

STANS' CHALLENGE:

Ensuring up-to-date data provision and absolute reliability



Everywhere across the world compressors are used by factories, power plants and hospitals. Gas, compressed or ultraclean medical grade air from sea container-sized compressors are crucial to the (business) processes of these organisations. IoT and the latest cloud solutions are used to ensure actual and reliable data. Wherever and whenever you need it.

Stan Verdiesen was involved with the innovative IoT platform SMARTLINK from the very start. "Microsoft delivered the cloud solution. In addition to the entire architecture, the design and realisation of the platform,

ICT deployed an Agile development team, as well as a complete, managed and hosted service once everything was up and running. We constantly asked ourselves: if you want to display certain information, then what is



the most efficient way to retrieve the required data? And what is the best way to store the necessary information? The automatic result is that data is often stored in multiple locations and in different ways.” This concerns considerable volumes of data. Stan: “The 150.000 compressors that use the platform receive about 130 million messages on a daily basis. That works out to approximately 1.400 messages per second. The expectation is that this volume will only grow larger in the future. That makes it a unique project.”

Code like spaghetti

When ICT became involved in the project, the previous platform was unable to handle the quantities of data. “The old platform used a single database. However, there was a huge number of ad hoc solutions, so nobody really knew how it worked exactly. When the volume increased even further, the platform was no longer able to process the data. As a result, users were not receiving actual data or they were experiencing disruptions, and distorted signals. An untenable situation because many of the organisations depend on their compressor system for their core activities.”

Microsoft Azure: the latest in cloud solutions

The solution was found in Azure, a Microsoft cloud solution. “Azure includes some twenty services for data storage. One for one the newest of the new. It was fantastic to work with and at the same time a challenge as not everything is known. Not even for Microsoft itself.” Together with his team members Stan had to transform software requirements into reliable methods that could perform the task. “In what way do these new techniques deliver with what we need? It was a matter of researching, trialling and pioneering. The fun part is that we came up with solutions that were new even to Microsoft. It was an excellent collaboration and we learned a lot from each other.”

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Gaining and sharing knowledge

Stan was not a complete novice when he began on the project back in May 2018. He participated in an Azure bootcamp in Seattle, organised by Microsoft. “ICT Netherlands highly values knowledge acquisition. The same applies internally; we regularly have knowledge sessions to share our insights with colleagues. Within ICT I am the expert with respect in the domain of Azure, and my expertise constantly gets me involved in other projects. This way the knowledge remains useful and my knowhow can be applied for other clients.”

Flexibility

Stan started as a senior software developer in 2014. The SMARTLINK-project was his chance to prove himself as a software architect. “Besides offering opportunities for development, ICT is an employer that gives you the space to work flexibly. As a father of two children it is nice to know that you can plan your own working hours or work from home when you need to. It gives you space to breathe.”

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