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The VanillaPlus Show Spotlight to DTW 2022

TALKING HEADS
Jon James, CEO, on
why a cloud-based
transformation was
critical for Nuuday



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Netcracker partners with Nuuday on major digital transformation project to deliver next generation customer experience

TDC Group, the largest communications company in Denmark, recently split into two businesses: TDC NET, which owns and maintains all physical infrastructure, including fibre lines, and Nuuday, which provides digital and cloud services to consumers and businesses under nine different brands. Nuuday has recently begun a large-scale digital transformation of its business.

In this interview, Jon James, the chief executive officer of Nuuday, speaks with Benedetto Spaziani, the general manager at Netcracker, about why the time was right for a transformation, why a cloud-based solution was critical for the service provider and what benefits and results it has experienced as it aims to become the top player in Denmark across broadband, TV, mobile and B2B services

VanillaPlus: Tell us a bit about Nuuday and its history in the Danish market.

Jon James: Nuuday is the market leader in telecoms, both for businesses and consumers, in Denmark. We offer mobile, broadband, TV and complex B2B services across the country under multiple brands, of which the best known are **YouSee**, a triple-play household brand, **Telmore**, which offers mobile and streaming to consumers, and **TDC Erhverv**, the leading telco for Danish businesses.

We are the service provider entity that was spun out of the former **TDC Group**, alongside **TDC Net**, which operates the DSL, coax and fibre fixed networks and the TDC Net mobile network.

Nuuday is now owned by **MacQuarrie Infrastructure** and a number of Danish pension funds.

VP: How do you approach your business when it comes to serving your customers?

JJ: Our mission is to transform an incumbent organisation without a significant digital footprint into a lean digital operator that is extremely customer-centric. This means transforming into a telco that delivers consistently excellent products and customer service.

Improving our customers' experience – whether service, sales, pricing or product quality – is central to these transformation efforts. Our early goals, which focused on customer service, simplified and sensible processes and improved pricing, are bearing fruit in improved net promoter score (NPS) and fewer fault calls. The next stage will be focused on improving our product range and transforming our customers' digital experience with our transition to a brand new digital stack.

VP: What was your motivation to undergo a large-scale BSS and OSS transformation?

JJ: Nuuday – and TDC Net – operate a legacy IT environment that's based on a home-grown ►

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Improving our customers' experience – whether service, sales, pricing or product quality – is central to these transformation efforts – Jon James, CEO, Nuuday

mainframe originally designed in the 1980s. This architecture is hugely complex, slow, expensive and difficult to adapt to the digital world. Multiple attempts dating back decades to adapt and upgrade the system have previously failed – to the point where previous management concluded that our systems were effectively impossible to adapt.

By the time of my arrival at Nuuday, the costs and risks for the business of this approach were all too evident. We were suffering from high complexity and the associated costs in supporting our IT infrastructure and in managing complex and opaque processes. Our customers were suffering from slow time-to-market, a lack of elegant end-to-end journeys and limited, clunky digital offerings in sales and service. In addition, much of our infrastructure was end-of-life, with too much downtime while support and maintenance were becoming increasingly difficult to source. It was fair to say that resolving the situation was critical.

But it is important not to waste a good crisis, so we

felt it was an easy decision to move fast and concluded that only a greenfield solution would be successful. We were lucky that in recent years, best-of-suite IT solutions from the leading vendors, such as **Netcracker**, have emerged that offer an end-to-end, fully integrated 'telco in a box' that is easily configurable and cloud-based.

Without the need for complex and expensive systems integration, these solutions also allow a far more rapid, lower risk transformation, which can be primarily focused on configuration and customer migration. By comparison, traditional upgrades are heavily reliant on systems integration, and hence slower – and slow migrations with lots of building involved tend to be the least successful.

VP: Why was Nuuday such an interesting customer to work with?

Benedetto Spaziani: We have more than 250 customers around the world. We were also interested in the trend of CSPs splitting their ►

Jon James
CEO, Nuuday

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infrastructure or network business from the services side, which is something we are seeing more and more of. Overall, Nuuday was a great fit for us and the synergy between our two organisations has been successful so far. Netcracker is thrilled to partner with Nuuday through this strategic initiative to modernise its BSS and OSS.

VP: Why was a public cloud-based solution important for Nuuday?

JJ: There were two key reasons: first, the cost reductions achievable when working with the combination of hyperscalers and a partner such as Netcracker mean that we can achieve genuinely best-in-class IT cost as a percentage of revenue. Second, Netcracker's cloud-based solution gives Nuuday an evergreen solution; we will always be on the most advanced version of its product without the need for complex and expensive upgrades of on-premise equipment.

VP: Can you tell us about the solution you deployed for Nuuday?

BS: The deployment consists of our cloud-native, microservices-based Digital BSS/OSS portfolio along with our professional services. The solution is

hosted in the public cloud, which was very important to Nuuday due to the inherent flexibility of this model and the options it offers going forward. With our solid delivery record going back almost three decades, along with our modern IT stack, we are confident our partnership with Nuuday will help it become best-in-class in its market and also an example that other providers can look to.

VP: How did you prioritise key aspects of the transformation?

JJ: We have spent a good deal of time in discussion with our telco peers internationally to ensure that we are learning from their experiences – the good, the bad and the ugly – as well as getting their perspective on vendors.

This helped to confirm a few key principles; for example, the importance of treating the transformation as a business transformation, not a tech project, the need to be rigorous in avoiding customisations and, critically, the right sequence to ensure a low risk, rapid migration.

We have been working since the beginning of 2022 to design our target portfolio and to begin the migration of our customers to the target portfolio within the existing system so that the subsequent ►



Benedetto Spaziani
Netcracker

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migration to the new platform is technical, rather than having an impact on the customer.

VP: Why was Netcracker the right partner to work with for such a complex project?

JJ: Feedback from our telco peers was important to us, and these conversations helped to confirm that Netcracker is a genuinely customer- and business-centric company with the reputation of building strong relationships with its clients and helping to drive their business to be successful.

Of course, the quality of Netcracker's offering was also critical to the decision. It combines a full digital stack, including a working digital front-end, with proven cloud capability across **Azure** and **AWS** with a strong product capability in both B2C and B2B. Netcracker also brings to us a team that is exceptionally experienced in delivering these complex transformations in businesses of all sizes.

VP: What new services and offerings are you able to offer your customers now, and what future services are you planning to deliver?

JJ: We are working hard to update our product offering to match the quality that Danish consumers and businesses should expect from the market

leader. We are focused on strengthening our offerings to the full range of businesses. We just relaunched our proposition for small and medium businesses and are updating our entertainment offering to deliver a better mix of traditional and streaming services. Once we launch on the new platform, we will also be able to transform the quality and range of our digital sales and services to give our customers a 100% digital experience.

VP: What do you see as the critical use cases for 5G, and how are you preparing your IT infrastructure to support an upgraded network and new services?

JJ: The TDC NET network was one of the first in Europe to roll out 5G, with Denmark overall one of the earlier adopters across Europe. So we have more experience than many in commercialising 5G. This has helped us to reinforce our premium position in the market for businesses and consumers as well as to sustain a notable premium in average revenue per user (ARPU) versus our competitors.

We are already offering a range of 5G-specific services, including IoT, and ensuring that our upcoming IT transformation is capable of delivering all the latest innovations that 5G has to offer. ■

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