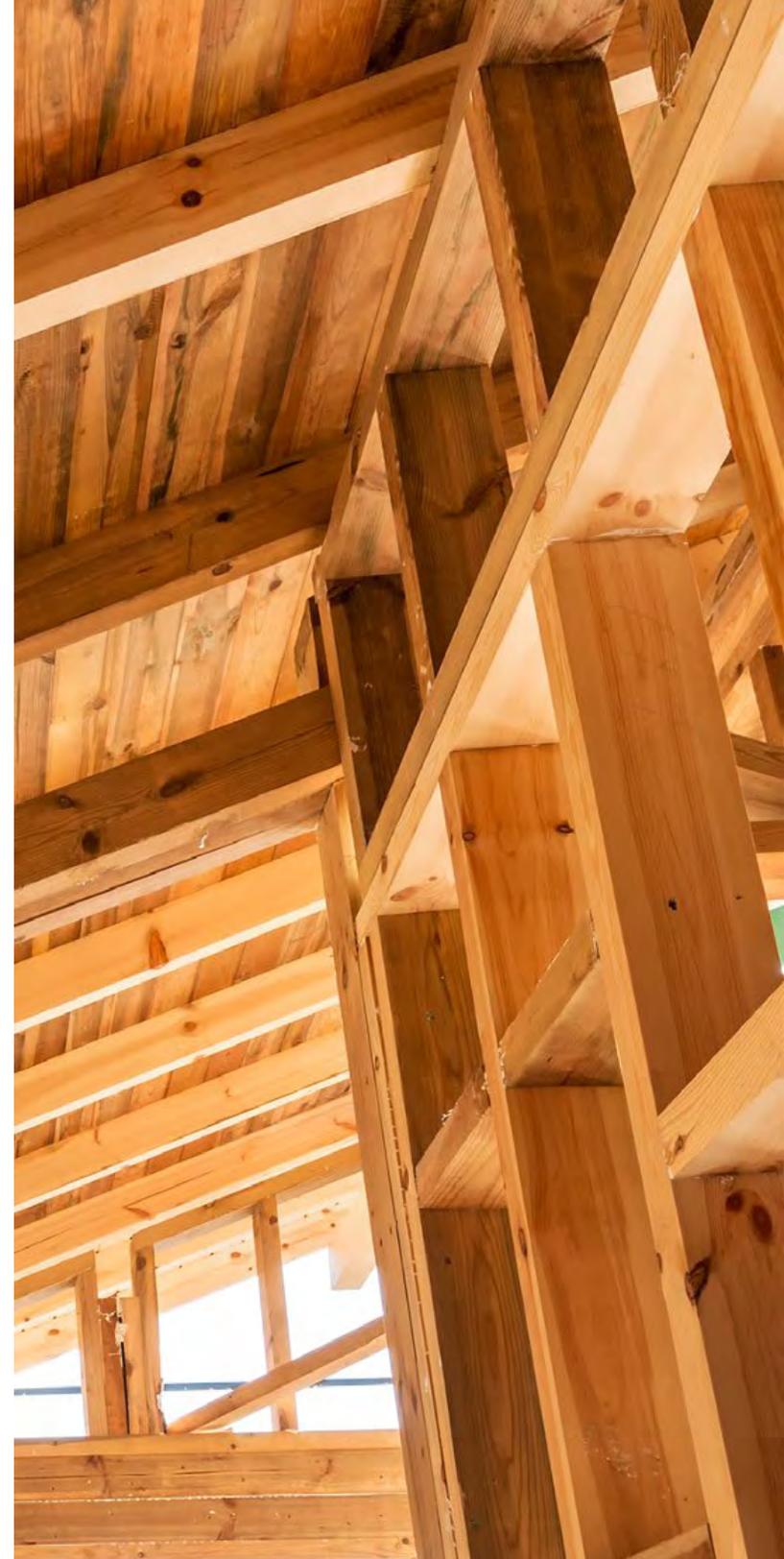


**Business application
modernization for
the homebuilding
industry**

Abstract

This eBook, written by business and technology experts, details the need for business modernization, the challenges associated with change, and the solutions available for companies ready to transform. It explains our approach to and experience in facilitating business application modernization for the homebuilding industry globally. We can help you create a rich workplace experience, simplify, and optimize on-premise IT, and achieve a secure, high-performance cloud environment. This eBook presents our lessons learned, best practices and research to help your homebuilding or construction company across your technology solutions.



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How to be resilient in times of change

Businesses reflect the markets they serve and change alongside them to remain relevant. For decades, market changes were gradual, giving companies years to plan and execute business transformation and the associated technical upgrades.

In recent years, the rate of change has picked up, initiating a fierce debate: Should businesses remain focused on the present and risk irrelevance? Or should they plunge into the unknown but exciting waters of business transformation?

