Veyance Technologies is the exclusive manufacturer of Goodyear* Engineered Products worldwide, with approximately 100,000 unique items in its product catalog. I joined Veyance in late 2011 with a mission to help our Ohio-based company improve operations and become a true multinational, global enterprise.

Our existing RISC platforms, hosted at a traditional outsourcing company, couldn’t support unified global operations or give us the agility to move as fast as our business demanded. Backed by Veyance’s leadership team, I set out to take full advantage of cloud delivery models and enable business transformation.

Less than 18 months later, Veyance has moved its enterprise infrastructure—including a 3,000-seat SAP* enterprise resource planning (ERP) system and more than 120 applications—to a virtual private infrastructure-as-a-service (IaaS) cloud. This cloud is built on Virtustream’s secure, high-availability, enterprise-class IaaS solution powered by Virtustream xStream* cloud management software and running on a foundation of server, storage, and network technologies from Intel. The cloud runs at Virtustream’s primary data center in Virginia, with disaster recovery services in San Francisco.

We replatformed many enterprise applications as we migrated them to the cloud, and have expanded our Internet-facing network capacity to make our enterprise more cloud-capable. We have also deployed a variety of software-as-a-service (SaaS) solutions, implementing a global shared services model and adding an agility layer to our IaaS foundation. Now, we’re establishing plant-in-a-box hybrid clouds that combine centralized management from our enterprise IaaS cloud with on-premises local clouds at our global plants.

Through these steps, we have reduced our risk profile and captured quantum improvements in service levels, quality, and agility. We’re enabling the business to streamline and coordinate global operations, capture efficiencies and economies of scale, and respond to business needs much more rapidly. We have reduced our infrastructure costs by roughly 30 percent, and we’re creating further value by reinvesting that in people and expertise.

What advice can I share based on our success? Here are several suggestions:

• **Move quickly.** You achieve transformation by driving for transformation, not by going slow and being timid. Define clear business objectives and take advantage of the ability cloud gives you to implement solutions quickly. Make cloud the default for new solutions and refreshes. You don’t get more done by going slowly.
• **Show you’re serious.** One of the first changes we made was to quickly migrate from Lotus Notes* to Office 365*. This was a strong, symbolic move that let everyone know we were serious about transformation, and that the company was investing to give employees the tools to be more productive and more competitive, and to collaborate more effectively as an organization.

• **Focus on professional IT process management.** You need a strong, internal IT service management capability to manage multiple cloud providers, create a coherent compute service delivery model, and get the most out of cloud technologies. Veyance has implemented Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) practices across the board, and uses ServiceNow* to support them. We worked closely with Virtustream to define how we integrate our processes such as incident management, change management, and recovery management, and we follow similar practices for release management with our SaaS providers.

• **Work with a true enterprise cloud services provider.** If you’re going to do transformative computing in an enterprise cloud environment, you need a vendor that understands the broader business and technical requirements and is equipped to fulfill them. Look for a vendor that provides comprehensive cloud capabilities such as enterprise-class management and security capabilities, expertise in running SAP in the cloud, and the ability to colocate applications that aren’t able to move into the cloud environment yet.

• **Keep security concerns in perspective.** Pay close attention to security, privacy, and compliance, but keep in mind that in many cases, cloud solutions are more secure than on-premises applications. They’re newer and have been engineered for security from the outset, unlike many enterprise environments where IT has had to bolt on security as an afterthought. To assess vendors’ security and management capabilities, try creating specific use cases and have vendors show how they handle them. This activity can also help you quickly determine if a vendor is providing true cloud computing with self-service provisioning and capacity on demand, or just hosted virtualization.

Cycle time and speed-to-solution are fundamental to creating business value, especially today, when business opportunities can come and go very quickly. With our cloud-based infrastructure and services, Veyance IT is much more relevant and responsive to the business. We’re supporting the business transformation to a truly global organization, enabling Veyance to get work done quickly anywhere in the world and apply talent wherever it exists to benefit our customers in every part of the globe. By using information technology as a strategic enabler, we’re creating a foundation for continued innovation and positioning Veyance to fundamentally differentiate itself in the marketplace.