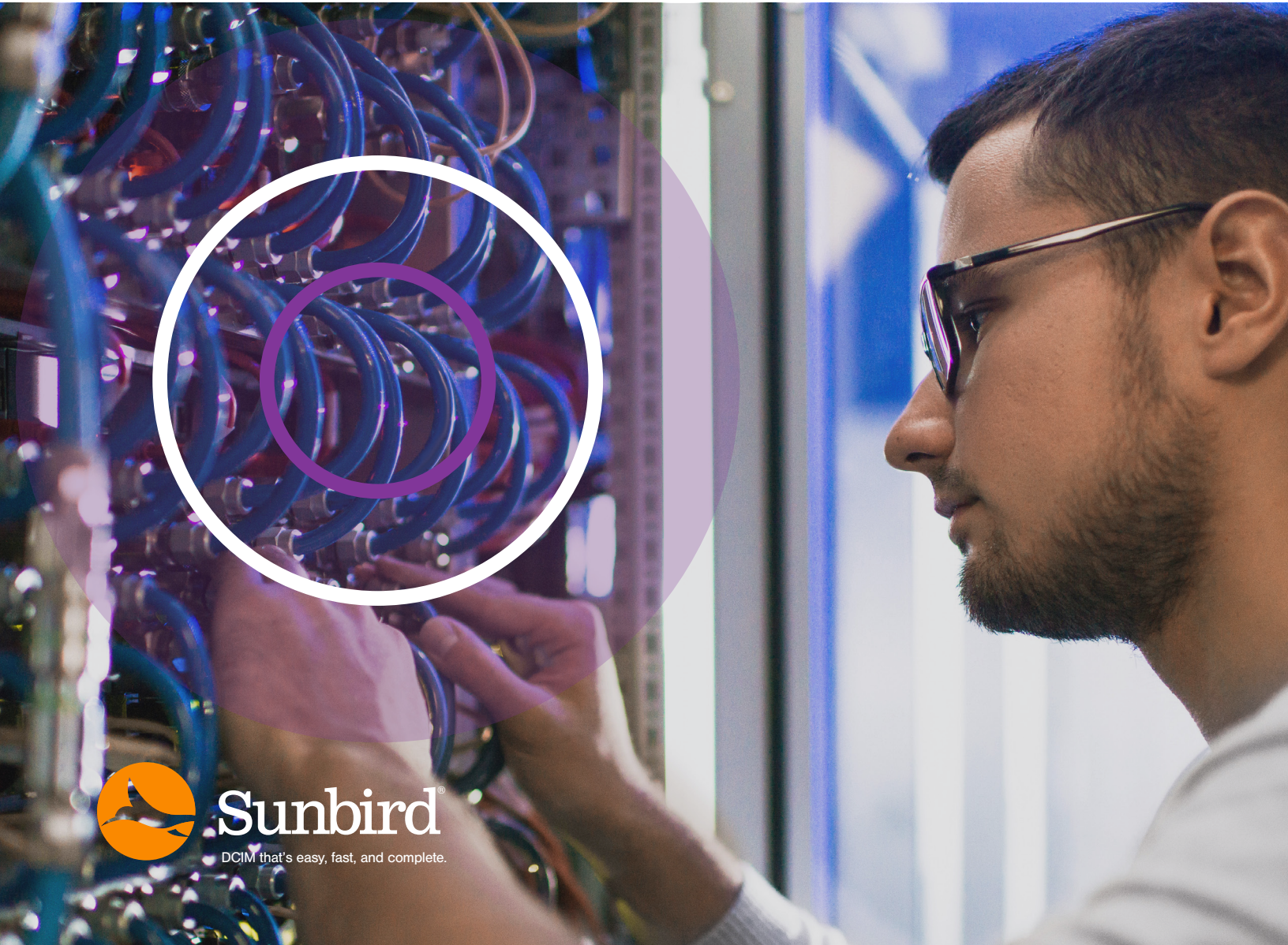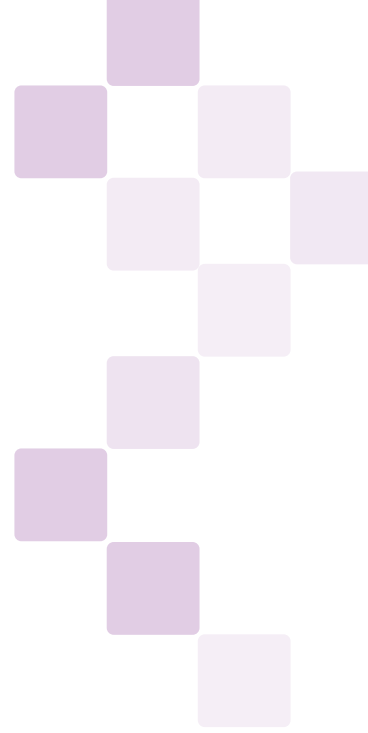# 8 Best Practices to Simplify Your Data Center Consolidation

Sunbird®
DCIM that's easy, fast, and complete.

