

The CFO playbook

Becoming the economic guardians of the future



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Estimated reading time
45-60 minutes

About this playbook

This playbook is intended for Chief Financial Officers (CFO) who want to level up their finance organization by embracing game-changing agility.

This playbook, designed to be shared with the CFO's team, aims to help CFOs ensure their finance team has the right competencies to adapt faster, work smarter, and perform better; in essence, to act with agility.

The content provides guidance around what it takes to have an agile finance team, tips for cultivating one, and best practices from established Microsoft partners who help our customers lead the way through disruption.

Partners in this playbook include Accenture and Avanade, Ernst & Young, KMPG, PwC, and sa.global.



The rise of a new approach to finance

Finance teams face a new world of challenges

Pinned between record inflation on one side and rising interest rates on the other, finance leaders face serious decisions ahead. According to the World Economic Forum's Chief Economists Outlook survey, inflation is expected to remain high in many parts of the world in the near term, especially in the United States and Europe, and the world may be heading toward a global recession.¹



The modern financial professional is expected to be a visionary who influences the company's overall strategy to accelerate growth.

Business leaders look to CFOs to decide whether organizations can afford to invest in future growth, are prepared to weather economic headwinds, and what companies need to do now to minimize the impacts of a slowdown. Finance teams that historically functioned as business stewards through tasks like reporting business results, analyzing risk, and maintaining clean and compliant records are looking for new opportunities to create value.² They're being asked to do more with less in today's high-risk, highly volatile environment. In addition to stewarding the business, the modern financial professional is expected to be a visionary to influence the company's overall strategy.

To help the organization prevail as the economy continues to shift, many CFOs are adopting practices that take advantage of innovative new business models and capitalize on market changes. By modernizing the financial, operational, and organizational structures within the finance team and the organization, visionary CFOs are transforming from economic guardians to futurists, business stewards, and change catalysts.

1. [World Economic Forum](#)
2. [Aberdeen](#)

1. Shifting from product- to service-centric operating models

While consumer goods companies have been on the journey to shift from a product-centric to a service-centric business mindset for years, it's now transforming business-to-business (B2B) operating models as well. The proliferation of cloud-based anything-as-a-service offerings allows businesses to access the benefits of innovative intellectual property (IP) without needing to own, manage, and maintain the underlying asset that power the IP.



B2B organizations find subscription-based models help to strengthen their customer relationships. Companies are learning to better anticipate customer needs and provide timely, personalized services and offers by collecting and analyzing the data from subscription services. Organizations that navigate this evolution successfully are moving from simply selling components and products to full integration with the entire product lifecycle.

Adopting subscription-based business models has turned many traditionally product-centric organizations into service-centric businesses. Whereas they may have manufactured and sold an asset in the past, today, they install the assets and charge for usage. Finance teams at these companies must shift their financial models from managing the supply chain and timing inventory to tracking in-field usage for monthly billing and maximizing service technician productivity. It's a whole new way to operate and organize the team.

2. Setting up the company to report ESG outcomes

Environmental, social, and governance (ESG) disclosures were voluntary for decades. Recently, however, there's been a tectonic shift with mandatory ESG regulation efforts picking up pace across Europe, the United States, and internationally. Today, more than 90 percent of S&P 500 companies publish ESG reports.³

ESG metrics describe a company's transparency, sustainability, and performance, in essence, measuring a company's ability to survive over the long term. These non-financial disclosures are centered around four pillars: people, planet, prosperity, and governance principles. They include measurements such as greenhouse gas emissions, pay equality, and board diversity.

In theory, ESG disclosures can help companies identify internal gaps, change how teams collaborate, and demonstrate the shared values and commitments they make on behalf of their brand. In practice, however, many finance leaders responsible for tracking ESG wrestle with assigning value and measuring ESG components—especially as understanding those components continues to mature and evolve. Finance leaders need systems and processes they can easily adapt and test and people who can quickly pivot to implement and refine them.

90%+

S&P 500 companies publish ESG reports²

3. [McKinsey](#)

3. Optimizing for changes in tax reporting requirements

As the global economy's role in business continues to grow, tax implications become increasingly relevant in terms of how to meet specific new tax requirements and how to mitigate the effects of those tax requirements on strategic decisions such as expansion. In addition to changing government policies, today's corporate tax team must account for many factors—from incentives introduced as part of COVID relief policies to legacy issues stemming from tax reforms. At the same time, internal pressures continue to mount to reduce costs, embrace automation, and recalibrate talent.

CFOs that restructure the tax department can move beyond compliance, reporting, and management responsibilities to add more value through risk mitigation and tax-aware decision-making.



4. Emerging stronger post-M&A

Markets for mergers and acquisitions (M&A) reached new records in 2021, with the U.S. market hitting \$2.6 trillion—a 99 percent increase over 2020 total values.⁴ From companies looking to circumvent supply chain issues by vertically integrating to those wanting to raise cash by selling off areas of business, M&As provide opportunities to recalibrate the business model in the face of change quickly. However, the success of any M&A correlates with the companies' ability to realize synergies and get back to business as usual quickly.

The CFO's presence can significantly influence the outcome of M&A. A recent McKinsey survey⁵ found that cost and revenue synergies were 30-35 percent more likely to meet projected targets when the CFO was very closely involved than when they were not. On the buying side, the CFO's ability to perform thorough and accurate due diligence ties closely to the availability of well-documented, well-understood financial processes and quick access to deep financial insights. Similarly, when divesting a portion of the business, companies that use modern, data-driven financial strategies can templatize and spin off elements of the business faster and with fewer disruptions than those that rely on siloed, manual systems.

As the number of M&A deals continues to rise, savvy CFOs will implement solutions that allow them to take advantage of the market and move quickly.