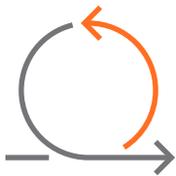
2020 ended that debate. The year's challenges rocked businesses that had focused on short-term priorities over long-term transformation. Companies quickly had to set up remote workforces, shift from physical to digital

business models, and bolster their IT infrastructure on-the-fly to accommodate a sudden increase in usage. And, with such an increased demand in the housing market, homebuilding organizations have had to quickly pivot in order to thrive.

Business transformation is no longer a hot topic. It's a business imperative. As a result, businesses are sprinting toward the cloud to establish a starting point.



This race to the cloud is made all the more urgent by the following six trends.



1. Agility has become necessary for competitive businesses

Ad hoc changes and upgrades are not enough to compete in a dynamic business environment. Companies must become “agile businesses” with the infrastructure, applications, processes and talent models to make changes quickly and decisively. 47% of business leaders say agility allows them to rapidly adapt to customer-or market-driven changes.¹



2. Digital business opportunities are growing, and they represent a significant portion of revenue

Digitally mature companies know how to use technology for positive business outcomes.² 45% of companies that are deemed “highly digitally mature” report net revenue growth significantly above industry average.³



3. Delivering outstanding experiences for “digital consumers” is the new competitive advantage

21% of CEOs cited changed customer behavior as a business risk that elicits extreme concern.⁴ The best way to keep up with customers and deliver the experiences they crave is by gathering data, extracting insights, and transforming those insights into valuable interactions. Today, up to 88% of valuable customer data goes ignored.⁵



4. Operational efficiency is essential for a futureproofed business

39% of organizations have adopted intelligent automation (IA) at the functional level, while another 32% of organizations report that they'll incorporate intelligent automation into their functional activities within a year.⁶ This approach is working. Companies that have automated 50 to 70% of their tasks have enjoyed triple-digit return on investment.⁷



5. Global supply chains need built-in resilience to weather disruptions

Today's supply chains are complex, global beasts. Business leaders have turned their attention to reducing both complexity and uncertainty by using technology such as advanced track and trace and robotic process automation.⁸ Automating supply chain processes allows leaders to focus on their strategic problems.



6. Cyber risks and cyber management are growing in complexity

Nearly 80% of global executives say cybersecurity is their organization's biggest risk management priority.⁹ The cybersecurity landscape has increased in complexity and attacker entry points have proliferated as companies turn to remote work. 32% of CEOs say the lack of available talent for key skills causes extreme concern.¹⁰

Criteria for successful business transformation

With the urgency of these trends in mind, what's next?

The next step is to shift your homebuilding organization's mindset toward a focus on modernizing and digitizing business processes. All stakeholders must buy into the idea that technology is the enabler, not the outcome.

sa.global views transformation as a journey consisting of four phases: simplify, modernize, accelerate and reimagine.

Each of these phases is specifically designed to address the common challenges that crop up during a business transformation project. Next, we cover these challenges, and how Microsoft's Business Applications Cloud addresses them.

Approach to business transformation

Simplify: Simplification streamlines operations, reduces costs, and removes technical debt. Deploying intelligent automation, for example, improves system performance, reduces backlogs, introduces efficiency and indirectly supports innovation.

Modernize: Application modernization makes organizations more agile and resilient, so they can respond faster to disruption. Deploying modern development platforms, processes and operating models supports these objectives (i.e., migrating the application platform to the cloud).

Accelerate: Acceleration means developing modern applications for new business process functionality to enhance both user and customer experiences. This allows organizations to digitize value streams for transparency and speed,

merge value stream execution analytics for insight-driven decision making, and enhance business responsiveness through automation and big data. This process improves customer and employee experiences and accelerates partner collaboration for co-innovation.

Reimagine: Reimagination initiates and accelerates business model disruption using digital platforms and advanced data and analytics. It streamlines and enhances partner ecosystem collaborations for risk management and cost optimization, and helps identify new business areas for new revenue and profit streams.

**How to address the
challenges of cloud-based
business transformation
with Microsoft's Business
Applications Cloud**

Building on Microsoft's Business Applications Cloud

Proceeding with a business transformation strategy is the easy part. Executing that strategy is where it gets tricky. Microsoft's business applications cloud serves as an excellent foundation for enterprise modernization.

1. Microsoft Power Platform

An estimated 45% of employee activities can be automated with existing technologies.¹¹ 86% of companies struggle to recruit the talent to build the applications they need.¹² Low-code tools help companies make the most of their developer and non-developer technical talent.

Microsoft Power Platform is a low-code application framework that enables rapid application development using data stored in Microsoft Dynamics 365 and third-party products such as SAP, Salesforce, Workday, ServiceNow or your own custom-built applications.

