



A CloudOps
for Azure
Managed Services
Customer Story:

**WatServ
helped
Milton's
Distributing
move to the
cloud with
confidence
and limited
downtime**



Milton's Distributing is an importer and alcoholic beverage wholesaler with a focus on servicing multistate, specialty retail chains since 1933.

Milton's Distributing Company is an importer and alcoholic beverage wholesaler that focuses on servicing multistate, large specialty retail chains like Whole Foods, Wegman's, and Costco. Located in Mansfield, Massachusetts, this family-run company, known for its excellent service, procures, registers, and transports liquor, acting as both a supplier and a compliance administrator. The warehouse is a hive of activity with shipments continuously coming in and going out. It needed a responsive and agile technology environment that could keep up.

When Paul Bartlett took the Director of IT role at Milton's Distributing, the team had already decided to move from Dynamics Great Plains to Dynamics NAV – a great move because of its high-functionality, accessibility, and customizable nature, in his opinion. Their original Dynamics NAV infrastructure was on a hosted private cloud that didn't allow for the appropriate scalability and flexibility needed to enable Milton's production environment to do what the team wanted.

WatServ's management of the production environment and rightsizing has produced many optimization opportunities, including a 20% reduction in Azure spend and an estimated 50% savings in SQL licensing costs.



“Our goal is to become as flexible as we can; to hit that always-on, always-ready state. To do that, we need to be able to flex and expand quickly and efficiently. The agile cloud infrastructure that WatServ provides, hosting and managing Dynamics NAV and GP Archive on Azure, moves us toward our goal while optimizing and rightsizing saves us resourcing time and operational costs.”



Paul Bartlett

Director of IT, Milton's Distributing

“I wanted to move them to a platform that I thought would better sustain the future,” says Bartlett. “A cloud-based architecture is now critical for resilience and is the only way a business can continuously evolve and build agility without complication. Given that we are a Microsoft 365 user and given that we are moving to Microsoft Dynamics NAV, Azure just seemed to be a better fit with the whole environment.”

Moving toward the future in Azure

There is a big difference between a privately hosted environment and a public cloud. Clients often hesitate to use a public cloud for infrastructure, and a big part of that hesitancy is due to connectivity issues. Especially with Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems, there may be potential latency between scanning barcodes at the warehouse and logging on the server side.

“When Milton’s Distributing started with Dynamics and Azure, I leaned on a national partner I’ve used in the past who is exceptionally good in the infrastructure area,” says Bartlett. “But after we got through development and went live, we found that the performance was lacking. I realized then that we needed an infrastructure partner who also understood the ERP system.”



It’s imperative to us that our systems are running efficiently. Our warehouse is typically active from 5:00 AM until midnight, six days a week. During holidays it can be active until one or two in the morning, seven days a week. We have no room for downtime.



Paul Bartlett

Director of IT, Milton’s Distributing

After vetting many competitors, Bartlett decided to go with WatServ. WatServ, with its established pedigree in moving complex production environments into Azure, was confident it could deliver better-than-expected results.

“I like the story that WatServ had to share,” says Bartlett. “They were aligned with what I needed. They have a strong Dynamics NAV practice and a strong presence in and understanding of Azure. The fact that they had customers already on Azure and had established best practices for a Dynamics NAV implementation on Azure cemented my choice.”

Milton’s Distributing decided to lift and shift its unmanaged Azure resources (NAV and GP Archive) from their incumbent provider to WatServ’s CloudOps for Azure with the caveat that WatServ needed to mitigate any potential production downtime during the migration. A request that WatServ was happy to oblige.

- 53% of businesses believe ERP is one of the priority sectors for investments ¹
- Almost 77% of organizations select on-premises software due to a lack of knowledge about cloud offerings ²
- 51–54% of companies experience operational disruption when they take their ERP live (no matter the infrastructure) ³

A transformative alliance built on trust

“As Milton’s Distributing did not have Managed Services previously, we began conservatively and aimed at building trust,” says Joshua Satheiswaran, Director of Client Success, WatServ. “In 2019, we started managing Milton’s GP Archive environment. Once WatServ showed the value-add included in Managed Services, and the client saw the benefits and optimization we can deliver, within a year of the original deployment, Milton’s decided to bring its NAV production environments into our Managed Services as well.”



Dynamics NAV is live now in the Azure Public Cloud. Milton's has completed rightsizing of the environment with WatServ's assistance and is currently conducting third-party performance evaluations of both the ERP and the Warehouse Management System (WMS).

Alcohol regulations require Milton's to complete certain transactional elements throughout the day. For example, when a truck leaves Milton's Distribution warehouse, the driver requires a Bill of Lading. By US Department of Transportation (DOT) standards and many state alcohol laws, they must also have an invoice that acts as proof of purchase for the alcohol on board the truck. Typical retail or wholesale organizations will make their shipment and, after business hours, post and send invoices out. Because of regulations, however, Milton's can't do that.



"Before this transformation, we were posting during the day, which caused Table Locks, which caused our customer service team to get locked out, which slowed down order entry," says Bartlett. "That system lethargy cascaded down to the customer. Table Locks have roadblocked some of our shipment confirmations. The invoices weren't going out when they needed to be, or we kept having to retransmit them from the warehouse management system. The poor performance slowed our team down in getting critical processes done."

Moving to WatServ's CloudOps for Azure Managed Services provided the ability to move transactions through the system much faster and to automate the data entry. It's a far more efficient system that allows the customer service staff to move into account management roles rather than spend their time on data entry. "I'm pretty happy with what's happened, and I think we're heading in a good direction," says Bartlett.



