The Ultimate Guide for Microsoft

DYNAMICS AX Implementation

In this ebook, learn key ERP implementation challenges and best practices, why you should use Dynamics AX as your ERP, and how to ensure successful implementation for maximum business results.

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Contents

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Introduction

Businesses of all types can benefit from a successful ERP implementation; however, it can be a challenging task: from choosing the right ERP, to evaluating and selecting a vendor, building a project plan, carrying out the implementation, and training users – implementing an ERP can be a pretty huge project. But when done properly, it helps companies manage business more efficiently by automating technology, services, and human resources functions to save time and money. That's what an ERP does – by improving business processes, it provides greater control over operations and delivers the insights you need to improve and maintain customer relationships. The result? Improved productivity, reduced costs, and a greater scope of scaling heights.

One ERP that has been living up to its name is Microsoft Dynamics AX, now known as Dynamics 365 Unified Operations – an amalgamation of intelligent business apps that enable organizations to run their business from end-to-end. A successful [Microsoft Dynamics AX implementation](#) not only helps in transforming business performance, but also in gaining a competitive advantage, to support business today and tomorrow. In this ebook, we will:

» Discuss key challenges that many ERP implementations face

» Provide an overview to Microsoft Dynamics AX ERP and understand its significance in today's digital world

AX implementation best practices and key steps for a successful ERP implementation

» Look at the key benefits of a successful Dynamics AX implementation and a real-life business case

» See how organizations benefit from a successful Dynamics AX implementation

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Key ERP Implementation Challenges

Many businesses face recurring issues with their obsolete systems but are unaware of just how much an ERP can really impact their bottom line. However, the implementation of an ERP is not always simple; considering how enormous the solution is, it can potentially create a lot of challenges depending on the way it is managed. Here are some of the potential ERP implementation challenges and how you can overcome them:

Resistance to change:
No matter how much an organization thinks they are ready for change, ERP deployments always carry a sizeable amount of resistance. Identifying the sources of resistance and building a robust change management plan can help in addressing this challenge.

Unrealistic planning and expectations:
An ERP implementation is not going to reap benefits overnight. It takes a whole lot of effort, time, and cost to get the most out of an ERP. Having realistic expectations in place, and working towards the achievable is essential.

Poor project management:
The onus of a successful ERP implementation lies a lot with the project management team, this team is key in assessing risk management and resource allocation, which are extremely important factors throughout the project. Active communication with key personnel and ensuring they understand the need for them to be fully involved goes a long way in the decision-making process.

Inadequate budgets:
Getting an ERP on board does not just include license costs, but also imple mentation, training, maintenance, and many other hidden overhead costs that are realized throughout the implementation. When budgeting, it is important to allocate for these costs to achieve the best results.
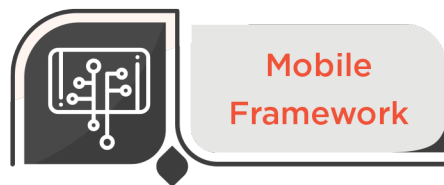
Lack of quality assurance:
The primary purpose of quality assurance is to prevent defects, risks, or nonconformities that may occur in production. To get the most out of the ERP investment, it is imperative that sufficient quality assurance is carried out before the system is fully implemented.

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Microsoft Dynamics AX ERP has always been a much sought-after ERP, across industry verticals and organizations of various sizes. Dynamics 365 Unified Operations is the latest version of Dynamics AX which includes the new Dynamics AX capabilities, also known as Dynamics 365 for Finance and Operations, as well as Dynamics 365 for Retail and Dynamics 365 for Talent. Emphasized on the importance of the cloud implementation approach, this solution is also available as an on-premises solution or a hybrid deployment.

