o9 Solutions enables global enterprises to transform disparate data into market knowledge with Microsoft Azure Synapse Analytics

o9 Solutions brings together leading technology and industry expertise to create and deliver best-in-class, value-generating, cloud-native enterprise software. Recently named one of America's 500 fastest growing companies by the Financial Times, the company has developed a premier AI-powered platform for driving digital transformation of integrated planning and operations capabilities.

The o9 solution integrates multiple technology innovations into one platform, including graph-based enterprise modelling, big data analytics, advanced algorithms for scenario planning, collaborative portals, easy-to-use interfaces, and cloud-based delivery.

Whether it's driving demand, deciding on promotions, aligning demand and supply, or taking corrective actions, enterprise planning processes can be made faster and smarter with o9's AI-powered digital solutions.

The digital brain of the business

Enterprise customers too often have to deal with data silos and disparate data sources, as well as systems unable to communicate with one another. This inhibits holistic decision-making strategies. AI technology can help companies see the bigger picture by bringing together data from across the entire supply chain, which allows organizations to be more agile in their planning and decision-making.

Challenge: Many businesses have a wealth of data, but no way to turn it into insights

When organizations have siloed data, it can be challenging to run analytics and inform decisions.

Solution: AI-powered insights from o9 Solutions and Microsoft Azure

AI can help companies unify their disparate data, generate insights, and become more agile.

Result: Enhanced visibility and insight to improve operations and make better decisions

o9 solutions helps customers consolidate their data and apply AI to achieve better outcomes.

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— Gautham Kudva, Senior Software Architect, o9 Solutions

o9 developed a "digital brain" to aggregate and store data in a single platform for supply chain optimization. Furthermore, the company's Enterprise Knowledge Graph technology provides rich modeling capabilities to power next-generation business applications. High-value use cases for the o9 solution on Microsoft Azure include real-time market knowledge, AI and machine learning-powered forecasting, supply chain and revenue planning, and digital integrated business planning.

"Think of it as a working model of the company's business," says Rajat Bhargav, VP of Product Management with o9. "We use data from multiple sources, internal and external, to represent the real supply chain—the company and its products, plants, warehouses, customers, suppliers, carriers, and their interrelationships. Our AI/ML tools optimize the model to yield actionable recommendations. For best results, the model needs to extend beyond the company's business partners and include all relevant macroeconomic and environmental factors. This external world of data is vast and rapidly growing. Azure Synapse provides us the capability to collect that data, distill the insights, and integrate this information into the digital brain to help with the decision-making."

o9 employs high-performance optimization engines and a flexible analytics platform to rapidly and incrementally modify business plans to meet changing needs.

The o9 solution is a cloud-native platform, built to scale on Microsoft Azure, enabling customers' digital transformation and providing the ability to gain insights through AI and advanced analytics. Azure empowers organizations of all sizes and across industries to achieve their short- and long-term goals with a proven cloud infrastructure designed to help create and align business and technical strategies. With Azure AI and advanced analytics services, organizations can build mission-critical solutions to analyze images, comprehend speech, uncover latent insights, and make predictions using data—increasing its value—from across their entire business.

A partnering that scales to meet customers' needs

Early on, o9 found that Microsoft technologies provided the flexible and high-performing platform it needed. o9's solution is cloud-native; the company's reliance on Azure means it doesn't have to manage its own infrastructure. The company is particularly versatile in its ability to deploy solutions either on the customer's Azure tenant, or on the o9 Azure tenant.

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"The whole idea behind the digital brain is converting data into knowledge. Our collaboration with Microsoft helps us collect this data easily and create actionable insights to solve business problems for our customers."

— Nitin Goyal, SVP of Product Management, o9 Solutions

With its global customers, o9 also benefits from Azure's geographic reach, which makes it easy to deploy solutions anywhere in the world. Its collaboration with Microsoft, including on Azure, Dynamics 365, and the recently launched o9 application for Microsoft Teams, also allows the company to scale to meet customers' needs, with world-class security built in.

