

## Improved Performance Flexibility with Microsoft Azure

### About the Customer

Unilever is a global company that sells fast-moving consumer goods that improve the health and wellbeing of its customers. Every day, 2.5 billion people worldwide use Unilever products – including food, beverages, and personal care and household products – made by global brands such as Lipton, Knorr, Dove, Axe, and so on. Unilever has the ambitious vision of making sustainable living commonplace.

The Unilever Belgium office is located in the heart of Brussels and accommodates approximately 800 employees. The company gathers large amounts of data each day, which demands end-of-business-day processing services. This in turn requires enormous flexibility on the part of the IT infrastructure.

### Challenge

Bringing all the different Unilever products to local markets in an optimized way poses a great challenge. Unilever's business intelligence applications are used to accurately plan promotions and commercial actions. At its core, the system consists of a data warehouse based on SQL Server. Updating this system to improve its performance was crucial in order for Unilever to be able to stay ahead of its competition.

According to Project Manager for Customer Development Sven Lenaerts, "Unilever's business intelligence system typically works with large data workloads that need to be processed by high-performance machines within a few hours each day."

### Solution

The system in place required flexibility in terms of performance. "Microsoft Azure Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS) offers us the flexibility, scalability, and just-in-time-performance that we need," says Lenaerts. "Azure only bills us for the times in which number-crunching machines are actually running." The IaaS solution is more ambitious than the previous on-premises solution, so implementing it called for rethinking architecture, development, and management procedures. Since Unilever and SoftwareONE have a solid relationship and SoftwareONE met all the requirements for this challenging project, a partnership was born.

### Results & Benefits

As a data scientist, Sven Lenaerts had little to no expertise in managing IT infrastructure. However, he is now able to adapt the performance of Unilever's business intelligence apps to his needs without the help of IT infrastructure specialists. He can now depend on Azure technology, which enables quick (de-)activation of virtual machines in line with Unilever's requirement for running processes on-demand.

As a result, Unilever can keep service consumption costs much lower than those incurred by on-premises architecture.



#### CUSTOMER

Unilever Belgium

#### INDUSTRY

Consumer Goods

#### SOLUTION

Microsoft Azure IaaS, Design & Implementation, Trainings, Disaster Recovery Procedures, Support

**"Microsoft Azure Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS) offers us the flexibility, scalability, and just-in-time-performance that we need. Azure only bills us for the times in which number-crunching machines are actually running. IT infrastructure is not the core business of Unilever Belgium, so we decided to partner with SoftwareONE.**