



Modernization + Promotion = Continued Success!

CBSI AND THE STRATOS ISVDC

The Stratos Cloud Alliance was created to help all Microsoft Partners continue to grow their success by modernizing their approach to cloud services and expanding their portfolio of services. Far beyond licensing guidance, billing and support from certified experts, Stratos Cloud Alliance provides a deep portfolio of offerings, marketing and sales support across the entire Microsoft stack, with special focus and expertise on Dynamics 365 and Azure.

Stratos is committed to providing extensive know-how, experience, and support to partners wishing to become an Indirect CSP Provider to grow their business.

The Stratos ISV Development Center

Having earned more than a dozen application-centered Microsoft Gold Competencies, Stratos Cloud Alliance is now a Microsoft Certified ISV Development Center (ISVDC). ISVs who offer extensions, utilities, and customizations built on the venerable Dynamics on-premises applications, GL, NAV, SL, and AX can now turn to the Stratos ISVDC for comprehensive end-to-end full lifecycle assistance to help them migrate their software to Dynamics 365 in the cloud and get it listed in the AppSource marketplace directory.

Case Study: Computer Business Solutions, Inc. Turns to Stratos Cloud Alliance ISVDC for Help Modernizing Their Software

Since 1991, Computer Business Solutions, Inc. (CBSi) has implemented ERP solutions for clients in a variety of industries, including Inventory, Distribution & Supply Chain, Manufacturing (MRP & MPS), Oilfield Service (OFS), Equipment Rental, and Contact Relationship Management (CRM).

More recently they have developed significant customized extensions to Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central to further automate processes, maximize efficiencies, and help these clients achieve their desired business outcomes.

CBSi prides itself on understanding how clients derive maximum value from Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central (BC) software, as well as how to apply leading practices to improve their bottom line. Clients also appreciate that CBSi is a “one-stop shop” for all their Microsoft software licensing needs including Office, 365, Dynamics, PowerApps, and SharePoint.

Modernizing Legacy Software

Originally, and for more than two decades, CBSi developed these extensions for the Microsoft Dynamics on-premises platforms that had preceded cloud-based Microsoft Dynamics 365.

CBSi’s flagship product, ofsERP, expands the capabilities of Dynamics 365 Business Central by enabling companies to send their own equipment and personnel to a customer job site for rental, to perform a specific service, or both. A fundamental difference between ofsERP and BC’s Service Management or Dynamics 365 Field Service, starts with the fact that in ofsERP the emphasis is on the equipment owned by the

service company, typically not on what is being serviced.

This enables additional industries to use Business Central, such as oilfield service (ofs) and rental, where the availability, utilization, revenue, location history, inspection, repair history and preventative maintenance schedule of each unique piece of equipment is paramount, and ofsERP with BC becomes a complete industry solution.

Recognizing the need to modernize their software by transitioning it to Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central (BC), CBSi set out to find ways to accelerate that process. Microsoft had introduced AppSource as the marketplace for all Dynamics 365 extensions and utilities. Being listed there opened doors to an enormous variety of new sales channels and opportunities. First, though, they would have to qualify for inclusion.

Microsoft Investment programs for Business Central ISVs in FY22 Provide Solutions!

The stated purpose of Microsoft’s FY22 ISV investment program is “to accelerate the success of ISVs with Business Central online and Microsoft AppSource.”

These investments include two fundamental initiatives:

Intellectual Property (IP) Activation Support

For ISVs who have decided to migrate their on-premise solutions to Microsoft AppSource and need support to accelerate onboarding. As a Dynamics NAV/SL/GP ISV partner, they get support from a coach to migrate their legacy IP to Business Central online.

Customer Migration Support

For partners who have their Business Central App(s) on Microsoft AppSource and have an ambition to migrate on-prem customers. As a Business Central App provider, they get support

from a coach to migrate their on-premise towards Business Central online with their available app(s).

