



**Customer:** GXS

**Web Site:** [www.gxs.com](http://www.gxs.com)

**Customer Size:** 1,800 employees

**Country or Region:** United States

**Industry:** Professional services

#### Customer Profile

Gaithersburg, Maryland-based GXS provides business-to-business electronic data interchange and supply chain services to more than 30,000 businesses in 50 countries around the world.

**Partner:** MindTree

**Web Site:** [www.mindtree.com](http://www.mindtree.com)

**Customer Size:** 8,000 employees

**Country or Region:** India

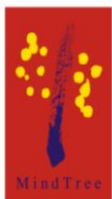
#### Partner Profile

MindTree is a global IT solutions company specializing in research and development and IT services including independent testing, knowledge services, and software product engineering.

#### Software and Services

- Windows Azure Platform
  - Windows Azure
  - Windows Azure Tables
- Technologies
  - Microsoft .NET Framework
  - Windows Live ID
- Solutions
  - Software-plus-services

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## Developer Boosts Agility, Reduces Costs with Web-based Supply Chain Management Tools

“With Windows Azure, we expect to increase business value at an attractive price without adding more infrastructure. Gaining this kind of agility benefits us as well as our customers.”

Justin Duewel-Zahniser, Global Product Manager, GXS

GXS was eager to find a cost-effective way to add more detailed, on-demand analytics services to its industry-leading business-to-business e-commerce platform, GXS Trading Grid®. The company turned to Microsoft® Gold Certified Partner MindTree to help develop a solution based on [Windows Azure™](#)—a “cloud” services operating system that provides developers with on-demand compute and storage capabilities. Using Windows Azure, GXS expects to speed deployment, reduce customer costs, and enhance scalability.

#### Business Needs

GXS is a worldwide provider of business-to-business e-commerce services. The Gaithersburg, Maryland-based company operates a highly reliable, secure global network services platform that makes it possible for more than 30,000 businesses—including 70 percent of Fortune 500 companies—to conduct business together in real time.

The company’s global business-to-business e-commerce and integration services platform—GXS Trading Grid—enables the real-time flow of information between businesses

regardless of technical capability, standards preferences, spoken language, or geographic location. GXS Trading Grid simplifies and accelerates business-to-business e-commerce by providing comprehensive products and services including global messaging, gateways, accelerators, synchronization, visibility, and outsourcing.

To maintain its competitive advantage in the marketplace, GXS wanted the ability to easily develop and deploy analytics applications on top of its Trading Grid platform. The company was especially interested in enhancing the historical

reporting capabilities of its global messaging services for its small and midsize business customers. "These customers would benefit tremendously from the advanced data-mining capabilities that large enterprise companies enjoy, including enhanced business intelligence and insight into changes in supply chain activity," explains Justin Duewel-Zahniser, Global Product Manager at GXS. "But the cost of offering these services was high using traditional means. We wanted to find a cost-effective way to offer value and scalability to this group of existing customers."

## Solution

To gain the agility necessary to meet the needs of small and midsize business budgets, GXS investigated the possibility of adopting a cloud-based approach. The company selected Windows Azure™—a "cloud" services operating system that serves as the development, service hosting, and service management environment for the [Windows Azure platform](#).

GXS turned to Microsoft® Gold Certified Partner MindTree for help with the product engineering. "Microsoft maintains an extensive community of skilled partners," Duewel-Zahniser says. "MindTree is an expert when it comes to Windows Azure, and is helping us add this flexible technology to our existing offering."

After two months of evaluating the design requirements, MindTree began building the solution architecture. Core development began in early September 2009 and was complete within five weeks. "From a developer perspective, people who are trained on the Microsoft .NET Framework will be able to use Windows Azure with minimal effort," says Prashant Agrawal, Senior Project Manager for Windows Azure at MindTree. "The development environment is very familiar, which allows us to work quickly."

On the compute side, MindTree used the scalable architecture of Windows Azure along with the Microsoft Visual Studio® 2008 development system to ensure that the application was properly componentized. "We have broken up the application into [Web role instances](#) and Web worker instances, which is one of the core design guidelines for Windows Azure," Agrawal says. "On the storage side, we are using Blob Storage and [Windows Azure Tables](#) in Windows Azure—a highly scalable database platform—to handle the volumes that will come from GXS Trading Grid. GXS processes over eight billion transactions a year—representing eight terabytes of data—and supports six million trading partner relationships." The Windows Azure-based solution also incorporates Windows Live™ ID, part of the Windows Live network of Internet services, for authorization and authentication.

GXS plans to launch a first-generation, limited release of the solution to a select group of existing customers by mid-November 2009. "We expect that our customers will be able to gain visibility into activity levels for different supply chain partners and transaction types, and then use that information to make better business decisions," Duewel-Zahniser says. "They could see, for example, that purchase order volume with a specific customer has increased significantly month to month, and then use that insight to inform subsequent contract negotiations."

## Benefits

Using Windows Azure, GXS is in the process of developing cost-effective, scalable analytics applications for its Trading Grid suite of solutions. The company expects to speed deployment, reduce customer costs, and make it easier for small and midsize businesses to scale up and down quickly.

## Rapid Release Cycles

GXS expects that using Windows Azure will help the company dramatically reduce the amount of time needed to develop and deploy new applications. "We expect to go from concept to market trial much more rapidly," says Duewel-Zahniser. "With Windows Azure, we can eliminate the hardware acquisition cycle, which means that we can bring solutions to market faster."

## Reduced Customer Costs

GXS chose Windows Azure because of its pay-as-you-go subscription cost model, which makes it possible for the company to offer analytics services to small and midsize businesses at a lower cost than via the traditional storage model. "We expect a much better price point with Windows Azure," Duewel-Zahniser explains. "The cost of adding storage capacity on-premises can be exponential, so we expect to reduce our costs by hosting this solution in the cloud."

## Enhanced Scalability

With Windows Azure, GXS can add data storage capacity without having to invest more in computing infrastructure. "One huge advantage to storing data in the cloud is scalability," says Agrawal. "Adding capacity on-premises can be very expensive. But with the subscription model of Windows Azure, the costs remain static. Windows Azure scales very well, and is highly available. From an architectural perspective, these systems have been designed to provide an availability of 99.99 percent."

Duewel-Zahniser concludes, "With Windows Azure, we expect to increase business value at an attractive price without adding more infrastructure. Gaining this kind of agility benefits us as well as our customers."