With Dynamics AX, you can

» Explore and discover data to accelerate insights and deliver amazing experiences

» Automate processes to reduce operational costs

» Improve business processes to boost efficiency and minimize costs

» Increase the consistency of data across your organization and deployments

» Build campaigns and engage customers in a collaborative way

Mobile Framework

Built-in Intelligence

Lifecycle Services

Business Insights

Data Unification

Demand Forecasting

Financial Reporting

UI/UX

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Dynamics AX Roadmap

Managing customer experiences and advancements in technology in a digital world compels the creation of future-ready applications. The Microsoft Dynamics ERP platform has seen rapid innovation over the past few years. A lot of effort has gone into bringing Dynamics AX to where it is today. By providing updated information on previously released versions, in development features and capabilities, and future plans and upgrades, Microsoft keeps its stakeholders abreast with its entire roadmap and availability of services. By reviewing the product roadmap, organizations can evaluate enhancements to existing functionality, and determine the impact on deployment plans and timelines.

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Microsoft Dynamics CRM		CRM 2014	CRM 2015	CRM 2016	Microsoft Dynamics 365 Enterprise edition	Ongoing Development	
Microsoft Dynamics AX	AX 2012 R2		AX 2012 R3	AX "7"	Microsoft Dynamics 365 Enterprise edition	Ongoing Development	
"Project Madeira"				Public Preview	Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business edition	Ongoing Development	

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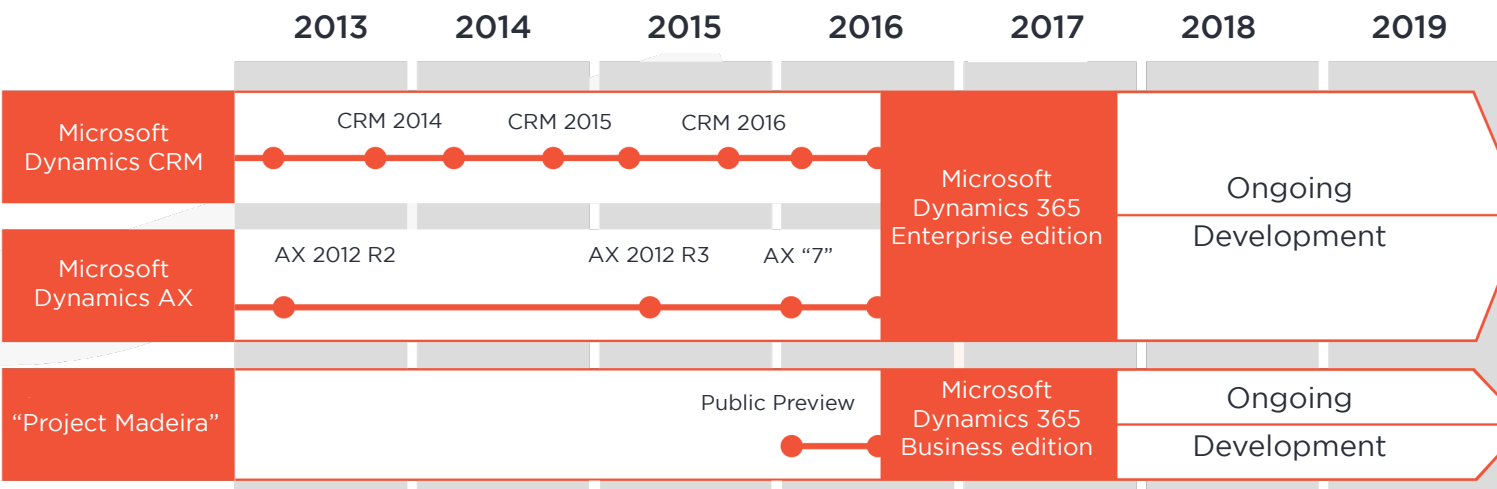
Dynamics AX Implementation Best Practices

Microsoft Dynamics AX can take a business to a whole new level, if implemented successfully. Here are some best practices:

Set your Goals	Get the right team in place
	Maintain strict control over key processes
Effectively train users	Identify gaps and minimize potential risks
	Be prepared for future upgrades and changing demands

Set your goals:

Since the end goal of an ERP implementation is to lower TCO and increase revenue, the first step towards a successful implementation is to go in with a detailed and realistic project plan. How do you want your business to work at the end of the implementation? How will Dynamics AX help you reach those goals? Which resources will play a crucial role in ensuring a successful implementation? Carefully strategize your project plan and make sure you consider all instances while circumventing unproductive, and time-consuming scenarios.

