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3 things you need to know
now about Customisation

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SERIES

Microsoft Dynamics 365
Business Central

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3 things you need to know about customisation in Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central

The 2019 spring release of Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central is likely to be the most popular version of the Dynamics NAV dynasty to date. It's not just the increasing functionality that the product provides but also that it is the perfect middle ground between the historic C/AL modifications and the new Dynamics 365 Business Central extension-based platform

1 The traditional methods of customisation are changing

Microsoft define the move from C/AL modifications to new AL based extensions as a six-step process, but some of those steps are not a couple of minutes long. In most instances, moving to AL extensions will also involve a significant re-engineering exercise because of the need to take often decades of evolving C/AL modifications and turn them into something fit for purpose in the current day.

Clients typically want to take the opportunity to remove, rather than transfer, changes where they are no longer appropriate to their business. Similarly, clients are voting strongly to go with standard add-ons rather than re-write custom bespoke.

It's not unusual to see Dynamics 365 Business Central implementations that have 30+ extensions, some as small as a couple of page and table extensions. Others though can be tens, if not hundreds, of objects which make extensive changes to the way the system works.

2 Plan a migration path that suits your business, at a time that suits your business

There is no standard migration path that is right for everyone. What you need to do depends on your circumstances and how your business is progressing. The right thing to do is to get a plan for where you want your business to be in the next 2 to 3 years and to build your Dynamics 365 Business Central migration plan to properly support it.

This release of Dynamics 365 Business Central will be supported by Microsoft for five years plus meaning clients will have a period of time to slowly migrate their customisations to extensions, one by one rather than a big bang approach. Separating different requirements into separate discrete extensions means that they are more easily maintainable, transferable and can be enhanced/fixed individually. All of which reduces complexity of deployment and risk.

Clients might also choose to use extensions from ISV's and AppSource rather than custom extensions as more and more become available. When in the future they have reached the utopia of being completely extension based, their upgrade process can be completely script based if they remain on premises or, more likely, they move to Microsoft's SaaS Business Central platform.

Those that have the hardest decision are the users on Dynamics NAV 2018 which does support extensions but does not have anywhere near the number of events that Microsoft have put through all the core logic for Dynamics 365 Business Central Spring '19. That means you can deliver customisations via extensions on Dynamics 365 Business Central Spring '19 that couldn't be done on Dynamics NAV 2018.

3 Maintain the Windows Client for existing users

Dynamics 365 Business Central Spring '19 release is the last version of Dynamics 365 Business Central that supports the Windows client – the client most existing Dynamics NAV users love!

While moving to the Web client from the Windows client is a matter of preference, often experienced users, used to the Windows client, are struggling with some aspects of the Web client. Being able to look at the icons on the action bar in the Windows client, or browse through the 'Departments' menu when you're not quite clear about what you want, does enable you to find options you don't know or cannot remember what exactly they are called.

In contrast, new users to the system take to the Web client like ducks to water.

Summary

The process of both customising and upgrading your Dynamics solution through the beauty of 'Extensions' and third-party 'Apps' is becoming ever easier.

With the rapid pace of business and regulatory change we see in the 21st century, you need to be on right platform – Dynamics 365 Business Central Spring '19 release - to take advantage of all the new capabilities.

A smooth, undramatic move that supports your business objectives and makes you as efficient and competitive as possible. Talk to us soon to determine what that plan should be.

Don't forget to check out our earlier "need to know now" publication – 5 things you need to know about now about upgrading from Dynamics NAV to Dynamics 365 Business Central.

Learn more ❯