

When E-Commerce Explodes – The More Data the More Dremio

Challenges	Solution	Results
Very large, rapidly growing data volumes plus rigid and complex structures that took a lot of effort to adapt.	Cloud architecture based on Microsoft Azure with Dremio as the central platform for all exploratory and ad-hoc analytic queries.	Single Source of Truth: Dremio provides quick, flexible and secure access to analytics-ready data.
Many disparate data silos that required complex data factory pipelines and transformation processes to move data into a target analytics database.	With Dremio, data can be explored directly with just a few clicks. Data loaded into the data lake in near-time can also be updated in near-time.	Time to Data - Instead of 3 days, building a data pipeline now takes only 3 minutes. Users can analyze the data they need in a timely manner.
Integrating customer master data that was previously stored in separate systems.	Lightning-fast access to data including historical data and combining it with current figures.	New revenue opportunities due to more targeted campaigns and better cross- and up-selling

CUSTOMER

DOUGLAS

www.douglas.de

GEO

Germany, Europe

INDUSTRY

Retail

REVENUE

Fiscal year 2019/20 Euro 3.3 Billion

OBJECTIVES

As part of the deployment of a new SAP-based e-commerce platform and their DIGITAL FIRST philosophy, Douglas wanted to establish a completely new, powerful and flexible data and analysis platform in the cloud.

ARCHITECTURE

- **Cloud:** Microsoft Azure
- **Data ingestion:** Azure Data Factory
- **Storage:** ADLS Gen2
- **Compute:** Dremio
- **Analytics:** R, SQL, Power BI, Tableau

RESULTS

- New revenue opportunities due to more targeted campaigns and better cross- and up-selling
- A central "single source of truth" system
- More security and governance
- Faster time to data, better decision quality

Summary

Douglas uses a modern cloud architecture based on Microsoft Azure, where Dremio provides analytics-ready data to optimize customer relationship management and helps driving more targeted actions and new revenue opportunities.

The Business – Heading to a Digital Future

Germany-based Douglas GmbH was originally founded as a soap manufactory in 1821. Today Douglas is the leading premium beauty group in 26 markets offering over 130,000 beauty and lifestyle products in online shops, the beauty marketplace and more than 2,000 stores. Douglas' international headquarters are located in the German beauty and lifestyle hub Düsseldorf. Further important locations are the offices in Hagen, which used to be the former headquarters of Douglas, as well as the central warehouse in Wojkowice, Poland. As part of its DIGITAL FIRST initiative, Douglas is integrating online shops, Marketplace, and stores into a digital, data-based beauty platform, thus evolving from a retailer with an online shop – with 1.2 billion euros in net e-commerce revenue – into a digital company with a brick-and-mortar business.

The Challenge – Breaking Down Monolithic Structures and Silos

As a successful long-term player in the beauty market, Douglas owns huge amounts of historical data, not only from the customer card they introduced 26 years ago (51,6 million members), but also from the customer data generated through e-commerce transactions.

As part of the deployment of a new SAP-based e-commerce platform and in alignment with Douglas' DIGITAL FIRST philosophy, the IT team responsible for Customer Relationship Management (CRM) led by Umberto Misso had to establish a completely new, powerful and flexible data and analytics platform in the cloud.

Umberto Misso, Team Manager CRM Operations at Douglas explains: "So far customer master data from brick-and-mortar stores was stored in different systems and handled separately. Loading and simultaneously transforming data from a variety of sources – aka data silos – to a target analytics database took an enormous amount of effort. In a first solution approach we built the analytics layer, which we had named "New Hope" project, based on Data Factory pipelines and an Azure Data Lake Gen2 while the components called Pinky (data lake) and The BrAiN (analytics database) represented the analytics systems."

Adapting the rigid and complex structures required a great deal of effort and they were difficult to view ad hoc given the rapid growth of the underlying data.

Time to Data

Data pipeline creation from

3 days

down to

3 minutes

Since they were already using cloud components from the Microsoft Azure Suite the CRM team based the new CRM data layer on existing technology (Azure Data Lake Gen2).

