



eBook

# Choosing an Add-On for Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central

10 Important Questions to Ask Before You Buy

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# Let's get started

Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central is a fully functional Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) product that provides comprehensive financial, manufacturing, distribution, inventory management, Customer Relationship Management (CRM), and retail functionality for companies in various industries. Microsoft continues to work on enhancing Business Central's capabilities and provides two major releases along with ten minor releases that include bug fixes every year.

As capable as Business Central is at meeting the needs of most companies, there are times when a company will need additional capabilities to extend or enhance the product to meet a particular need, such as an industry requirement or a unique process need for that company.

This guide will help you determine the best course of action when considering enhancing your Business Central product. This guide assumes you are running Business Central in a cloud environment (SaaS). However, much of the information remains relevant if you are running Business Central on-premises.

## 1 Do I need additional software to enhance Business Central?

Fortunately, Business Central is flexible enough to be configured to meet most business requirements without requiring additional development.

However, there are times when a company will need an additional software solution rather than a simple configuration change. Additional software solutions can take one of two forms:

### 1. Microsoft Partner

Your Microsoft reseller partner can provide software development expertise to customize Business Central for your unique situation.

### 2. ISV

An Independent Software Vendor (ISV) might already have developed a commercial solution that meets your requirements.

Generally, the main differences between the two approaches are:

#### Customized solution

- You own the custom-developed solution.
- It meets your specific software needs.
- It takes time to map out the software requirements and build, test, and implement the solution.
- Costs might be high depending on the solution's complexity.

#### ISV solution

- Licensed from a third-party software vendor.
- Available right away.
- ISV vendors provide regular updates and bug fixes.
- It is usually more cost-effective than a custom solution.
- It might have more functionality than you need, resulting in higher costs.

Your partner will be able to discuss the benefits of each solution for your particular situation.



## 2

### How should I go about choosing an add-on solution?

If you find that Business Central lacks the functionality you need, you should first talk to your partner. It might be that Business Central already has that capability built into it. If it does not, the next step is to perform a needs assessment for the missing functionality. Is this an absolutely necessary modification to Business Central? If so, you will want to identify all your requirements and talk to your partner to help you compare the cost benefits of a customized software solution vs. an ISV solution.

## 3

### Where can I find available ISV products for Business Central?

Microsoft currently lists over 6000 ISV products available for Business Central on AppSource.

These products range from inventory and warehouse management solutions to connectors for eCommerce platforms like Shopify and BigCommerce to credit card processing and collections.

ISV products are either embedded applications or standalone solutions:

- **Embedded Application**  
An embedded application is fully integrated into Business Central. A benefit of having an embedded product is that all the information and software are available within Business Central. For example, retail solutions that are directly tied to Business Central's financial capabilities must be embedded.
- **Standalone Solution**  
A standalone solution typically connects to external applications via Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) or other integration methods. An example might be a solution that provides an interface to a CRM or Human Resource Management (HRM) application.

#### Learn more

To view all the ISV add-on products that are available for Business Central, visit [Microsoft's AppSource for Business Central](#).



# 4

## What are the licensing and maintenance costs?

Software licensing is typically determined by user type. Be sure to find out how the software product is licensed and maintained, as well as all the costs associated with your organization's use of it. Understand the licensing model so you are aware of the costs of adding additional users and maintaining the solution over time.

# 5

## How does the ISV handle support and problem resolution after implementation?

Knowing how the ISV handles support and problem resolution after implementation is critical. Ask about the escalation procedure for problem resolution. Be very clear on exactly what will happen if you have issues with the software. Understand whether support for the product will be provided by the ISV, your partner, or another entity, as well as any associated costs for support.

# 6

## Are modification requests allowed? If so, who would handle them, the Partner or the ISV? What is the process, and how are the changes handled?

Modifications are sometimes needed for three reasons:



The customer has an issue with the software (a bug).



A suggestion is made that could benefit most or all users of the software.



The customer needs specific additional functionality for their business.

It's important to know how the ISV handles these types of requests:

- Are modification requests allowed? If so, who makes the changes, the partner or the ISV?
- Does the ISV have a documented process?
- How are the changes handled?
- What is the cost?
- How are upgrades handled, and how do they affect upgrades to Business Central and vice versa?



# 7

## How does the ISV provide updates to the end user?

Frequent software updates and bug fixes are essential. Be sure to determine how frequently software updates are released for the product annually.

Ensure you're clear on how updates to your add-on will be handled and that your add-on will be able to keep up with Business Central's update schedule.

- Will updates be provided by your partner or the ISV?
- Will there be a charge for the updates?
- Will there be a charge for services to install the update from the ISV and/or your partner?

Ensure you fully understand how updates will be provided and the associated costs to avoid unexpected expenses.



# 8

## Are there potential conflicts with existing add-on products and code?

Some ISV products might conflict with products from other vendors or that access the same Business Central resources. Check with your partner. For instance, installing a Retail solution and a Sales Tax solution might conflict because they access the same part of Business Central. This is why an up-front needs assessment is so crucial.

# 9

## Does the ISV offer training and certification?

Software is of little use if your employees can't use it. Training is an integral part of acquiring a new piece of software. Ask the ISV if they provide training and/or certifications for their products. If not, ask your partner if they can provide training and certification for this ISV product.

# 10

## What about the stability and longevity of the ISV?

ISV failures are rare, but it is important to know an ISV's financial health and commitment to the product being considered. Ask your partner if they have had previous experience with this ISV or this particular product.



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## Getting the Big Picture

Consider these tips mentioned above as you weigh the advantages and disadvantages of purchasing an ISV add-on product.

And be sure to include your partner in the decision-making process. Your partner will be able to guide you through the ISV selection process and offer valuable insight into various ISV solutions and which ISV options meet your specific requirements. Your partner will also be able to help you calculate your overall costs. For example, suppose you have a requirement for 30 users. In that case, your partner can help you estimate the monthly cost for a 30-user license, complete with licensing, implementation, training, and support.

If you are looking for a Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central partner to help you with Business Central support, training, upgrades, consulting, software development, and managed IT, [contact ArcherPoint](#) or call 1-866-343-4517.