Finding the Right Coach

CBSi had first encountered Stratos years before. Stratos was pursuing a Microsoft Dynamics project with the Pizza Hut subsidiary responsible for calculating franchisee royalties, marketing development fund allocations, insurance, and invoicing 5,000 stores. Recognizing the need for customization to manage their franchise store structure and complex invoicing requirements, Stratos found CBSi had a franchise billing product and the right combination of industry experience and expertise to provide exactly what this customer required. Together, they won the deal on-prem and today BC provides significant efficiencies for the client.

When the Stratos Cloud Alliance was first formed to support Tier II partners, CBSi quickly joined the alliance and turned to their long-time partners to support a wide variety of services needed to serve their customers.

When Dynamics 365 Business Central was introduced and the opportunity arose to modernize their software to run on it and participate in AppSource to promote it widely, CBSi was

delighted to find out that Stratos Cloud Alliance would be their coach.

This positioned Stratos to collaborate with CBSi at every level of development and promotion. Wherever CBSi needed additional resources or experienced guidance in navigating the complexities of Microsoft's certification programs, Stratos was there to provide. Even though they had participated in, and repeatedly achieved, the "Certified for Microsoft Dynamics" (CFMD) program, qualifying for inclusion in AppSource required a whole new level of commitment. As an example, this program required CBSi to onboard a minimum of 50 paid full users of Dynamics 365 BC once their offering was onboarded. CBSi would double that number well before reaching the deadline.

Software Conversion

Throughout the process of converting their software from its previous Microsoft NAV on-premises platform to Dynamics 365 BC, the CBSi team consulted with the Stratos experts whenever they encountered questions or concerns.

They found the greatest value when it came time to put the converted extension software through the required validation processes. Stratos was able to perform the same validations Microsoft would



ultimately require assuring the CBSi software was completely ready for their approval process.

Stratos also helped CBSi to properly format and prepare all required documentation for their extensions for immediate acceptance by Microsoft and inclusion in AppSource and other sites.

New Challenge

Dennis Smith, founder and CEO of CBSi, is pleased that his biggest current challenge is to find and recruit people who have enough experience with Business Central and CBSi's targeted industries to keep up with demand. To solve this challenge Smith looks to the future, considering the possibility of selling their software through Stratos, or perhaps through a network of select Microsoft Dynamics partners.

He adds that he believes the functionality of ofsERP, not the pending conversion to BC extensions, was the key driver for large ofsERP sales which occurred even before the transition to Business Central cloud was complete. However Smith also believes the presence of an ISV product as an extension on AppSource is already a critical litmus test for savvy corporate buyers. He shares some of his thoughts about what has made the transition to BC so successful for many legacy NAV on-prem companies:

First, Microsoft's decision to add a new extension layer exclusively for customizations which react with the Microsoft code base without modifying it, "is yet another technological feat by Microsoft and a competitive game-changer," says Smith. Once partners perform the initial transition of their clients' customizations and data to BC cloud, clients can receive and deploy new features from Microsoft and ISV partner extensions without having to invest in a time-consuming and expensive upgrade."

Second, since "BC cloud preserves about 95% of Navision, Dynamics NAV, and BC on-prem, with the same tables, logic, applications, and more," according to Dennis Smith. "Partners and end-users alike, experienced with this lineage have a much shorter learning curve. This familiarity begets some NAV long-timers like me to affectionately refer to BC cloud as "NAV in the cloud."


Thanks in part to the excellent support and timely information regarding Microsoft we received from Stratos ISVDC, CBSi extensions for Microsoft Dynamics 365 BC were listed and available in AppSource months earlier than they would have without Stratos's help.

Dennis says that the BC sales we are seeing are just the tip of the iceberg and that partners who have not yet converted to BC extensions should discuss their plans to do so, with Stratus, as soon as possible.

Get the expertise and guidance you need to activate and accelerate your ISV solution migration from on-premises to the cloud.

Need help getting your solution published on Microsoft AppSource?

Contact Us:

 **888.644.7066**

 info@stratoscloud.com