

Ideal for enterprises operating regulated, mission-critical data platforms with high availability and audit requirements.

FAF™ Case Study

Assessed Data Modernization

Enterprise-scale modernization. Measured. Delivered. Assured.
Measured, validated, and governed against Africa's Data Standard.

Executive Snapshot

Fidelra applied the **Fidelra Assurance Framework (FAF™)** to transform a fragmented, high-risk SQL Server estate into a standardized, resilient, and cloud-ready data platform with validated modernization outcomes.

Prior to engagement, modernization existed largely as intent. SQL Server versions were inconsistent, platform standards were loosely enforced, and legacy dependencies constrained both agility and cloud adoption. Upgrade decisions were reactive, audit confidence was limited, and modernization progress could not be objectively measured or defended.

FAF™ replaced assumption with evidence

Through objective scoring, standardized platform engineering, governed execution, and audit-ready assurance, Fidelra enabled the enterprise to move from fragmented legacy operations to **defensible, enterprise-scale modernization confidence**.

Measured Outcomes

Metric	Pre-FAF™	Post-FAF™
Modernization Readiness Score	15%	88%
Platform Supportability	Low	Fully Supported
Standardization Coverage	Fragmented	80%+ Standardized
Cloud Readiness	Unclear	Measured & Governed
Audit Confidence	Low	Audit-ready

Modernization shifted from assumed progress to objectively measured and governed execution.

The Challenge

The organization operated a large, business-critical SQL Server estate supporting core enterprise workloads. Over time, tactical deployments, deferred upgrades, and inconsistent standards resulted in a high-risk modernization posture characterized by:

- × Unsupported and end-of-life SQL Server versions
- × Inconsistent OS, CU, and configuration baselines
- × Standalone deployments lacking standardized architectures
- × Legacy application dependencies blocking modernization
- × High operational variance and elevated change-failure risk
- × Limited evidence to support audits and platform reviews

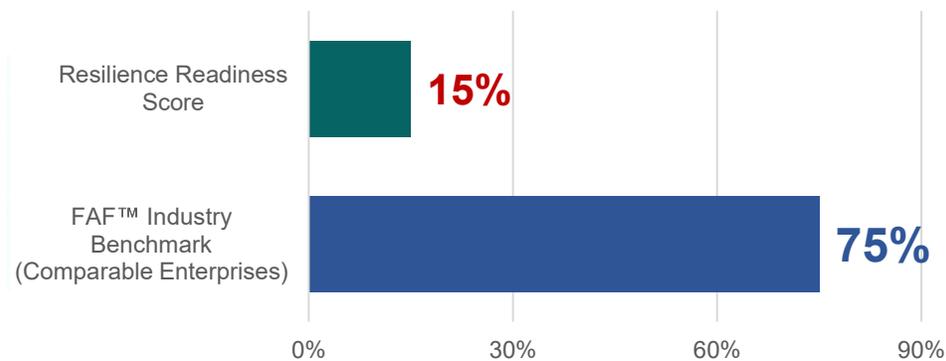
Modernization risk increased with every change, while confidence in platform currency steadily declined. Modernization was discussed — but never conclusively proven.

Baseline Assessment — Pre-FAF™ Modernization Readiness

Fidelra initiated the engagement with a **FAF™ Baseline Assessment**, measuring the environment across modernization readiness, platform currency, operational maturity, security, and governance.

Baseline Results

- Modernization Readiness Score: **15%**
- Industry Benchmark: **~75%**



Key Contributors to Low Readiness



Platform Obsolescence

A significant portion of the estate operated on unsupported SQL Server versions, exposing the organization to security, stability, and vendor-support risk.



Architectural Inconsistency

Builds, configurations, and deployment patterns varied widely, increasing operational complexity and upgrade effort.



Legacy Dependency Drag

Applications and integrations lacked modernization pathways, blocking cloud adoption and version alignment.



