

# SPEAK

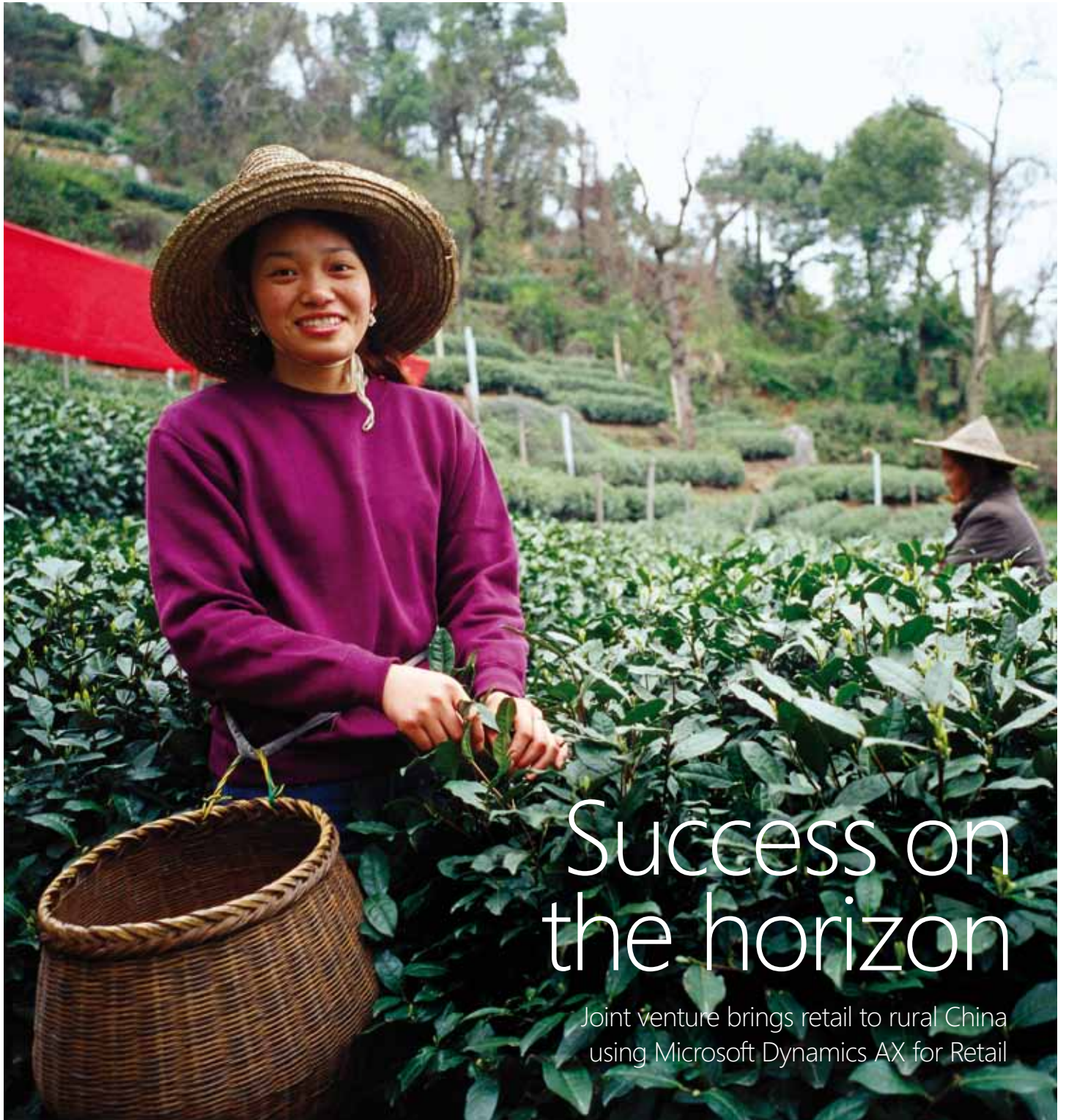
"Microsoft Dynamics AX for Retail was the ideal choice for our business. As we embark on a rapid growth trajectory over the next few years, we are confident that this solution will continue to scale with us"

**Bill Fields, China Horizon**



MICROSOFT TECHNOLOGY IN RETAIL, CONSUMER INDUSTRIES AND HOSPITALITY

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## Success on the horizon

Joint venture brings retail to rural China using Microsoft Dynamics AX for Retail

Spring 2011 £9



Customer centricity | Delivering personalised experiences  
Business intelligence | Instant access to the right information  
Cloud computing | Putting the concept into practice

# PARTNERS

SPRING 2011

## Microsoft®

Speak is produced in partnership with Microsoft (NASDAQ 'MSFT'), the world leader in software, services and solutions that help people and businesses realise their full potential. The company offers a wide range of products and services designed to empower people through great software – anytime, any place and on any device.

