

Case Study

How Dealroom Helps Microsoft Target
and Connect with Relevant Partners

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"We only find these promising companies when we work with someone like Dealroom who is keeping track of venture funding, private equity funding and other critical intel. It all boils down to relevance."



Chris Dial,
Senior Director, Microsoft

"What we like about Dealroom is that it's still a bit of an art in how to find and work with emerging tech companies. It's about finding out as much as we can and putting the pieces together, because we have to narrow down and pick the best ones out of potentially tens of thousands of companies based in Europe."

Microsoft does business in every major European country.

The Netherlands hub is an important ecosystem for new companies, startups and scaleups.

Challenges

- Finding new, emerging software companies to partner with
- Accessing pertinent data that helps determine relevance and fit
- Connecting with target companies faster than competitors

Solution

- Use Dealroom's smart search to identify under-the-radar companies before anyone else does
- Research promising companies at Dealroom to determine fit
- Build targeted lists of relevant companies to partner with

Results

- Access critical data all in one place, allowing speed of movement
- Narrow down and pick the best partners out of potentially tens of thousands of companies
- Use Dealroom data to get clarity on the quality of the company Microsoft is reaching out to

Challenges

IDENTIFYING PARTNERS IN A COMPETITIVE ENVIRONMENT

Take the world's most famous tech company. Add their sophisticated, proprietary tool suite that needs no introduction. Now recognise that the full evolution of Microsoft's business applications – and their future success – relies on them finding growth-potential software companies to partner with. This was the challenge facing Microsoft's Netherlands office, a team that helps startups and scaleups build on the Microsoft platforms to become more successful.

"We can look for companies at any time along their lifecycle," says Chris Dial, Senior Director at Microsoft. "But early- to-mid is best, before the company settles into an application architecture and grows its business with a certain infrastructure ecosystem partner. Ideally, we're looking for new, emerging category definers or category leaders to collaborate with. We're basically looking for software companies that want to grow, bring new solutions to the market and deliver value to our customers."

For Microsoft, getting to these companies is challenging – and they need to move fast. "It's a very competitive market," Chris explains. "There are lots of ways that tech companies can bring solutions to their customers, from the well-known public cloud options like Microsoft, Amazon and Google to local hosts and other providers. We have to be compelling in what we do and quick to find and make a proposition to them."

Solution

ACCESS CRITICAL DATA ALL IN ONE PLACE AT DEALROOM

Microsoft gained the insights it was looking for through a trusted partnership with Dealroom. "There's no directory for the type of companies we're seeking," Chris says, "and finding them is a bit of an art. There are some tax registration lists that we can use but generally, we only find these companies when we work with someone like Dealroom who is keeping track of venture funding, private equity funding and other critical intel."

"We're looking at a lot of different data points, but it basically boils down to relevance – the team the company has, the funding, the momentum. Maybe that's not all captured in a single place; it may not be about how much money a company has raised; it could be about how much web traffic or social media exposure they're getting. It could be the amount of employee growth or it could be about certain types of employees or customers. Or investments by certain types of individuals or organisations that are critical in the markets they play in."

"It's really about finding out as much as we can and putting the pieces together. Because we have to narrow down and pick the best partners out of potentially thousands and tens of thousands of companies based in Europe. Without Dealroom, it would be quite a search challenge."

Results

SELECTING THE BEST PARTNERS OUT OF TENS OF THOUSANDS OF COMPANIES IN EUROPE

Microsoft touches thousands of companies a year – multiple thousands. For them, it's about broadening networks; going deep into the rabbit hole and seeing what connections can be made when you put the data points together.

"This business is all about networks and connections, so if we find a couple of good companies that are searching for venture capital, we can look at other companies the fund is working with and see if they're good options for us," Chris explains. "Or we see serial entrepreneurs who've worked with us before and have built quality companies in the past; that could be interesting. We can see if people align with certain organisations. Using Dealroom helps us fill out the whole picture so we can get a better sense of the quality of the company we're reaching out to."

Looking ahead, Microsoft wants to realise the path it is on, which is developing better, more efficient applications to bring to the markets on the Microsoft platform, thus helping these new software companies to succeed. Ultimately, that helps Microsoft's customers succeed because these are the solutions they want. Dealroom is delighted to play even a small role in this mission.

"We want to see a market that's full of useful applications for every industry; that are impactful and scalable, that are going to reach anyone, on any device, in any format and language," Chris says. "Diversity and inclusion are important for us, making sure that people with disabilities or challenges can still use the same applications."

"There are so many technologies we are just getting started on – data analysis tools, machine learning, algorithms; we're using the mixed-reality device HoloLens which we can see integrated and bringing together business functions and data functions within our business applications platforms. I think we're just getting started."