



## Case study

# Building a rock-solid data foundation, step by step

A global travel company with thousands of staff in the UK, Dubai, and ANZ had been a user of a legacy homegrown IT system that had expanded over the years.

The system was hard to maintain and fraught with issues as customer data was divided in a number of applications and databases.

In order to target productivity, achieve compliance, and reduce costs, the business started a project to move to Dynamics 365 Finance, Supply Chain Management, and Customer Engagement.

The first phase of the project targeted the UK business and involved moving over 150 of their business processes to Dynamics 365.

Since the travel business handles people's personal data, including sensitive data like passport information and medical certificates, they had to be GDPR compliant. The team worked with an experienced system integrator and took a proactive approach to data governance and data security starting with charting out the architectural blueprint of their "to be" design. They wanted to be on top of all data outflows and inflows to make sure there is consistency, integrity, and security of data. There is one source of truth, so they defined apps that held the master data and a companywide policy formulation to let every department know what to find where and the exact process to request, update, and delete a customer's record.

They also built in workflows to manage data retention responsibly, like disposing of information when requested by a customer.

The previous systems were disjointed with data existing in silos. Different departments had sometimes widely different views of customers, which caused confusion and poor service for customers. Call centers were constantly busy as a customer's call was routed from department to department as no one person knew the whole picture.

One of the senior managers remarked that taking a proactive approach to data governance and coming up with a design that put data at the heart of every decision, helped the company to become truly data driven.

With the first phase of the UK deployment successful, the company is now actively working on going live for Dubai and ANZ businesses.

The system integrator also recommended an approach of managing configuration data for deployments. With businesses in three countries, there is lot of commonality in setups in the three legal entities that could be reused. But at the same time, there are peculiarities that need to be maintained separately. Instead of managing all this complexity manually, system integrators had good experience using data templates and packages in Finance and Supply Chain Management. They worked with the company and came up with a configuration plan checklist that identified each of the three businesses' specific setup requirements. This planning exercise paid back multi-fold when the business discovered how smooth, quick, and error free their subsequent deployments became.

As part of the project, they also moved their historical databases of different applications to Azure Data Lake and connected with Power BI to provide analytical reporting to the end users.

The company now has a unified view of their customers, which helps them provide better customer service and allows marketing efforts to be more targeted.