



Success Story

FROM WORD & EXCEL TO ERP: SMART SIM INTRODUCES BUSINESS CENTRAL

How do you make the leap from Excel, Word & Co. to a structured process landscape within a modern ERP system? Until the implementation of Business Central, SmartSim GmbH initially had no ERP solution in place. Most of the company's processes were handled using Word and Excel.

INTRODUCTION OF BUSINESS CENTRAL IN THE STANDARD

One of SmartSim's main goals was to create invoices more efficiently using a professional system. Therefore, the initial plan was to use only the sales module in Business Central. The aim was to utilize the standard features, receive some initial support, handle as much as possible independently, and then operate autonomously. The project scope was intentionally kept to a minimum.

Subscription management as a key requirement

SmartSim primarily distributes software licenses via a subscription model - with requirements such as contract durations, price adjustment clauses, and index-linked adjustments. Business Central provides an ideal foundation for this: Recurring revenue models can be implemented quickly and effectively using the bill-to-365 add-on from CKL Software - a long-standing Inway partner. The add-on covers contract durations, automatic billing, tiered pricing, and license management, and can be flexibly expanded.

Since SmartSim's requirements went beyond the standard, a true co-development emerged during the project: Inway Systems and CKL Software jointly further developed bill-to-365 - resulting in features such as index-based pricing, flexible billing models, and API interfaces for external license key generators. These new functions are now an integral part of the official bill-to-365 standard.

EXTENSIONS AFTER THE FIRST GO-LIVE

The go-live was not an end point, but a starting point. As daily business grew, new requirements arose, and Business Central was expanded step by step.

Project module in Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central

Since many SmartSim licenses are based on implementation projects that only convert into a subscription upon completion, the project module has been added. It systematically records phases, expenses, and billing – and automatically transfers this information to the subscription management system.

Individually developed revenue planning

Another special feature was revenue planning: SmartSim wanted to book revenues based on planned project values in the correct accounting period – even before invoicing. Since the Business Central standard does not support this, Inway developed its own revenue logic with monthly distribution, automated offsetting entries, and configurable booking templates.

Manually updating the history

In addition, all contracts and invoices were manually re-entered up to the year 2018 – an investment in data quality that fully enables historical evaluations.

Power BI Controlling

SmartSim uses Power BI, built in-house, for controlling purposes. The data is provided by Business Central – extended by Inway APIs that also integrate custom tables from subscription management. The result is transparent reporting that can be seamlessly synchronized with DATEV data.

Further results and efficiency gains

The efficiency gains speak for themselves: Monthly billing is now completed in under two hours. License management is largely automated. And GasCalc – SmartSim's solution for gas performance indicators – can now be marketed much more actively thanks to its scalable processing.

Outlook: Business Central continues to grow – with DATEV interface & more

The Inway Systems team is currently working on a DATEV interface to automate data exchange with tax advisors in the future. Further optimizations are also underway – for example, on existing extensions or system performance.

“For us, the decision to choose Business Central and Inway was absolutely right,” summarizes Dr. Peter Schley. “The solution not only saves us time today, it also grows with us – and we know who to turn to when new requirements arise.”

CONCLUSION: TAILOR-MADE SOLUTION WITH BUSINESS CENTRAL

What began as a standard project evolved into a customized ERP solution. Open communication, streamlined processes, and collaborative partnerships enabled the direct implementation of individual requirements within the project, in some cases even becoming the new standard. The SmartSim project clearly demonstrates that an ERP system is successful when it is consistently aligned with a company's actual processes.

Inway Systems GmbH

Tel +49 731 - 88 00 73 0

info@inway.de

www.inway.de

