Compete 366

Microsoft Partner

Gold Cloud Platform
Gold Small and Midmarket Cloud Solutions
Gold Cloud Productivity

Case Study

Compete366 works with Herrco to build Azure infrastructure

Herrco is a trusted full-service beauty and cosmetics manufacturer based in the UK. Read this case study to find out how Compete366 worked with Herrco to build a scalable, accessible and flexible cloud infrastructure.

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Herrco is a trusted full-service beauty and cosmetics manufacturer based in the UK. Producing high quality products for local and international brands such as Dr Organic and the White Company, the business is based in Halesworth, Suffolk.

The Business Challenge

As a rapidly growing business, Herrco develops the majority of it's software to support the business in-house. The project range from Bulk Production Development systems, which manage the ingredients, timings, process, temperature, viscosity of the beauty and cosmetics products they manufacture, to the Quality Control software for QC spot checks on finished goods, and Warehouse management software which handles the dispatch of the finished products worldwide.

Herrco had made the decision to move their IT infrastructure to MS Azure, driven by the expansion of the business – they had scaled quickly from £18-30 million growth in terms of £ revenue.

This was of particular importance as the onsite ERP system was running on an onsite server which did not have the capacity to increase as these new software developments came to fruition. The decision was made to avoid further capital investment for a new server and Tim Entwistle (Head of Software Development) decided to look to the cloud – and specifically chose the MS Azure platform.

The Solution

It was agreed by the business that all of the new software systems would be hosted in the Azure cloud, keeping the core ERP system onsite, thus ensuring its server wasn't overloaded or performance impacted.

After the initial set up of the MS Azure platform, Tim was contacted by a Microsoft Cloud Engagement Specialist who offered to help with some assistance where Herrco had gaps in their knowledge. At this point, Tim was put in touch with MS Gold Partner and Azure specialist, Compete366.

As Tim explains *"We looked at the companies recommended by Microsoft, and Compete366 was by far the most proactive. We were immediately impressed with the advice that the Compete366 specialists in Azure Architecture were able to provide. This was all new to us and we really needed some external expertise that we could use to get our questions answered. The beauty of working with Compete366 is that we transferred our Azure consumption to them, and at the same time received all of their advice and guidance free of charge. Other companies wanted to charge us on a project basis which wasn't what we wanted at all."*

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Herrco's Environment

- Azure App Services – containerized
- Azure SQL DB
- Azure VMs
- Azure Storage (Tables)
- Azure DevOps with Github integration
- On Premise Server hosting ERP system and databases
- MS Teams + O365 suite.

Key Business Drivers

Scalability

Herrco recently opened a sister site with a brand-new warehouse facility for storing goods. Initially there was no internet set up at the new location and the software systems needed to be able to interact with this site. Because of the Azure cloud infrastructure, this was possible without any issues by using SIM cards in the tablet devices, interacting via simple 3G.

Time savings in development

Using the Microsoft Containerised Azure App Services alongside Docker, Tim's team has been able to recreate the Herrco live environment and test all of the software development work before deploying it to live. This means that the in-house developers know that new software is going to work in the live environment, and they also don't have the hassle of delivering new releases to on-premise servers– making the time to delivery of software much quicker.

Accessibility

As a business working with global brands, the senior team travel worldwide and with the cloud infrastructure can access the data that they need via their smartphones, wherever they are.

Next steps

Business Intelligence is a big driver in the business. The Herrco Cloud First approach has meant that all of the different systems are able to easily exchange data with the ERP system. The plan is to use MS PowerBI to take this data from the different systems, using the power of the cloud infrastructure to amalgamate it and then create a cloud-based Data Warehouse to allow for users to build analytics on whatever data they need.

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Working with Compete366

"From the get-go,the level of service that Compete366 has delivered has been amazing. Initially Compete366 were checking in regularly to make sure we had everything we needed. And their technical experts focus right into the detail – so much so that I never had any doubt in my mind that they had missed anything – which took a lot of the worry away when moving to a new platform. We are now ready to build on our successes in the cloud – and our strategy now is definitely MS Azure cloud first every time!"

Tim Entwistle, Head of Software Development, Herrco

To find out more about implementing Microsoft Azure please call Warren Duke on 020 3282 7186 or email engage@compete366.com

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