Governance Gaps

Upgrade decisions were reactive, undocumented, and lacked measurable acceptance criteria.

The assessment confirmed that modernization was largely aspirational rather than operationally assured

Measured Against Africa's Data Standard

FAF™ evaluates enterprise data platforms against **Africa's Data Standard** — a context-aware assurance baseline reflecting African regulatory expectations, operational realities, and enterprise risk profiles.

FAF™ measures modernization across five core dimensions:

- ✓ Platform currency
- ✓ Standardization
- ✓ Operational maturity
- ✓ Security alignment
- ✓ Cloud readiness

Each dimension is objectively scored, evidence-mapped, and validated through execution — not documentation alone.

This ensures modernization is not declared, but proven, and remains defensible under audit, regulatory, and executive scrutiny.

What Fidelra Delivered

Platform Modernization & Standardization

Actions

- ✓ Upgraded SQL Server estates to supported versions
- ✓ Standardized OS, CU, and configuration baselines
- ✓ Consolidated fragmented deployments into governed estates
- ✓ Enforced build and deployment standards

Outcomes

Platform obsolescence was eliminated, operational variance reduced, and modernization became repeatable, predictable, and auditable.

Security & Platform Alignment

Actions

- ✓ Aligned encryption, identity, and access controls
- ✓ Standardized patching and platform hardening
- ✓ Closed security gaps introduced by legacy versions

Outcomes

Security posture improved materially, and vendor supportability was restored across the estate.

Performance Engineering & Stability

Actions

- ✓ Optimized execution paths and resource utilization
- ✓ Reduced contention and inefficiencies introduced by legacy designs
- ✓ Embedded performance telemetry

Outcomes

Performance stabilized under load, and modernization no longer amplified operational risk.

Cloud Adoption Enablement

Actions

- ✓ Conducted cloud readiness and compatibility assessments
- ✓ Identified and resolved legacy blockers
- ✓ Defined phased, governed modernization pathways

Outcomes

Over 95% of workloads were validated as cloud-compatible under compliant, governed conditions.

Modernization Impact — Quantified Results



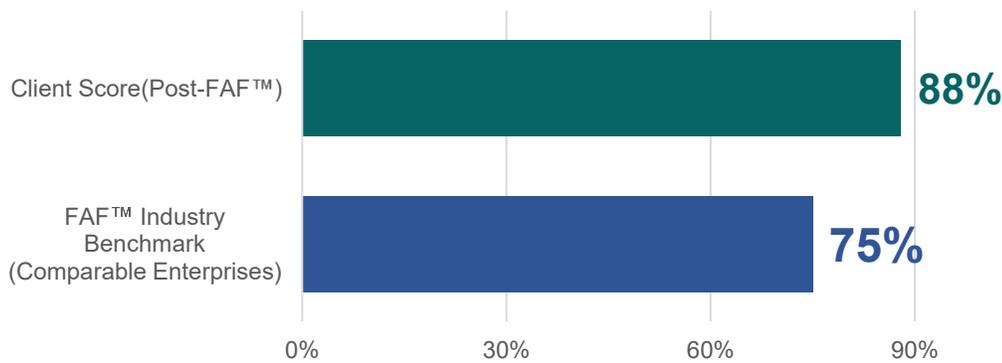
75% reduction in legacy and unsupported platforms

80% standardization across builds and configurations



99.99% availability readiness through validated HA/DR architectures

Post-FAF™ resilience score, exceeding benchmark



Capability	Pre-FAF™	Post-FAF™
Modernization Readiness	15%	88%
Platform Supportability	Low	Fully Supported
Standardization	Fragmented	Enforced
Cloud Readiness	Unclear	Measured
Governance Confidence	Low	Audit-Ready

Resilience evolved from fragile and implicit to validated, governed, and defensible.