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Introduction

Whether you are downsizing your infrastructure within a single room or eliminating half of your data center sites, a data center consolidation is a complex, risk-prone project.

Fortunately, you can mitigate many of the mistakes and unwelcome surprises that even the most experienced data center professionals find derailing their consolidation.

In this eBook, we have compiled the top eight proven best practices that we have learned from our experiences with hundreds of customers in our global user group program. Follow these tips before, during, and after your project and you will overcome often-overlooked challenges and achieve a successful consolidation.

Key drivers of data center consolidations

Government mandates.
Federal mandates like the Federal Data Center Consolidation Initiative (FDCCI) and Data Center Optimization Initiative (DCOI) aim to increase the utilization of government data center facilities. These mandates require agencies to develop and report on strategies to consolidate their inefficient infrastructure.

Migration to the cloud.
As more and more enterprises shift workloads to the cloud, the need for space is reduced. As such, organizations are downsizing their footprint to use their space more efficiently and reduce the complexity of data center management.

Reduced costs.
Managing a smaller footprint provides an opportunity to realize cost savings. Fewer physical locations and less equipment comes with reduced operational expenses, energy consumption, procurement fees, software licensing costs, and maintenance costs.

Green data center and sustainability initiatives.
Data centers around the world are at the forefront of the green movement, reducing their environmental impact and ushering in a new era of sustainability. Organizations have made it a priority to maximize energy efficiency and reduce their carbon footprint.
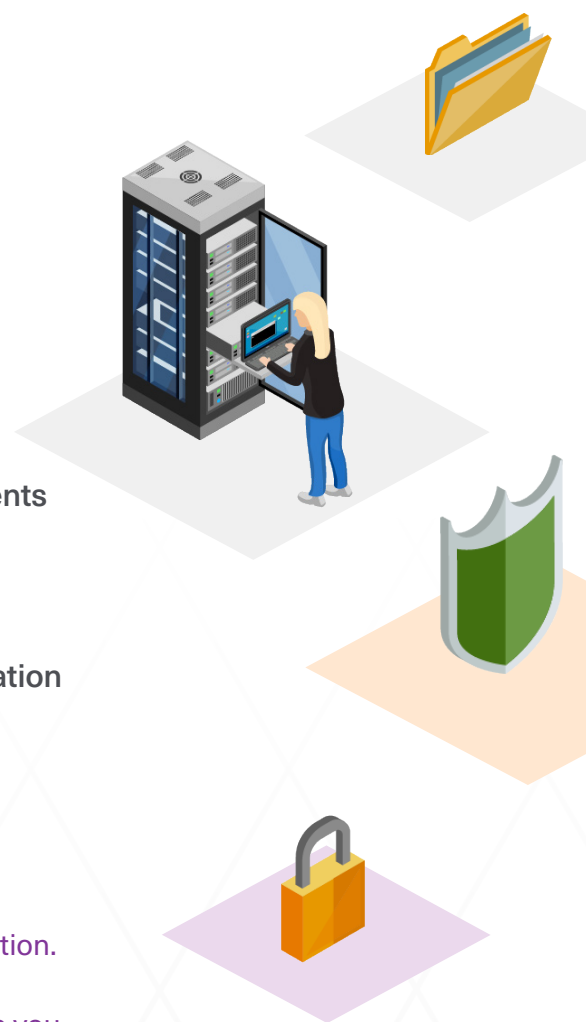
Common challenges of data center consolidations

A data center consolidation is a risky endeavor with many potential complications. Surprises and errors can happen and cause extended periods of downtime can happen in any consolidation effort. Common challenges include:

- Not properly planning out the move in detail beforehand

- Mismanagement of teams and resources

- Ineffective use of capacity

- Inaccurate asset inventory records

- Missing or misused cabling and other hardware components

- Unfamiliarity with the new facility

- Difficulty moving all equipment associated with an application quickly and simultaneously

