



CLIENT SOLUTION CASE STUDY

Port of Anacortes Sets Sail to Improved Productivity with Cloud Upgrade



MIGRATING FROM DYNAMICS SL TO DYNAMICS 365 BUSINESS CENTRAL

Customer: Port of Anacortes

Industry: Government, Tourism

Headquarters: Anacortes, WA

Solution: Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central

CHALLENGE: Port of Anacortes needed to replace its aging, older version of Microsoft Dynamics SL on-premise solution, as it was frequently crashing, causing disruption to business operations.

SOLUTION: Port of Anacortes selected cloud-based Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central.

BENEFITS:

- Easily allows for a remote work environment, faster than their slow VPN connection
- Reliable, modern cloud-based solution
- More user-friendly interface
- Provides true “self-service” access to information without asking Accounting
- Cost-effective implementation
- Velosio is quicker to respond to support questions than previous partner

CLIENT OVERVIEW

The Port of Anacortes is a municipal corporation of the State of Washington, created in 1926 to provide for the development and maintenance of harbors and terminals, promote tourism and foster economic activity in its district. One of eight natural deep-water marine terminal facilities in Washington State—the Port is instrumental to the success and economic development of the community with its 1,000+ slip marina and its roughly 80 acres of commercial properties. The Port, including its airport, marine terminal, and marina, is independent from other local or state governments and has geographic boundaries that consist of Fidalgo, Guemes, Cypress, Sinclair, and neighboring islands, and a small strip of land bordering Padilla Bay up to and including Samish Island.

Aging Dynamics SL Solution

The Port of Anacortes finance team was a long-time user of Microsoft Dynamics SL, but the screens began to crash more and more often. “We didn’t know if it was the aging technology that was making the screens crash, but we became increasingly frustrated, and we weren’t big fans of the user interface anyway,” says the Port’s Accounting Manager, Wendy Fauver. “Our IT Manager and I discussed upgrading for a couple of years, as the AR side of the system was not very user friendly, and we perceived the solution to be only for project-based companies—not a great fit for the Port,” continues Fauver.

Fauver attended a Microsoft Dynamics SL user group conference. “We attended a presentation on Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central during the conference, and became interested in looking at it more seriously,” says Fauver. “When I got home, I signed up for the free two-week trial of Business Central and started playing around with it. It seemed more user friendly, so we started down that route,” continues Fauver. After reviewing and processing dummy transactions through the trial, “We felt that Business Central was an improved version of Dynamics SL,” says Fauver. “We concluded we didn’t have to look at other solutions.”

A New Solution and Partner

Port of Anacortes was working with another Microsoft partner for their Dynamics SL solution but had not been happy with their level of service for some time. “Our IT Manager, Anthony, and I talked about it, and we decided it would be a good time to move to a different Microsoft partner since we wanted to upgrade anyway,” says Fauver. “We researched different partners, interviewed them, and discussed cost and migration with them. A big consideration for us was the cost of the implementation since we are fairly small with a staff of only three in Accounting. Would this be worth the cost? Would it increase our productivity? Velosio gave us an upgrade offer that was very competitive price-wise, and we were comfortable with the folks we interviewed, so we selected them as our partner,” continues Fauver.

“I appreciate how quick Velosio is to respond to our questions and concerns,” says Fauver. “I’ve never had to wait two days for a response like I have with other partners—Velosio’s customer service is great.”




A Remote Work Environment



After going live with Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central, and working with the system for nearly a year, the world was shut down from a worldwide pandemic—COVID-19—but the Port of Anacortes team was able to work from home efficiently in the cloud—something that wasn't available to them with Dynamics SL on-premise. "The cloud-based technology has really saved us during this time," says Fauver. "In the past, our IT Manager would set up a VPN connection for us if we needed to work from home, but it was slow and very inefficient," continues Fauver. The Port's airport, marine terminal, and marina remained open to serve vital roles for emergency services access and ensure the transport of needed goods to market, but the main port office and harbormaster's office closed to the public with staff working remotely by phone and email—including the accounting staff. "With Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central in the cloud, we all efficiently worked from home during the shelter in place," describes Fauver.

There have been some bumps in the road, but Fauver looks forward to attending the virtual Business Central user group coming up, and to learning more about Power BI. "Since we used Dynamics SL for so long, we were so used to it, but I'm a big proponent of giving some time to get used to a new solution." Now that Port of Anacortes has a year of experience with Business Central under its belt, the team is looking to add Fixed Assets to its AP, AR, and GL configuration.

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- Wendy Fauver
Accounting Manager

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 888.725.2555
 info@velosio.com

