



## Case study

# TravelOperations Business helps SMB travel agencies adapt to post-COVID world

## Business Central provides platform for new SMB solution

TravelOperations, a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner, started as a traditional CRM and ERP services provider focused on the travel industry, initially building on-premises offerings on Microsoft Dynamics and then transitioning to SaaS solutions built on Dynamics 365. While TravelOperations knew that a large segment of the market was SMB agencies, its enterprise-scale solution, TravelOperations Enterprise for Microsoft Dynamics 365 Finance and Operations, with an average six-to-eight-month implementation window, simply wasn't an option for smaller businesses who don't need all the functionality offered but require a standard solution implemented fast and at a fixed price.

To address the SMB market, TravelOperations Business explored the Microsoft's first cloud-based small business accounting solution when it was released in 2017. This initial version didn't feel like the right fit at the time. But when the next-generation Dynamics 365 Business Central was released just a year later, the team took another look and determined they had found their platform. Dynamics 365 Business Central offered TravelOperations Business a full-service finance solution that is highly scalable, localized, and evergreen with feature updates rolling out every six months. In addition, integration with the Microsoft 365 productivity stack and Power BI provided a way to drive adoption and insights with SMB customers.

## TravelOperations

### About TravelOperations Business

TravelOperations Business helps small and mid-sized travel agencies around the world streamline processes to help build and sustain a competitive advantage.

**Microsoft Business Applications focus**  
Dynamics 365 Business Central

**Segments**  
SMB

**Headquarters**  
Denmark

**Microsoft partner since**  
2018

**Growth**  
18 new customers in 10 months across nine countries

### Key customer outcomes

Improved customer experience by centralizing all data in one system

Added digitization and automated processes to save the company thousands of dollars a month



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**Peter Holm**  
General Manager, TravelOperations Business

"It was clear Microsoft had put a lot of effort and investment into the Dynamics 365 Business Central product. All of a sudden we saw a mature product that had rapidly transformed into the cloud-enabled solution perfect for what our target market needed," said Peter Holm, General Manager at TravelOperations Business.

After investing about nine months in developing a solution on Dynamics 365 Business Central, the company spun off its SMB unit into its own business to better capitalize on the opportunity. By the beginning of 2020 the new unit was up and running with two customers already deployed, a strong pipeline, and expanded operations in the UK.

Then COVID-19 hit.

## Fixed price offering reduces overhead, decreases risk

With COVID-19, the worldwide travel industry ground to a halt. So, Holm tore up his business plan and started from scratch. With travel off the table for implementations and travel agencies having zero cash flow, TravelOperations Business redefined its offering to be fixed price, fixed scope, and deployed 100% remotely. Deployment times were dramatically reduced from 30 days to just 10 days (from initiation to go-live) so companies could get up and running as quickly as possible when countries reopened their airports and borders.

Once the new strategy was in place, it took the company about three months to launch its updated [TravelOperations Business](#) travel order management and financial management solution, which was laser-focused on small businesses looking to digitally transform their operations. Promoted through LinkedIn campaigns, the solution immediately resonated with SMB agencies even while businesses were still shut down.

"A lot of the agencies we spoke with were very frustrated because they had purchased solutions from other suppliers and couldn't get out of their agreements even when business was at a stand-still," said Holm. "When they saw our solution was fixed price, could scale up and down as needed, was always updated with the latest features, had a better look and feel, and was easier to use than their legacy systems, they realized it was clearly a cost-efficient, lower-risk choice to help them weather the turbulent business environment."

As a result of its new strategy, TravelOperations Business has added 18 net new Microsoft customers in the last 10 months across nine different countries. Part of its success comes from a strong focus on training and support after deployment to ensure customers are successful until they become self-sufficient. "In addition to our hyper-care approach to onboarding, we just released a new product for online training in 50 different languages so we can do an even better job of getting users up to speed," said Holm.



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**"TravelOperations Business delivers all the key components we need ranging from CRM and profile management to end-to-end travel back office and ERP. Having all functions within one ecosystem is amazing—it just works."**

**Lisa Simpkins**  
CEO, DealCaptains

## Building for the future during COVID-19

One of the forward-thinking customers that engaged with TravelOperations Business during the COVID-19 shutdown was [DealCaptains](#), a travel consulting group started by CEO Lisa Simpkins in 2019. With 15 clients going into 2020, Simpkins saw an opening when COVID-19 hit to rethink traditional technology models for her business. “I chose to see it as an opportunity to focus on building a business for the future. It was a crucial moment to concentrate on getting our technology foundation just right, centering our attention 100% on creating the best possible customer experience,” said Simpkins.

With business-to-business travel margins razor thin, a technology-first, cloud-based approach that offers customers omnichannel, hassle-free experiences serves as a real differentiator—especially in a recovery market. “TravelOperations Business delivers all the key components we need ranging from CRM and profile management to end-to-end travel back office and ERP. Having all functions within one ecosystem is amazing—it just works,” said Simpkins.

TravelOperations Business' open-source integrations with telephone systems, booking sources, agnostic GDS/NDC enabled, ARC, and vendor and bank reconciliations also make a world of difference. “By having every vital business function in Microsoft’s ecosystem, we save thousands and thousands of dollars a month. To a small business this is huge,” Simpkins continued.

## Microsoft cloud helps drive growth in still volatile market

With COVID-19 still at pandemic levels and travel not yet recovered to where it was in 2019, TravelOperations Business sees a strong future for its streamlined offering on Dynamics 365 Business Central. In particular, as one of the very few Microsoft-based solutions in the travel market, the company believes the complete Microsoft cloud is a big reason for its robust growth trajectory.

“The scalability and interconnectivity of Dynamics 365, Azure, and the rest of the Microsoft productivity stack are real differentiators,” said Holm. “As new capabilities around IoT, automation, and collaborative business processes evolve, we see our Microsoft partnership becoming even more important going forward, helping SMBs innovate and build trust in a challenging market.”