

COMPANY CASE STUDY

BRAND FINANCE



COMPANY BACKGROUND

Brand Finance is a leading independent brand valuation and strategy consultancy. The business is headquartered in the City of London, with a presence in over 20 countries.

For more than 20 years, Brand Finance has worked with businesses to provide a better understanding of marketing finances, and helped to build robust business cases for brand decisions, strategies and investments.



CHALLENGES

- › Previously had Microsoft Dynamics 365 Sales in place to support the sales side of the business
- › Lacked a solution to effectively manage the operational side
- › For project management, Brand Finance were using spreadsheets and a manual time entry solution to manage resources
- › Difficult to gain end-to-end visibility of projects
- › Challenges around resource scheduling and capacity management
- › Operate with multiple currencies and needed better control of project pricing globally
- › Recognised future reporting requirements and the previous processes would not be able to accommodate this



SOLUTION

- › Implemented Dynamics 365 Project Operations and configured this to fit around Brand Finance's day-to-day processes
- › Extended the functionality that was already utilised in Dynamics 365 to support end-to-end project management
- › Utilised the standard resource skills and competency features with D365 to overcome resource scheduling challenges
- › Implemented a resource scheduling board to visualise resource bookings and capacity
- › Developed a RAID log entity to track risks and issues for each project
- › Established an integration between Dynamics 365 and Microsoft 365
- › Implemented Microsoft Power BI for management reporting



BENEFITS

- › Leaner application landscape
- › Improved visibility and access to information
- › Enhanced resource scheduling
- › Improved overall operational & process efficiency
- › Stable platform for future
- › Increased insight for decision-making

CHALLENGES



Brand Finance previously had Microsoft Dynamics 365 Sales in place to support the sales side of the business, however, the business lacked a solution to effectively manage the operational side.

For project management, Brand Finance was using spreadsheets and a manual time entry solution to manage resources. This was a challenge, given that the business manages a significant number of projects (both short and long term) with multiple resources for each one. Additionally, as a professional services business, the time spent on a project is what is billed and it is crucial this is tracked effectively. The previous method was not only time-consuming, but it was difficult to gain end-to-end visibility of projects.

The projects that Brand Finance delivers are based around the world and the business has organisational units on respective continents. Scheduling the resource with the correct skills and competencies was becoming an onerous task and identifying resource capacity was challenging. On top of this, they operate with multiple currencies and pricing structures per organisational unit and needed better control of project pricing globally.

From a reporting perspective, the lack of a centralised system made gaining key insights difficult and although it wasn't something Brand Finance had an immediate need for, they recognised that it would be a future need and the process they had in place would not be able to accommodate this.

Ultimately, Brand Finance required a solution to support all areas of a project, such as time registration, milestone invoicing, resource scheduling, and capacity management.



SOLUTION



We implemented Microsoft Dynamics 365 Project Operations and configured this to fit around Brand Finance's day-to-day processes. We extended the functionality that was already utilized in Dynamics 365 Sales (leads & opportunities) to support the end-to-end project management process; an initial project plan, scheduling resources to fulfill the plan, the ability to track this through to completion, time tracking, and invoicing at the end of the project.

To overcome resource scheduling challenges, we utilised the standard resource skills and competency features, within Dynamics 365 Project Operations. This enabled Brand Finance to rely on the system to suggest the correct resource with the right skills in the right organisational unit, where previously this was a manual task. We also implemented the resource scheduling board to visualise resource bookings and capacity, to identify where resource capacity challenges may arise.

We also developed a RAID log entity to track risks and issues for each project and functionality to track custom project milestones. An email notification is sent to the finance team when a project milestone is marked as ready to invoice, saving the need to search through various spreadsheets and disparate systems.

To improve collaboration across departments and increase overall efficiency, we established an integration between Dynamics 365 and Microsoft 365 (previously known as Office 365); Word, OneNote, Excel, SharePoint, Teams and Outlook.

As part of the implementation, we also reviewed the Dynamics 365 Sales system that Brand Finance had in place, extended the capabilities within this, and re-architected them to fit with project operations, alongside aligning them with best practices.

Lastly, we implemented Microsoft Power BI for management reporting. Dashboards and reports were created, detailing key financial insights and reporting on quotes, opportunities, orders, and projects. Management can use these insights to gain a more advanced view of the organisations and make more informed decisions.



BENEFITS



Through the implementation of our solution, the following benefits were realised:

- > **Leaner application landscape** – Brand Finance were previously using multiple systems across their technology landscape, which was expensive and inflexible. Everything required is now integrated within Dynamics 365, which is mutually beneficial for user adoption, future growth and also reduces costs for various applications.
- > **Improved visibility and access to information** – As a result of centralising information in one place, users reduce time searching for information and can conduct their daily tasks more efficiently.
- > **Enhanced resource scheduling** – Brand Finance can effectively schedule the required resources with the right skills for projects around the world, which was previously a manual and inefficient process previously.
- > **Improved overall operational & process efficiency** – Across Brand Finance, there is no longer the need to switch between disparate systems which were previously wasting time. Additionally, the system accurately reflects the way projects are managed, meaning that overall operation and process efficiency are improved. The business can now manage its entire end-to-end process; track sales, quotes, projects, resources, time entry, invoicing, etc., from within a single platform.
- > **A stable platform for future growth** – As Brand Finance scales and the business requirements change, Dynamics 365 can be customised to fit around processes and provide a stable platform to grow.
- > **Increased insight for decision-making** – Management can now gather key insights quickly and easily using Dynamics 365 and Power BI reporting capabilities. With a lot of complexity across Project Operations, having visibility of this in a digestible manner is particularly valuable and allows managers to make more informed decisions.



“When we approached Pragmatiq, we were a small professional services company reaching the need for a more sophisticated project and resource management system that fitted in with our Dynamics 365 Sales implementation. Previously, many of our project management systems had been ad-hoc or simple enough for me as the Managing Director to have a good handle on all activities. However, we reached the point where this was no longer viable and as we continued to grow, it would only become more challenging.

The Pragmatiq team were friendly, professional, and methodical in helping us to implement Dynamics 365 Project Operations. They helped us get our head around the system, whilst at the same time working to understand how our business model worked to best cater the Project Operations solution to our needs. We would not be able to function as we currently do without the system Pragmatiq put in place and it provides a platform to continue our growth, rather than be constricted by operational difficulties.”

RICHARD HAIGH – MANAGING DIRECTOR AT BRAND FINANCE



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