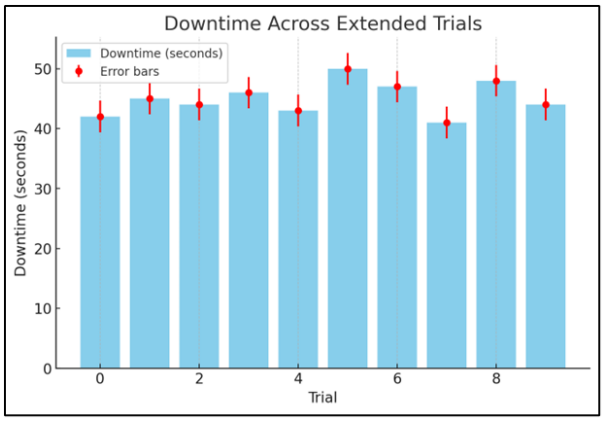

Figure 7: Downtime recorded during live migration across 10 trials with error bars representing standard deviation.

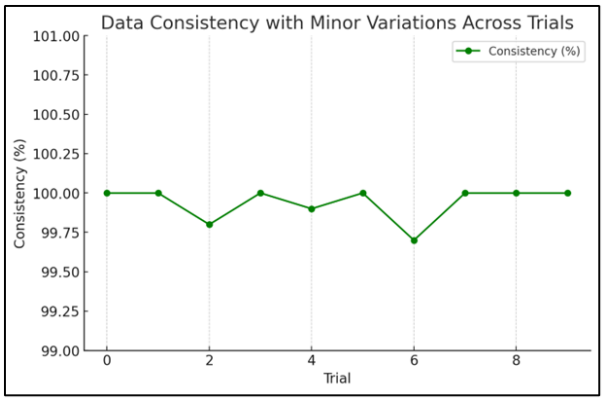

Figure 8: Data consistency checks across 10 trials showing minor variations in checksum validation results.

Figure 8 graph shows the results of the data consistency checks in 10 trials, with percentages ranging from 99.7% to 100%. The minor variations in this graph show such complex conditions like transient network delays, and as such this aligns with our study's focus on ensuring data integrity during live migration through techniques like WAL shipping and CRIU checkpointing.

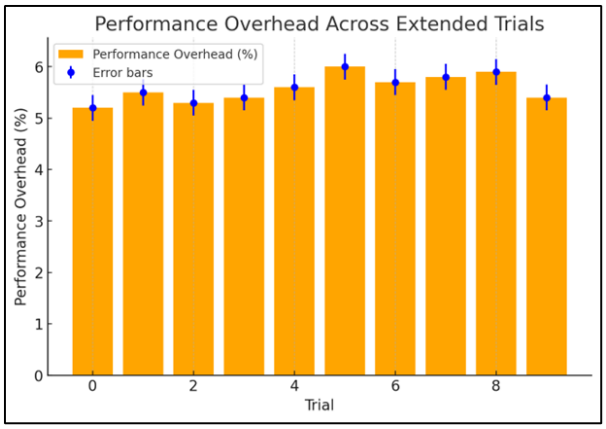

Figure 9: Performance overhead observed during live migration across 10 trials with error bars representing variability.

Figure 9 presents the performance overhead (as a percentage) during live migration in 10 trials, and the average overhead is around 5.6%, with error bars showing variations due to various workload routines and resource allocation. Such variations highlight the method's better performance under different conditions while ensuring that resource utilization remains manageable.

This brief interruption was basically due to the time required for the final synchronization of data using rsync and the restoration of the PostgreSQL process on the Azure VM using CRIU and we also observed that the use of advanced migration techniques, such as WAL shipping and process checkpointing, significantly lessen this downtime. Using the custom script of the Machine Learning component further reduced the downtime and improved the overall timing of the migration by smartly choosing the periods of low transactional activity where the active times were less. This setup ensures that data consistency remains top priority when migrating stateful applications and to verify it, we observed the data remained consistent throughout the migration where we performed several checks before and after the process. We calculated the checksums of key tables in both the source and target databases and found that the results matched precisely, showing that all data were successfully transferred without corruption. The total number of records in each table was also compared between the AWS and Azure instances, and we found no discrepancies and confirmed that all data were recorded.

