

ERP system go-live with over 80 companies in 14 weeks – thanks to innovative products and a consistently agile approach

System change to Microsoft Dynamics 365 Finance by means of SMIT RapidKit and SMIT ConfigBridge

For decades, Buss was primarily a port company with its own transshipment terminals in the Port of Hamburg. Today, the owner-managed group of companies with around 500 employees is broadly positioned in the business fields of port logistics, wind energy, logistics real estate, shipping and investments.

The tradition-rich Hamburg-based company decided to replace the previously used SAP system with the ERP solution from Microsoft to be optimally positioned for future business requirements with the forward-looking cloud system. Buss therefore entrusted Sven Mahn IT with the implementation of Dynamics 365 Finance using its release automation and quality assurance products.

Sven Mahn IT took over the implementation project in mid-September 2020. Buss targeted to implement the system replacement by December 31, 2020, in order to work productively with Dynamics 365 Finance from the first working day in 2021.

 **BUSS**

The special challenge of this tight schedule was that the Buss Group comprises more than 80 enterprises with very different business models, which had to be created as companies in the new system. According to classic working methods, this would have taken more than a year, which would have made Buss' target date unattainable. Thus, the products developed by Sven Mahn IT for the rapid configuration of Dynamics 365 were the main reason for choosing the implementation partner. With these products and an agile project methodology, a timeframe of only 14 weeks was estimated, and the envisioned go-live at the turn of the year was possible.

“We are very satisfied with the result achieved. Especially considering our ambitious schedule, with the technology used, Sven Mahn IT was the only contractor able to guarantee a go-live on the desired deadline. In addition to the convincing portfolio, we found the cooperation very constructive thanks to the

competent personnel and look forward to a successful continuation.”

Jan Brockmüller, CFO Buss Group



In addition to the standard finance functions including intercompany logic, the implementation project also included the connection of interfaces to incoming invoice workflow, expenses and banking as well as the implementation of an extension for loan management. It was carried out by an experienced Scrum team from Sven Mahn IT. Together with the customer, 14-day sprint cycles and the use of the development platform Azure DevOps for backlog and code maintenance were agreed.

First, the SMIT RapidKit came into play. The system was initially set up for Buss using the Azure DevOps extension for the automatic setup of Dynamics 365 financial accounting systems. The SMIT RapidKit supplied the associated Azure DevOps project template as standard – already filled with all relevant content, such as epics, features and user stories. This ensured without further effort that all essential topics were taken into account.



Using SMIT ConfigBridge, the team then created and iteratively extended a Buss-specific Golden Config. This was continuously rolled out to all companies. With this basis, only a few delta adjustments were needed in the individual companies.

To assure optimal but time-efficient continuous testing, both the Azure DevOps extension SMIT TestCaseHub for test case management and the logical Dynamics 365 test cases of the SMIT TestKit were used. This saved a lot of effort planning, creating and applying the test cases. Furthermore, the early availability of the high-quality test cases meant that errors could be discovered during the sprints and fixed directly.

The entire project was designed as an online collaboration. Morning dailies, topic-based workshops and a steering committee that met regularly after sprint changes provided the necessary timely coordination and efficient problem solving – an important prerequisite for meeting the tight schedule.

Besides the project manager and a finance specialist, the users on the customer side took on an important role in the project: With a high level of commitment, they executed the tests themselves using the SMIT TestKit test cases arranged as process group tests. Using this method, the users were not only directly trained on the processes in the new system, but it also initiated a fruitful exchange of ideas for improvement, which were jointly evaluated and prioritized. To avoid manual testing on all companies, the tests were automated in parallel with user testing via Microsoft RSAT.

The system went live as planned with all companies at the turn of the year 2020/21. On January 4th, 2021, the first Buss users were working with Dynamics 365 Finance in the cloud. Buss has been serviced by the Sven-Mahn IT support team since the go-live.

“Just in time for Buss’ request, our two new products SMIT RapidKit and SMIT ConfigBridge were finalized, making Dynamics 365 setup and configuration possible at the push of a button. So, it was a chance for both Buss and us to prove it: It is possible to bring more than 80 companies live in three months. Together and with team spirit, we succeeded in this go-live. Great job!”

Sven Mahn, CEO Sven Mahn IT

In the second phase of the project, the personnel, organization and project management modules will now be implemented using a similar approach. To maintain the advantage of the tested, largely uniform configuration across clients, the SMIT ConfigBridge will continue to be utilized. In addition, the SMIT GetFitKit will also come into use as a training system for future users in the further course. This way, the training quality will be optimized, and employees will be able to train more independently from the test system.