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IRC delivers life-changing assistance with enhanced finance and operations

Avanade helps nonprofit manage and evolve

CASE STUDY
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Business situation
Navigating the challenges of a global ERP rollout

The International Rescue Committee (IRC) is a global nonprofit that provides survival and recovery assistance to people who have been displaced from their homes because of conflict and disaster. With a presence in more than 40 countries and over 20 U.S. cities, it provides clean water, shelter, healthcare, education and empowerment support to refugees and displaced people.

Managing the resources and steps involved in delivering these services is complex. The IRC's employees need a way to pay vendors, manage inventory, apply for housing, enroll children in schools and much more. The urgency for this assistance requires a strong and reliable enterprise resource planning (ERP) system. If tools are cumbersome and it takes too long for employees to use the system, there's less time to focus on the core mission. "Having a clear picture of our financials and a clear picture of our inventory is critical for us to be able to efficiently respond," said Parker Williams, ERP director at the IRC. That's why the nonprofit invested in a new finance and operations system built on Microsoft Dynamics 365 Finance and Operations. Merging the words **integrity** and **integration**, the IRC named the system "Integra."

To ensure it was making the most of this technology on a global scale, the IRC needed managed services support. The nonprofit found a trusted partner in Avanade, which brought deep Dynamics expertise, a strong relationship with Microsoft and a shared commitment to the IRC's mission.

> "The ERP system is the IRC's attempt to really bring together our finance, supply chain and grants processes from paper to digital."
>
> **Rachael Stewart**
> Global ERP Director, IRC

Solution
Managed Services for Microsoft Dynamics 365

Avanade Managed Services provides ongoing support for and enhancements to Integra. We also offer guidance on the strategic performance of the system, helping the IT team address any issues that arise while scaling the solution globally. "We're supporting the IRC in a dynamic fashion. Because of our skills and our scale, we're able to bring people with the right skills, right when the IRC needs them and provide that consulting and thought leadership," said Anil Kripalani, Avanade's account lead for the IRC.

This technology support is critical for nonprofits like the IRC that face unique challenges. For example, most nonprofits operate on much more limited budgets as they depend on donor funding and must report on how those funds are used – so having great solutions that are affordable is paramount.

"The organization itself is trying to scale and meet the demand and at the same time position ourselves to be there for emergency response. The technology has allowed us to do that more quickly and with more agility," said Rachael Stewart, global ERP director at the IRC. "Avanade really brought to the table a way of being a partner in creative thinking. Their passion for wanting to understand what we need, who we are as a client, how we operate, really resonated when we were having conversations. And because of Avanade's work with other nonprofits and expertise in Microsoft Dynamics 365, we don't have to reinvent the wheel ourselves."

That's what our Tech for Social Good program was created to do. We work in close collaboration with Microsoft Tech for Social Impact to help nonprofits fulfill their missions through the development of solutions that we then harvest to be repeatable and affordable.

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Results
More time to help more people

Integra is currently live at the IRC's offices in the U.S., Europe and Africa. As the rollout continues, the IRC benefits from:

- Capacity support
- Testing capabilities with an automated test platform
- More efficient and transparent operations
- Faster application development for all the latest and greatest features

"We constantly want to be pushing boundaries and making sure that we are efficient and effective in the work we're doing. As an organization, we're striving for excellence and making the best use of resources in everything we're doing. That extends into how we use technology," said Stewart.

"The technology keeps changing so we all need to keep evolving together to bring even more efficiencies – whether it's operational systems like better budgeting, planning, managing grants and empowering our people."

With more reliable operational tools, the IRC's employees have more time to focus on what they do best – helping people shattered by conflict and disaster survive, recover and gain control of their future.

About the International Rescue Committee

The International Rescue Committee responds to the world's worst humanitarian crises, helping to restore health, safety, education, economic wellbeing, and power to people devastated by conflict and disaster. Founded in 1933 at the call of Albert Einstein, the IRC is at work in over 40 countries and over 20 U.S. cities helping people to survive, reclaim control of their future, and strengthen their communities. Learn more at www.rescue.org and follow the IRC on Twitter and Facebook.

"Putting this system in place has required us to reevaluate our business processes – how we collect the information that needs to go into the system and, more importantly, what we do with the information that comes out of it. It's been fun working through this together and just trying to wrap our heads around all the possibilities that now exist after so many years of being used to the constraints we previously faced."

Parker Williams
ERP Director, IRC

About Avanade

Avanade is the leading provider of innovative digital, cloud and advisory services, industry solutions and design-led experiences across the Microsoft ecosystem. Every day, our 56,000 professionals in 26 countries make a genuine human impact for our clients, their employees and their customers. Avanade was founded in 2000 by Accenture LLP and Microsoft Corporation. Learn more at www.avanade.com

North America
Seattle
Phone +1 206 239 5600
America@avanade.com

South America
Sao Paulo
AvanadeBrasil@avanade.com

Asia-Pacific
Australia
Phone +61 2 9005 5900
AsiaPac@avanade.com

Europe
London
Phone +44 0 20 7025 1000
Europe@avanade.com