The Solution – Cloud and Dremio

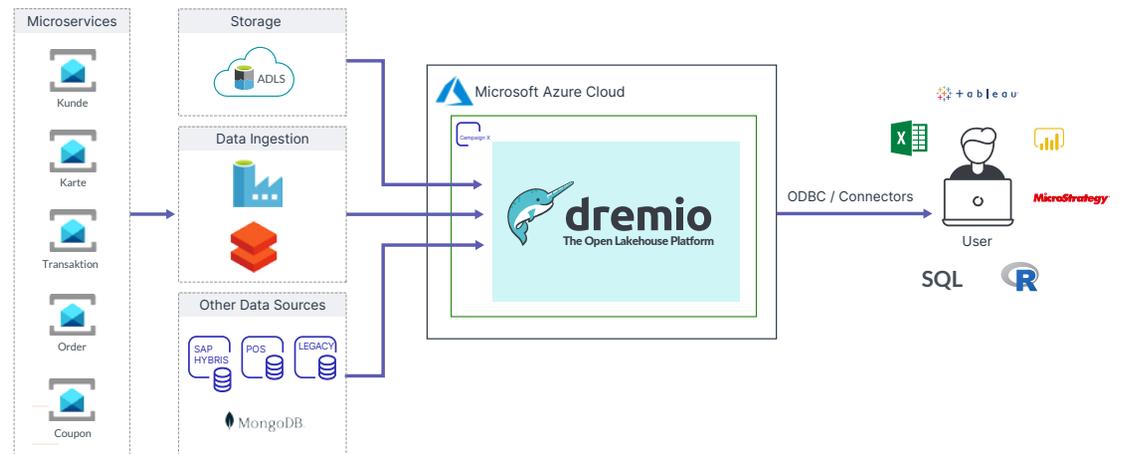
Umberto Misso: "During the data lake implementation, we became aware of Dremio and had already checked out the data lake engine as the ideal tool for viewing our raw data in the data lake."

After a kick-off with Dremio and a short but intense proof-of-concept phase, the CRM team was certain: Dremio will be the right analytics environment for the data lake they built.

The flexible and fast integration of surrounding microservice-based data pools is already an essential advantage in the data lake context. But having a feature that allows working directly with the data based on the Parquet files in the data lake is an even greater one.

"Where we previously had to create Data Factory pipelines and transformation processes, Dremio provides data exploration with just a few clicks. In order to set up analytic structures for the in-house analysts and to guarantee a matching restricted access, we created a structure within the Dremio Engine based on combined Physical Data Sets (PDS as a summary of underlying Parquet files) and Visual Data Sets (virtually merged data) and paired it with a role base authorization concept that allows us to control country access", explains Umberto Misso.

From e-commerce (SAP Hybris V6) to POS, legacy and other on-premise systems, all data now flows into an Azure Data Lake where all CRM-relevant information can be analyzed like on



"We have a lot of data about our customers – but without the right processes and tools it is neutral and represents unused business potential. With Dremio, we integrated an important tool for our digital strategy that can solve many problems by making our data treasure available and accessible."

Martin Slawik

Head of CRM IT & Digital Technologies
Parfümerie Douglas GmbH & CO. KG

a gigantic hard drive. While data ingestion is handled by Azure Databricks and Data Factory, processing in Apache Spark ensures lightning-fast results.

Another component of the data lake is a supply line created with CampaignX, a proprietary campaign management solution the Douglas IT developed back in 2011. The solution, which has been tailored to the business and the company's requirements, is still used today by operational marketing. Integrating the Dremio layer with the campaign management solution is part of the internal roadmap.

As a powerful data lake engine, Dremio is the central platform for all exploratory and ad hoc analytic queries and also serves as a data validation tool during data layer development.

For the implementation of the new data lake engine Dremio consultants and Douglas IT worked hand in hand. As the experienced data experts had already prepared a lot, users could quickly leverage the new cloud architecture.

The Results

The CRM team sees itself as service provider for the business units and uses its expertise to support them. Before these specialists will implement something in technology they will always consider the analytical aspect, too. This is why Umberto Misso and his colleagues were so keen to use Dremio, because the fast exploratory access to the underlying data empowers their "customers" to better understand and use their data.

