E-book

Grow opportunities and customer connections with integrated data

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Data management between solutions

No matter the size of your business, disparate application ecosystems and siloed data can lead to challenges. When data sources are disconnected, many employees will develop various ways to cope, which often leads to manual processes and redundant data entry efforts.

Compounding problems is the fact that these redundant data entry efforts are both inefficient and frequently lead to data inaccuracies. In turn, your ability to gain a holistic view of your business' financials or customers is diminished. How can you plan your marketing or growth strategy if you don't know your customers or do not have insights into the top selling products?

Microsoft® Business Applications (Dynamics 365 and the Power Platform) are designed to help solve these all-too-common challenges. It starts with secure access management through Azure® Active Directory, down to user-friendly applications to support your business' growth strategy.

Three ways Microsoft Business Applications can help you succeed are through (1) holistic applications, (2) process automation and (3) low-code development solutions.

Disparate systems could be suppressing your growth

Have you ever played the *Telephone Game* as a child? The original statement, which went through a few different people, never matched the statement the last person heard. As a kid, this was quite amusing! Yet there is a noteworthy lesson in this game. If you can't remember the exact wording, you are inclined to paraphrase what was said, and after a few iterations, the final statement can have a significantly different meaning than the first.
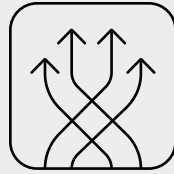
You can easily translate this scenario, and its outcome, to the results of redundant data entry efforts. When systems aren't connected, employees will often try to create work-arounds that aren't documented in a standard operating procedure to bring the same data into a different system.

Redundant data-entry challenges

Imagine you have a sales invoice that needs to be entered into and tracked across your customer relationship management (CRM) solution, inventory management solution and enterprise resource planning (ERP) solution. If any one of these three systems isn't talking to the others, it can cause a cascade of business challenges.
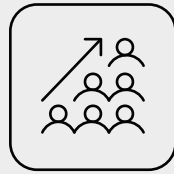
"...it is the companies willing to redefine who they are, what they sell and how they operate that will win in the digital age."

Forbes, 5 ways your business processes could be hurting your business[1]

Reduced productivity & employee dissatisfaction

It is no secret that repetitive processes or navigating between multiple systems reduces employee productivity. According to a digital transformation survey conducted by ZenSar, most employees believe the correct digital tools will make them more successful, and 42% of those surveyed by said digital transformation would improve morale.[2]

Headcount reliance

If your business is growing, and you rely heavily on manual, repetitive processes, you will need additional headcount to maintain these processes at a larger scale. According to Forrester's Total Economic Impact™ of Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central study, the implementation of this ERP solution enabled a reduction in headcount requirements, even as growth continued.[3]

Data-entry errors

Humans make mistakes, and like the Telephone Game, by the time data's been entered manually two or three times, there's a pretty good chance some of it is incorrect. Data entry errors lead to significant business challenges, including reduced customer engagement and a loss of revenue. Furthermore, relying on inaccurate data may lead to misinformed strategic business decisions.

