



Training Teams with Surgical Precision:

GlobalMed's Comprehensive
Skill Development Program





GlobalMed's Cloud Story

GlobalMed is the leading telemedicine platform for virtual health delivery used in 55 countries with over 15 million virtual consults including with the United States Federal Government. The company creates a wide array of medical devices and software, connecting patients to practitioners virtually. GlobalMed is uniquely positioned with its product suite, especially as demands increase from patients seeking additional ways to stay in touch with doctors and physicians to fulfill their healthcare needs.

GlobalMed identified the value of cloud and brought in Amazon Web Services (AWS) and systems engineering specialist, James Dawson, to assist with the migration of the company's global communications network to the cloud. Soon after joining, GlobalMed leadership selected Microsoft Azure as the company's strategic cloud provider. As Vice President of Information Technology, Dawson set out to implement an educational program that would drive additional expertise across the organization, programmatically train teams, and measure teams' practical readiness to ensure a successful transition.



James Dawson
Vice President of
Information Technology at GlobalMed



Finding the Right Platform

GlobalMed's move to Microsoft Azure was part of a broader technical refresh that the organization undergoes every few years. There's one constant for the organization and others in its industry: the need for strict adherence to additional governance, risk, and compliance requirements. Dawson needed a solution that would enable his teams to identify and learn the Azure services that comply with regulatory frameworks like HIPAA, FDA, and ISO. "AWS and Azure have reached a point from a compliance perspective that they are mature enough for us to begin really considering them in the critical industry that we operate in," says Dawson.

Dawson is someone who does things the right way. "A lift-and-shift might be fine in the short term, but you quickly need to examine the architecture and resources, right-size them for the cloud, and refactor a few things," Dawson recalls saying. He adds, "And 'a few things' is an understatement. The differences are significant between how software may have been developed under traditional models when compared to a cloud-native product."

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The shifts that would be needed would be as much cultural as technical. Dawson sought a solution that would not only deliver technical training to his team but also help the broader organization with the transition. Everyone would need to be on the same page.

"Moving to the cloud isn't just an IT operations job", says Dawson. "It's a software job, product management job, and even a sales job. Your organization sees a complete shift in your business from top to bottom, and everyone needs to be involved."

Amid the search for the right platform was also the need to get an entire technical team on board and engaged in the pursuit of new skills and capabilities. As a lifelong learner, Dawson evangelizes the fact that evolutions in technology impact careers. He recounts stories of shutting down email, ERP, and BlackBerry servers with a certain fondness. It was in the early 2010s that Dawson began to really invest time in learning AWS. Using his own money, he purchased books, practice tests, e-learning websites such as Linux Academy and Pluralsight. No single resource seemed to be a silver bullet until he discovered the Cloud Academy platform.

Dawson initially signed up for a personal account and was impressed by Cloud Academy's offerings, including its breadth and comprehensiveness of content around AWS and Microsoft Azure. Dawson spent the ensuing months paying out of pocket for Cloud Academy, investing time where he could in learning all he could about Microsoft Azure.

Accelerating with Cloud Academy

At the same time, GlobalMed leadership and Dawson were beating the transformation drum. In addition to the breadth of content, GlobalMed selected Cloud Academy as its corporate training solution because its platform enabled the company to roll out training efforts at scale and with accountability.



“While professionals are obligated to keep their skill set current, they also might spend 10 hours a day at work and they might get home and have a family and kids that need attention,” explains Dawson. “We needed to provide the training resources to our staff because if we left it to them as individuals, it would take too long to get there.”

To emphasize the necessity of training and drive accountability, GlobalMed implemented [Training Plans](#) across the IT Operations and Software Development groups. For the IT Operations group, Dawson began budgeting training time each week. “The deployment of Training Plans enabled us to create this shared responsibility model with our employees”, says Dawson.

“I am able to report out to the leader of our software department around how much time we spent training, who was engaged, and who wasn’t, which allowed us to foster a friendly competitive environment.”

GlobalMed used Cloud Academy’s certification preparation Learning Path for the Microsoft Azure 70-535 exam as the basis for a foundational Training Plan, which was assigned to the IT and Software Development teams. With Azure foundational skills in place, Dawson anticipates training to fork into paths that are specific to job roles.

Dawson and GlobalMed are leveraging [Assessment Cycles](#) and [Skill Profiles](#) to perform a gap analysis against the company’s transformation roadmap and align guided training opportunities accordingly. With a rapidly growing number of services offered by public cloud vendors, Dawson found Cloud Academy to be very effective due to its curated and focused nature.

However, while the Cloud Academy curriculum covered a great deal of ground for Microsoft Azure, there were still missing pieces that Dawson’s team needed. These include some training details and materials specific to

GlobalMed as an organization. Dawson is setting out to customize training through [Content Engine](#), including writing custom test questions and inserting GlobalMed specific documentation into Learning Paths.

“I was blown away by Content Engine and think that it’s one of the more compelling features,” says Dawson. “We can do so much with it, from integrating the specifics of our organization into the curriculum to providing internal certifications that can show whether an administrator is capable of deploying and administering our product. This is something I definitely see myself leveraging more and more over time.”

The Cloud Cure

With Cloud Academy, GlobalMed is beginning to make significant progress toward establishing a common language and understanding across teams. With almost 90% of the teams actively working on three assigned Training Plans in the first month, certain team members are eager to jump into training on big data pipelines, microservices, containers, and disaster recovery.

For the time being, Dawson is laser-focused on establishing the foundational knowledge needed for each job role and their migration roadmap. As migration comes closer into view, there’s significant work ahead: creating documentation, re-visiting policies, and making a move to Azure in a secure and compliant manner. Dawson and GlobalMed are taking the opportunity to establish a culture based on shared expectations of continuous improvement and accountability.

As a technology leader, Dawson believes that all professionals have an obligation to themselves and their peers to keep their skills fresh, especially when paired up with the appropriate training platform.



He reminds professionals that “a company makes a financial and time-based investment to provide staff with training. As professionals, we’re training in a way that serves the interests of the organization, but it’s important to regard each skill attained as a tangible tool in the toolbelt.”

In tandem with his organization’s cloud migration work, cloud training remains very much a priority for GlobalMed and Dawson can’t emphasize enough the value of structured cloud training.

“Professionals and organizations should take advantage of the training offered by Cloud Academy,” says Dawson. “The Hands-on Labs and training content are all worth the price of admission and translate into both career and business growth. The value of the experience is second to none.”



Cloud Academy is the leading enterprise training platform that accelerates teams and digital transformation.

Companies trust Cloud Academy to deliver multimodal training on the leading clouds (AWS, Azure, Google Cloud Platform), on the essential methodologies needed to operate on and between clouds (DevOps, Security), and on the capabilities that are unlocked by the cloud (machine learning, IoT).

From the fundamentals to advanced scenario training, Cloud Academy empowers organizations with the knowledge, critical thinking, and hands-on experience needed to adopt, operate, and optimize the multi-cloud.

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