99%

increase in M&A from 2020 to 2021⁴

4. [White & Case](#)

5. [McKinsey](#)

5. Attracting talent and scaling a productive workforce

Today's workforce is radically different from just a few years ago in terms of who is available, where, and when they want to work. The gig workforce is growing and is estimated to surpass full-time workers by 2027.⁶ The unprecedented talent shortage in 2022 has raised the demand for skills to a record high, even amidst a spike in unemployment.⁷

Meanwhile, remote work made hybrid options the norm for many traditional office-based companies. Whether it's due to a shift in public sentiment, which shows 53 percent of people report valuing their health and well-being over their work, or the result of a more significant cultural movement, companies need a way to attract talent.⁸

While these seem like human resources issues, finance teams led by strategic CFOs will need to develop creative solutions that help the business embrace these changes. They'll use the shift to hybrid work environments to reduce capital expenditures. They'll support managers competing for skilled talent in the job market by creating new organizational models that account for the natural ebb and flow of the gig workforce.



To keep pace with these shifting trends, capitalize on new business models, and manage global volatility, CFOs need to build a hyper-agile, responsive team that can make the most of today's intelligent tools.

6. [Forbes](#)

7. [Trading Economics](#)

8. [Microsoft 2022 Work trends Index](#)

Today's CFO needs to build for hyper-agility

Today's successful CFO will build a hyper-agile finance team that knows when to bend, pivot, and change to accommodate forces more potent than the organization. Agility is the willingness and ability to iterate, adapt, and change in near real-time based on new information. The faster a finance team can adjust, the greater its agility and the greater the potential outcomes.

In an effort to improve agility and strengthen their business leadership role, many finance leaders have made digital transformation a priority. Whereas the progression of digital transformation and its implications are well understood when it comes to data, technology, processes, and reporting, it's less understood when it comes to people—though the implications are apparent. For example, by centralizing data and automating reports, teams can reduce time spent on transactional processes—however, without people capable of using those tools and insights to the fullest, the methods and reports don't mean much. Companies need a strategy for developing talent that will complement and accelerate digital transformation.

Agile companies achieve

30%

higher profits⁹

37%

faster revenue growth⁹

20 to 30%

cost savings¹⁰

5 to 10×

increase in driving change¹¹

9. Accenture

10. Economic Intelligence Unit

11. McKinsey

→ **Is your team able to act as a leader and partner to your organization?**

→ **Are they able to give solid business advice and counsel?**

→ **Can they spot trends and provide predictive insights?**

To do all this, they need dynamic communication, presentation, interpretation, problem-solving, business, and interpersonal skills. While technical and financial skills are important, to be a real change-maker, CFOs and their teams must understand the organization's objectives and the broader industry so they can contribute to continuously moving forward.

What's missing in this technology-led quest for digital transformation is the human element. Indeed, technology enables finance capabilities and streamlines processes. However, real change occurs when finance teams develop advanced competencies that can drive better business outcomes. In a recent study, Gartner found that 66 percent of finance leaders believe the digital competency gap within their finance team is widening.¹⁰ Not only is it crucial for finance teams to be digitally skilled, but they also need to evolve how they operate within the broader organization to enhance functional value and effectively contribute to the overall company strategy.

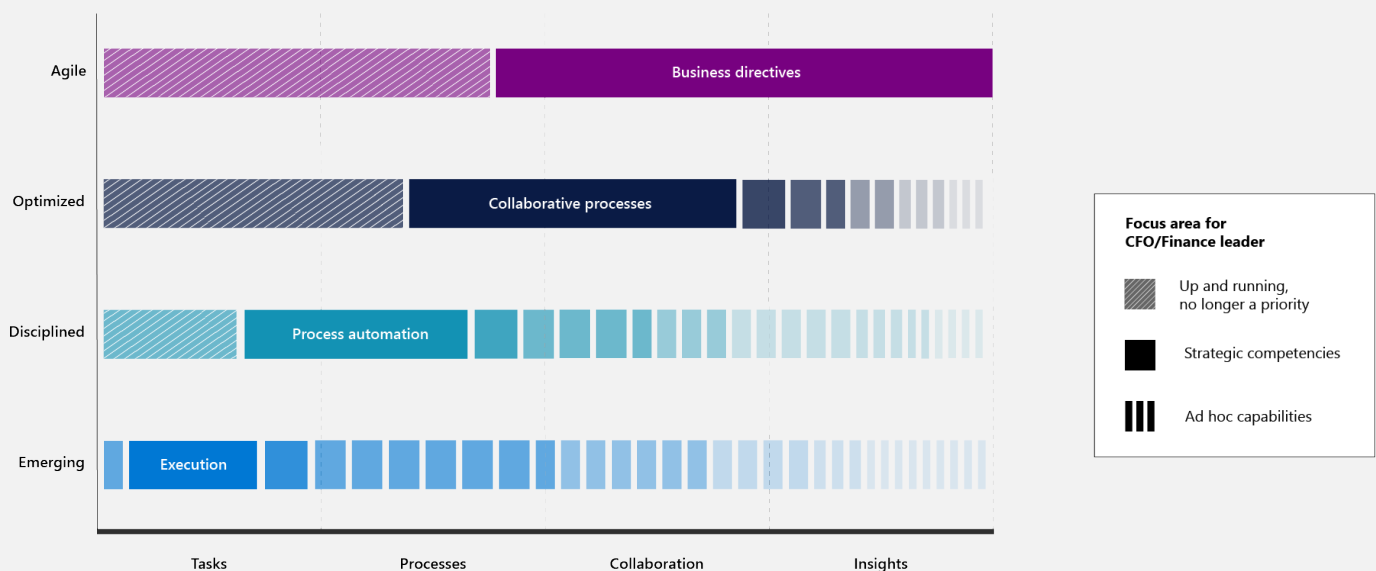
Real change occurs when finance teams develop advanced competencies that people can use to drive better business outcomes.

¹⁰ [Gartner](#)

Ladder up your teams' competencies

Today, proactive CFOs cultivate competencies that allow them to use advanced digital technologies more effectively and create competitive advantages. Developing advanced competencies starts with knowing where you are and where you need to go.

Microsoft offers a competency-based maturity model that enables you to benchmark your finance team across different areas and functions. The model ranks the various competencies needed to advance stages—emerging, disciplined, optimized, and agile—and achieve the desired end state as an adaptable and collaborative finance team.