Three ways Microsoft Business Applications can help you grow

1. Dynamics 365 enables you to have a holistic view of your financials and customers

Dynamics 365 is a SaaS solution that empowers users to enter data whether they are working from home, from the office or while traveling. In addition, with its API capabilities and Microsoft App Source, it is easy to integrate relevant data in the application.
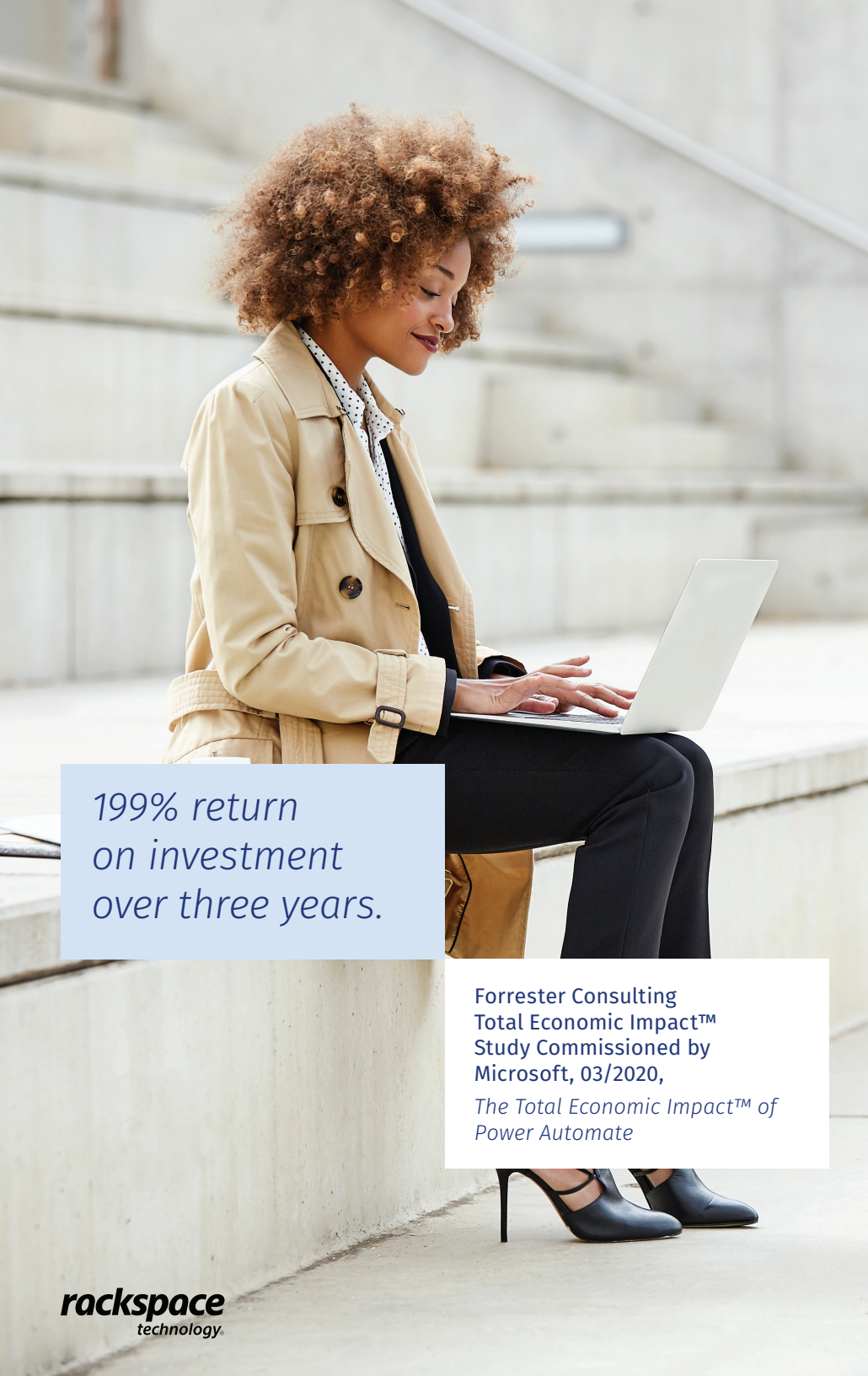
These capabilities can enable the generation of real-time data insights while establishing a single source of truth for customer or financial data.

As an added benefit, a well-designed and configured Dynamics 365 application can improve productivity, which can lead to cost savings through a reduction in hiring requirements.[3]

Avoidance of one full-time equivalent and one part-time equivalent finance and operations hire is noted as a key quantified benefit of Business Central[3]

Forrester Consulting Total Economic Impact™ Study Commissioned by Microsoft, 09/2020, *The Total Economic Impact™ of Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central*

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199% return on investment over three years.