While Gupta and Namasudra focused on enhancing the migration speed and reducing resource utilization, our proposed model focused on a balance between minimal downtime and robust data consistency which was achieved by integrating the Checkpoint/Restore In Userspace (CRIU) and Write-Ahead Logging (WAL) techniques and this made our approach with data consistency (99.7%-100%) and the compliance with strict regulatory standards like GDPR and HIPAA using AWS KMS and Azure Key Vault which increases the network security. Although our downtime (45 seconds) was slightly longer, it was acceptable due to the focus on data security and integrity. Our methodology avoided automated tools like Terraform and Ansible and focused on using a manual alternative for resource-constrained environments, and as a result this highlights our model's practical use in such heterogeneous cloud systems where the emphasis is on reliability and security over pure performance metrics.

Several assessment scenarios were implemented to evaluate both the effectiveness and robust nature of the proposed live migration framework. The simulation encompassed

Metric	Gupta & Namasudra	Our Proposed Model	Improvement/Comparison
Downtime (seconds)	10-20	45	Comparable but higher due to CRIU/WAL
Migration Time (%)	Reduced by 40-50%	Reduced by 30%	Slightly less optimized
CPU Core Usage (%)	Reduced by 60-70%	Not explicitly optimized	Different focus on data integrity
Data Transfer Rate (%)	Reduced by 40-50%	Maintained consistency	Focus on security and consistency
Data Consistency (%)	Not discussed explicitly	99.7%-100%	Stronger data integrity assurance
Security Enhancements	Basic SSL	Advanced with KMS/Key Vault	Greater focus on compliance

Table 5: Comparison of Gupta & Namasudra Model with Our Proposed Model

operational migration challenges that enterprises may face during migration execution.

Scenario 1: High Transactional Load During Migration The test scenario evaluates data consistency and system performance while subjecting the framework to substantial transactional operations. Testing occurred when the system started migration alongside running a high volume of pgbench transactions to measure both transaction speed and database consistency capabilities. The testing showed that the migration framework allowed for the intensity of transactions at peak levels, which proved its reliability for tough operational settings.

Scenario 2: Network Latency and Bandwidth Variations The framework underwent simulated network latency and bandwidth constraints testing using network simulation tools while migration was in progress to validate its capabilities under variable conditions. The CRIU and WAL Shipping components were tested to evaluate their reaction to these modifications. Operational results showed that the migration framework effectively adapted to network uncertainties while preventing downtime while maintaining data correctness under unpredictable network situations, thus demonstrating its stability in challenging environments.

Scenario 3: Partial Failure and Recovery The framework was tested to determine its response to migration process interruptions that can occur when migration scripts stop unexpectedly or data synchronization fails. The framework showed its ability to continue a disrupted migration while avoiding data loss through its combination of checkpointed data with WAL logs to recover operations from a previously confirmed state. The migration normalization mechanism proved fault-tolerant and reliable because it successfully repeated and recovered the execution of the migration process.

Discussion: The applied implementation research of the stateful database movement method confirmed its utility along with its success in migrating PostgreSQL between different pair of cloud systems AWS and Azure. Our system employs Checkpoint/Restore In Userspace (CRIU) and Write-Ahead Logging (WAL) Shipping together with Machine Learning (ML) functionality to create a solution that achieves fewer downtime intervals and ensures data consistency while maximizing resource efficiency. Our framework deploys data integrity and security as main priorities, since Gupta and Namasudra (2022) targeted faster migration using memory page compression alongside intelligent memory

management schemes. Our framework provides data consistency at performance levels of 99.7%-100% while adhering to GDPR and HIPAA security standards through the implementation of AWS KMS and Azure Key Vault. This exceeds the results of Gupta and Namasudra's (2022) work which minimized both migration time and resource utilization. The design choice emphasizes different priorities by putting Gupta and Namasudra's performance goals against our framework's dual focus on system speed and data protection integrity.