Agile finance teams adapt faster, work smarter, and perform better. While your finance team can be high performing at any stage, becoming agile means embodying the collaboration and innovative thinking required to make finance a true strategic partner to the business. Agile finance teams give leaders real-time insights into business performance and offer recommendations for future initiatives that will help the organization thrive amid disruption.


The most dynamic finance teams serve as a driving force for the business's commercial performance and proactively provide the analysis and insight that help frame the company's most important decisions. You're well positioned as an agile finance team to help the organization weather changes and embrace new opportunities with less disruption.

Agile finance teams drive better business outcomes

Teams with agile competencies are involved in more strategic conversations with executives due to the innovative systems they have in place and the ease and speed with which they can glean insights from data. They drive operational excellence and business model innovation, maximizing financial visibility and profitability. Agile finance teams also provide the foundation for a hyper-agile business by enabling the organization to make quicker, better decisions through responsive access to forecasting, financial reporting, and modeling.

Microsoft partners work with customers worldwide to enable digital transformation and prepare finance teams to become highly agile and dynamic. A few key partners, Accenture and Avanade, Ernst & Young, KPMG, PWC, and sa.global, provided insights on how they've developed their finance practice and offerings to better help their customers respond to today's ever-changing world.

Accenture and Avanade

A woman with dark hair, wearing a white blouse, is shown in a circular inset, writing on a whiteboard. The background of the entire page is a server room with numerous blue network cables bundled together and held by black metal brackets. The lighting is blue and purple, creating a high-tech atmosphere.

Accenture, a Fortune Global 500 company with over 720,000 employees, is one of the world's leading professional services firms, specializing in information technology services and consulting. **Avanade**, formed by Accenture and Microsoft in 2000, totals over 60,000 Microsoft-focused experts, combining advisory, technology, and experiences to help clients unlock the full potential of their IT departments and business and maximize the effectiveness of their Microsoft investments. Together, Accenture and Avanade help organizations achieve their finance transformation journey.

Accenture and Avanade saw many organizations look to finance leaders for help navigating the ripple effects of COVID-19, the energy crisis, and the Russo-Ukrainian War. Questions were coming at CFOs fast and furious around supply chain management, demand planning, channel mix, and forecasting, to name just a few. The trouble was, to assume the role of business architect for the organization, CFOs found they needed assistance implementing digital technologies and processes. Accenture and Avanade stepped in to help.

The firm provides consulting services and solutions to help CFOs expand beyond owning financials and take an active role in operations, supply chain, and talent management. Accenture and Avanade help organizations integrate these functions and enable end-to-end visibility across the business, thereby removing data, reporting, and collaboration silos that previously limited many financial teams.

Through relationships with large enterprise organizations across industries, Accenture and Avanade have seen the role of the CFO become more critical to achieving success. Given the intensifying market disruptions, escalating risk volatility, and ongoing changes in customer behavior, the CFO plays a crucial role in balancing economic stewardship with the strategic assessment of growth risks and opportunities to drive enterprise value.

The Accenture and Avanade success model

Accenture and Avanade developed a series of finance narratives and scenarios that speak to the present-day challenges CFOs face. The firm uses these narratives and scenarios to benchmark the role of finance teams today and help them create rigorous strategies to evolve. From how a consumer packaged goods company can segment a new product to how a retail enterprise can optimize its supply chain to how a bank can achieve financial elasticity, each scenario is carefully constructed from the deep-seated industry knowledge at Accenture and Avanade.

In addition to finance-focused scenarios, Accenture and Avanade also consider how softer skills can help CFOs and finance teams play a more strategic role across the enterprise. Whereas traditional finance teams had accounting backgrounds and focused on FP&A, controls, reconciliation, and compliance, today's financial leaders need a combination of communication and presentation skills in addition to financial acumen. Accenture and Avanade help teams develop talent through targeted

training that enables finance team members to not only interpret analytics and business intelligence but also how to tell a compelling story that links operational choices with financial implications.

Similarly, they help finance teams understand the value of cross-company collaboration. In this way, the firm helps organizations break down silos that previously separated data, processes, talent, and technology to create systems that encourage collaboration. Doing so provides CFOs with an end-to-end view of the enterprise, empowers a better understanding of working capital and cash flow, and enables everyone to see opportunities across the value chain.



Accenture and Avanade customer success

Embracing change to create value for our clients is how we help them become the next and best versions of themselves worldwide every day.

Siemens

As one of the world's largest producers of energy-efficient, resource-saving technologies, Siemens is a powerhouse in delivering innovative, forward-thinking solutions. Still, with the constant changes in tax regulations, navigating the requirements for digital and global trades became more complex for tax experts and employees. After searching the market for the right solution, Siemens chose to partner with Avanade. The Avanade Chatbot Accelerator, built on the Microsoft Bot Framework, combines powerful cognitive and AI services. The solution has improved the overall digital workplace experience for Siemens employees. It saves time searching for up-to-date information and getting answers to repetitive questions.

"We see a lot of opportunities to optimize processes. That way, our people are relieved from repetitive routine tasks, and they will really have free hands for the very important and core topics of a tax adviser."

Michael Tobai

Head of Tax Technology and Digitalization
Siemens

Willemen Groep

After years of steadily acquiring new companies, Willemen Groep set off on a strategic initiative to unify its core financial processes onto the Microsoft Dynamics 365 Finance and Supply Chain Management enterprise resource planning (ERP) platform. A fragmented and aging ERP landscape impacted operational performance, making it difficult to get a real-time, up-to-date picture of the group's financials. For example, putting together bi-annual financial reports would take months, preventing the ability to make timely strategic decisions. Straddling numerous systems also caused increased maintenance

costs, sub-optimal employee engagement, and a strain on IT resources—all critical drivers behind the decision to modernize onto a single, cloud-hosted ERP platform.

