



Microsoft Dynamics Services Partner Solution Case Study



VAR Uses Implementation Methodology to Improve Solution Delivery, Reduce Risk

Overview

Country or Region: United States
Industry: Professional services—IT services

Partner Profile

Advanced Systems Integration (ASi) is a Microsoft® Gold Certified Partner that specializes in the implementation, development, support, and training of Microsoft Dynamics® AX.

Business Situation

The partner sought a more cost-effective and efficient way to store and manage project deliverables, collaborate on global engagements, and consolidate firm best practice information.

Solution

ASi combined Microsoft Dynamics Sure Step with its existing solution framework to more cost-effectively manage projects across a range of industries.

Benefits

- Increases efficiency by 25 percent
- Confidently manages project risk
- Decreases operational costs

“By leveraging Microsoft Dynamics Sure Step with our existing solution framework, we’ve been able to reduce ramp-up time for our consultants by 25 percent.”

Tom Kim, Senior Vice President, ASi

Advanced Systems Integration (ASi) is a Microsoft® Gold Certified Partner and value-added reseller that focuses exclusively on implementation, support, and training for Microsoft Dynamics® AX. The company’s success is based largely on its deep knowledge of the solution, its industry experience, and its strong project management disciplines. With an extensive background in process improvement and enterprise project management, ASi continuously strives to refine its delivery capabilities to improve the customer experience. To drive greater efficiency and expand profitable business growth, ASi integrated Microsoft Dynamics Sure Step with its existing solution delivery framework. Now, the company benefits from an expansive, integrated repository of customizable project templates, project management tools, and best practice guides for implementing or upgrading Microsoft Dynamics AX.



“As soon as ASi showed us documentation from another project that they had recently completed and systematically walked us through each step of the implementation, we knew the company could help us meet our goal.”

Mike Forte, IT Manager, Felt Bicycles

Situation

Founded in 1991, Advanced Systems Integration (ASi) is a value-added reseller of Microsoft Dynamics® AX and a distinguished Microsoft® Gold Certified Partner headquartered in California. As one of the original resellers of Damgaard Axapta, now Microsoft Dynamics AX, ASi has more than a decade of experience working exclusively with the product. ASi has built a reputation for consistently managing project risk associated with complex deployments of the solution. Despite a challenging economic climate in 2009, the company continues to grow, adding customers and expanding its delivery team to meet the increased demand for its services.

Company executives, including Jeff Onesto, Business Development Director for ASi, are not surprised by this sustained growth. “From its inception, ASi set out to distinguish itself from other partners based upon an optimal blend of competitive pricing, low risk, and high quality,” says Onesto. “That approach has consistently resonated with our clients and continues to pay dividends in the form of an expanding client base.”

The company’s success is also attributable to the continuous honing of its delivery capabilities and dedication to improving overall customer experience. “Over the years, we’ve adopted various tools to help us further refine our deployment capabilities and remove operational inefficiencies so that we could deliver cost savings to our customers,” says Onesto. Early on, the company began using the Task Recorder and Rapid Configuration Tool in Microsoft Dynamics AX to compete with preconfigured solutions from Oracle and SAP. Onesto and other executives saw further opportunities to compete against Oracle and SAP by taking advantage of a comprehensive implementation methodology and toolset that Microsoft developed—one that offers best practice guidance and

customizable project deliverables for a full range of project types. “We definitely spent lots of money and time internally developing and maintaining our existing delivery framework,” says Simon Sadri, Vice President of Operations for ASi. “Our content and methodology were proven, but we were lacking a single repository to efficiently manage our client-facing project deliverables.”