- Incorrect equipment installation

Any of these issues can impede the success of a data center consolidation. Keep the following best practices in mind as you plan your data center consolidation for a faster transition with fewer risks. These tips will help you complete your project successfully and, ultimately, achieve your goal of managing highly efficient data center infrastructure.
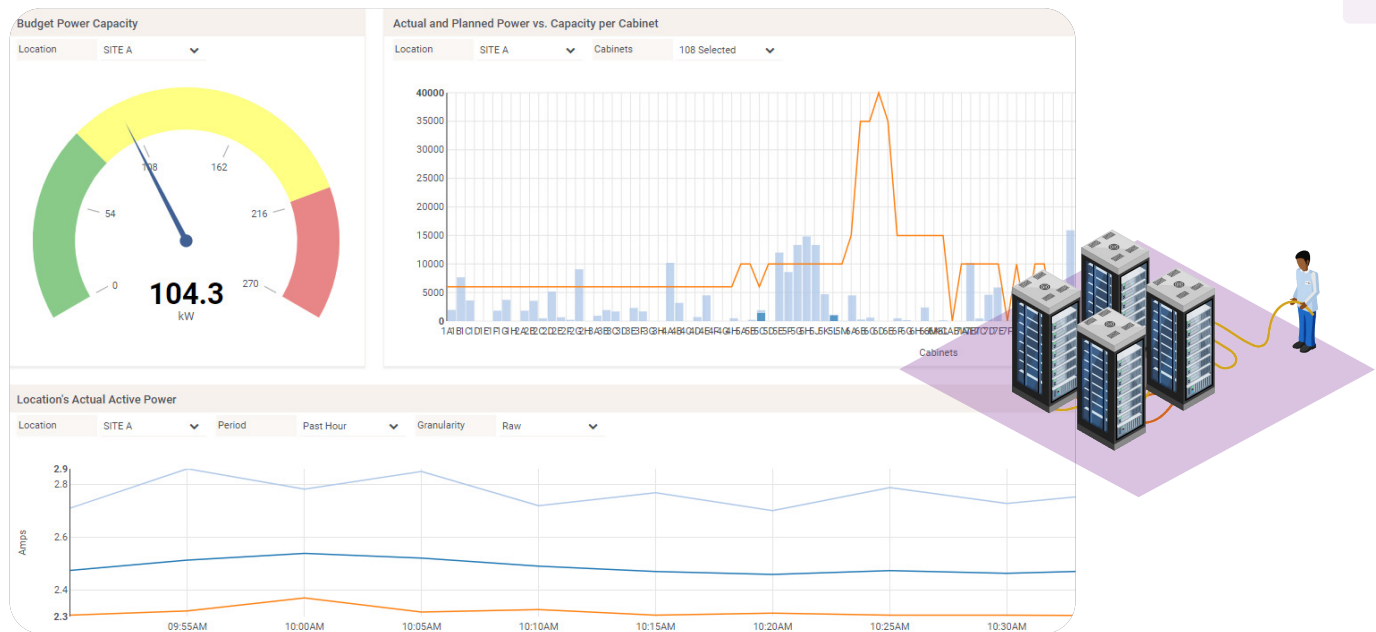
8 Best Practices to Simplify Your Data Center Consolidation

Understand your actual power utilization.

The first step of a successful data center consolidation is to have an accurate understanding of how much power you are using in your current environment. This will help determine how much you can consolidate later in the process.

To get useful data on the power load of your devices and infrastructure, deploy intelligent rack PDUs and other metered infrastructure in your data centers. While inlet-metered PDUs will provide readings at the cabinet-level and are useful in measuring power usage and available capacity, to properly perform a consolidation from start to finish, you need outlet-metered PDUs.

Outlet-metered PDUs provide all the benefits of inlet-metered PDUs, plus the highly valuable data that comes with monitoring power consumption at the device level. This data is a must-have to achieve the other best practices on this list and maximize efficiency.

Deploy a complete data center management solution.

Data Center Infrastructure Management (DCIM) software, when combined with intelligent rack PDUs and other metered infrastructure, forms the complete solution for efficient data centers. DCIM software transforms the data from your meters into actionable insights that help you increase the efficiency of your capacity utilization before and after the consolidation.

Some data center professionals think they can wait until after their consolidation project to deploy DCIM software. The fact is that if you do not have the proper tools and information at the very start, your consolidation is doomed to be at best an uphill battle or at worst a complete failure. Reasons to deploy DCIM before your consolidation include:

Instant accuracy. Perform one audit before the consolidation and have an accurate, real-time asset inventory from day one.

Data-driven decision-making. Turn your metered data into actionable information. Easily assess, plan, and review your strategy to make the most informed decisions for your consolidation project.

Perfect timing. A consolidation provides a fresh start to move away from manual, inaccurate, antiquated tools and towards a modern solution. DCIM software will make up only a small part of the overall project scope, so it is a great time to get funds for a cutting-edge data center management platform.

Immediate return-on-investment. Gain all the benefits of having a DCIM solution right away. Maintain uptime, improve capacity utilization, boost productivity, and reduce costs from the onset.

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