



Global Furniture Retailer Deploys a Linux  
on Microsoft Azure Market Intelligence  
System to Gather Insights and Improve  
Customer Experience  
Microsoft Case Study

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## The Client

Furniture retailer with more than 400 franchise locations in North America, Europe, Australia, Mexico, Russia, Asia, and China offers in-store and online shopping. Profits for 2018 surpassed 42 billion U.S. dollars with more than 200,000 workers employed.

## Summary

A global furniture retailer needed to improve customer service and create a cohesive branding experience across all franchisee locations. Initial attempts were too limited, too fragmented, and failed to provide a scalable and repeatable model. Cloudreach was asked to build a scalable, cloud architecture for gathering and analyzing continually increasing amounts of customer data to provide critical, timely market insights to franchise owners.

## The Challenge

As franchises are acquired and new stores open around the world, the furniture retailer must ensure the company's flagship core customer experience is being tested and replicated at all locations. They first tried to provide a proof of concept using a few franchises in one country as a model but failed. Customer feedback information was decentralized and fragmented from one store to another—giving an incoherent view of the overall experience.

Corporate headquarters decided to enact a large-scale IT solution for all stores in all countries under one 'data lake' cloud solution that could provide insights for specific areas as well as an umbrella view of customer experiences at all locations.

*"There was no way we could get an accurate view of our flagship customer experience model at individual franchises until we created a central, connected intelligent storage system in the cloud."*

*—Global head of customer experience*

A few well-known cloud providers submitted a request for proposal (RFP) to the furniture retailer yet Cloudreach was assessed to have the best cloud intelligence solution and necessary certifications to develop it at scale, within budget, and on-time. Microsoft Azure has the biggest reputation in the country their main offices are located which also helped them decide to partner with Cloudreach.

“Cloudreach’s Microsoft Gold Partner status convinced us they were the best Microsoft Cloud Solutions Provider (CSP) for the job,” said global head of customer experience.

## The Solution

Cloudreach built a foundation for a multi-tenant data architecture that included a data lake, Kubernetes cluster, data workflow orchestration in the form of Airflow, and an Azure Databricks analytics platform. “On top of this foundation we created workflow and analytics jobs that were delivered to Customer Experience insights as a tenant,” explains Douglas Fraser—a Cloudreach Cloud Systems Developer.

This foundation architecture can also be used as tenants for other areas of the business, so teams can focus on defining data workflows and performing analysis and not worry about deploying and maintaining the cloud infrastructure. Most of the workloads are fully containerised using Azure Kubernetes Service, and there is no manual work needed, the system is fully automated. “It is zero touch, all processed automatically from pay plane to the virtualization application,” says Fraser.

Customer service sentiment is captured from many data points—in-store, social media, online forums, digital customer surveys—with SurveyGizmo the primary source of information fed into the system. Daily, actionable market intelligence insights are then available to franchisees through dashboards designed with Azure Qlik Sense. Natural language processing on the data signals alerts when certain coded-in sentiments are recognized such as multiple complaints about a delivery service in one area of a city. The franchise owner can then address the issue immediately.

## The Partnership

Cloudreach worked onsite and remotely with the corporate headquarters IT team to create a cloud data system for their franchising customer service model. It was a two-phase process starting in June 2018. The first step was to establish a governance framework for the retailer that all projects would comply to. The second data engineering project phase is ongoing with many franchisees now having access to daily market insights via customizable dashboards.

## The Outcome

The business now has a cloud market intelligence system in place to handle all current and future franchisee customer service data. They are better equipped to assess and monitor how effectively their flagship customer service model is being implemented around the world.

*“Our goal is to have our flagship customer experience consistent across the world, and Cloudreach is helping us make that happen.”*

*– Global head of customer experience*

For more information about powering your business with Cloudreach and Microsoft Azure, please visit [Cloudreach.com](https://www.cloudreach.com).