Compete 366

Microsoft Partner

Gold Cloud Platform
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Case Study

# Compete 366 provides expert help to Hanse with SaaS infrastucture using Microsoft Azure

Hanse is a start-up business that has built a software and analytics platform to query International Trade Flows (Import and Exports). This case study explains how Azure experts, Compete366 helped Hanse to build a robust SaaS infrastructure to launch its business.

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*Hanse is a start-up business that has built a software and analytics platform to query International Trade Flows (Import and Exports). The platform is aimed at organisations importing and exporting physical products, and is ideally suited to the SME market worldwide, with an initial focus on the UK market.*

## Business Background

Coming from the same stable as High Digital a small software development business formed in 2018, the Hanse project stems from work completed by Dr. Ousmène Jacques Mandeng on with both the IMF and the U.N. Economic Commission for Latin America. The aim is to analyse international trade flows at a detailed level in order to help businesses to identify relationships between countries and trade.

Ousmène has worked on international trade for many years and developed the programme Trade CAN for analysing international trade for the U.N. Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLAC) during the 1990s. The data underlying Hanse is from the United National Comtrade database and updated continuously.

Hanse has received some funding from The Sustainable Innovation Fund from Innovate UK,  The UK's Innovation Agency, which has allowed them to launch a beta version which delivers monthly data, visualisation and queries.

The platform will be delivered using a subscription model paid either monthly or annually, and it is anticipated that there could be around 2000 end users, made up mostly of SMEs.

## The Business Challenge

The Hanse team, managing the project with Innovate UK, needed to achieve a good overview of the likely forecasts and costs of the business, and hold this information in one place.  This would make It easier to demonstrate what they are working on, and to manage it.

The objectives of the initial phase of the project are to:

- Deliver a SaaS product to end customers
- Provide individual Logins to portal
- End customers should be able to query data specific to them and view Reports/Dashboards
- Download data/ reports as needed

## The Project Solution

After doing some initial research, the team at Hanse was put in touch with Microsoft Gold Partner, Compete366. Who helped and advised throughout the process to build an MS Azure based solution that would allow Hanse to retrieve the required data from Comtrade, using source APIs. The data load frequency is monthly, and the infrastructure needed to be able to handle a hugely anticipated data volume of around 1.5 Billion rows.

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As Oliver Mackereth – Project *Director* explains

*"We were looking for a partner who could review our design, propose a suitable platform and advise and guide on best practices, and architectural recommendations. When we realised that Compete366 could licence all of the Azure platforms we needed, at the same cost as purchasing direct from Microsoft, but with the additional support we needed, it was a no-brainer!"*

## Technical Solution Details

1. Azure platform hosting SaaS product
2. Azure Platform IaaS with Azure WVD,
   SQL Virtual machines, Virtual Network & Disks
3. Application VM (Azure Linux OS): customer portal with
   embedded reports and dashboards built in MS PowerBI
4. Database VM (Windows OS): SQL Server Instance

## What Did Compete366 Deliver?

Compete366 helped with designing the correct Azure infrastructure, advising on how to utilise the licences, guiding on technical requirements, and hand holding through the process of setting everything up, including the Azure Windows Virtual Desktops (WVD).

As Alam Shukla – Data and Technology Lead explains:

*"Compete366 gave us lots of essential support with the Azure platform. They explained what we could do, and most importantly advised on when to apply which elements. This timing advice helped us to get the sequencing right and save costs. The independent opinion that the Compete366 Azure experts provide on everything is so valuable.*

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## Next Steps

As the Hanse team was already familiar with MS SQL, they decided to use MS Power BI to provide the embedded Reports and Dashboards in the Hanse platform. This will be an easy next step to add PowerBI as an embedded instance within the Microsoft infrastructure that is already in place.

With an initial launch in July 2021, targeting the UK SME market, the aim is then to leverage from there into other markets worldwide. As Oliver Mackereth – Project Director explains:

*"Scalability of our platform is key to our business, to allow us to build an infrastructure that will grow flexibly as our customer base grows – and the Microsoft IaaS platform is perfect for this." "Working with Compete366 has been like extending our own team – they are extremely and easy to work with. Right from the outset, it was clear what was on offer – everything was presented to us in a straightforward and uncomplicated way. They also provided just the right level of challenge to our developers and saved us time and money by suggesting better ways to implement our infrastructure."*

HANSE

HIGH DIGITAL

UKRI UK Research and Innovation

To find out more about how Compete366 can help with your Azure Infrastructure please call Warren Duke on 020 3282 7186 or email engage@compete366.com

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