2. Microsoft Dynamics 365

Enterprise software traditionally exists as enterprise resource planning (ERP) or customer engagement (CE) monoliths. These tools are powerful, but significant upgrades can call for an overwhelming "rip and replace" approach. If you can't afford the business interruption or secure stakeholder buyin, this reality often forces you to delay business transformation.

Microsoft Dynamics 365 brings CE and ERP cloud offerings together into one cloud service with specific, purpose-built applications for key business processes including:

- Finance
- Supply chain management
- Project operations
- Commerce
- Fraud protection
- Salesforce automation
- Marketing
- Customer service
- Field service

The applications can be implemented individually in a sequential manner or bundled together to modernize multiple areas of the business at one time. Additionally, these cloud applications can be incorporated into existing application architectures and integrated with other third-party applications such as SAP, Salesforce, Workday, ServiceNow or your custom applications.

3. Data-driven business transformation

Data silos prevent company-wide visibility of data and stifle insight-generating analysis. Microsoft provides the tools to centralize your data to enable insights on your customers, products, equipment, and business processes.

4. Built-in security

Dynamics 365 business applications come with built-in security features. This intelligent security helps organizations detect and respond to threats across their entire digital estates. Dynamics 365 accomplishes this with identity and access management, information protection, threat protection and security management capabilities. This allows you to focus on business outcomes instead of secure application development.

5. sa.global HomebuilderONE

sa.global HomebuilderONE is an end-to-end modern ERP homebuilding solution built on Microsoft Dynamics 365. It reduces complexities and simplifies your IT environment, leveraging all the native tools that Microsoft Dynamics offers, including Power Platform, Power Apps, Power BI, Office 365, Azure, and others.



How sa.global customers successfully manage the builder life cycle

sa.global implemented sa.global HomebuilderONE, built on Microsoft Dynamics 365, to manage the entire builder life cycle from land feasibility to development, sales, construction, finance and postsales customer service at each of the following organizations.

KB Home

The organization was able to gain detailed insights into the profitability of the business in order to make more informed decisions, allow more units to be built at greater efficiency, with consistent repeatability, and at a higher level of quality, as well as reduce the time to create new plans, open new communities and expand into new markets.

Activa

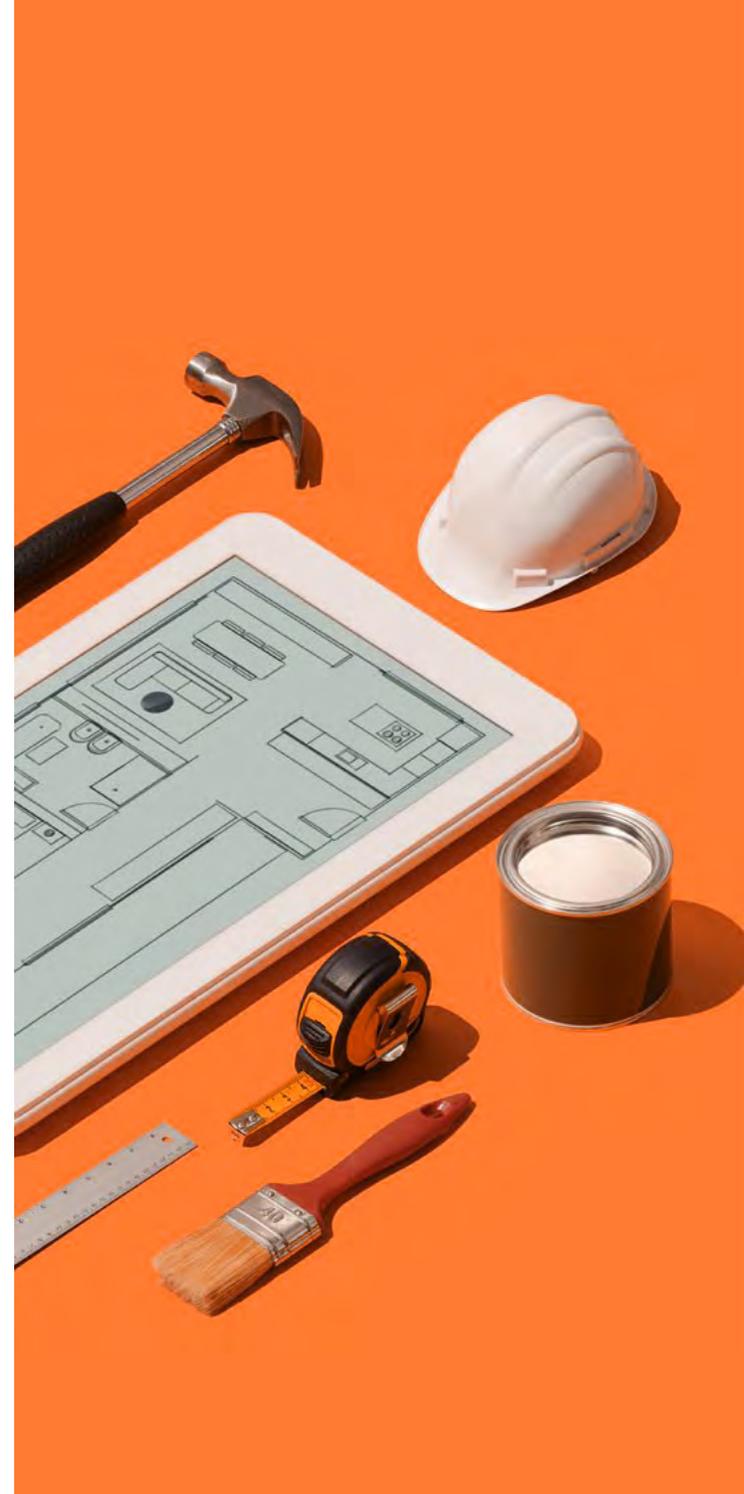
This was an out-of-the-box deployment completed in just seven months. After the initial phases were complete, sa.global supported Activa in importing their own data to ensure that the system was running optimally for their unique business needs.

