A Food Manufacturer Leverages Existing Microsoft Investment To Streamline Business Processes and Empower Citizen Developers
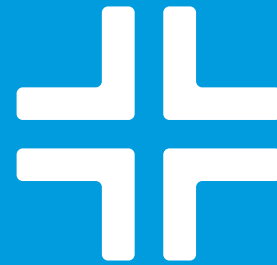
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An established food manufacturing company requested support to help them fully leverage their existing Microsoft infrastructure and to prove that they could consolidate apps, bots and tools from other vendors onto Microsoft platforms.

Working closely with the client, the Withum team developed a proof of value for governance using the Microsoft Center of Excellence (COE) Starter Kit and showed how Power Platform, Power Automate and Dataverse could be leveraged to replace existing forms, apps and RPA bots. The manufacturing company has been able to consolidate more of its IT and business operations onto Microsoft infrastructure and leverage the Power Platform to automate and innovate at scale.
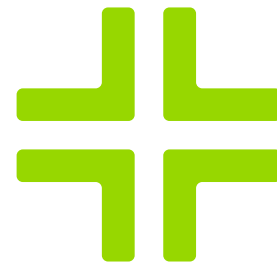
ABOUT THE CLIENT

An established and successful publicly traded company with 14,000+ employees who generated nearly nine billion U.S. dollars in annual worldwide sales in 2022 with a desire to get the most out of their Microsoft 365 investment. With nearly a dozen plants and 30+ offices, the company is no stranger to growth and the technology needed to sustain it.
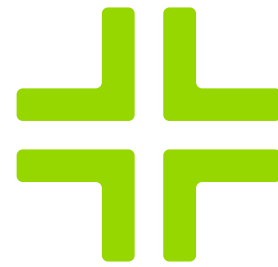
Employees	Annual Worldwide Sales	Office Locations
14K	$9B	30+

THE CHALLENGE

The manufacturing company made the investment into Microsoft 365 so they could enhance their business operations and create a more collaborative space with the powerful productivity tools it provides; however, with all its applications and versatility, they knew they were not leveraging the full power of their Microsoft 365 plan, including Power Platform. The client also wanted to streamline their many vendors to a simple solution for the vendors they worked with to accomplish their business process automation goals.
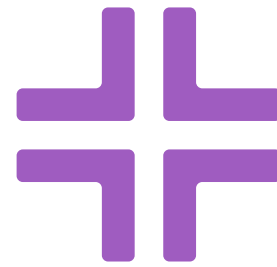
The company brought in Withum's Digital and Technology Transformation team to come up with proof of value for increased Microsoft 365 adoption and to prove to business stakeholders that this solution was a good fit for them.

The company wasn't sure where to start, but they knew Withum's expertise in testing, research and implementation was scalable and governable for their large organization.

The company was also very interested in further engaging and nurturing its existing citizen developers. The idea for this project started with a simple thought, "We have all these licenses, but are we using all the capabilities?"
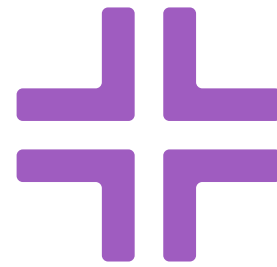
THE APPROACH AND SOLUTION

The project began with implementing a proof of value using the Microsoft Center of Excellence (COE) Starter Kit, a pre-built set of tools for larger organizations to get started with Power Platform. The COE is designed to help companies develop a strategy for adopting and supporting the Power Platform, with a focus on Power Automate and Power Apps. The Withum team chose this approach as it enables citizen developers to automate business processes while still maintaining the necessary level of governance and central oversight.

The Withum team also recreated several process workflows that interface with the client's line-of-business systems.

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After analyzing the reports from the COE and speaking further about the company's requirements and goals, a plan was made to continue a wide rollout of the Power Platform with defined roles and responsibilities. Given the company's plans, this step was just the first of many to launch a full citizen developer community to solve business issues in the future. Microsoft 365 and its applications had everything that the manufacturer needed.
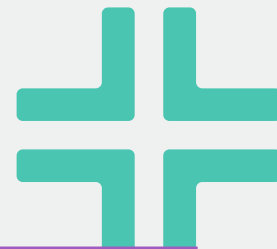
THE RESULTS AND ROI

The COE project resulted in a full proof of value which established a centralized framework to manage and govern the usage of Microsoft Power Platform across the organization. These efforts gave the manufacturer confidence that it could roll out the Power Platform and help its Citizen Developers innovate in a controlled, scalable and secure manner.

The COE and vendor consolidation efforts resulted in many changes, but most notably:

- Doubt has been removed around the benefit of citizen developers. A new path to the future leveraging citizen developers (with guardrails in place) is in progress.

- Power Platform applications, primarily Power Apps, Power Automate and Dataverse are replacing other systems and processes that were no longer meeting the needs of the company.

With these improvements in place, the more long-term work of enhancing company-wide processes and best practices can begin, which will encompass everything from more collaborative workspaces and real-time collaborations to innovations in the way equipment is run, monitored and maintained.

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