Solution

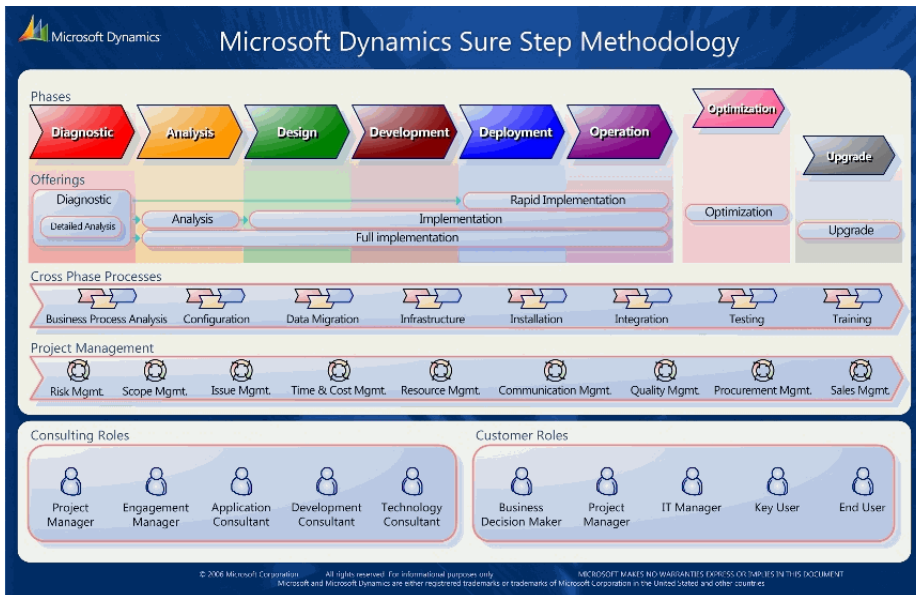
ASi chose to slowly integrate Microsoft Dynamics Sure Step, a comprehensive and highly flexible implementation methodology, with its existing delivery framework.

Microsoft Dynamics Sure Step employs a taxonomy common to other Microsoft products and technologies. “The fact that the Microsoft partner ecosystem is rapidly adopting Microsoft Dynamics Sure Step means that ASi can pick up where another partner has left off without needing to recreate large amounts of project documentation,” says Sadri. “And in the event that we do need to interact with Microsoft, we’re able to save time because we now share a base methodology.”

In addition, because ASi customers often have intricate supply chains spanning vast geographies, ASi project managers and consultants can now better collaborate with virtual project teams, which leads to reduced costs, increased quality, and less risk with a more satisfying experience for its global customers.

Integrated Repository

Integrating the customizable project management repository in Microsoft Dynamics Sure Step, including document templates, best practice guides, and built-in project recording and reporting functionality with their existing delivery framework, helps ASi ensure efficient, consistent collaboration



Microsoft Dynamics Sure Step provides an integrated repository of templates and best practices for managing every phase of an implementation project.

among its delivery teams. For example, ASi uses Microsoft Dynamics Sure Step for archiving various project data to illustrate key concepts and provide additional proof for prospective clients during the sales cycle. Materials generated during the sales process, including project scope details and client expectations, are now stored in a single repository that can easily be shared with members of the ASi delivery team. "Having all the tools within our delivery framework means we can be more efficient internally, effectively communicate expectations to our clients, and repeatedly deliver on those expectations," says Onesto.

Configurable Templates

In addition to its integrated repository, ASi appreciates the flexibility of Microsoft Dynamics Sure Step. The framework lets the partner customize project templates based on the unique requirements of the projects across a variety of project types and industries. For example, a partner can generate the necessary documentation for a client that wants to implement lean

manufacturing and then quickly and easily reuse those deliverables for relevant future projects. ASi is constantly updating internal best practices to include those unique to the consumer packaged goods, industrial goods and services, and apparel industries.

Sure Step in Action

Assurance of a highly coordinated and traceable project flow was an absolute requirement for Felt Bicycles, a global bicycle manufacturer and distributor based in Irvine, California. ASi recently helped Felt Bicycles implement Microsoft Dynamics AX to improve the manufacturer's supply-chain management and drive efficiencies in its warehouse operations.

To minimize disruption to its business, Felt Bicycles targeted an aggressive implementation schedule of four months from project kickoff to completion. Michael Forte, IT Manager at Felt Bicycle, knew that meeting the deployment deadline was critical and he was convinced that ASi could deliver on time. Says Forte, "As soon as ASi showed us documentation from another project that they had recently completed and systematically walked us through each step of the implementation, we knew the company could help us meet our goal."