Quality analytics instead of ping-pong effect

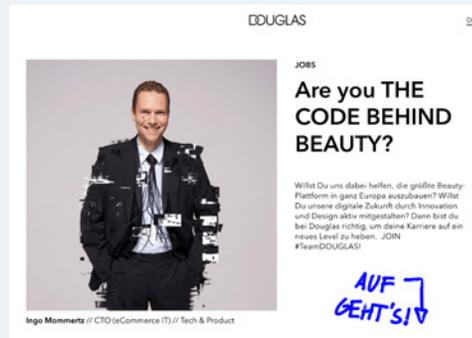
Unlike the CRM teams, many users have no idea what's possible with their data. To avoid toing and froing, IT and business use their daily coordination meetings to discuss requirements in detail. Then Dremio prepares the data in exactly the way marketers need it for high-quality analyses. Subsequently, the functions of the virtual datasets can be transferred to the data factory pipelines. Data transformations are then moved to the underlying layer, thus lightening the load of the analytical infrastructure.

Single point of truth

All data is held centrally and delivered via Dremio. There is no more uncertainty about which data is correct or the most up-to-date. Furthermore, the IT team has now the flexibility to respond quickly to new requirements and can even create new reports for ad hoc queries in a flash. The tedious collection of data from a variety of source systems has turned into an easy delivery. Another plus: Data loaded into the data lake in near-time can also be updated in near-time.

Working@Douglas

As leading premium beauty platform Douglas is looking for the best talent from the fields of beauty, technology and retail. Staff at Douglas are given the opportunity to create a new future – not only for the company, but also for themselves.



Under the heading THE CODE BEHIND BEAUTY, the company is specifically targeting talent in e-commerce, tech or online marketing to help grow the largest beauty platform in Europe. If you want to actively shape the digital future of Douglas through innovation, design and code, you can find open job positions in the [job board for digital jobs](#).

Plug & play for analysts' favorite tools

Interfaces like ODBC and JDBC enable power users to access Dremio data either through the Dremio user interface or with external tools like SQL clients or R. In addition, Dremio offers a variety of native connectors that deliver data to Tableau, Power BI or other tools for super-fast visual BI analysis and dashboards.

A new dimension of CRM – customer lifecycle

From receipt data to the last online transaction, every purchase was and is recorded. With Dremio, marketers also get access to historical data and can analyze and combine it with current information. Therefore, they can not only identify KPIs like total sales by customer but also improve the effectiveness of cross-selling activities.

Speed and ease-of-use – time to data

In the past, building a data pipeline took 3 days. With Dremio this now takes only 3 minutes and from an idea for an analysis to the required data needs only a few clicks.

Security and governance

With Dremio users can only see the data they are allowed to see. Access rights can be restricted to specific datasets so that, for example, users can only access information from their own country. Dremio ensures adherence to internal governance guidelines as well as GDPR compliance and it is of course possible to anonymize data.

Future Plans

The Douglas CRM IT team can already envision many more use cases for Dremio, since more legacy systems will be phased out. Currently, the switch to the new cloud platform is still in full swing. After the successful transformation in Germany, systems in other European countries are next on the list. At the moment, the team is busy integrating the systems in Italy, France and Spain. Thanks to Dremio, no business unit has to do without data as the Data Factory connectors make sure that it is loaded daily. This means that all data can be used even before the migration is complete.

ABOUT DREMIO

Dremio reimagines the cloud data lake to deliver faster time to analytics by eliminating the need for expensive proprietary systems and providing data warehouse functionality on data lake storage. Customers can run mission-critical BI workloads directly on the data lake, without needing to copy and move data into proprietary data warehouses or create cubes/aggregation tables/BI extracts. In addition, Dremio's semantic layer provides easy, self-service access for data consumers, and flexibility and control for data architects. Dremio delivers the world's first no-copy architecture, drastically simplifying the data architecture and enabling data democratization.

Deploy Dremio

[Learn more at dremio.com](https://dremio.com)

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