



Reference Guide: Getting the Most from Your Microsoft Dynamics Investment

You can help increase the success of your business's Microsoft Dynamics® investment and be more confident in your Microsoft Dynamics implementation will meet requirements and stay within budget. By working with a Microsoft partner who uses a proven methodology - implementation processes and tools - you can more easily meet five criteria that will help you achieve a successful software implementation.

Criteria	What You Can Do to Achieve Business Success:
<p>Executive Commitment</p> <p>Executive and middle management support is essential to an ERP or CRM project's success. Keeping management involved can help you ensure your business goals are met.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ... Ask senior management to take on active, visible project sponsorship roles. ... Involve senior management in high-level project decisions and sign-off meetings. ... Include senior management in regular project status briefings to keep them aware of progress, and to get their help in overcoming obstacles.
<p>Smart Budgeting</p> <p>Many companies attempt to cut project costs by minimizing focus on change management, project management, and training. Instead of eliminating these integral pieces, consider other options to help streamline budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ... Ask your Microsoft partner about a rapid approach to implementation and how that might help you keep costs down. ... Involve department managers and key staff members early on and throughout the project. Ask them to build training and transition into their departments' day-to-day activities. This will help you get the most use out of your new solution ensuring higher return on investment.
<p>Change Management</p> <p>During an implementation, it's essential to inform end users of upcoming changes, being sure to explain the benefits and offer training. Your Microsoft partner can give you recommendations on how to limit user frustration and arrive at a successful user experience.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ... Develop communications mechanisms to keep information flowing on a regular basis. Be sure to communicate "up, down, and across" the organization throughout the project. ... Work with your Microsoft partner to determine impacts to key stakeholders. Involve them early on so they can prepare for and adapt to changes brought on by your new business solution. ... Keep your customers in mind. Inform them early and often of any process or policy changes that will impact them. ... Remember—training does not stop with your implementation "go live." OConduct follow-up training to be sure everyone is taking full advantage of features and functionality in your new Microsoft Dynamics solution.

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<p>Project Management</p> <p>A successful project starts and ends with a successful team. At the heart of every successful team is an experienced project manager. Use your Microsoft partner's experience and recommendations to help ensure a successful project.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ... Identify and assign a strong project manager early on. Make sure they are rewarded for taking on this important accountability. ... Ensure that project team members are working closely together. If you have multiple sites or geographies, make sure you have effective communication tools that help keep team members connected. ... Work with your Microsoft partner to implement proven project controls, such as risk management and project scope management.
<p>Manageable Modifications</p> <p>Leverage solution capabilities and learn to manage modifications to fit your budget and business needs. Your Microsoft partner can assist with the process of aligning your business goals with Microsoft Dynamics features <i>before</i> you decide to build extensive modifications into your solution.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ... Work with your Microsoft partner to perform a thorough gap-fit analysis, which will help you identify gaps between software functionality and your business needs. ... Carefully consider both the short- and long-term costs of modifications. Keep in mind the ongoing cost of "carrying forward" customizations when new versions of software are released. ... Ask your Microsoft partner to develop and review with you business cases to justify essential modifications. ... Encourage your teams to keep an open mind by adopting new, streamlined processes versus making modifications solely to keep old processes.

Thank you for taking the time to learn how you can be more successful with your new Microsoft Dynamics solution. Ask your Microsoft partner about the implementation methodology they follow and how they can help you have a more successful Microsoft Dynamics implementation. If you are still evaluating the purchase of Microsoft Dynamics and would like more information visit www.microsoft.com/dynamics > **Contact Us.**

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