Is data the 'smart' way to reinvent the water treatment industry?

Since 1991, Ukraine-headquartered water vending leader Ecosoft has consistently innovated and delivered a range of water treatment solutions. But as the world evolves, so does Ecosoft – as it digitally transforms itself to win new business via the Internet of Things (IoT). A move utilizing a powerful analytics platform that is helping itself and its trusted partner network.

Customer
Ecosoft
Website: ecosoft.com
Country: Ukraine
Industry: Manufacturing
Customer size: 400 employees

Customer profile
Ecosoft is a Ukraine-based manufacturer of water purification filters, producing everything from pitcher filters to industrial reverse osmosis systems and office water vending machines.

Software and services
Microsoft Azure
Microsoft Dynamics
NAV
Power BI

"With Microsoft, we have found a way to 're-invent' the water business - getting it to customers fresher and in a more sustainable, efficient and profitable way."

Andrey Salatsky
CFO, Ecosoft

Kyiv-headquartered Ecosoft is one of the world's leading producers of water treatment equipment and is one of only five full range suppliers of purification solutions from domestic and office to full industrial application. With important German and Belgian subsidiaries, the company has a presence in over 50 countries through its extensive partner network.

So how do you innovate in high quality water supply? The answer lies in the company's intriguing move to apply the latest technology to improve not just the core product, but the way that product is distributed and offered to its marketplace. "Selling fresh water is potentially very profitable and an attractive business to be in, if you get it right," confirms Marketing Manager, Olga Bakun. "The innovation we offer is to streamline how our water is delivered to customers."

Key to that business process improvement in Ecosoft's logistics is a full, in-depth understanding of where its products are, day or night - as well as how they are being used. That information can be used to deliver data-driven business decisions, says Chief Financial Officer Andrey Salatsky: "We needed to know where to place our dispensers for maximum usage, as well as be able to work out how our business was doing at a macro level."

Real-time, IoT-delivered insight

Ecosoft has achieved this with a combination of Azure-hosted Microsoft's Business Intelligence and Enterprise Resource Planning technologies - Power BI and Dynamics NAV. This works on data provided by an IoT network of sensors deployed in its products, says Salatsky.

Working together in a framework delivered by experienced local implementation partner SMART business, Ecosoft is extracting and benefitting from the kind of real-time, highly granular information it hoped for. As a result, Ecosoft is now able to monitor information in real-time from every machine and use that data to locate new ones in areas that will be immediately profitable. Internally, everyone in the company sees the same detailed performance picture, refreshed daily.

In bottom line terms, that translates to 70% sales growth in the first years of IoT and a 30% reversal in dropping unit sales. "Thanks to the new system we increased the number of water dispensers in our network and partner network by 80%," he confirms. Salatsky also thinks he has saved at least $20,000 in IT costs by moving to Azure.

So wonderful success - but not just for Ecosoft. "We are sharing useful data with our key B2B partners - something that helps them, and which adds even more value to our business proposition," says Bakun.

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- Engage customers
- Optimize operations
- Transform product

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Next, there is a serious consideration to experiment with Kinect devices physically attached to products that would utilize Azure cognitive services. This would allow the company to capture more user information, like age and gender, to deepen its understanding of water vending machine usage.

Summing up the benefits of this unique mix of advanced data-collection and data-analysis, for Salatsky, "We have transformed our product for our partners and are optimizing our business with data. With Microsoft, we have found a way to 're-invent' the water business - getting it to customers fresher and in a more sustainable, efficient and profitable way."