

Self-service with ThoughtSpot helps T-Mobile Netherlands sustain market leadership by boosting analyst productivity and cutting IT costs

T-Mobile Netherlands is the country's largest mobile network operator (MNO), serving 6.9 million mobile customers. It's also one of the fastest growing in Europe thanks in part to wide-ranging transformation efforts led by Deutsche Telekom, its owner until recently. Today T-Mobile's services extend to "quad-play" comprising mobile, landline, interactive TV, and broadband services.

T-Mobile's is riding high today, but maintaining leadership is a constant battle. There are permanent struggles for customer loyalty, with 'churn' and transient customers a constant headache for telecoms and internet providers across the board. As with many companies in telecoms, winning even a small percentage point in customer retention can have a dramatic impact on the company's bottom line - between 25-95% according to Bain Capital.

THOUGHTSPOT IMPACT

- Fewer custom BI requests win the data analyst team 40 more days of labor per month to solve the most complex cases
- Estimated savings from moving routine frontline queries to self-service equates to roughly €1 million annually in data analyst and outsourced IT time
- Accelerated high-stakes M&A due diligence process, with ThoughtSpot-driven answers to critical data questions in less than 15 minutes

Bringing data conversations from the backroom to the boardroom

Hermen Geerts, product owner for Business Intelligence, T-Mobile Netherlands is responsible for data: a key weapon in this closely fought telecoms battle. His mission is to support every one of T-Mobile Netherlands' customer-facing team members, whether in sales, marketing, or customer support, with the insights they need to retain and delight loyal subscribers.

To be successful, they must be well-informed, agile, and fast in responding to customers' needs and concerns. T-Mobile had been using BI tools like Qlik and Tableau for years to meet this need.

However, the company's recent growth, along with the explosion of customer data in the telecoms industry resulting from device and app proliferation, had made keeping these solutions a big challenge. Even with IT and data experts performing at their best, it was taking days or even weeks for customer data essential for problem-solving or dealmaking to reach frontline teams. There were simply too many requests from business users, in need of actual insights – and the number of requests only kept growing. Geerts knew he needed a solution to give business users the ability to access their relevant data themselves, and fast.



We had a big, complex, on-premise data infrastructure with Excel, SQL and Qlik all interrogating a 120-Terabyte customer data hoard. A rich playground for a techie; not so much for a salesperson trying to close a competitive deal.

HERMEN GEERTS, PRODUCT OWNER B2B AND B2C VALUE STREAMS FOR BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE, T-MOBILE NETHERLANDS

A three-step plan for data democracy

To close the data access gap, Geerts established a three-step plan.

1. Move as much as possible to the cloud to clean out the applications and T-Mobile's 'data zoo'.
2. Allocate the most relevant, timely ten percent of the company's massive data store to be available to employees 'on demand'.
3. Provide open access to that data by introducing ThoughtSpot and execute a plan to wean people off dashboards over time.

T-Mobile initiated an exhaustive search to replace its old BI dashboards with a self-service platform, opting for ThoughtSpot over Qlik Sense in the final stretch. A key part of ThoughtSpot's appeal was that users wouldn't need extensive training or have to rely on data experts. Getting fast data answers to support customers in real-time was as simple as doing a Google search.

T-Mobile NL went live with ThoughtSpot in November 2020, aided by consulting partner Wipro Technologies, which worked with T-Mobile to clean and curate the data. T-Mobile also moved to the cloud as planned with the help of its new cloud hosting supplier, Amazon Web Services (AWS).



Marketing and data analysts alike benefiting from data

Geerts crystallized the impact of moving to ThoughtSpot and the cloud through a marketing colleague's experience. This colleague needed insights immediately and couldn't wait to dive right into using ThoughtSpot with no training. After a short intro from Hermen he was able to build his first pinboard to analyze a fairly complex data set in 90 minutes. Today he regularly spins up pinboards to calculate, for example, the monthly sales conversions of newly introduced products, in just 15 minutes. Also, if he discovers something else in the data that he wants to drill down into something further, such as regional variations, he now has the confidence to do that on his own.

Crucially, T-Mobile's analysts are also benefiting from the move to ThoughtSpot. Instead of taking weeks to add and configure data to the core database, it's now ready for use in a matter of hours, freeing them up to concentrate on the

most complex, strategic problems like integrating legacy data sets after mergers or blending data from multiple incompatible systems.



Specialist, highly-trained analysts are now free to help us meet our most strategic challenges. We've estimated that we're saving in the region of €1 million annually by freeing up at least 40 days a month in data analyst time, along with outsourced IT costs.

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Supporting board-level due diligence

During the transition to ThoughtSpot, a significant ownership change occurred that demonstrated the power of having analytics 'on tap'. In September 2021, the brand was acquired by two big private equity companies. This was a significant step for the company, as it represented a significant euro value (more than €5 billion), and many complex questions needed to be answered for the firm's new owners as fully as possible as part of the divestiture.

ThoughtSpot supported a very in-depth due diligence process, allowing T-Mobile's finance team members to answer complex financial questions that arose during

negotiations. At one stage, for example, T-Mobile needed to produce an analysis of the splits in the customer base between those paying for single play vs quad play services. Fortunately, because Hermen's team had already made the relevant data available in ThoughtSpot, the team could produce accurate answers in less than 15 minutes. This not only saved data analysts from having to work several intense hours to verify, integrate, and analyse data from multiple sources, but the fact that answers were given so fast and confidently reflected very positively on T-Mobile during these negotiations.



Using ThoughtSpot during our company's sale we estimated saved us between 10 to 15 days of work—which helped us get the M&A done as rapidly and successfully as it was.

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A decidedly “magenta” and data-driven future

Geerts and his T-Mobile Netherlands colleagues continue to do battle in a pandemic-transformed market where customers are more reliant than ever on competitive quad-play telecoms services. Having completed the transformation to self-service with ThoughtSpot, T-Mobile plans to further empower the business by exposing more

internal data, and also letting frontline workers analyse their own and external, public data sets. Heading into 2022 with new investors, leading in market share, and a data-empowered workforce, the future for T-Mobile Netherlands looks as bright as its iconic magenta brand!





About ThoughtSpot

ThoughtSpot is the Modern Analytics Cloud company. With ThoughtSpot, anyone can leverage natural language search and AI to find data insights and tap into the most cutting edge innovations the cloud data ecosystem offers, extend the value of their data to partners and customers, and automate entire business processes.

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