

Case Study

Microsoft ISV Exclaimer's business sky-rockets with new Azure-based solution

"We sell high volumes of Office365 seats and having Exclaimer's product in our portfolio enables us to have a key differentiator to offer to our Value-Added-Resellers. It's such a neat add-on to Office365 and from the great feedback we have had, we now have an ambition to achieve a minimum of a 10% attach rate to our Office365 deals."

Al Frisby, Head of Product and Marketing, intY

From on premises to cloud on Microsoft Azure – the sky is the limit

Microsoft ISV partner Exclaimer has seen its business opportunity sky-rocket since it took the decision to invest in developing a cloud-based version of its on-premises solution on the Microsoft Azure platform.

"With clear direction coming from Microsoft that partners with a cloud-first strategy would gain distinct advantage in the market – and many of our customers asking us for it, the decision to modernise our application had opportunity written all over it."

Neal Stanborough, Global Sales and Marketing Manager, Exclaimer

Exclaimer has been providing a robust portfolio of email utility software and solutions that work directly with Microsoft technology, specifically Outlook, Office 365 and Exchange since 2001 with over 50 million users worldwide.

Maintaining an impressive but diverse customer base from all sectors and sizes of business including renowned international organisations such as Lloyds Bank PLS, Sony, Mattel, Morgan Stanley and the BBC, Exclaimer's decision to invest in building on Microsoft Azure had to make business sense.

"We had already built a great on-premises Microsoft-based product that customers loved and when you are in that situation the temptation is to think 'if it's not broken don't fix it' – why should we change? However, when we really listened to what Microsoft was advising us as an on-premises ISV and then talked to our customers we realized our opportunity to drive significant scaled adoption with an Azure-based solution was vast", continues Stanborough.

"Microsoft's investment in Office365 initiated a significant shift in the market. Therefore our customers' knowledge and experience of using Microsoft products and services made the decision to shift to Azure much easier."

Delivering significant cost savings to customers in excess of £60k per year

The Exclaimer Cloud product enables organisations to design professional email signatures that are automatically added to all emails sent from Office365. Users can easily add additional elements like social media icons, promotional banners, legal disclaimers and more. Exclaimer Cloud – Signature for Office 365 works across all devices is backed up by ISO 27001:2013 security and already has over 1 million users worldwide.

Exclaimer estimates an average 5,000 person organisation, with around a 20% attrition and staff role-change rate, can spend over £60k per year simply by using their IT departments to update signatures.

In addition, the astronomical volume of emails that are sent out on an hourly or daily basis mean that professional, customisable signatures are also a marketing managers' dream come true.

"The Exclaimer Cloud product is just great" says Sarah Dimery, Marketing Communications Manager, intY.

"It's really easy for me to add signatures and tailor adverts to different audiences. It's like having another free of charge marketing channel available to me to promote product launches, advertise events and ensure our customers are not missing out on the latest offers. I can just add what I need to the sales people signatures, and everyone sees it. It's really simple but super effective".

Transformational technology

Exclaimer's email signature service utilizes the latest Microsoft cloud technology to process over a Million messages a day. With Azure services being consumed from 14 regions across the world including Europe, North America, Asia and Australia.

"We've used 15+ years of experience to architect a solution that takes advantage of Microsoft's global Azure infrastructure, together we're able to deliver a world class service that's secure, reliable and scalable."

Andrew Millington, Founder and CEO, Exclaimer.

Microsoft partner channel opens new doors

Although the Exclaimer business maintains a very successful portfolio of direct relationships with its customers it could see a high potential opportunity to build new revenue streams by working collaboratively with the right Microsoft partners.

"When we first started the business we asked ourselves, how much can we expect people to pay in order to buy on a credit card? We were determined that price should never be a barrier for people to buy, so the product was really low cost" explains Neal Stanborough, Global Sales and Marketing Manager, Exclaimer.

Neal continues: **"We'd been considering our partner proposition for a while and when we originally met intY at Microsoft's worldwide partner conference were in the early stages of considering our channel strategy. Clearly, Microsoft has been doing a fantastic job of highlighting to CSP partners how important it is for them to differentiate and offer 'stickier' solutions within their portfolios. intY was very open to talking to us about working together and could see the advantages of the Exclaimer Cloud solution almost immediately."**

Stanborough adds "Our aggressive growth ambitions and the obvious opportunity Microsoft was creating for its channel partners meant our product and business model presented a compelling proposition for partners".

Armed with a robust plan to create a pricing strategy that made the Exclaimer Cloud product appealing to channel partners, Exclaimer set about building a strong relationship with intY, which delivered almost immediate results for both organisations.

"ISV's can accelerate their success with partners like us by being visible and investing the time and effort necessary to train our sales teams on their products. The relationship with Exclaimer flourished quickly because they put in the time.

Our sales people really value working with ISV's that they can build a relationship with. Exclaimer will jump on calls with our prospects and clients and give us the support and response we need. It's hard to break through the levels of account management and structure with a business such as ours without investing in the relationship", Al Frisby explains.

Cloud and collaboration - the keys to limitless growth

The limitless opportunity for Exclaimer Cloud adoption will see the organisation experience vastly accelerated growth rates over the next few years.

Stanborough confirms "Now that the product is built on Microsoft Azure and the channel strategy is defined, it's all about collaborative engagement. With a partner like intY we needed to understand more about the business and how it worked, quickly established simple systems integration and provide access to our development resources which we knew would drive accelerated opportunity with intY. intY has its own billing and marketing system in place and it was simple for us to build an open API which was low cost, very low administration and removed any barriers for us to trade. After that it was all about building the relationship."

He continues "Microsoft's Go-To-Market materials and events such as the Cloud and Hosting Summit and the Worldwide Partner Conference really help CSP's and distributors to accelerate their knowledge and drive home the message that ISV's like us can add real value. Microsoft is to be commended on how hard it is working and how much it is investing in facilitating strong, commercially viable relationships with partners."

Frisby agrees "In today's cloud-first world being a Microsoft partner that has a strong partner-to-partner business model is no longer a choice, we think it's an absolute necessity".

Founded in 1997, global cloud distributor intY maintains a rich and powerful portfolio of partners all over the world. Since inception, the business has focused on providing pay-as-you-go SaaS and is a well-recognised cloud expert. As a Microsoft Gold partner and multi-tier CSP distributor with offices in Bristol UK and Seattle in the US, intY works hard to ensure its partners have access to the latest cloud solutions at a highly competitive price. intY is always seeking new and innovative solutions to add to its portfolio and the partnership with Exclaimer is testament to that.

"We work proactively to identify new ISV's and work closely to bring them on board with us if we see a strategic fit. Exclaimer Cloud is a highly relevant service for our partners and resellers. It's extremely customisable, and very simple to use," continues Frisby.