

A Global Dynamics Rollout to Streamline Data-Sharing

In 2018 OnActuate created, implemented, and supported a strategic rollout of Microsoft Dynamics AX for Hammond Power Solutions, leading to a 50% faster month-end closing time.



BACKGROUND

Established in 1917, **Hammond Power Solutions (HPS)** has grown from a small family-owned business to an industry leader in magnetic transformer design and manufacturing. Innovative engineering capabilities, high quality products, and responsive customer service have established HPS as a technical leader in electrical and electronic manufacturing. Their products can be found on every continent, every ocean and have even orbited in space!

SYSTEMS CHALLENGES

The Devil is in the Details

In 2010, HPS was running numerous disconnected, smaller Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems. All the data had to be manually consolidated and the solution didn't handle multi-currency or multi-entity. After one of its vendors ran into some financial difficulty, HPS decided to move to a new ERP platform.

The requirements were that the system had to be multi-currency, multi-language, multi-entity, and be housed within a single instance. After narrowing it down to three products, HPS formed a team of 40 functional leads who completed detailed scripting exercises to evaluate hundreds of smaller feature sets.

Paul Gaynor has been the Director of Information Services at HPS since 2010. He manages the technology and business systems for all their facilities globally. *"We were trying to put a scientific approach to selecting the product because ERP is so vast. It's quite difficult to go through a single demonstration and pick which one is going to be the best for your organization,"* said Gaynor. *"You've got to get as many of those checkboxes checked as you can for it to be successful."*

HPS chose to move forward with Dynamics AX 2012 and began plans to roll it out to its manufacturing facilities around the world - Canada, the United States, Mexico, and India. The IT team at HPS had the knowledge to complete these global implementations but as a lean team, bandwidth was an issue. In 2012, HPS deployed AX 2012 throughout its operations in North America with the help of a partner.

Taking Back Control

In 2015, HPS acquired a company in Hyderabad, India. At HPS India all the products were custom engineered and custom built. Staff had to price the product and commit to a delivery date before the product had even been engineered. Besides the challenge of the engineering process, HPS also needed to manage the build and delivery cycle.

From the start, HPS India had difficulty with accurate reporting and data sharing. It didn't have any form of system automation - all reporting was manual and paper-based. *"We had no visibility into their inventories. Due to system limitations, they couldn't report what their monthly sales were,"* said Gaynor. *"We struggled to get month-end closing to consolidate into the corporate financials."*

HPS decided to leverage AX 2012 to make HPS India more efficient. Gaynor began looking for a partner to help with the global ERP deployment.



(L-R) Amit Varshney, Paul Gaynor, Ashish Sharan, Praveen Kumar, and Tanuj Goel at a site visit before project kick-off in 2017.

APPROACH

Creating a Global ERP Team

Initially HPS had trouble finding an implementation partner with the centralized, global project management they were looking for.

Gaynor's Top Tips



Find the product that best suits your organization.

Get as many of your internal subject matter experts involved as necessary to analyze in as much detail as you can. In addition to the product features, consider the culture of your organization and the type of business that you're in.



Involve post-sales during the evaluation stage with your partner.

Find a partner that you are comfortable with and align expectations between pre- and post-sales. This will ensure the sales team and the implementation team responsible for delivery are on the same page.



Take ownership of the product.

Your partner is an expert in the ERP, not in the nuances of your organization. Take responsibility for making sure sensitive processes aren't being disrupted and anything important to your organization is being addressed in a way that your organization can handle.

In 2016 Gaynor connected with **OnActuate**, a Gold Certified Microsoft Partner, at a Microsoft conference. Soon after, he met with a member of the OnActuate executive team at their branch in India to do a diagnostic exercise and come up with a plan. *"Right out of the gate, I knew OnActuate was the right implementation partner for us,"* said Gaynor. *"I was impressed with the team's knowledge and respect for our business. We built a solid relationship from the start."*

The OnActuate strategy from the start was to build a global ERP project team at both the client and the partner level. This cross-functional business unit team was organized around the primary business objectives for HPS and followed a process-centric, collaborative approach with ample communication. This helped to drive ownership and accountability of the new solution throughout HPS. The hands-on project activities increased competency in the project team and improved the quality of the implementation, leading to optimal results.

"The OnActuate team is very trustworthy and adaptable. Some of the tactical work is done from their global delivery center, but it's not beyond your reach. They give you direct contact and information when you need it," said Gaynor. *"They learned our logging and auditing process, and our ticketing system. They even give the code back to us in the same manner that our internal developers would have done it!"*

“OnActuate is a really good company. They have a strong commitment to making the customer happy. It’s not all about the bottom line.”

Paul Gaynor, Director of Information Services

RESULTS

HPS India went live with AX 2012 in February 2019. At the end of March it did a fiscal count for year end and was able to provide an accurate physical inventory count for the first time. Since the global rollout, HPS India is able to complete physical inventory 75% faster and perform month-end closing in half the time.

What’s Next

With more than 100 years in business, HPS continues to evolve to best support their customers. As of March 2021, they are working with OnActuate to deploy AX 2012 at their facility in Quebec, Canada. HPS finds a lot of value in their global rollout of AX 2012, but they face some challenges being on-premises. It is difficult for them to keep up with the product release cycles from Microsoft to stay current. It also takes about 1.5 years to build out infrastructure for any new companies they purchase.

HPS and OnActuate’s next project together is a global upgrade to cloud-based Microsoft Dynamics 365. This 2-year project will include 8 manufacturing locations and follow the same process-centric and global project team approach. *“The biggest challenge we have now is popping up new environments and getting new companies on board,”* said Gaynor. *“To have it sitting in the cloud [when HPS moves to Dynamics 365] and be able to just go straight in and start spinning up that new entity will be enormously beneficial to us.”*

Global ERP rollouts are complex, but OnActuate’s proactive planning, extensive knowledge, and People First philosophy set Gaynor at ease. *“OnActuate is a really good company. They have a strong commitment to making the customer happy. It’s not all about the bottom line,”* said Gaynor.



(L-R) Paul Gaynor and Ashish Sharan cut into a cake to celebrate a successful go-live in 2019.

ABOUT ONACTUATE

OnActuate is a global enterprise solution integrator that thrives on making technology work hard and efficiently for businesses like yours. No matter where you are in the evolution of your technology systems, we are equipped with the know-how to move your business forward. With 60+ countries served, OnActuate global teams are tight-knit, knowledgeable, and experienced. When our team joins your team, we guarantee we’ll get the job done.

OnActuate has offices in the U.S., Canada, India, and Panama.

Contact us for an assessment of your current or planned project: info@onactuate.com

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