KNOW WHAT'S COMING: MUNICH START-UP LOOKS INTO THE FUTURE WITH THE OPEN TELEKOM CLOUD

Spontaneous computing power at any time for Big Data analyses by HR Forecast

Munich start-up peopleForecast has tapped into the nerve of the time with Big Data analyses. With their management suite HR Forecast, the HR experts are taking a software-assisted look into their customers' future. First released in 2013, the solution is already in high demand worldwide, from Australia to the Netherlands to Mexico. But the founders are focusing on the European market. With computing capacities from an American provider's cloud, however, the entrepreneurs ran into problems, in Germany in particular, where customers expressed concerns about data protection and data security. The solution: flexibly scalable IT resources from the Open Telekom Cloud**.**

AT A GLANCE

- Munich start-up analyses the HR demand of tomorrow with its solution HR Forecast based on Big Data and machine learning algorithms
- Highly complex calculations often require spontaneous, extreme computing capacities for Big Data analyses
- Customers expressed a wish for a higher level of data security and data protection
- Therefore, peopleForecast is now switching from an American provider to the Open Telekom Cloud in high-security German computer centres

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THE REFERENCE IN DETAIL

THE CUSTOMER

peopleForecast GmbH has developed a solution that literally allows a look into the future: the management suite HR Forecast calculates how the labour market will develop in the future on the basis of huge quantities of data. From these, the system derives precise recommendations for action for companies' future HR policies.

And this is how it works: the software searches publicly accessible sources on the internet for figures, data and statistics. In addition, users of HR Forecast provide data for the analysis. This creates an enormous data pool, from which an intelligent algorithm calculates an individual forecast. "We are offering a service that is the only one of its kind in the world," says CEO and founder Florian Fleischmann. The 30-strong team has already enjoyed international success with the solution.

THE CHALLENGE

For the highly complex Big Data analyses, HR Forecast needs huge resources. Operating IT capacities itself on such a scale would be uneconomical. "Especially as we only need these capacities in some cases," says Fleischmann. "Our AI engine only goes into action when our data pool is sufficiently full. Then, however, we need extreme capacities spontaneously." The company is therefore banking on IT from the public cloud, instead of its own servers. Before now, peopleForecast used the resources of a US provider – which over the course of time led to problems for European and, in particular, German customers.

"The recommendations that our solution calculates are of major competitive relevance and highly sensitive for our customers. Therefore, it is extremely important that this data is stored securely," says Fleischmann. "Unfortunately, experience has shown that an American cloud provider often produces security concerns and feelings of unease among our customers, especially German customers." The Munich start-up therefore wanted to switch to a public cloud provider who fulfils the highest possible data security and data protection standards. In addition, the new cloud solution needed to offer the possibility of making extreme IT capacities available spontaneously at any time – ideally in real time. Fleischmann: "Furthermore, a flexible price model was indispensable for us as we don't require a constant performance from the cloud. Our demand fluctuates significantly."

THE SOLUTION

The Open Telekom Cloud met all of the Munich start-up's demands: the security of the Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS) offered, for example, has been verified by independent bodies.

Deutsche Telekom also operates the public cloud in high-security computer centres in Saxony-Anhalt. All of the data processed and stored here is subject to strict German data protection regulations. If they wish, users can pay depending on their usage – by the hour and always only exactly as much as they actually need.

Computing and storage capacities can be added or deducted spontaneously at any time. For this purpose, peopleForecast can either access pre-configured virtual machines, which are specially designed for high-performance computing, or set up some itself. With the autoscaling function, the Open Telekom Cloud also works by itself, if required: if the utilisation of the virtual machines increases or decreases, the system reacts automatically, based on pre-defined rules.

"Very few competitors offer such dynamism. This is a huge advantage, as our customers do not forgive any performance problems," says Fleischmann.

The Open Telekom Cloud therefore fits perfectly into the Munich start-up's requirements profile. This is why peopleForecast GmbH is currently migrating the entire system to the German computer centres of Deutsche Telekom.

THE CUSTOMER BENEFIT

Now, peopleForecast has a flexible cloud provider offering the highest possible security standards. "Security concerns are a thing of the past. When our customers hear about the German computer centres of Deutsche Telekom, no questions remain unanswered," says Fleischmann.

In the future, the entrepreneur is planning another data-intensive application: virtual reality (VR). "Our customers will meet in virtual rooms for the data analysis, like in the film Minority Report," says Fleischmann. "This will only work with reliable computing power in the background, which we can retrieve from the Open Telekom Cloud at any time, in real time."

"The innovative solutions from peopleForecast are of course also of interest to our large and medium-sized customers in Germany and abroad," says Dirk Heidemann from Deutsche Telekom Partner Sales. "If you want to operate on the basis of Deutsche Telekom's secure infrastructure from now on, I am confident that together, as partners, we can set much more in motion and be even more successful in the market."