Get the right team in place:

A successful Dynamics AX implementation is a result of cross-functional teams that have the right knowledge and skills, and the commitment to make the implementation work. Who will comprise the project team? And, from what departments are representatives needed? What responsibilities will they each have? What processes will you have in place to enable them to work collaboratively? Having the right cross-functional team will ensure inefficiencies are identified ahead of time, bottlenecks are cleared, and quality control issues are handled.

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Maintain control over key processes:

While implementing a large enterprise application like Dynamics AX, there is a potential that the right processes are not in place or haven't been identified and established. To keep processes aligned and followed, you should analyze different scenarios, consider various design alternatives, and regularly develop and test code, and performance.

Effectively train users:

No project can be successful if the users are not trained efficiently with an ample amount of ramp up time. One of the most important aspects of a successful Dynamics AX implementation is to get started quickly – choose from eLearning, training guides, Dynamics AX portals, and ensure proper training for end users.

Expand your global enterprise:

The best way to begin a Dynamics AX implementation project is with a strong focus on gap analysis and risk management. You can identify gaps ahead of time, and spend less time responding to issues. Consequently, you know how to gain and maintain control of the project.

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Key Benefits of Proper Dynamics AX Implementation

Dynamics AX is an integrated, flexible platform (cloud, on-premises, or hybrid) that provides your business with the power and agility required to stay a step ahead of the competition and support ongoing growth. With the right solution, you can reduce the complexity and cost of IT. The new AX release (Dynamics 365 Unified Operations) has built-in smart intelligence and the combination of Cortana Intelligence, Power BI, and Azure Machine Learning, enabling deep insights into business performance. The presence of the Common Data Model (CDM) helps in simplifying data management and integration across apps and business processes. It brings data together, including data from Office 365 and third-party sources, while composing data using the Azure cloud. You can easily create more intelligent business processes with PowerApps and Microsoft Flow as well. Let's look at key benefits of a successful Dynamics AX implementation:

Expand your global enterprise:

With multi-industry capabilities, language support for 36 countries, and a scalable infrastructure, Dynamics AX helps to cater to new customers in fresh new ways, and expand your global enterprise.

Gain a competitive advantage:

Dynamics AX offers a 360-degree view of competitors, and aids in tracking trends and anticipating future needs through built-in intelligence. It helps generate data-driven predictions across your business not only to forecast market trends but also customer needs.

Work better, faster and smarter:

Since data from multiple sources, and systems is unified, you get a comprehensive end-to-end picture of your business and customers. You can make informed, real-time business decisions by gaining insight into data, and transform business processes faster to enable business growth.

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Reduce costs and increase revenue:

Although the initial investment in Dynamics AX system is relatively high, in the long run, it reduces costs (including IT and training) for your organization and helps increase revenue. It brings agility and efficiency to your business processes by using an integrated solution that optimizes production planning, operation, project management, and cost management.

Save time and increase flexibility:

Automated workflows help in turning repetitive tasks into multi-step workflows, saving you time spent on manual tasks. The integrated framework and a familiar UI offers the flexibility and convenience you need to do business your way.

Support business today and tomorrow:

With crucial insights and access to the right tools, and flexible deployment alternatives, Dynamics AX helps you build solutions quickly and be prepared for every business scenario.

Better connect stakeholders:

Dynamics AX smoothly connects employees, customers, suppliers, and partners through its integrated self-service collaboration capabilities and the use of productivity tools.

Take advantage of other Microsoft business solutions:

Dynamics AX smoothly connects employees, customers, suppliers, and partners through its integrated self-service collaboration capabilities and the use of productivity tools.

