

Financial forecasting

Solution Overview

Establishes a unified forecasting framework that aligns regional inputs and methodologies, ensuring consistency, transparency, and streamlined collaboration across geographies.

Reduces unnecessary complexity by standardizing data, enabling more focused analysis and clearer insights without sacrificing accuracy.

Speeds up each forecasting round through automation and structured workflows, allowing finance teams to iterate faster and respond more quickly to market dynamics.

Introduces objective, data-driven mechanisms that reduce reliance on subjective judgment, improving forecast reliability and decision-making confidence.



Business Use Case

Traditional forecasting methods (often manual spreadsheets) are time-consuming, siloed, and prone to human bias or “gaming.” For example, in the past, hundreds of finance professionals at Microsoft each built their own Excel models to project sales, taking weeks of effort and multiple management review cycles. This manual process not only consumed substantial analyst time, but also introduced “layers of bias” as forecasts rolled up through management adjustments.

Benefits

- Common forecast approach and language
- Stopped manual forecasts for each country
- Built no-code web app to democratize ML to hundreds of other forecasts
- Open-sourced ML forecast framework for everyone to use

Key Results

\$2.4M

annual cost savings

50%

Less time forecasting

Technology

- Excel
- Azure Machine Learning
- Azure Synapse
- Azure Storage
- Azure Active Directory

Time taken

First deployment in 5 months
(Updates and enhancements every 6 months)