Willemen Groep selected Avanade as its trusted adviser to secure its transition to Microsoft Dynamics 365. Avanade developed a solution specific to Willemen Groep's industry using our Avanade Intelligent Enterprise Solutions (AIES). This is comprised of a global Avanade team and investment strategy that fuses the products, assets, and knowledge of Accenture, Avanade, and the Microsoft ecosystem to support business process transformation. AIES solutions are designed to help clients rapidly deploy leading business practices enabled by innovative technologies. Avanade also used agile methods to shorten feedback cycles, bringing velocity and quality to the delivery cycle.

Willemen Groep is seeing the benefits of consolidating its ERP systems onto Dynamics 365, including:

- Business process innovation. Decision-makers can access financial insights in real-time. Financial users across various regions work from the same financial backbone and can get reports within a few clicks. This innovation has resulted in increased agility, simplification, and productivity.
- Business insights to help Willemen Groep predict and lead. The Dynamics 365 implementation is part of a larger strategy, including migration to a more digitally dynamic workforce. The new ERP solution is also making recent mergers and acquisitions more seamless.



DGS

DGS is an innovative and international manufacturer of complex, high-quality die-casting components with locations in Switzerland, China, and the Czech Republic. For more than a decade, each location used its own ERP system, which was inefficient to maintain. The company's leadership wanted greater financial visibility and control so it could improve efficiencies across its production sites. It first needed to harmonize its business processes onto a single platform.

Given Avanade's service offerings, international experience, and longstanding partnership, DGS worked with Avanade to upgrade to Microsoft Dynamics 365 and Microsoft Azure. Using a hybrid-agile approach, Avanade helped implement Dynamics 365 for Finance and Operations to harmonize its IT landscape and business processes – including finance and supply chain—in the cloud. The platform also integrates with the company's production control systems to help improve data quality and ensure effective processes. The result is significantly more accurate information because it flows directly from the company's equipment into the ERP systems and platforms.

"The combination of strategic consulting and technological know-how was the success factor for this project. With this knowledge and background, Avanade presented us with a project approach and led us to a solution in a structured manner within the framework of a hybrid, agile approach."

Urs Aemisegger


Head of IT
DGS

The new ERP system has made DGS's processes much more efficient and sped up information delivery. Financial managers get the information they need to make better, more informed decisions as many as two days earlier than before.

Additional benefits included:

- Operational efficiency and agility
- Improved budgeting
- Enhanced reporting and controlling capabilities

Ernst & Young



Ernst & Young (EY) global professional services organization operates in over 150 countries with more than 300,000 employees who deliver Assurance, Tax, Consulting (Business and Technology), and Strategy and Transaction services to their clients. EY's global reach and operating model allow it to generate value for its clients locally while providing global, sector-specific skills and insights. Over the years, EY professionals have worked with many Fortune 500 CFOs and IT leaders to transform and reshape their finance organizations into high-performing, dynamic teams.

With its strong alliance with Microsoft, the EY Microsoft Services Group creates transformative cloud solutions that help the world work better and achieve more. EY was named the Microsoft Global Advisory Partner of the Year—third year in a row—and has also been recognized by both IDC and Forrester as a Leader for Microsoft Implementation Services and Business Application Services, respectively.¹ It also has six Microsoft Advanced Specializations and is a Microsoft Cloud Solutions Partner in all six designations across Azure, Dynamics 365, and Microsoft 365. Together, EY professionals work with Microsoft to further advance the agendas of the C-suite executives and leaders.



1. The EY Microsoft Services Group was named a 2021 Leader in IDC Worldwide Microsoft Implementation Services and 2021 Leader for Microsoft Business Application Services by The Forrester Wave™.

EY tax transformation

Today, CFOs are expected to be oriented to the future: 82 percent of finance leaders increasingly see CFOs as the stewards of long-term value, serving stakeholders rather than just shareholders.² These leaders often contend with corporate strategy, IT, supply chain, risk, and procurement—all vital in today's disruptive landscape. In short, what CFOs do and how they do it—and for whom—have all shifted.

To be a true business partner, CFOs must rethink their finance functions to be future-ready, agile, and focused on long-term value. The C-suite has recognized technology's significant role and how the tax and finance functions can be real value-adding partners to the business. In a recent survey, 41 percent of CFOs believe the lack of a sustainable plan for data and technology is the most significant barrier to achieving their tax and finance function's vision. This rises to 50 percent for large companies with over \$30 billion in revenue.³ This clearly shows that there is plenty of transformational work to be done.

EY professionals are positioned to help CFOs think more strategically across the whole continuum of finance and tax: uniting leading-edge technology, creating optimized operating models, and guiding talent through change management. EY professionals work alongside leadership to craft a forward-thinking vision, define the principles that guide the organization, and organize the tactical strategies they'll deploy to achieve the desired future state. They employ a rapid maturity assessment methodology specific to the client's needs, quickly defining the current finance and tax operating model and crafting a transformation roadmap that builds a bridge to those outcomes (including the immediate, near-term, and long-term priorities). The goal for transformation is to digitize end-to-end processes, optimize the operating model, provide timely insights, and improve business partnerships.

2. EY 2020 DNA of the CFO Survey.

3. EY 2022 Tax and Finance Operations Survey.

The global EY network of integrated finance, tax, and technology consulting team members sets the organization apart—accelerating the transformation journey thanks to leaders in Organization Design, Process Optimization and Automation, Technology Implementation, Change Management, Tax, Human Resources, and Program Management.

As CFOs target technology as a critical enabler to their growth plans, the power of the EY Microsoft Alliance accelerates outcomes with solutions focused on:

- Finance and tax transformation powered by EY Rapid Foundation for Dynamics 365
- EY Tax and Finance Operate managed services powered by the EY Global Tax Platform
- Financial forecasting and scenario planning leveraging Azure Data and AI, ML
- CFO dashboard analytics and enterprise insights
- EY Connected Tax Gateway and Tax Application Marketplace
- Indirect Tax enabled by Dynamics 365
- Process automation leveraging Microsoft Power Platform
- ESG Reporting and EY Decarbonization Platform

EY customer success

By bringing people, processes, and technologies together and drawing on the power of Microsoft's trusted platforms, EY teams help CFOs accelerate finance and accounting transformations—across industries and all over the world. These recent engagements illustrate our strengths.