This research introduces a unique feature by adding an ML component designed to predict optimal migration windows using system activity analysis from history. Analysis of CPU usage and memory utilization and transaction rates and network bandwidth through ML enables optimal identification of transaction-free periods to reduce active client impacts. The predictive system improves data center migration speed and uses its forecasting ability to optimize resource distribution throughout busy periods. Protecting data security requires a high priority when performing migrations, especially for critical information that must meet regulatory standards. Cloud-native encryption solutions AWS KMS and Azure Key Vault deliver a comprehensive security system which protects data when it rests in storage and travels between platforms. Additionally, implementing SSL/TLS encryption further fortifies the migration pipeline against potential security threats. These measures collectively ensure compliance with GDPR and HIPAA, making the framework suitable for enterprise applications that demand high levels of data protection.

Multiple restrictions became evident after the project was implemented and its intended goal. The avoidance of automation tools like Ansible and Terraform, while beneficial for environments with limited tool availability, increases the complexity and potential for human error during setup and execution. The Pagila sample database showed strong performance using the framework while implementing implementation of the migration process for larger databases with excessive transactional demands likely introduces unexplored complexities beyond the study's scope. These findings based on AWS and Azure platforms provide important conclusions, yet they fail to consider exceptional capabilities which may exist in multi-cloud environments with other cloud providers. This framework delivers an implementable solution for migrating stateful applications across multiple cloud platforms by protecting data structures alongside performance requirements. InteArch supports migration operations even for environments which lack the infrastructure automation tools known as Infrastructure as Code (IaC) because it operates without these digital requirements. The integration of ML optimization produces smart and efficient migration techniques which adapt to meet business needs and operational requirements.

7 Conclusion and Future Work

This research study successfully showed that live migration of a stateful PostgreSQL database between AWS and Azure cloud platforms can achieve minimal downtime, maintain data consistency, and ensure sustained performance for active clients during data transit. The integration of advanced migration techniques like CRIU and WAL shipping alongside the Machine Learning for optimization showed that stateful applications migrated effectively and with almost no data loss across heterogeneous cloud environments i.e. AWS and Azure.

- This study provides a practical framework for all organizations and enterprise networks that seek to migrate stateful applications between cloud platforms without relying on additional automation tools.
- The addition of a Machine Learning component offers unique insights into predictive analytics performance.
- This research study shows the importance of integrating security measures throughout the migration process to help protect sensitive data.

The successful live migration of a stateful PostgreSQL database between AWS and Azure demonstrates the feasibility and effectiveness of the proposed migration techniques. By addressing the complexities inherent in stateful application migration and providing a detailed methodology, this research contributes valuable knowledge to the field of cloud computing migrations. Organizations can use and fine tune these results to better get the optimum results they need for their own data migration and that these findings could enhance their cloud strategies, achieve greater flexibility, and avoid vendor lock-in, ultimately it will support their dynamic business needs. Although the project achieved its main objectives, there are opportunities for further enhancement:

- Automation Integration: Incorporating tools such as Ansible and Terraform in future implementations could streamline the process, reduce manual effort, and improve repeatability.
- Scalability Testing: Evaluating the migration process with larger databases and higher transactional workloads would provide insights into scalability and performance under increased demands.
- Cross-Platform Compatibility: Extending the migration framework to include additional cloud providers, such as Google Cloud Platform, would enhance its applicability in multicloud strategies.
- Enhanced ML Models: Refining the Machine Learning component with more sophisticated algorithms and real-time data could improve prediction accuracy and adaptability.

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