



future fit **TRAINING**

Overview

Industry

Training Provider

Business Situation

Future Fit Training sought to modernise their internal infrastructure and make their processes scalable

Highlights

- Better student experience in terms of speed and giving greater control to handle their own bookings
- Improved reporting as the whole team uses the same application, with all business data in one place
- Clearer student insights contributing to effective marketing campaigns and increased lead conversions
- Potential for continuous improvement with other Microsoft applications

Future Fit Training are the UK's leading training provider for personal trainers, nutrition advisers and pilates instructors.

Since 1993, the company has been driving innovation and raising the bar for fitness professionals by providing quality training and learning platforms. Through its face-to-face workshops, e-Learning and online CPD training platform, Future Fit strives to make fitness entertaining, convenient, and memorable.

We talked to Dave Hanley (Head of Commercial) about the transformation that Future Fit Training has made since it deployed Microsoft Dynamics 365.

Why did you choose to implement a new system, and what were your main objectives?

Many of our internal infrastructure processes were rooted in the late-1990s/2000s and we had got to a point where they were proving too time intensive which could restrict our continued growth. We had a good quality of processes so far as outcomes, but the time and labour required meant this could not be scaled. Our team were using a combination of applications including Salesforce, Act! CRM and Mailchimp, as well as a series of spreadsheets. These weren't connected and consequently it would take us several days to enrol a new student as information was shifted across the business by multiple people between these systems.

We wanted to do things much quicker. This included speeding up our interaction at the point of sale which would allow us to scale by working with more students. We also wanted to make the enrolment process more interactive by giving students a better experience, with greater control to handle their bookings.

Why did Future Fit choose Microsoft Dynamics 365?

We couldn't find an off-the-shelf product that would fully meet our requirements. Rather than attempting to develop a bespoke system from scratch, we decided to create a solution that would hang off an established application.

Salesforce was already used by one part of the business, but based on our experiences, we didn't believe their service levels would meet our expectations and we had concerns about its rising costs. We concluded that Microsoft has the strongest platform which is widely supported. In selecting Dynamics 365, we also saw the benefit in being able to connect our existing Microsoft applications including Teams.

Overall, we felt more comfortable with Microsoft's scalable platform design. In addition to Dynamics 365, we were attracted by Power BI so we bought into the infrastructure that would bring everything under one roof and allow us to connect more parts when needed.

Why did you choose to partner with Preact?

During our research, we looked at various suppliers. We identified several enterprise providers who would likely provide a good service, but we had concerns about their pricing models and if we would receive sufficient long-term focus. We also looked at appointing in-house developers but felt the risks would be too high because so much knowledge would be reliant on just one or two people.

We sought a partner with the infrastructure to handle everything all the way through from our project design and implementation, to providing the continuity of longer-term support and development.

Preact (now part of ANS Group) already had knowledge of our Act! CRM system, so they had expertise with that product and could help us get our data out and into Dynamics. They work in the same SME space as Future Fit and are a similar size, so in addition to their Act! knowledge, we concluded they would be the best fit for us.

Can you tell us about your experiences in deploying Dynamics 365?

We jumped from an antiquated set-up to a modern, cutting-edge system, so this project represented a dramatic change. Looking back at our progress, it's amazing that we've come so far relatively quickly. This was a big leap and inevitably during a project of this magnitude there were some ups and downs. Moving from spreadsheets and flat file databases presented some challenges but we got there, and we can see the fantastic solution that has been built.

"We have good relationships with Preact's team who know our account and understand our needs which saves a lot of time. Everyone we speak to is personable and I appreciate the upfront nature of these interactions, especially when communicating what the system can and can't do."

Dave Hanley
Head of Commercial
Future Fit Training

How has Dynamics 365 allowed you to speed up your processes?

One of our pain points was the time it took us to onboard a new student. After a student paid, they could encounter a delay of several days, or longer, before they could start all their learning.

Now the enrolment process is managed through Dynamics 365, these sign-ups are completed in real-time. This includes automated workflows to create records, email confirmations and provide login details for our e-Learning platform. It's light years from where we were!

Previously, when a student wanted to book a course, it would require a manual check for availability and their payment status. We've now connected these processes to our online portal, so as well as being easier to manage, we're giving students greater control by allowing them to schedule dates in just a few minutes without needing to speak to us.

In what ways has Dynamics 365 helped Future Fit Training improve its reporting?

We quickly saw reporting improvements across our commercial and marketing teams, simply because our data is now in one place and much easier to query. We no longer need to bring multiple data sources together and compare them.

One example of the early benefits we've seen has been to make the availability on our upcoming courses more visible. This enables everyone to see a live report where they can quickly check for available spaces which is helping us increase our fill rates and avoid double-bookings. By avoiding the need to direct enquiries to our student support team, it's another example of how Dynamics is helping us increase the speed of business.

What benefits have you gained by using ClickDimensions?

Previously, our marketing team used Mailchimp which provided limited reporting because it didn't relate back to the rest of our data.

With ClickDimensions embedded in Dynamics 365, we now have a better understanding of our students based on their interaction with our web pages. This includes identifying the top pages for lead generation and which campaigns generate the best traffic. It also means that we aren't shooting blindly because our team are able to make a timely follow up which is improving our contact rates and lead conversion.

Because ClickDimensions uses the same infrastructure as Dynamics, we're able to better manage our data in a relational way to measure everything and assess campaign successes.

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Dave Hanley

Head of Commercial
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How well did your team adopt Dynamics 365?

This project involved a lot of change for us, but everyone got to grips with the system very quickly. Just a couple of months after moving from Salesforce to Dynamics 365, we had our best sales month! This reflects the incredible efforts of our team and the quality of the solution we've deployed.

The training we received from Preact was very good and they were fully supportive during the onboarding process. Since then, we've been able to top up our knowledge by arranging additional sessions with their trainers.

How has the managed service enabled you to make further improvements?

The nice thing about our managed service agreement is that we can easily use hours without needing to purchase additional time. Our team can use time pots for short tasks by quickly booking in these jobs to arrange the work and continuously make improvements.

We have good relationships with Preact's team who know our account and understand our needs which saves a lot of time. Everyone we speak to is personable and I appreciate the upfront nature of these interactions, especially when communicating what the system can and can't do.

Timelines for availability and the completion of work can often be fluffy with some companies, but I've found these to be clearly defined at Preact. They are open and honest with us which helps us plan as we have confidence that work will be done as agreed.

What are you planning next?

As an education provider, Future Fit Training is looking to push out into different spaces. This includes growing our B2B business and we know the technology infrastructure is now there to support this. There is a lot more we want to do with Power BI to gain more insights from our data and we are also looking to join up more processes by connecting LinkedIn Sales Navigator with Dynamics 365.

We are grateful to Dave for sharing his experiences. Visit www.futurefit.co.uk to learn more about the health and fitness training courses provided by Future Fit Training.

More information

To find out more about our Microsoft Dynamics 365 services, visit www.preact.co.uk