Forrester Consulting
Total Economic Impact™
Study Commissioned by
Microsoft, 03/2020,
*The Total Economic Impact™ of
Power Automate*

2. Power Automate reduces errors by 27.4%

A reduction in data errors can lead to an increase in data accuracy. Microsoft Power Automate brings automation and consistency to your workloads, and has been shown to reduce errors by more than 27%, thereby making the data you analyze for use in strategic business decisions or improving customer relationships more reliable.[4]

In addition to improved data accuracy, Power Automate has generated a 199% return on investment over three years. These significant savings are due to a reduction in headcount enabled through the automation of manual processes, such as new-hire onboarding processes.[4]

3. Power Apps cuts development time and cost by 74%

In a Forrester study, Power Apps was found to provide an ROI of 188% over three years.[5] Another benefit was a 74% reduction in application development time.[5] These results reflect an improvement of internal development efforts, as well as a reduction in professional service fees and requirements for vendor applications.

Notable unqualified benefits include improved business outcomes and decisions. Businesses using Power Apps noted happier customers and increased revenue. Employees also found data to be real-time and more accurate, enabling them to make quicker and better decisions.[5]

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Advantages of quality data

Sophisticated data solutions, when designed and integrated properly, can help your business reliably capture, govern and maintain accurate data. And businesses with secure, reliable access to quality data can improve company revenue and better manage costs.[6]

Furthermore, executives and managers can more easily generate real-time insights and build confidence in the reliability of their data.

More reliable data makes better customer experiences possible. For example, customers are increasingly looking to businesses to create more personalized experiences. And according to McKinsey, companies who successfully deliver those experiences can increase revenue by up to 15%.[7]

Connected solutions like Dynamics 365 and the Power Platform provide the tools you need to manage data, from entry to reporting, in order to gain a holistic view of your customer and financial data.

How to get started

1. **Identify your challenges**: Gain some insights into challenges being caused by your disconnected systems. Speak with managers to learn what work-arounds employees have created to either capture, analyze, and/or report on data.

2. **Establish your priorities**: Identify one or two challenges that are either causing the most redundant efforts or leading to the highest data inaccuracies. These can provide a measurement for an investment into a connected solution.

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Start connecting today

Move your process-improvement projects forward

With our experts — and technology from Microsoft — we can help you streamline and improve your internal processes.

Our experts start by establishing a thorough understanding of your business priorities, challenges and constraints. Once identified, we can help advise you of next steps. When you are ready for system improvement, our team of professionals and engineers can design, build, manage and optimize your Microsoft Business Application solution.

Learn more at **rackspace.com/applications/dyanamics-365** and click on "Get Started" to speak with a specialist today. Or call our specialists at **866-201-7852**.

References:

1. 5 ways your business processes could be hurting your business, Forbes, 11/2016
2. Digital Transformation: should employees feel like they are an afterthought?, ZenSar, 9/2019
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4. The Total Economic Impact™ of Power Automate, A Forrester Consulting Total Economic Impact Study Commissioned by Microsoft, 3/2020
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6. Managing Data Is As Critical As Having Data: Focus On Data Governance And Data Quality, Forbes, 08/2019
7. The future of personalization — and how to get ready for it, McKinsey, 06/2019

About Rackspace Technology

Rackspace Technology® is the multicloud solutions expert. We combine our expertise with the world's leading technologies — across applications, data and security — to deliver end-to-end solutions. We have a proven record of advising customers based on their business challenges, designing solutions that scale, building and managing those solutions, and optimizing returns into the future.

As a global, multicloud technology services pioneer, we deliver innovative capabilities of the cloud to help customers build new revenue streams, increase efficiency and create incredible experiences. Named a best place to work, year after year according to Fortune, Forbes and Glassdoor, we attract and develop world-class talent to deliver the best expertise to our customers. Everything we do is wrapped in our obsession with our customers' success — our Fanatical Experience™ — so they can work faster, smarter and stay ahead of what's next.

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