Accelerated finance solution for a climate change startup

To advance the decarbonization agenda, this company was developing facilities to capture and store carbon. Yet it lacked an ERP system, an approvals process for expenditures in project accounting, defined roles, and security guidelines for downstream regulatory reporting and controls. In under six months, the EY team implemented Microsoft Dynamics 365 Finance to support existing procure-to-pay for 40 legal entities, underpinned by EY Rapid Foundation, a series of predefined and templated finance processes based on leading practices. Approval workflows were created to boost leadership oversight into operational spend and to facilitate spend analysis. At the same time, roles and responsibilities were defined with proper security permissions.

Streamlined processes, data integrity, and empowered automation for an M&A titan

Created through the merger of seven companies, this rail and leasing services group struggled with disparate data sources for finance, HR, and operations. On top of this, they had multiple IT platforms for reporting and analysis. Over 100 management reports were prepared manually each month, and ad-hoc reports were distributed through emails and shared drives. EY teams worked with management to identify the root cause of issues—and within a week, they leveraged their CFO dashboard platform to build a working prototype with client KPIs to showcase the capabilities of the Microsoft Azure platform and Power BI to coalesce data and eliminate anomalies. Subsequently, the client awarded the project to EY professionals to develop standardized KPIs,

reports, and reporting methodologies, as well as automate transactional reporting activities—resulting in process standardization and efficiency gains.



Bringing clarity to indirect tax and eliminating manual workarounds for a multinational client

The client's complex global footprint posed significant challenges for its small finance team, which was responsible for addressing business operation scenarios and regularly processing a vast range of transactions. Boggled down with manual workarounds, these professionals were struggling to keep up. The Microsoft Dynamics 365 Finance platform is well-suited for operations in multiple markets where abiding by varying local requirements is a necessity. The EY Indirect Tax team brought leading practices for implementing the platform, which eliminated manual efforts through its automated native tax calculation component. The client can now synthesize key tax and finance processes, such as accounts payables and accounts receivables, on a system used in all their operating countries.

KPMG



KPMG, one of the Big Four accounting organizations, is a global professional services network providing audit, tax, and advisory services. The longstanding Microsoft Partner is known for helping international clients get ahead of problems before they become setbacks. KPMG firms provide the KPMG Powered Enterprise suite, a collection of target operating models that can be applied to distinct processes across finance, supply chain, cybersecurity, HR, procurement, and more.

Most recently, KPMG firms have helped large enterprise clients successfully adapt and respond to a changing economic landscape, with new shifts caused by the pandemic and others resulting from rapid innovation. The steep rise of operating costs due to setting up employees to work from home led many KPMG clients to look for opportunities to improve procurement processes and vendor management. Similarly, the pandemic triggered massive M&As, which created the need for KPMG to develop templated solutions that organizations use to divest finance functions and empower newly acquired teams to get back to work quickly.



Through business model innovation, the shift to a service-centric operations model has become top of mind for many KPMG clients. Organizations need help redefining the partnership between service operations, the CFO, and the head of HR to help ensure people are at the heart of the service model. Likewise, because ESG compliance and reporting rules now fall under the CFO's domain, KPMG supports CFOs in meeting ESG key metrics and disclosure requirements by developing strategies to improve compliance.



The KPMG success model

When KPMG helps a business transform digitally, it frequently needs to demonstrate to the CFO what is possible. For example, KPMG aims to show CFOs that if they look at spend properly, they can drive margin growth. CFOs then learn to hunt through their organizations to find waste, such as employees duplicating tasks when they could perform more strategic work.

KPMG ties the business's value proposition to the technology, so a CFO can use their technology to verify that their processes are robust, see their data in real-time, and leverage that data for maximum insights. When used all at once, the CFO can advise the company on ways to pivot quickly in response to market conditions.

KPMG has detailed maturity models that enable CFOs and their finance teams to benchmark their digital transformation progress. KPMG's Powered Enterprise target operating model is divided into six pillars: functional process, people, services, technology, reporting and KPIs, and security and governance. Inside that, functional scopes are broken down into more distinct elements such as procure-to-pay, quote-to-cash, acquire-to-retain, project-to-report, record-to-report, and transact-to-report—all the primary blocks of a finance team. For every primary block, KPMG measures maturity on a scale between one and five across the six pillars.

KPMG has collected substantial key performance indicators (KPIs) on how an investment in its Powered Enterprise Finance products can enable a business to improve its return on investment (ROI). It has set up its offerings in a multi-stage delivery, whereby KPMG helps ensure that all stakeholders are aligned to the correct scope of what they want to transform. Questions such as, "Where are you today against every function?" and "Where do you want to get to as a business?" serve as the foundation, then KPMG analyzes where the gaps are in the selected departments, staff, roles, responsibilities, and what people need to do to get to the desired end goal. KPMG continually evolves its maturity model and releases a new version every six months.



KPMG customer success

KPMG firms offer a full suite of forward-looking services designed to navigate new complexities and support greater customer centricity, including digital transformation and growth, data analytics and security, supply chain management, growth, and new business models.

Wesleyan

Wesleyan, a 181-year-old financial services organization based in Birmingham, England, needed a modern finance system to better serve its core customers, including teachers, doctors, and dentists. The organization wanted a solution that provided the flexibility and scalability of the cloud and did not require too many customizations. Microsoft Dynamics 365 Finance checked all the boxes.

In February 2020, Wesleyan and Microsoft Gold Partner KPMG LLP (UK) kicked off an implementation of Dynamics 365 Finance, only to be ground to a halt days later when the COVID-19 pandemic sent everyone home to work. The team quickly remobilized, shifting to Microsoft Teams, to keep the project moving. Fifteen months later, the platform went live—on time and on budget.

