



By Matthew Jones

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## Coles partners with Microsoft

Azure to become Australian supermarket chain's cloud platform of choice



Coles chief information and digital officer Roger Snizek

**A**ustralian retailer Coles will use cloud-based innovation to transform the shopping experience for its customers.

The move is part of a new partnership signed between the retail chain and technology leader Microsoft.

The strategic partnership is based on Microsoft Azure becoming Coles' cloud platform of choice.

Together with Microsoft, Coles is building an enterprise data platform in Azure that will power advanced analytics across its business and enable the deployment of artificial intelligence (AI) technology to drive innovation in physical stores and through the supply chain.

"The use of Azure AI services will bolster Coles' ability to use a variety of customer insights to drive decision making and better tailor its range to meet the needs of customers and how they like to shop," Coles said in a press release on its website.

"These decisions will be based on deeper

data analysis from its proprietary research, flybuys and customer transactions."

In addition to more personalised customer benefits, a key part of Coles' Smarter Selling strategy is in its stores, where staff members will be provided with a range of new tools. These tools will be used to remove or streamline manual tasks for repetitive activities like stock management and price markdowns.

"These changes will boost productivity and allow them to focus on the things that matter most to customers," according to the press release.

Microsoft will also provide tailored training for Coles' digital and technology teams so they have the necessary skills to exploit the full potential of the new platforms.

"This strategic partnership builds on our long-standing relationship with Microsoft and will enable the Smarter Selling pillar of our strategy through efficiency and pace of change," said Coles chief information and digital officer Roger Snizek.

"By moving to the Azure cloud we will be able to simplify our operations and deliver at pace. The Azure-based Enterprise Data Platform will allow us to execute advanced analytics and artificial intelligence across all areas of our business at extreme scale."

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