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Be the Game Changer

Most ERP implementation projects fail not because the solution is incompetent, but because of poor planning and inadequate budget. Although IT delays, unexpected roadblocks and uncontrollable variables are unavoidable, following certain tips and best practices will ensure successful implementation of Microsoft Dynamics AX. Considering how Dynamics AX has transformed the enterprise software market game with enhanced productivity, deep integration, anytime, anywhere accessibility, built-in intelligence, and superior automation, it is critical for organizations to choose the right implementation path to get the most out of their investment and effort. Careful assessment of business needs, understanding each and every facet of Dynamics AX and how it can help meet business needs, and choosing the appropriate project team, is critical for guaranteed implementation success.

For a successful Dynamics AX implementation, have a clear picture of your goals, get the right team in place, have a trust-worthy vendor spearhead the project, choose the right implementation strategy, and be the game changer in your industry!

Learn more about how Synoptek can help your business successfully implement Microsoft Dynamics AX.

How Synoptek Can Help

Synoptek offers a complete suite of Dynamics AX services to help organizations maximize business opportunities, drive innovation, and deliver value faster, including:

Implementation best practices:

We are a Microsoft Partner and have been implementing, customizing, integrating, and upgrading Dynamics AX for almost a decade now. We follow Microsoft's Sure Step Methodology, Life Cycle Services, and best practices implementation accelerators, during implementation and pride ourselves on customizing the solution untill it fits every need of your business.

Adaptability and flexibility:

We develop Dynamics AX solutions that are flexible to help you meet changing business scenarios. We focus on an agile-hybrid model, which combines the work of onsite experts with a highly qualified offshore development team.

Resource expertise:

We have Microsoft certified resources who have executed multiple projects across various industry sectors. These resources have helped numerous enterprises adopt best practices, increase productivity, gain business insights, and stimulate growth through process automation.

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Capabilities and competencies:

We are a Managed Microsoft Partner with a Gold competency in ERP, with successful completion of over 60 AX projects, and are one of the few consulting partners in the world that have worked on implementing the first few instances of new AX releases. In addition to this, Indusa is a member of AXpact, a network of globally active Dynamics AX service providers.

Complete suite of support services:

We provide comprehensive Dynamics AX support services to make sure your organization's investment in Dynamics AX is fully maximized. Our seasoned, dedicated resources are ready to help you troubleshoot, assist, and evaluate your AX system. Our support services include system upgrades, custom enhancements, system maintenance, issue resolution, and more.

CASE STUDY

Client: A non-profit organization providing verification services, accountable solutions and transparent data to the cross-media market.

Requirement: Implement Microsoft Dynamics AX 2012 R3 solution and increase business and employee productivity.

Synopteks's Solution: Synoptek implemented the finance management, project management, sales and marketing, service management, and human capital management modules of Dynamics AX 2012 R3 and integrated it with client's Oracle Relational Database Management System (RDBMS) and legacy systems such as EDP System (LINUX PRO*C) and Adobe (LiveCycle). Synoptek followed a Sure Step methodology and made use of Microsoft Dynamics accelerators including Best Practice Configuration Accelerator and Implementation Accelerators.

Client Benefits: Synoptek's solution helped the client in

» Centralizing the business model

» Optimizing business process through the integration of stand-alone systems

» Easy management of business processes

» Providing more control over

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About Synoptek

Synoptek is a global systems integrator and managed IT services provider offering comprehensive IT management and consultancy services to organizations worldwide. Founded in 2001; headquartered in Irvine, CA, we have offices and resources across North America and delivery centers in Europe and India.

Our key services include:

» Application Management
» Data Insights
» Workforce Productivity
» Custom Software
» IT Leadership
» Cyber Security
» Infrastructure Stability
» Business Continuity
» Cloud Advancement

Synoptek focuses on providing maximum "business value" to our clients enabling them to grow their businesses, manage their risk/compliance, and increase their competitive position by delivering improved business results.

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