



PARTNER CASE STUDY

From complexity to clarity: How ICF used Datadog to help modernize cloud operations for a federal agency



 Global Consulting & Technology Provider

 ~ 9,000 Employees

 Reston, Virginia, USA

 ICF

ABOUT THE AGENCY

A U.S. federal health agency which is focused on advancing research, prevention, and treatment programs. It uses large-scale computing and data analysis to support innovation and improve public health outcomes.



“Together, we leveraged Datadog’s observability and FinOps platform to transform the agency’s cloud management into a smarter, more efficient and financially transparent environment.”

Manish Pradhan
Director of IT Modernization
ICF

WHY DATADOG?

- Datadog’s FedRAMP® authorization enables federal agencies to meet compliance standards while modernizing complex, hybrid cloud environments.
- By consolidating monitoring, APM, log management, and FinOps into a single platform, Datadog improved visibility, reduced downtime, and enhanced decision-making across 300+ cloud accounts.
- Its unified dashboards helped leadership connect performance metrics to cost data, optimizing operations and resource allocation.

CHALLENGE

The agency needed to modernize its fragmented cloud monitoring tools to meet federal compliance requirements, reduce costs, and improve operational visibility across hundreds of cloud accounts.

WHY ICF?

- ICF brings decades of federal modernization experience, combining deep technical expertise with mission understanding.
- As a trusted Datadog partner, ICF guided the agency’s multi-cloud observability transformation—integrating AI-driven insights, ITSM workflows, and financial transparency.
- Together, ICF and Datadog delivered a secure, AI-scalable, and data-driven observability framework that supports modernization and advances the agency’s mission.

USE CASE

 Application Performance Monitoring

 Infrastructure Monitoring

 Log Management

 Cloud Cost Management

KEY RESULTS

25% reduction

In cloud monitoring costs by consolidating tools and improving financial transparency through Datadog's unified FinOps capabilities

300+ cloud accounts

unified under a single observability platform, improving collaboration and response times across multi-cloud environments

700+ hosts monitored

with full-stack visibility, enabling proactive issue detection, optimized performance, and smarter resource allocation

From complexity to clarity: How ICF used Datadog to help modernize cloud operations for a federal agency

Federal agencies are accelerating their move to the cloud. In the 2025 ICF-Meritalk Federal Software Reimagined report, three-quarters of 100 federal technology leaders said adapting modern software practices is critical to mission success—and nearly all (93%) expected cloud-native development to be a major part of that work.

But increased reliance on the cloud comes with challenges, including the need to manage costs and complexity. Agencies must ensure every dollar spent on technology directly supports mission outcomes.

“The synergy of financial and operational oversight allows all stakeholders to make data-driven decisions that reduce waste, improve efficiency, and accelerate the delivery of high-value public services.”

“Effective FinOps, application monitoring, and AI-enabled optimization are the cornerstones of effective cloud adoption.”

Manish Pradhan, Director of IT Modernization, ICF



Navigating Federal Constraints

Federal agencies face distinct challenges that go beyond commercial cloud adoption. Compliance with programs like FedRAMP®, frameworks like TIC 3.0, and evolving OMB guidance adds layers of complexity to modernization efforts. Procurement constraints and legacy system integration further complicate the path forward. These realities demand tailored approaches that align with federal frameworks while driving mission outcomes.

Modernizing the management of cloud platforms is quickly becoming an imperative. When a federal agency wanted to improve its cloud operations, it turned to ICF for guidance. ICF leveraged Datadog's observability platform to transform the agency's cloud management into a smarter, safer, and more financially transparent environment.

Finding the Right FinOps Fit

The agency sought a solution that could unify monitoring, enable FinOps visibility, and integrate with existing workflows. Key requirements included:

- Cloud monitoring, full-stack observability, and FinOps capabilities
- AI-driven optimization and ITSM integration
- Multi-cloud, single-pane visibility

ICF selected Datadog's unified platform, a recognized leader in observability for both cloud infrastructure and application performance.

Implementing Datadog provided immediate benefits, including:

- Improved collaboration, reliability, and security across cloud environments and applications
- Enhanced decision-making for more than 300 AWS and other cloud accounts through a unified multi-cloud view
- Increased operational efficiency and faster incident response across 700+ infrastructure hosts
- 25% cost savings from consolidating legacy tools and improving process efficiency

“Providing visibility into how applications and infrastructure perform across multi-cloud and hybrid environments—and how those resources are consumed through a showback model—allows agencies to make informed decisions for cost savings, budgeting, and forecasting.”

“Connecting cloud performance with financial data gives leaders a clearer picture of value. This partnership shows how FinOps and modernization can work together to drive mission success.”

Jimmy Cesario, Regional Vice President, Datadog

Harnessing the Power of AI and FinOps

Looking ahead, ICF will continue to support this agency's efforts to derive additional value from its Datadog investment. One avenue is Datadog's Watchdog tool, which incorporates AI to understand patterns in cloud application vulnerabilities and usage. This data would help leaders make decisions about where and when to increase or decrease spending on cloud capabilities, driving efficiencies while lowering overall costs.

The agency also wants to integrate its Datadog instance with the ServiceNow platform, which can help the agency with tasks beyond monitoring and addressing cloud application problems. Through this integration, still in proof-of-concept, the ServiceNow ITSM could create key vulnerability or performance alerts based on issues that Datadog detects, making those issues actionable and trackable.

Thanks to its Datadog implementation, this agency has equipped its leaders to make faster, smarter decisions about its cloud-related costs, reducing financial waste and improving efficiencies across the agency.

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