### Publishing Partners

#### ARGILITY

Argility has a large, happy customer base in the UK and southern Africa. Experienced people and mature, stable independent or integrated EPOS and merchandise management solutions provide the agility required in today's competitive retail market. Our fully trained and certified channel partners have the experience and knowledge to deliver more efficiently to your requirements.

#### DASSAULT SYSTEMES

Dassault Systemes' retail portfolio includes 3DVIA for online 3D lifelike experiences, and ENOVIA PLM for global collaboration on product innovation, development and global sourcing. Internal and external teams work on a single version of the truth, driving significant improvements to product lead times for top-line growth while delivering operational efficiencies to the bottom line.



#### LS RETAIL

LS Retail is one of the principal companies developing end-to-end software solutions and services for the retail, hospitality and forecourt industries. LS Retail is sold and supported by more than 120 certified partners in over 60 countries and has been installed by more than 1,600 companies with 30,000 stores operating over 64,000 POS terminals worldwide.



Maginus is a launch partner for Microsoft Dynamics AX for Retail and a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner with many years experience of the multi-channel market. Microsoft Dynamics AX for Retail with Multi Channel Commerce from Maginus is a real-time, multi-channel solution that enables retailers to benefit from trading across multiple channels, including increased sales, reduced costs and improved customer service.



NCR is a global technology company and leader in automated teller machines, self-checkouts and other self- and assisted-service solutions, serving customers in more than 100 countries. NCR's software, hardware, consulting and support services help organisations in retail, financial, travel, healthcare and other industries interact with consumers across multiple channels.

#### QLOGITEK

IMAGINE WHERE YOU COULD BE

QLogitek manages the B2B complexities of planning, buying, making, paying, moving and selling. Both software-as-a-service, cloud and on-premise models offer seamless connection of disparate supply chain systems and communities. 31,000 trading partners, including manufacturers, shippers, and distributors, are mobilised by QLogitek across 170 countries for leading retail and consumer packaged goods enterprises.



Rackspace Hosting is the world's leading specialist in hosting and cloud computing and has been ranked in the Financial Times Top 50 Great Places to Work in the United Kingdom for the past six years. Rackspace provides Fanatical Support to its customers across a portfolio of IT services, including managed hosting and cloud computing.

#### Microsoft Dynamics

Microsoft Dynamics is a line of familiar, adaptable ERP and CRM solutions that work with your existing technology and scale as you grow to give you long-term value. Microsoft Dynamics helps your people be more productive and your investments in existing systems last longer, while enabling your business to derive the insights necessary to respond quickly and have a competitive edge in an ever-changing world of business.

### Sponsors



### Industry Partners

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Aberdeen is a leading fact-based research company, with 2.5 million readers in over 40 countries. After benchmarking 644,000 plus companies, Aberdeen helps technology end-users achieve best-in-class performance by providing research that reveals how to increase revenues, profitability and business growth.

#### EHI Retail Institute

EHI is a scientific institute of the retail industry. The 500 plus members of EHI include international retail companies along with their industry associations, consumer and capital goods manufacturers and service providers. We carry out research, organise conferences and working groups, and operate our own publishing house.

#### Which?LM

Which?LM is an independent news and information hub boasting a readership of key decision makers from apparel and retail companies looking for a product lifecycle management solution. Users can download tools to guide them through the PLM selection process as well as compare vendors and evaluate PLM solutions.

## Event preview: Retail Business Technology Expo



RBTE will take place in London from 16-17 March 2011

Retail Business Technology Expo (RBTE) is a brand new event focusing on business solutions and technology for the retail industry. Taking place on 16 and 17 March 2011 in London, the UK, the event will combine a technology solution exhibition with an informative and interactive education programme incorporating seminars, workshops and inspirational features, plus a host of networking opportunities and hospitality – all under one roof. Rebecca Lambert catches up with some of the key exhibitors about what they think the event has to offer and, with the help of technological innovation, where they see the retail industry going.