Audit-Ready Evidence Pack Delivered

Fidelra delivered a comprehensive regulator- and auditor-ready evidence pack, covering:

	Platform & Configuration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Standard build blueprints✓ Version and patch alignment matrices✓ Change logs and release documentation
	Resilience & HA/DR	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Standardized clustered HA architectures✓ Validated RPO/RTO targets✓ Automated recovery runbooks✓ Platform hardening controls
	Operational Maturity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Health checks and failover validation✓ Incident workflows and escalation paths✓ Automated remediation✓ Predictive capacity and risk indicators
	Performance Optimization	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Query and index tuning✓ Contention elimination✓ In-memory processing✓ Partitioning and compression
	Cloud Readiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Full asset inventory✓ Compatibility and security validation✓ Landing-zone governance✓ Migration sequencing roadmap

Every control was documented, repeatable, and independently defensible.

Governance & Controls Embedded

Governance & Controls Embedded	Risks Addressed
<p>FAF™ ensured modernization was governed by design, not dependent on ad-hoc upgrades or individual discretion.</p>	
<p> Defined Modernization Standards → SQL Server versioning, configuration baselines, and lifecycle standards converted into enforceable platform architectures and upgrade controls.</p>	<p> Platform Obsolescence Risk → Unsupported versions eliminated; vendor supportability restored across the estate.</p>
<p> Validated Modernization Gates → No modernization state accepted without evidence: <i>Baseline</i> → <i>Design</i> → <i>Execute</i> → <i>Validate</i> → <i>Document</i> → <i>Assure</i>.</p>	<p> Upgrade Failure Risk → Version transitions tested, validated, and documented before acceptance.</p>
<p> Embedded Continuous Modernization Assurance → Platform posture continuously tracked through <i>Monitor</i> → <i>Detect</i> → <i>Validate</i> → <i>Recommend</i> → <i>Improve</i> → <i>Re-score</i>.</p>	<p> Modernization Drift → Configuration variance detected early; regression prevented through re-scoring.</p>
<p> Operational Roles & Accountability → Clear ownership across platform, operations, security, and application teams for version currency and modernization outcomes.</p>	<p> Change Risk → Upgrade decisions governed; accountability explicit and auditable.</p>
<p> Standardized Build & Upgrade Runbooks → Upgrade, rollback, validation, and compatibility procedures made repeatable, auditable, and automated.</p>	<p> Execution Risk → Manual, error-prone upgrades eliminated; outcomes standardized.</p>
<p> Cloud Readiness Governance → Modernization pathways aligned to cloud compatibility, security, and landing-zone controls.</p>	<p> Cloud Adoption Risk → Migration decisions evidence-based; unsupported workloads blocked from transition.</p>
<p> Audit-Ready Modernization Evidence → Platform currency, configuration state, and upgrade history documented and mapped to regulatory and internal audit expectations.</p>	<p> Compliance Exposure → Modernization posture defensible under audit, regulatory, and executive scrutiny.</p>

Modernization was institutionalized as a governed, defensible operating discipline — not a one-time upgrade initiative.

Why This Worked

Fidelra delivered durable modernization because we:

- ✓ **Measured** before executing
- ✓ **Used assurance — not assumptions** — to guide decisions
- ✓ **Embedded governance, security, and standardization by design**
- ✓ **Aligned modernization to African enterprise realities and regulatory expectations**

FAF™ ensured modernization outcomes were **durable, auditable, and defensible** — not temporary upgrades.

Client Benefits

- ✓ Reduced platform and security risk
- ✓ Faster, safer upgrade cycles
- ✓ Improved audit and regulatory confidence
- ✓ Cloud-ready foundation with governed pathways
- ✓ Executive visibility through transparent scoring and evidence

Strengthen Your Data Modernization — Measured. Delivered.

This engagement forms part of **Fidelra's Audit-Ready Modernization Advantage™**.

[Request Your Audit-Ready Modernization Plan →](#)

Get your modernization readiness score — measured, validated, and assured against Africa's Data Standard.



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