In addition, ASi posted its project documentation to a Microsoft Office SharePoint® Server site that Forte could access to monitor status, view budget details, and track task completion. Working with ASi, Felt Bicycles deployed Microsoft Dynamics AX on schedule and within budget.

Benefits

ASi considers Microsoft Dynamics Sure Step an integral part of its delivery framework, which focuses on documenting project expectations and delivering on stated goals through every phase of the engagement. By adopting Microsoft Dynamics Sure Step, the

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Jeff Onesto, Business Development Director,
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company has strengthened its overall efficiency, boosting capacity for managing multiple concurrent projects without dramatically increasing staffing levels. And by reducing its costs through shorter sales cycles, streamlined project management, and simplified staff training, ASi is now able to provide cost-effective, enterprise-level solutions to fast-growing companies.

Increases Efficiency by 25 Percent

With its familiar, intuitive interface, Microsoft Dynamics Sure Step simplifies staff training, enabling new hires to gain proficiency in substantially less time than with other methodologies. “By leveraging Microsoft Dynamics Sure Step with our existing solution framework, we’ve been able to reduce ramp-up time for our consultants by 25 percent,” says Tom Kim, Senior Vice President for ASi. “And, we’ve increased our delivery capacity by the equivalent of almost one full-time consultant by eliminating the need to internally develop and maintain our methodologies from the ground up.”

Moreover, by integrating many parts of a standardized and shared Microsoft methodology, the company can more effectively collaborate with other Microsoft Certified Partners on complex global engagements. Because Microsoft has built everything, from sales materials to change-request documentation, ASi can spend more time listening to clients’ business needs and solving them.

Confidently Manages Project Risk

ASi embraces Microsoft Dynamics Sure Step as a key component of its delivery framework. Because the methodology enhances the firm’s existing comprehensive project management toolsets, ASi can record, monitor, and manage project risks. In addition, by using additional components of the Microsoft solution platform, such as Microsoft SQL Server® and Office SharePoint

Server, ASi delivery teams can drill down into real-time project data and communicate relevant information to clients. “The ability to leverage the .NET Framework helps us extend all the great tools within Microsoft Dynamics Sure Step and empower our clients with the unique views they need throughout the life cycle of the entire project,” says Sadri. “As a result, our clients stay fully engaged, which means no surprises, and our team can proactively affect the outcome of each project.”

Decreases Operational Costs

By reducing its operating costs through increased efficiency, ASi is now able to compete for deals that previously would not have been profitable for the company. “We have so much more flexibility now in terms of market penetration,” says Onesto. “Now, we can profitably compete on projects in the lower midmarket, such as with our engagement with Felt Bicycles, a company with fewer than 50 employees and a fixed IT budget.”

Says Forte, “We wanted to bring on an experienced implementation partner, but we didn’t have a lot of room to negotiate price. ASi was right in line with our budget target and we are extremely impressed with the results.”

For More Information

For more information about Microsoft products and services, call the Microsoft Sales Information Center at (800) 426-9400. In Canada, call the Microsoft Canada Information Centre at (877) 568-2495. Customers who are deaf or hard-of-hearing can reach Microsoft text telephone (TTY/TDD) services at (800) 892-5234 in the United States or (905) 568-9641 in Canada. Outside the 50 United States and Canada, please contact your local Microsoft subsidiary. To access information using the World Wide Web, go to: www.microsoft.com

For more information about ASi products and services, call (949) 597-2170 or visit the Web site at: www.advancedsystemsintegration.com

For more information about Felt Bicycles products and services, visit the Web site at: www.feltracing.com

Microsoft Dynamics

Microsoft Dynamics is a line of integrated, adaptable business management solutions that enables you and your people to make business decisions with greater confidence. Microsoft Dynamics works like familiar Microsoft software such as Microsoft Office, which means less of a learning curve for your people, so they can get up and running quickly and focus on what's most important. And because it is from Microsoft, it easily works with the systems that your company already has implemented. By automating and streamlining financial, customer relationship, and supply chain processes, Microsoft Dynamics brings together people, processes, and technologies, increasing the productivity and effectiveness of your business, and helping you drive business success.

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