**What has brought about the need for an industry event such as the Retail Business Technology Expo in the UK? How is it going to stand out from others?**

*Nigel Stephenson, marketing manager, K3 Retail:* Since the demise of the Retail Solutions event in the UK in 2008, the industry has lacked a single destination for identifying potential partners to deliver solutions to the retail industry. RBTE is targeted at people interested in how technology can solve classic retail problems and grow new multi-channel markets. It's a great way to get all the leading players together in a single location in the UK for the first time in three years.

*Mark Kusionowicz, marketing director, The Logic Group:* Retail Solutions ran for 26 years so it was probably time for a rethink. However, the retail IT industry does need a show and there is clearly demand from retailers. Technology is now embedded in every area of the retail business and more than ever, retailers want to work with vendors to make sure that it is implemented appropriately and where it will give back maximum value to the business. RBTE is an ideal place for retailers to share ideas with vendors and each other so that they can constantly improve the way they engage with their customers.

*Andrew Blatherwick, SVP international business development, Argility:* After a couple of years

“Aimed at retailers and technology partners, this event will encompass everything going on in the industry at the moment. It’s an exciting opportunity for anyone involved in retail to go along and see what developments are being made”

Richard Goodley

Davidson-Richards

without a major retail event in the UK we believe that retailers will support this year’s Retail Business Technology Expo as they are looking for the new and innovative ideas that can deliver real benefit to their business. It is an opportunity for retailers to meet companies that are thriving in the exciting new world of retail IT.

**What do you think attendees will gain from visiting the event?**

*Russell Dorset, sales and marketing director, Maginus:* The show is aimed at all types of retailers and across all verticals. Attendees will be able to see integrated multi-channel solutions that can help them to deliver a true multi-channel experience to their customers. They’ll also find out about the associated services that can help them to maximise traffic to their Web site, increase conversion rates and improve customer loyalty.

*Richard Goodley, managing director, Davidson-Richards:* Aimed at retailers and technology partners, this event will encompass everything going on in the industry at the moment. It’s an exciting opportunity for anyone involved in retail to go along and see what developments are being made and where the industry is heading. We’ll be there exhibiting our solution RMSynergy as well as OpSuite Retail Operations Software, a cloud-based, software-as-a-service solution.

*MK:* RBTE is aimed at decision makers in retail, which increasingly means people outside the IT department. RBTE is a good place for them to share ideas, which will be critical as IT works its way across all departments and functions.

**What do you think is the biggest challenge the retail industry currently faces? What technology is going to solve it?**

*Dilip Popat, global industry director, Microsoft Dynamics:* I think the biggest challenge is being a true and consistent customer-centric organisation.

Customer centricity needs to be at the heart of the business with focus on the consumer and how the organisation with their IT systems and processes are designed and consumed with that in mind.

*RD:* Customers now expect to be able to interact with retailers across multiple channels and, more importantly, they expect a consistent level of service and real-time information across each channel. This makes things difficult for retailers that typically have different systems to control each channel, which are very costly to integrate, if they can be integrated at all. The new Microsoft Dynamics AX for Retail system is a fantastic store and head-office foundation solution for traditional bricks and mortar retailers, which, when complemented by the Maginus Multi Channel Commerce solution, unleashes its real power to provide a multi-channel consumer experience at an affordable price.

*RG:* One of the biggest challenges facing retailers today is making it worthwhile for customers to keep coming to the store. As online shopping and even TV shopping continue to grow in popularity, getting customers to come to the store and browse, and then actually part with their money on the spot, is becoming more and more of a challenge. In order to overcome this, retailers must be able to offer a completely integrated multi-channel experience.

*NS:* Customers expect a consistent product proposition, competitive pricing and the flexibility to interact while on the move, direct, in store and online. For a retailer to offer a consistent proposition and level of service to all these demands, they need a single source of information that processes customer interaction through whichever channel the customer chooses.

**Where do you see the industry heading over the next ten years?**

*MK:* The growing use of the Internet and mobile

# MARKETWATCH

THE LATEST NEWS IN RETAIL, CONSUMER INDUSTRIES AND HOSPITALITY



The event will combine a technology exhibition with an education programme

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Mark Kusionowicz

The Logic Group

connectivity is already changing the way that people shop and communicate with retailers. How the Internet complements and in some cases replaces the way that consumers relate to the store, presents a challenge to all bricks and mortar retailers. A successful multi-channel strategy will depend on technology that drives not just individual channels, but cross-channel retailing. This is a big challenge for both retailers and vendors, and RBTE is an excellent opportunity for them to solve the problem together.

