Is Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central right for your business?

Comparing Microsoft Dynamics Business Central and NAV 2018

Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central is the official name for Microsoft's mid-market ERP solution provided on a pure SaaS basis (Software as a Service). This is the solution that was referred to as Dynamics 365 Tenerife during its development and what some have called "NAV in the Cloud" as it provides the full Dynamics NAV functionality.

Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central provides the same standard functionality as NAV (formerly Navision), Microsoft's flagship solution for the mid-market used by over 160,000 companies worldwide. Both solutions boast rich standard functionality and integration with D365 Sales (aka Microsoft CRM) and Office 365 etc.

Microsoft describe D365 Business Central as: "an all-in-one business management solution that helps organizations streamline business processes, improve customer interactions and enable growth." Addressing three core business benefits:

- Business without silos: D365 Business Central as a hub connects with familiar office tools through workflow (Microsoft Flow) and automated tasks (Office)
- Actionable Insights: PowerBI integration and ability to leverage Azure Intelligence tools (e.g. Cortana for forecasting)
- Solutions Built to Evolve: a flexible platform that can scale to meet increased volumes and complexity, supporting Microsoft's Extensibility Model

D365 Business Central vs NAV

Standard Functionality

Just like NAV, D365 Business Central's functionality is divided across two "packs": Essentials and Premium. Essentials maps like-to-like to the functionality provided in NAV's Starter Pack and Premium maps to NAV's Extended Pack.
The table below shows high level functional areas addressed by D365 Business Central and NAV:

D365 Business Central Essentials / NAV Starter Pack	D365 Business Central Premium / NAV Extended
Financial Management General Ledger Cash Management Fixed Assets Currencies Consolidation	**Financial Management Plus** Inter-Company (Essentials) Cost Accounting (Essentials)
Supply Chain Management Sales Order processing Purchase and procurement Item management Locations Basic Warehousing	**Supply Chain Management Plus** Advanced Warehousing (Essentials)
Jobs and Resources Job Planning, Budgets and Invoicing Resource allocations Timesheets	

Contact Management	Service Management
Contacts	Service Contracts
Campaigns	Service Items
Opportunity Management	Service Order Management
D365 Sales Integration	

Assembly	Manufacturing
Assembly Bill of Materials	Production BOMs
	Works order management
	Capacity and Demand planning

Enhancing

D365 Business Central can be enhanced through "apps" purchased in the Microsoft AppSource. There is no concept of custom development. All apps are approved and published by Microsoft. It will be possible to customize Microsoft Dynamics Business Central through tenant/customer specific extensions created and uploaded to the tenant by partners.

NAV can be enhanced through "extensions" purchased through the partner channel (pre-built enhancements, approved by Microsoft) and through bespoke development. Customers can skill up and manage own development.

NB: this refers to enhancing code. Features for menu design, reports etc are all met in the standard offerings of both solutions.

Hosting Options

D365 Business Central is hosted by Microsoft, on Azure in a public cloud.

NAV can be deployed on Azure, in a private data centre or on premise

Licensing

D365 Business Central is a subscription licence that includes the application, hosting and maintenance in one per user monthly fee.

NAV can be perpetual or subscription licensing for the application (for subscription the monthly fee does include maintenance); hosting is an additional cost.

Accessing

D365 Business Central is accessed through web client (i.e. a browser) and mobile apps for smart phones and tablets.

NAV is accessed through a PC client (the Windows client), web and mobile app.

Both also offer access directly from Outlook.

Which is the right fit for you?

Both solutions are aimed at the mid-market D365 Business Central is priced to be attractive to smaller organisations as they outgrow entry level accounting solutions and look for their first ERP as well as meeting the needs of larger SMBs.

D365 Business Central is aimed primarily at new users whose needs are well met by standard software. As the AppSource offerings mature and increase, more complex users will see D365 Business Central as an option.

NAV is aimed at users with complex needs (where enhancements are required) and those who require an on-premise solution.

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