



EMBRACING TECHNOLOGIES WITH BUSINESS CENTRAL



Better together – Dynamics 365 BC, Planner, Flow and Azure

When introducing ERP, especially Dynamics 365 Business Central in its first not cloud-only version, the initial question that arises is the type of operation - going cloud or making the investment in a complete server landscape with all the necessary material and human resources.

For a traditional bakery and manufacturer of fine food advertising means from Upper Franconia in Germany, the only right and reasonable way was choosing Dynamics 365 BC on cloud. This was an exciting challenge for us at Business Systemhaus AG not only because it was our very first project implementing Dynamics 365 BC on cloud. There were also certain requirements from the customer which forced us to acquire new technologies and rethink our whole way of doing ERP projects. We got the chance to interlink our two main departments – ERP and Modern Workplace – together. The outcome for the bakehouse is a functionable Dynamics 365 BC environment with different extensions – both standardized like Business Systemhaus AG's 365Performance DATEV, 365Performance Essentials and 365Performance Documents and customized. These customer-specific extensions are based on and use the functionality of 365Performance Documents – expanded further by Office 365 applications and Azure technologies.

Overview of technologies and programs used in this project:

- Dynamics 365 Business Central
- Microsoft Planner
- Microsoft Flow
- Azure Functions
- DevOps and Visual Studio Code

First, the integration of Microsoft Planner was a customer requirement with the aim to provide the employees in the production department a graphical overview of the production stages displaying the way articles go through different stages from production to packaging and finally to the shipping department. The employees should have a clear presentation of the production stages where articles and orders are located enriched by further information regarding each order like amount, delivery date etc.. This overview is displayed on screens in the production department. The challenge was the integration of Dynamics 365 BC and Microsoft Planner which is no standard functionality. Therefore our developers made use of another Office 365 application to bridge the gap. At the point an order is released, a specific customization in Dynamics 365 BC from our developers triggers a Flow that is enriched by the information of this order. This Flow then hands over all this information to Planner and there directly creates an initial task in the first bucket representing the first production stage. Then Planner is the main actor with all its functionality to support the processes and tasks in the production line of the German bakery.



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At the point of releasing an order, a production note is created. Our customer had the special requirement here that there should be a barcode integrated in the order document transferring additional information through the different production stages. Same here – this is no standard functionality Dynamics 365 BC offers. To solve this, our developers created an Azure function. By using dotnet coding they created a specific Azure function to execute the following. The Azure function uses parameters that are necessary for the barcode generation handed over by Dynamics 365 BC, generates an individual barcode for each order and sends it back to Dynamics 365 BC where the barcode is integrated into the document as an image file. Furthermore, the document is created through our extension 365Performance Documents to enable e. g. the integration of item pictures and further comments sections. Looking ahead to the future, the Planner task which is initiated by Flow should pin this production document directly to the task by Flow.

For our customer there are several positive outcomes. The biggest added value realized is the general road to digitalization throughout the whole company. The automation and digitalization of the business processes had the effect that manual work could be reduced which results in a faster order processing and reduced error rate.

Drawing a conclusion from this exciting first project with Dynamics 365 BC on cloud, we as Business Systemhaus AG had to invest a lot in the promptly adoption of the new development toolset and mindset around Dynamics 365 BC. We gained a lot of knowledge during this project in AL programming and organizing projects using DevOps and Visual Studio Code. The project forced us to interlink our business fields and forced our consultants and developers to think outside their boxes – a little trial & error gaming did the rest to deliver the customer the best solution possible.



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