Stanley Martin Homes

Named *BUILDER* magazine's 2021 Builder of the Year.

"It doesn't matter what device you're on or where you are - everything works. It became really easy that we weren't reliant on anything technologically happening locally."

- **Steve Alloy**, President and CEO, Stanley Martin Homes, on the company's sa.global HomebuilderONE implementation



**Extend the value of
functional business
applications to support
your industry's needs**

We apply a tried-and-tested business modernization methodology

Our tried-and-tested business modernization methodology ensures direction and structure, so you can focus on your business objectives. It prevents companies from falling into one of business transformation's biggest traps: losing focus halfway through the project.

This methodology guides you through the process of redefining and re-imagining your business by testing your assumptions about enterprise transformation.

The outcome is a business that is more agile, competitive, and relevant to the global economy.

We develop a segmented roadmap for sustainable business transformation

A long-term roadmap is great for strategic planning, but it's often too vague for execution. We segment your business transformation roadmap into a series of projects to modernize discrete business processes in a modular fashion. Focusing on modernizing discrete business processes supports the following project objectives:

- Reducing long lead times and potential business interruptions
- Accelerating time to value so you can reap the rewards of business transformation sooner and build organization-wide excitement and support for the next investment

Using Dynamics 365 and Power Platform, we help you modernize specific business applications within your existing technology landscape. For example, you may decide to add Dynamics 365 applications for marketing, sales, or customer service to an existing SAP implementation.

Why sa.global?

At sa.global, we have the experience and expertise to help you succeed in the homebuilding industry. Our methodical, detail-oriented approach and our focus on customer success will allow you to focus on the future of your business.

sa.global

Selected by 15 high-production builders in the U.S., the UK, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand to implement sa.global HomebuilderONE.

- 11-time Microsoft Partner of the Year winner
- Implementations in over 80 countries
- Presence in over 25 countries across six continents
- 30+ years of experience in the Microsoft platform
- 1 out of 10 Microsoft vetted ISV development centers
- Over 800,000 Microsoft Dynamics users supported worldwide

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Interested in discussing next steps?

Discovery

Schedule a Discovery Assessment with sa.global's business advisors to identify your top three challenges and opportunities.

Rapid prototype

Schedule co-design and co-creation sessions with sa.global's business and technical advisors to validate proposed strategy, determine next steps and investment, and ensure alignment with key stakeholders.

Solutions

Leverage our local and global delivery centers to build the right solution for your business.

Speak to a sa.global specialist about how we can help you plan for modernization and transformative change — [connect with us here](#).

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About

sa.global is the leading global Microsoft provider for project-based businesses. We empower project-based businesses to achieve more by simplifying the complexities of businesses powered by the delivery of profitable projects. Over 800,000 users in 80 countries around the world rely on sa.global's industry-focused expertise to power project success using the Microsoft Cloud to drive profitability and realization through collaboration and real-time business insights. Backed by 31 years of experience in ERP, CRM, HCM, business intelligence solutions, consulting, and Modern Workplace, sa.global is a Microsoft Dynamics Gold Partner who delivers industry-specific solutions to firms in key vertical markets like AEC, Legal, Accounting, and Advertising & Marketing. The company is an 11-time winner of the coveted Microsoft Dynamics Partner of the Year Award and has been a part of Microsoft's elite Inner Circle for years in a row. The global organization has a team of over 1000 members in 25 countries.