Hewlett Packard Enterprise | **Microsoft**

Digital transformation

Dear Reader,

Today's IT leaders are aware that a digital transformation is vital to achieving and maintaining success. An organisation's IT and finance department and other stakeholders have a shared commitment toward the business in making this revolution happen – sometimes supported by new laws and regulations. All this necessitates rapid action in order to keep up-to-date and remain relevant.

Individual companies and organisations are also looking for opportunities to forge new partnerships, improve digital collaboration and explore new business and supply-chain models.

This publication tells the story of how five Dutch industry leaders are not only putting their IT resources at the service of their organisations, but also how IT serves as an enabler and helps to create innovations, streamline processes and – above all – allows employees to collaborate more smoothly and securely by giving them access to valuable tools and resources.

We make a point of highlighting the 'digital journey' in our publication, as we feel this is the key to inspiring you and can provide you with fresh new insights.

You will find that all of the solutions described are based on Microsoft and HPE technologies. In partnering with InSpark and Microsoft, we seek to provide our clients with superior solutions that meet their business needs.

We would be happy to discuss the options available with you any time – until then, we hope you enjoy reading this publication.

Yours sincerely,

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De Goudse Verzekeringen Story

Azure Cloud Transformation

3. Azure Cloud Transformation

De Goudse Verzekeringen | Roland Currie, Sector Manager Operations & Management

The most visually apparent effect of insurance company De Goudse Verzekeringen's recent transition to the cloud is that its data centre currently serves as a storage space for desks and chairs and other assorted office equipment. We asked Sector Manager Roland Currie about the long and frequently arduous journey he and his colleagues had to complete to reach their destination.

De Goudse Verzekeringen employs 750 people, including around 150 IT staff, divided across two areas of expertise. "We've got software developers and architects on one side, and management and operations on the other. Our mission is to do only what we're good at and leave everything else to experts in their field." This has helped De Goudse Verzekeringen to evolve into a management organisation in recent years, which entails doing the job themselves if it adds value and managing everything when third parties can do a better job.

Procedures

"What really stood out in the development of IT – other than the usual more-for-less requirement, of course – were the steep administrative costs. We've currently got six VT administrations. Whether it will be possible to reduce this number remains to be seen, but the administration can be stripped down by moving around some other functionalities, as this will reduce the costs of the administration systems." We have switched to a new development method: we've gone from being waterfall-oriented to using a more agile approach. "We're becoming more of a DevOps organisation, and the experiments we've carried out so far have been promising." Administrators now work closely with developers in order to be able to act quickly in any process. A partnership with the enterprise platform Mendix has resulted in tailor-made solutions for different roles with a platform which can achieve short-term results.

The strength of the cloud

"We believe in the strength of the hybrid cloud, where we combine the capacity of the data centres operated by our suppliers with the cloud services we purchase. The idea is to have a single public cloud provider, which, in this case, is Microsoft. Another one of our key principles is 'SaaS before PaaS before IaaS.' We use a lot of different types of software: we've got as many as 200 applications for a

total of 750 employees. We're currently also implementing a number of pre-defined cloud playbooks." De Goudse outsourced several of its operations between 2012 and 2017. "After outsourcing the various VT systems, we converted the WAN network to EVPN. Next, we transferred all the Wintel components to Centric, while the workspace switched from fat to thin clients using a VDI concept. All components had been removed from the data centre at that point, so we could complete that stage of the process. We no longer have any technical use for those components."

Looking ahead

But De Goudse insurance company is not quite ready to rest on its laurels yet. "What else is in the pipeline for us? Working in the cloud. We're currently sorting out the finer points, as the VDI environment is extremely costly. We're migrating DTA(P) infrastructure to IaaS. For DTA, we'll be reducing costs by introducing a pay-per-use system, and we'll be doing the same for P through flexible sizing to peak moments. We migrate portals to PaaS in order to achieve availability and scalability more easily and at a lower cost. The document management system also needs to be fully upgraded, simply because postal volumes are declining and the fact that outgoing post has already been outsourced. We expect the archive to be transferred to Azure as well. And finally, there are the six VT systems which are being stripped of functionalities as part of the rationalisation process. I'm unable to say at this point whether they, too, will be migrated to the cloud, but I can tell you that all peripheral systems certainly will."

Current status

"We're currently at the implementation stage. VSTS is a costly operation: we were mired in technical debt, and it's essentially a never-ending process. I absolutely believe in DevTest Labs, and once we get that up-and-running, it will make everything more user-friendly and improve productivity in the process. The migration from Dynamics 365 was a long and drawn-out process – we actually needed four separate contracts for the DTAP environments – but it really paid off in the end. We're currently finalising SharePoint Online, which will then be released to our users. API Management is our disconnection point for converting externally available web services. While Azure AD B2C certainly works fine, the question is whether it's the right choice from an architectural point of view. Our new Goudse portal is run based on Azure VMs with Sitecore."

2018 and beyond

And there's more to come: "OMS and Azure Security Center will be further implemented next year. Windows 10 and HyperV will allow us to save significant costs on our licences. We're in the process of preparing Hybrid Exchange and an Office 365 cloud workstation for 'ordinary' users. Another exciting development is BizTalk: we've created a complex HA BizTalk integration environment in which all parts of the system are integrated. We're setting up an HA BizTalk in Azure, which is really a case of trial and error. We're also involved in Azure storage: SQL DWH, Azure data lake options for DWH. We've prepared a business continuity plan for when something happens, as we will need to keep things running no matter what. Maintaining two systems and performing all the tests this requires is extremely costly, which is why we're considering Azure Disaster Recovery: this may allow us to dismantle the DR system for two data centres. And finally, another exciting thing: we're working on telephony: on-premise PABX versus cloud PABX, Office 365 E5. Quality of service is very important to us: our customer contact centres should be accessible by phone at all times. That's why I'm a little wary of taking this next step. After all, we're all doing this with the objective of providing better services to our customers."

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