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Unicorn Vs The Giants

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Unicorns are software companies worth >\$1bn. Grant Halloran, Chief Marketing Officer, Anaplan says his company competes against SAP, Oracle and Microsoft.

“We are a cloud-based software company providing enterprise-level planning and forecasting. We help customers predict events, simulate decisions in response, then act. We can connect all that on a single platform and make it happen instantaneously.”

It compresses decision-making from months to days. For example, we help HP, with thousands of products and people, using 15bn sets of numbers.

How to optimise? It now takes HP 3 days to optimise where it used to take months. We enable them to issue quotas and compensation packages to salespeople globally.

Anaplan has 610 people, and \$240m VC from Silicon Valley, and see three-digit growth every year. We have 80,000 high-value users.

We took on Oracle, SAP & IBM. We needed an incredible product not just a minimally viable one. Most VCs want startups to start in the US – we didn't: we went global from the start. The giants created frustrated customers who saw how we could help them speed up their processes in a fundamental way. That's because enterprise software sucks. The vendors don't think about the user experience or self service. The fee structure sucks too, along with IT dependency. It's just bad software.

Many of these products were built to allow eg professional services companies to make millions out of customisation. So we wanted to change that and do something historical.

Ours is a patented technical modelling technology with a billion cells in one model – it runs in memory and calculates millions of data points in seconds. If we'd started only in Silicon Valley it wouldn't have happened.

Halloran talked about founder Michael Gould who designed the technology. The system has low dependency as it's easy to use, providing self-service. It's about process and organisational change not IT. We've also built a community, a cult-like following for the brand.

Globally, conversations are the same wherever we go, and lots of customers are global, so that's why we soled problems globally. We have a passion to change the way that business works – the money is a by-product!

(Courtesy: NetEvents)