Today, Wesleyan has approximately 200 users on Dynamics 365 Finance. The cloud-based application platform is used to manage general ledger (GL) accounts and fixed assets and to raise manual payments or purchase ledger payments. The legacy manual sub-ledgers once used in Excel were brought under one system, removing manual intervention and risk and thereby creating a more sustainable basis for growth. The new system created efficiencies that allow users to pull reports, perform reconciliations, and look after bank accounts, improving the overall process significantly.

Because Dynamics 365 Finance replaced Wesleyan's purchase ledger system, employees outside of finance use the platform to check and oversee invoices and purchase orders. It's useful at the individual supplier level and a wider procurement level with spend reporting by category. It has also helped the company make data-driven decisions about its supply chain strategy.

In the aftermath of Wesleyan's finance transformation journey, employees learned new skills and ways of working. The team attributes the tremendous success of the project, even despite unforeseeable circumstances, to the close relationship and support provided by KPMG.

Dixie Chemical

Dixie Chemical is a U.S.-based market leader in the development and manufacturing of high-performance specialty chemicals such as thermoset composites and coatings materials, fuel and lube additives, and alkaline paper sizing.

As this global supplier of specialty chemicals evaluated its financial and business operational growth goals, it realized it was imperative to invest in becoming agile

and data-transparent. The employees at Dixie Chemical were manually processing many transactions using an outdated and unsupported software solution that did not provide timely visibility into the data required to support effective business decision-making.

Additionally, employees were spending numerous unproductive hours completing activities to maintain the company's manufacturing, inventory, customer services, and financial transactions—all of which created unnecessary costs and difficulties reporting and providing answers to key business-related questions.

The leadership at Dixie Chemical wanted to quickly implement a powerful technology solution to improve their operating productivity, data accuracy, and insight into real-time business performance. They turned to KPMG in the U.S. for thorough guidance on implementing the right cloud-enabled system to achieve their goals. KPMG designed a Microsoft-enabled Powered Enterprise implementation approach to transformation that includes stakeholder training sessions.

To date, Dixie Chemical has achieved:

- An increase in net income by approximately \$2 million
- Improved visibility of production costs leading to insight into true customer pricing and margin
- More solid understanding of operating costs and a 25 percent improvement in operating results, along with identifying hidden manufacturing costs

The creation of monthly management reports in half the time it previously took and allowing for maturity in end-user analysis requests

Enhanced work and collaborative efforts through a holistic understanding of the company's operating solutions and options

Business continuity and customer communication improved during critical operational setbacks.

Overall, KPMG's Powered Enterprise implementation led to an increased focus on daily activities critical to achieving Dixie Chemical's business mission.



PwC

At **PwC**, the purpose is simple: build trust in society and solve important problems by helping business leaders reimagine the possible. PwC's network of firms across 155 countries and 327,000 people is committed to delivering the highest quality in assurance, advisory, and tax services.

Within the Microsoft practice, PwC's team of 9,000+ certified Microsoft Consultants helps clients drive business value and sustainable outcomes across the Microsoft cloud.

Regardless of industry, PwC stands out as a leader in helping enterprises look at finance through a new lens and helps clients reshape that function to better support their business. PwC brings its clients' vision to life in a future-state operating model that improves visibility and reduces risk in a cost-effective manner.

Over the past few years, PwC has seen a paradigm shift in how finance operates, mainly brought about by a confluence of external forces: foreign exchange and inflation fluctuations, regulatory shifts, accelerated M&A activity, talent wars, and the rise of digital and advanced technologies like artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML). This undulating

landscape changes how the business views the roles of the CFO and finance teams everywhere.

Gone are the days when finance's main role was to process and report transactions. Today, finance provides critical data-driven insights that business uses to steer decision-making at every level. This encompasses not only insights by function and new ESG/Tax reporting but also how those insights need to interplay. The interplay will drive the next generation of profits for companies with the right strategy, data structures, technology, and reporting frameworks.

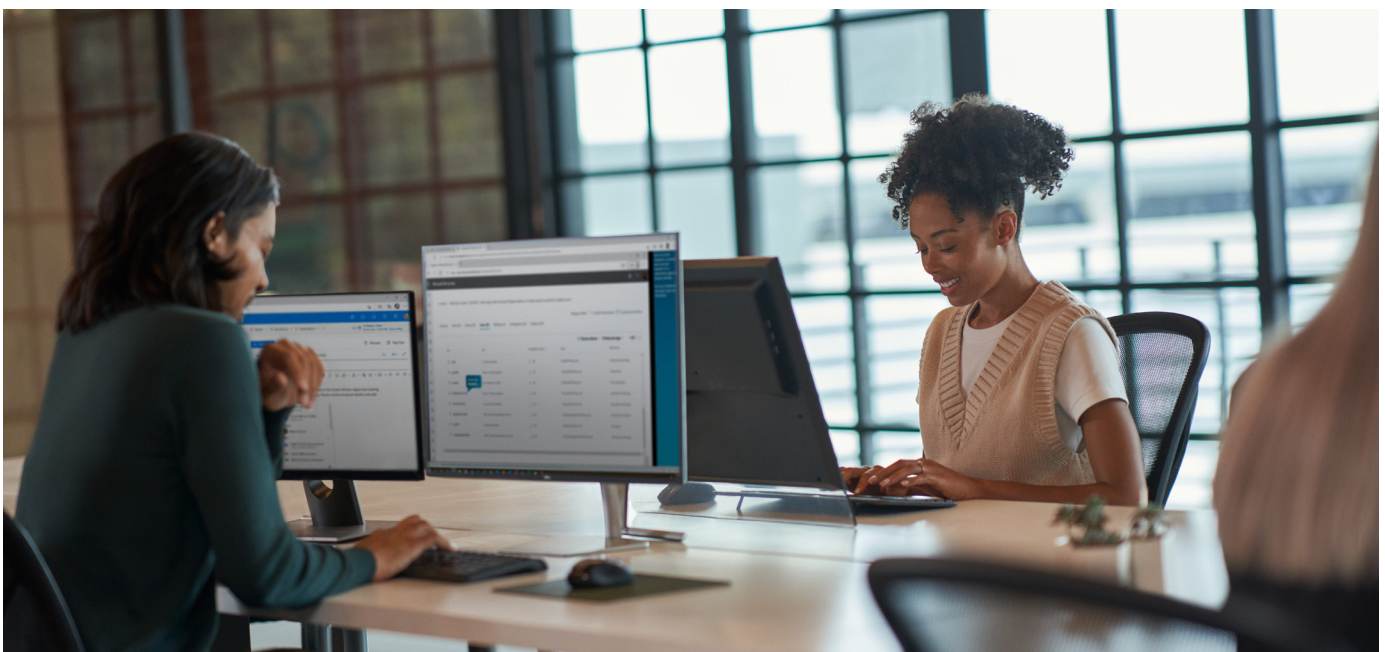
Clients look to PwC for help with their finance transformation because of their approach as a business integrator rather than a systems integrator.