*NS:* The use of technology in the sales environment is set to explode. The arrival of mobile shopping technology will just be the start. There will be new ways of shopping and increasingly these will take the form of multiple touch engagements.

*RD:* Stores will continue to be important for customers who want to see and feel a product before they buy, but they will increasingly become a collection point for goods that have been purchased online. This is a bit radical, but I can see a time in the future when retailers form alliances, which allow customers to pick up products that have been ordered from a different,

complementary retailer, therefore boosting a retailer's footprint without an excessive increase in rents and associated costs.

*RG:* Multi-channel retailing will take off in a big way; it has to if retailers want to ensure optimal customer satisfaction. I also believe that the entire retail environment will ultimately make the transition into the cloud. Once people can truly trust in our Internet infrastructures then shops won't need to have their IT infrastructure on their premises; all they will need are smart devices that can connect to the cloud.

*DP:* Gesture-based computing will dramatically change the way users interact with IT applications. An example of that innovation is Kinect for Xbox 360. This replaces the controllers typically required to navigate through video games with a system that lets users interact with games simply by executing gestures. Now imagine how this type of technology will change the way consumers are able to connect with retailers' applications by having a totally different in-store experience, as well as dramatically simplifying the way retail staff will be able to do their work using business applications.



# Just the normal process of progress

Cloud computing is just the next step in the IT evolution, says Richard Goodley

**In the beginning when the automobile started to replace the horse, such was the level of fear that it was required by law that a person should walk in front of the vehicle waving a red flag to warn of its approach. In much the same way there was some rational but mostly irrational fear about e-commerce and Internet banking in the early days, as people mistook a poor level of their understanding of the technology for a greater opportunity for fraud than really existed.**

As understanding grows, the level of acceptance follows, and for cloud computing this should also end up being the case. After all, progress can never be ignored. The automobile now has purpose-built roads to run on to ensure greater safety for pedestrians and passengers alike, while e-commerce and Internet banking arguably reduces the opportunities for most fraud, which is committed by human beings stealing card numbers and security details. In much the same way, it is inevitable that all computing will end up in the cloud. This transition may take many years and go through several stages, but it will happen.

In the same way that most people today use smart devices (mobile phones) to use communications services and run personal applications without needing to know what is running in the background, so it will become the case with business applications as the move to the cloud accelerates. It is illogical for individuals and organisations today to have to pay for the implementation of expensive IT infrastructures and ongoing maintenance. If this can be outsourced to a reliable third party at a much lower cost, as we do currently with our telecommunications and mobile requirements

without a second thought, then it makes complete sense.

In recognition of these realities, Davidson-Richards and our partner Positive Technology began developing OpSuite, our cloud-based HQ solution, in 2008. We know that migration to the cloud is the inevitable end-point for business applications, but we also acknowledge this will be a staged process. In retail it is not yet feasible to take in-store systems and host them up in the cloud. The store must always be able to function as it's the main point of interaction with the customer and the main source of revenue. If networks and data centres go down, the store still has to be able to carry on operating as usual. That is why the OpSuite solution is currently focused on managing headquarters operations in the cloud while still connecting with Microsoft in-store POS solutions. Perhaps this hybrid approach will remain the case for many years to come until service providers can guarantee 100 per cent uptime and entirely seamless connectivity.

The journey to the cloud is all about progress and trust. It would be a commercial folly to try to make clients move faster than they feel comfortable doing; likewise it could be disastrous to ignore the ubiquitous nature of the cloud as we continue to progress and adapt. We feel confident that today's hardware and software is already capable of facilitating the move to the cloud; now it's about building up trust.

There are cultural differences too. Cloud adoption in the US, for example, is already much higher than in the UK and across Europe. So while several hundred US retail outlets are already using 'OpSuite', we have chosen to hold the release date of the solution to the EU until 2011.

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phrase 'there is nothing new under the sun' springs to mind. If we take the approach of acknowledging the process and managing the pace, then cloud computing and businesses taking advantage of it will flourish.

*Richard Goodley is managing director of Davidson-Richards*