As it builds data pipelines for its customers, Azure Synapse Analytics meets o9's needs for processing very large datasets typical in market intelligence. Azure Synapse is a limitless analytics service that brings together data integration, enterprise data warehousing, and big data analytics. It gives organizations the freedom to query data on their terms, using either serverless or dedicated resources—at scale. Azure Synapse brings these worlds together with a unified experience to ingest, explore, prepare, manage, and serve data for immediate business intelligence and machine learning needs.

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The o9 solution and Azure Synapse enable agile organizations to adapt to fast-moving changes in their business environment. o9's intelligent platform on Azure can help drive 10x improvements in speed, productivity, and effectiveness of smart decision-making for sales, marketing, and supply chain organizations.

Market knowledge benefitting companies across industries

o9's solutions are helping organizations across multiple industries transform digitally and make better decisions, faster.

The U.S. division of a multinational consumer products company needed support to grow both market share and margins significantly. The company had an enormous trove of market intelligence data. Spread across various databases, however, the data was not being consolidated in one place to connect the dots and enable strategic and operational decision-making. o9 designed and implemented new processes and systems for the company, including its Enterprise Knowledge Graph solution on Azure. By aggregating legacy data and new data streams with Azure Synapse, the solution gave the company visibility and insight on the information it needed to improve operations and achieve better business outcomes. o9 also delivered data and AI services on Azure to support both strategic and operational decisions.

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— Simran Sachar, Director of Analytics, AI & Industry, Microsoft Global Partner Solutions

One of Canada's largest retailers lacked visibility into key business information due to multiple disconnected data sources and systems. It had limited visibility to store inventory and found itself strapped with a labor-intensive process to forecast and plan store allocation and stock replenishment. These deficits led to inefficiencies and less than optimal decision-making. o9 implemented a machine learning-based forecasting process at big data scale. Advanced machine learning algorithms produced billions of records every week for integrated demand, allocation, and replenishment planning with automated release of orders. Through enhanced AI/machine learning-based forecasting, the o9 solution on Azure made it possible for leadership to focus on strategies, analysis, and long-term inventory policies. Now, store stock replenishments are demand-driven and there is alignment of merchandising with supply chain and store operations for faster, more nimble decision-making.

"We are excited about our work with o9 Solutions to help organizations transform from disconnected processes to an integrated business planning platform powered by analytics and AI on Microsoft Azure," says Simran Sachar, Director of Analytics, AI & Industry, Microsoft Global Partner Solutions. "Our collaboration is helping our customers accelerate digital adoption and value creation across planning and decision processes."

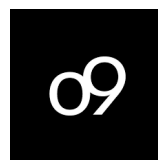"o9's AI-powered digital platform on Azure allows customers to streamline their processes and improve decision making through integrated planning and operations," says Casey McGee, Vice President ISV Partner Sales. "This is accelerating digital transformation and unlocking previously unimaginable opportunities for businesses with Azure AI and advanced analytics intelligence."

Growth opportunities ahead

o9 is currently in a period of rapid expansion with aggressive scaling of its business to support sales, marketing, and delivery across a greater number of industries, and is building teams in all global regions. Growth opportunities are seen across the board—in retail, consumer goods, apparel, consumer electronics, industrial manufacturing, oil & gas, and more—where the combined o9 and Microsoft technologies are being deployed to tackle customers' most complex challenges.

o9 believes that it is just scratching the surface of the possibilities with its software, Azure Synapse, and Azure AI/machine learning technologies. The goal is to continue to scale the types and volume of data its digital brain can ingest and process so that businesses get more value through better data-driven decisions.

The combination of Microsoft technologies and o9's solutions will continue to help organizations realize value through improved access to their data, powerful forecasting using Azure AI and advanced analytics services, as well as o9's own proprietary AI tools and models.

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