PwC focuses foremost on the business outcomes the client is trying to drive using their BXT approach—Business, eXperience, Technology—to account for factors needed to drive those outcomes.

Some of these factors include:

- A clear understanding of the customer's business processes, challenges, and goals.
- A strong user-centered persona design approach.
- A deep knowledge of the client's systems and related integrations.

BXT not only helps their clients envision the future but rejuvenates and rallies teams behind that vision to achieve sustainable business outcomes.



The PwC success model

Every CFO knows how complicated global finance transformations can be, and they all want to “get it right” the first time. PwC follows a well-defined process for helping clients be successful by incorporating several critical components.

Engagements start with envisioning sessions, in which CFOs bring key stakeholders into the conversation to collaboratively develop the transformation plan. In the first part of the envisioning session, PwC focuses the discussion on current state, goals/objectives, and baseline requirements of the finance team.

PwC then benchmarks the organization against other companies in the same industry, size, and revenue to help inform the most effective approach.

The assessment measures the maturity of a customer’s finance team against four areas:

- **People:** Give finance teams new ways to use underutilized skills
- **Process:** Have a roadmap for finance effectiveness, not automation

- **Performance:** Drive insights with connected, self-service financial data
- **Cost efficiency:** Determine if the finance function is cost efficient

When it comes time to design the new financial operating models, PwC brings in its teams of specialists to help tailor the solution for each unique client. For example, one recent global transformation program included the PwC test team, process transformation team, chart of accounts standardization team, change management team, and enterprise program and portfolio management team. Deploying all those specialist teams together enables the client to move through the transformation journey while getting it right the first time.

Clients often bring PwC specialists in to extend the reach of their finance transformation across the business. PwC helps by identifying opportunities to refine customer-facing applications and systems in a way that supports the finance and business goals accordingly. Likewise, the firm’s organizational behavior specialists work with the HR department to ensure skilling and competency training gets baked into employee development and aligns with the criteria for promotions and compensation.

PwC customer success

PwC brings technology to life for its clients, helping them to successfully undergo digital transformation, streamline financial systems, reimagine operations, and foster agility.

PwC transforms a \$3B software company's finance operations

Following the merger of two leading cloud-based SaaS companies, the company needed to develop standardized processes and a scalable technology architecture to optimize finance and accounting functions and achieve its long-term growth objectives.

Working with the client, PwC led a finance-focused transformation enabled by Microsoft Dynamics 365 to help identify business process improvements across key finance and supply chain workstreams, including Procure-to-Pay, Record-to-Report, Acquire-to-Retire, and Order-to-Cash, including a completely redesigned global Chart of Accounts (COA).

Ultimately, PwC helped transform the clients' financial processes by implementing industry-leading practices driving the following sustained business outcomes:

Single source of truth across all financial data

- 15 percent resource capacity unlocked in the office of the CFO
- 40 percent reduction in monthly close cycles (less than four days to close)
- Less than 1 percent after the fact POs
- 25 percent reduction in the # of accounts in the redesigned COA

Agtegra evolves finance operations to reinforce trust

As part of an organization-wide digital transformation at Agtegra, one of the largest farmer-owned grain and agronomy cooperatives, was looking to modernize its finance and operations functions to enable more than 6,300 member-owners to streamline financial operations and drive business efficiencies.

With PwC's help, Agtegra redesigned finance and supply chain systems and processes using Microsoft Dynamics 365.

By taking a holistic view and identifying key business opportunities, PwC and Agtegra implemented a solution that streamlined finance & operations while establishing a new level of trust for their constituents.

Key business outcomes included:

- 40 percent reduction in accounts payable processing costs
- 75 percent less time to close books monthly; reduced from 20 days to 5 days
- 50 percent reduction in time spent on daily bank reconciliations

Explore how PwC and Microsoft are empowering companies to [reimagine their finance function](#).



sa.global

sa.global understands that today's accounting firms are not only faced with staying abreast of evolving accounting standards and delivering the highest quality services but must also be on the lookout for opportunities to build new practices and service lines as a source of continued growth. The unprecedented churn in the industry is causing accounting firms of all sizes to confront new challenges. sa.global help CFOs and their teams take this head-on by implementing Dynamics 365 modules that deliver a 360-degree view of clients, projects, finances, and people.

In many cases, finance firms seek support from sa.global when dealing with recent M&As, and the parent company needs to evaluate its processes and examine its strategic priorities. Many CFO realizes they want to move their staff onto higher-level activities and away from time-consuming tasks such as manual data entry. Automating processes is one way to free up staff time so they can focus on delivering more value to the organization.

The sa.global success model

sa.global works with finance teams that run the gamut, from small businesses to enterprises. When sa.global begins working with new customers, the first step is to assess where they stand in terms of technology, processes, and willingness to change.

