



Overview

Industry

Charity (Hearing Assistance Dogs)

Business Situation

ALHD needed a new system that would support their growth as a business and be scalable to match requirements for future growth.

Solution

Rapid cloud deployment of Dynamics 365 Sales

Main Benefits

- On-demand access to information from anywhere
- Unified data supporting strategic decision-making
- Improved fundraising insights and personalisation of marketing communications.
- Visibility of connections between ALHD stakeholders
- Scalable application that enables changes to be made on the fly

Since 1980, Australian Lions Hearing Dogs (ALHD) has trained and placed Hearing Assistance Dogs with deaf, or hard of hearing, people throughout Australia. ALHD is the only Australian organisation accredited by Assistance Dogs International.

ALHD selected Preact to support its deployment of Microsoft Dynamics 365. We spoke to CEO, David Horne to discuss their journey and their early successes with Dynamics.

What were your main reasons for implementing a new system?

Our team was using an Access database that we had developed in-house but this was only handling one aspect of the organisation. Also, as our trainers spend time away on work, they need to be able to connect in, but our Access system wasn't meeting these requirements.

ALHD is going through a growth phase and it was time to make a change by implementing a new system that will scale and support us.

Why did ALHD select Microsoft Dynamics 365?

On our travels we saw the system used by Hearing Dogs for Deaf People in the UK. We were impressed at how everything could be connected, with the flexibility to handle dog training programs, fundraising and volunteers within Dynamics 365. We believed this would meet the needs of each department and provide scalability, so it seemed the perfect choice.

Why did you select a UK implementation partner?

We found it difficult to find an organisation in Australia that was familiar with using Dynamics 365 in a not-for-profit and fundraising scenario. We knew Preact had undertaken similar implementations and they were highly recommended.

What has been the most significant benefit your team has gained from Dynamics 365?

Being able to use Dynamics everywhere and capture data in real-time.

Previously, when our trainers were away on placement, they weren't able to add notes and contacts until they returned to the office. Using Dynamics, they now have access to all the information they need by mobile, tablet or laptop, so they're able to make updates when this information is fresh in mind.



**Australian
Lions Hearing Dogs**

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David Horne
CEO
ALHD

Did you encounter any user adoption challenges?

It’s been extremely pleasing to see everyone gaining their own benefits from the system and there hasn’t been any scared faces around the table.

From the start, Dynamics 365 has felt comfortable and accessible for our team who are dog trainers not computer experts. For them to pick it up as quickly as they have done, shows how easy the system is to use. They are creating their own views and dashboards, and are confident in doing so.

Our team haven’t been afraid to suggest improvements and make it easier for the rest of the organisation. In acting on these ideas, we’ve found Dynamics very easy to adapt by making changes on the fly.

How is Dynamics 365 helping ALHD improve its fundraising?

In the last two years we’ve expanded our fundraising programs and brought in additional professionals. Previously, we used a simple fundraising tool provided by Lions Clubs which worked well until we outgrew it.

Every aspect of our fundraising activity now goes into Dynamics. This has meant we can instantly report on where we are, what projects we are working on and plan accordingly. It’s made it much easier to work with the fundraising data we are capturing. Combined with some historic data that we’ve imported, this is now presented in a format we can use to approach individuals and steward them.

Our Marketing function has also benefitted, as we are better able to target large demographics and niche audiences, with what we know works for them. We can customise our communications before sending it out.

In what other ways has Dynamics contributed to better reporting?

We now have a single source of data that is easily accessible worldwide and that’s enabling us to dig deeper in our reporting and forecasting.

As well as helping us navigate a growth phase, these insights are also supporting our decision-making as we develop strategies to protect our operations in the event of future Covid-19 restrictions. Without needing to look across multiple systems for forecasting and budgeting, we can plan in a manageable and sensible way.

Dynamics has also supported us as we place more dogs following the easing of Covid-19 travel restrictions. We fly to most locations and we are now covering more areas. Using these planning tools, we can confirm the right standards are being met, verify flight bookings, check contacts and make sure everyone is on the same page.



“The knowledge that our data is protected in the cloud and available when needed has made a huge difference. We are delighted with Dynamics. It’s been thrilling to see what we have achieved already and what more can be done.”

David Horne
CEO
ALHD

For more information

To find out more about Preact and Microsoft Dynamics 365 please call 0800 381 1000 or +44(0)1628 661 810

Or, visit www.preact.co.uk

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What added benefits has ALHD gained by unifying its data?

The connections that exist between people, ambassadors and donors are now easier to identify. All it took were some easy integrations between Dynamics 365, and SharePoint and Outlook, for us to see this spider web of connections and keep up with changes. It meant we had a clear digital paper trail for all correspondence with clients. We have a better understanding of what is happening which helps us avoid doubling up and asking unnecessary questions. All the information we need is now at our fingertips.

How did Preact support your Dynamics 365 rollout?

Preact's knowledge of our industry made it easier for us. It was incredibly helpful to work with a partner that has worked with not-for-profit and fundraising organisations and even has experience in the assistance dog industry.

Their solutions architect very quickly understood and grasped our main processes, in getting a dog from a puppy through to a placement with a client. Throughout the build process, Preact were always professional and the standard of their work was excellent.

What challenges did you encounter working across different time zones?

This worked for us in some ways as it meant issues could be addressed outside of our normal working hours with updates and fixes ready for us in the morning. There was a limited window for our teams to speak but with some scheduling flexibility on both sides we overcame this. The result has been a product we are extremely happy with.

How did the pace of the project meet your expectations?

We are very happy with the speed the project was completed. In our initial discussions with Preact we were surprised at how quickly this could be delivered but their timelines proved spot on.

Bringing in data and deploying the system is always a crunch point but with Preact's help it was much easier and quicker, compared to how we know this can prove for many other organisations. For us, their work has been faultless.

What are your future plans?

We are looking to expand into other areas from our initial build that will cover our dog breeding program, monitoring pedigrees and temperament testing. We know that Dynamics 365 can grow by us making changes or getting Preact to do this so it's exciting times!

We are grateful to David for sharing his experiences. Visit lionshearingdogs.com.au to learn more about Australian Lions Hearing Dogs and their valuable work.