We've got you covered

With WatServ managing your environment, you get strategic management – both proactive and reactive.

“We monitor all your metrics; CPU, ram, storage utilization, and identify outliers within your environment,” says Satheswaran. “Then, we conduct predictive forecasting for capacity planning. We ensure that we know enough about your environment to predict how it will react three and six months from now based on current utilization. We look for every opportunity for optimization and rightsizing. We evaluate your utilization over the last 30 to 60 days, and then use that data to rightsize your environment.”

WatServ monitors your environment 24-7-365.

To provide the same capabilities in house would mean employing five to seven full-time people and a significant investment in hardware and software (as well as suffering maintenance headaches).

As part of WatServ's CloudOps platform, you also get Security Operations Centre as a service (SOCaaS), including advanced threat management. It's a fully covered cybersecurity package.

Globally, the most popular managed services are hosting, storage/backup, and managed security services, each of which serves to provide clients with the benefits of extensive IT infrastructure without the need for large amounts of in-house hardware. ⁴



WatServ Managed Services has exceeded my expectations. We had a slowdown in our WMS recently. Before the warehouse management support could get on the server to see what was going on, WatServ had already reported it to me and identified the root cause of the problem. I was able to forward that information to my warehouse management people, who resolved the issue much quicker than we normally would have. The WatServ team then went further and ran some tests and flagged fixes, so we avoid that problem in the future.



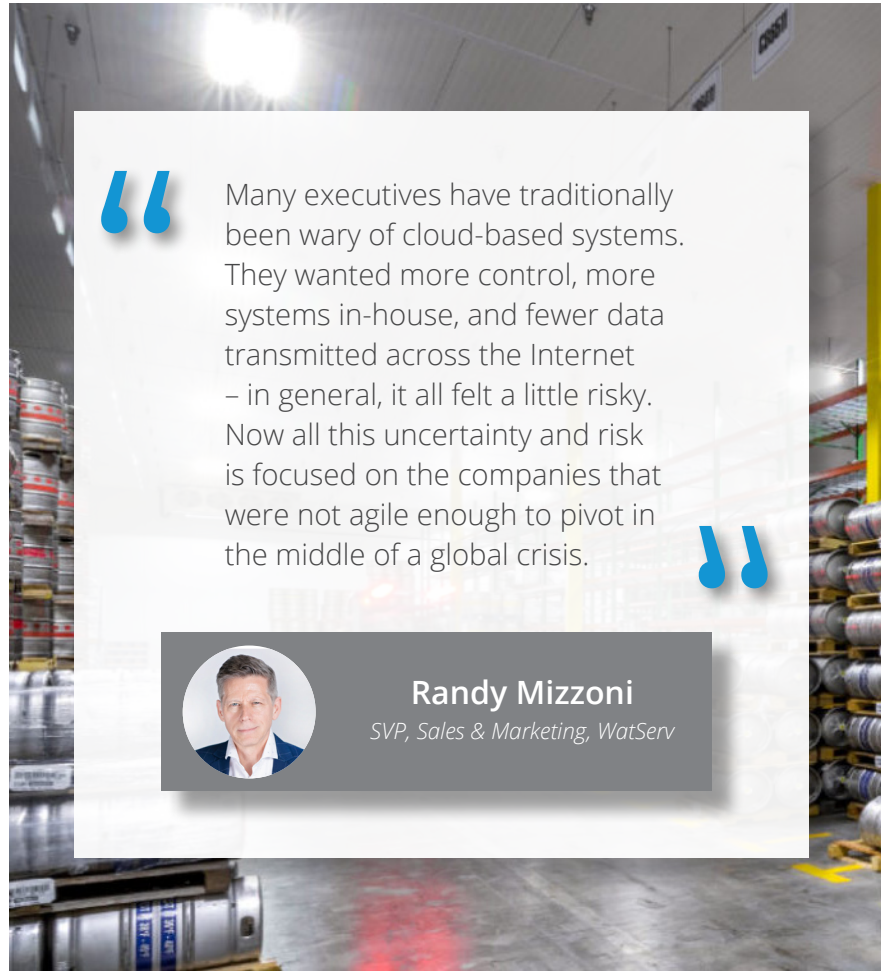
Paul Bartlett

Director of IT, Milton's Distributing

WatServ has the breadth and depth of experience to handle any IT or cybersecurity issues that may spring up. Working with an experienced provider allows you to focus on what's important to you and your core business.

"Organizations don't have to be scared moving to the cloud," says Satheiswaran. "I feel like a big part of moving from a private to a public cloud is the fear of change and what that could mean in terms of performance, uptime, the actual migration window, et cetera. But, at WatServ, we've done this successfully time and time again. Don't let apprehension keep you from reaping all the benefits that Azure offers."

WatServ helps organizations who would otherwise select on-premises software due to a lack of knowledge about cloud offerings, take full advantage of the cloud by alleviating the complexity. To learn more about WatServ's Managed Cloud Services, [check out our solution brief](#).



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Many executives have traditionally been wary of cloud-based systems. They wanted more control, more systems in-house, and fewer data transmitted across the Internet – in general, it all felt a little risky. Now all this uncertainty and risk is focused on the companies that were not agile enough to pivot in the middle of a global crisis.

”**Randy Mizzoni***SVP, Sales & Marketing, WatServ*

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