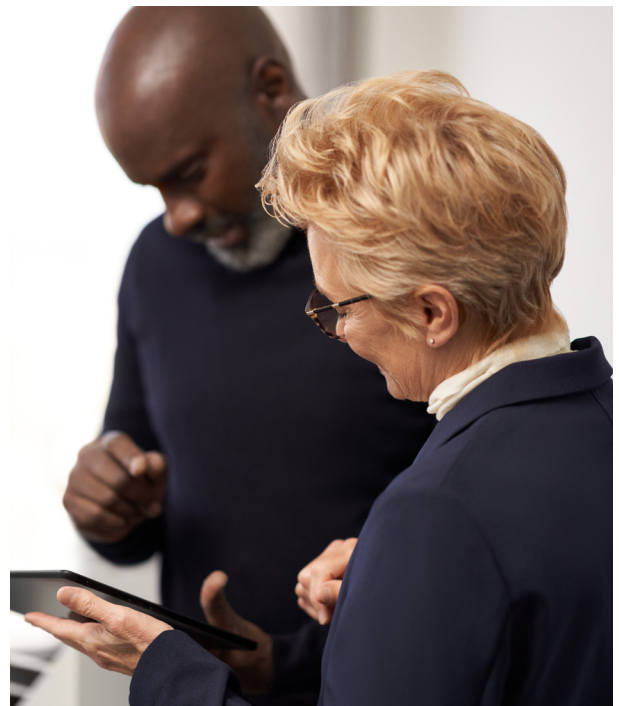
The sa.global team evaluates finance teams on the following criteria:

- **Technology tools:** Integrated systems with common data stores shows more maturity (vs. ad-hoc spreadsheets based on manual data entry)
- **Process sophistication.** Consistency and clear ownership illustrate more advanced maturity
- **Culture for change.** A willingness to adopt new technology and processes demonstrates a higher maturity

When evaluating the maturity of a particular area, sa.global benchmarks the company against mature practices. For example, in the case of the budgeting process, they would look for a team to be running sophisticated what-if analyses

using cost drivers to dynamically produce different scenarios and operating with full traceability, including audit trails and segregation of duties in systems to ensure everything needed for audit reporting is at their fingertips. Depending on how a customer compares against the ideal, their business goals, and their appetite for change, sa.global develops a modernization plan to help them increase their maturity.

Once up and running, sa.global ensures the finance teams have all the resources they need to succeed by providing change management support to ensure end users take full advantage of the Dynamics 365 platform.



sa.global customer success

sa.global has successfully used Microsoft Dynamics 365 to help their client's finance teams become more dynamic. The next few pages walk through two examples, Clean Energy and an international IT services provider.

Clean Energy

Clean Energy, the largest producer of renewable natural gas (RNG) with an extensive network of 570 fueling stations across North America, came to sa.global to get help reaching its pollution-reducing goal. Clean Energy's goal hinged on internal efficiency, anchored by a collaborative, well-integrated infrastructure plan. But it was growing rapidly, as was its IT landscape, creating more data silos. The company wanted to overcome these siloed applications and gain faster access to data to become more productive.

sa.global assessed the company's finance team's maturity and competency by looking at their original and existing processes and consistency across processes as indications of maturity. Competency is often a journey with new software, and sa.global's implementation methodology focuses on building end-user and subject

matter expert competency throughout the implementation phase and on to hyper care and support after go-live.

Since Clean Energy was looking to standardize its systems in one place, sa.global recommended upgrading to flexible, cloud-based Dynamics 365 for Finance, Supply Chain Management, Field Service, and Sales on an Azure-based infrastructure.

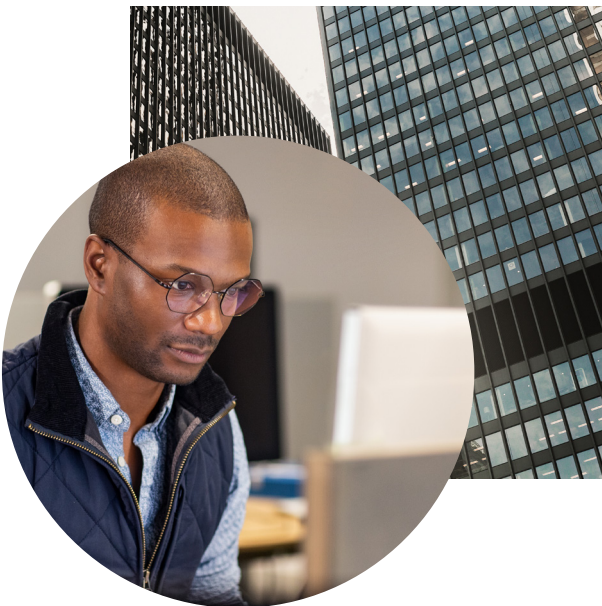
With Dynamics 365, Clean Energy has experienced more accessible user interfaces, less technical overhead from old distributed systems, and a single source of truth to drive finance reporting and analytics.

International IT services provider

This IT services provider was experiencing inefficiencies with its outdated legacy ERP system and was using Microsoft Excel heavily to augment it. The company was looking for a cloud solution that could streamline business processes, improve transparency, and improve the overall efficiency of international operations.

sa.global completed an initial scoping exercise before the implementation, which allowed the firm to assess the client's current state and maturity and ensure they were ready for implementation. sa.global recommended Dynamics 365 to help finance, project management, accounting, HR, and electronic invoicing. Moving to the cloud was already a big step for the IT services provider, so sa.global used minimal extensions and customizations to ensure the new system was streamlined and easier to maintain.

The IT services provider's initial results improved operational efficiency, and the company is introducing automation into its processes as it matures. A comprehensive audit trail is also on the horizon, as well as more accurate reporting that requires less manual support.



Optimize faster with Microsoft Dynamics 365

Microsoft Dynamics 365 can help you optimize financial and operating models to drive resilience and innovation. Improve financial dexterity, operational proficiency, and project-centric services success by making timely decisions using comprehensive, real-time reporting, embedded analytics, and AI-driven insights. The power of Dynamics 365 is the way it connects data from within and beyond the Microsoft cloud and transforms it into actionable insights for your people to drive more impactful results. Equipped with the right digital capabilities, you get agility in the face of change, so you can pivot complex operations nimbly and quickly to keep your customers subscribed for life.

 Microsoft Dynamics 365

Confidently move to the cloud to optimize digital business processes and unlock the insights needed to adapt faster, work smarter, and perform better.

Request a demo 