NEW ENGLAND WIRE TECHNOLOGIES AND AXTEGRITY: A PARTNER FOR LIFE

OVERVIEW

When New England Wire Technologies (NEWT) implemented Microsoft Dynamics 365 for Finance and Supply Chain Management, the company knew it needed an ongoing support partner that had broad knowledge of D365, as well as experience operating ERP systems in an on-premises environment. Thus, they embarked on a search for a very specific partner engagement.

A New Hampshire-based company, NEWT creates one-of-a-kind wire and cable solutions using a proprietary manufacturing and rigorous testing process that includes wire drawing, plating, braiding, cabling, insulating, and extrusion services. Because it operates as a US federal government contractor, NEWT implemented an on-premises installation of D365 for Finance and Supply Chain, with plans to implement D365 Customer Engagement and Microsoft 365 in a Government Community Cloud (GCC) services tenant.

The company's 350 users use various D365 functionalities, ranging from finance to supply chain. NEWT also maintains multiple integrating products. In the Financials space, they use Enterprise Asset Management and Precision Forms. On the production floor, they employ two large products for designing cable and managing Bills of Material and required routes. These add-on products all integrate with the company's D365 Finance and Supply Chain implementation.

The Internal IT and Development team includes three developers and a small IT staff who provide support and server management as well as ongoing maintenance of the on-premises environment. In New England's on-premises deployment, application servers and the Microsoft SQL Server database run in its own data center. NEWT manages the deployment using Lifecyle Services (LCS), Microsoft's portal that provides the tools and services needed to maintain an implementation.

NEW ENGLAND WIRE TECHNOLOGIES' NEED

As the company neared the end of its ERP implementation, it became quite clear that it needed a strong partner that could offer capable, all-encompassing support, according to Craig Simpson, NEWT's IT Manager. "We needed a group that had expertise in all areas of support. We were looking for one stop shopping." That need included a partner that was capable and experienced in all phases of the on-premises product lifecycle:

•	Environment Analysis
•	Development
•	Integrations
•	Licensing
•	Application Support
•	Training for Developers and Users

Axtegrity's experience with on-premises installations and deployments for Dynamics 365 was another important requirement, and key to establishing the relationship. Keith Odom, Axtegrity CEO said: "We are able to service all aspects of our client implementations. We also understand both the cloud and OnPrem models in D365 and AX for those implementations hosting it in Azure or onsite."

The company was also searching for a trusted liaison for their internal developers from design direction, to implementation and support, and lastly, to advice regarding ongoing future projects. "We needed a partner that could properly create a specification for development scope, provide reasonable time and costs estimates and deliver on those estimates," Simpson explained.

A PARTNERSHIP IS BORN

NEWT's prior partner engagements, both positive and negative, drove its search for such a partner. "We had narrowed down the field and it quickly became clear that Axtegrity checked all the boxes. Making the decision to partner with Axtegrity has proven to be one of the best decisions we have made," Simpson said. "Not only has Axtegrity demonstrated that they have the necessary expertise, but their commitment to us as a client has been nothing short of exceptional."

By partnering with Axtegrity, a long-term and mutually collaborative relationship was a natural fit. The key to maintaining and expanding the proper ERP implementation, regardless of application, is to start with an experienced, forthright partner who understands, end-to-end, what the client needs, Odom said.

For example, when NEWT was considering the options for its Payroll integration to D365, they tasked Axtegrity with the design and a move-forward recommendation. Axtegrity revised the current design documentation, and presented options for both partner development or in-house development by NEWT engineers. The company made the decision to take on the development in-house, with the support of Axtegrity since it was based on data entities which they were familiar with from their data migration experience.

Being presented with the options, was crucial, Simpson said. "Axtegrity will provide lower cost alternatives to suggested solutions or development. That means not only do they fully understand what we have asked for, but also recommend alternative methodology that may prove to be easier, better and cheaper."

Laura Jacobowitz, Axtegrity Senior Solution Architect, explained the company's approach: "Partners can better understand a client's frame of mind when they become aware of a problem, research different solutions, and compare options for them. Our goal is to empower NEWT employees with the right tools and technology so that they can get the job done and focus on what's important."

ONGOING SUPPORT

As a Microsoft Gold Partner, Axtegrity has access to Microsoft advisory services, upgrade and product-release readiness guidance, and direct access for support cases: from troubleshooting a specific Microsoft application problem, to resolving a critical error, or to requesting assistance with functions that aren't working as expected.

Axtegrity's customer portal, which is built on Dynamics 365 for Customer Engagement, serves as a support desk where NEWT can open tickets, which are immediately seen by the internal support team for attention. "Their response time is usually within a few hours. Certainly, we have never waited more than 24 hours for any response," Simpson said.

For Dynamics 365, Microsoft releases regular updates, for both the platform and applications. Depending upon the complexity of the update, Axtegrity has, and will continue to assist, when requested.

 "They have always gone the extra mile for us, working long days to meet our development schedule. The training for developers has been well-received and has been scheduled so as not to impede daily work," Simpson said. Each of these support touchpoints has helped move New England further along in its D365 journey. When considered collectively, this commitment has helped create a successful end-to-end customer experience.

"There is good customer service and then there is excellent customer service. I have never worked with any support partner that has ever provided a level of customer service as exceptional as AXtegrity. No matter the issue, no matter the time, no matter the level of complexity – they have always come through," Simpson said.

A PARTNER FOR LIFE

Axtegrity's approach to its clients is based on honest sharing of information and teaching clients how to be self-sufficient, when requested. "Our goal is to be a life-long partners, we're not successful unless our customers are successful," Odom said.

In the near-term, NEWT is looking to expand its Microsoft 365 footprint by adding D365 Sales and Marketing and Microsoft Office 365 (they are currently running on-premises Exchange Server). Because NEWT manufactures controlled products for the US Government as well as other defense contractors, it has specific requirements with regarding to logging and trace. A full cloud implementation is a future consideration when Microsoft fully supports those companies needing government high protection requirements.

Throughout this journey, Axtegrity will continue to serve as a dedicated partner, guiding NEWT through all aspects of the customer lifecycle.

To sum it up, Simpson said: "Without a doubt, I would recommend Axtegrity. From day one they have exceeded expectations. I am very pleased that we have partnered with them and I expect our relationship to continue for many years to come."

Axtegrity Consulting | 321-209-8725 | info@axtegrity.com