



Case Study



What matters to AALTO is reaching new heights with its people-centric ERP solution

Do what matters

AALTO is an Airbus subsidiary, designing, manufacturing and operating the Zephyr High Altitude Platform Station (HAPS) series of stratospheric aircraft, capable of providing Earth observation or direct-to-device connectivity from the stratosphere. To support its rapid growth and operational independence from Airbus, AALTO implemented Microsoft Dynamics 365 Finance and Supply Chain Core. This enabled the team to streamline operations, improve agility and scale efficiently. The integration also allowed AALTO employees to focus on innovation — reducing manual tasks and leveraging real-time data for refined decision-making. By modernizing its ERP system, AALTO is fostering a culture of agility and collaboration, supporting employees in driving the commercialization of the Zephyr HAPS, and positioning them for long-term growth and success.

Inspiring change:

Empowering independent operations

AALTO had only been operationally independent for a year-and-a-half. It was facing an ambitious schedule to ready the newly established company for commercializing the Zephyr — a breakthrough technology in more than just aerospace. The team sought to establish and implement an enterprise resource planning (ERP) system. This was crucial to help drive operational efficiency and agility for the company, separate from the existing Airbus systems, while maintaining the same level of robustness within an environment designed for AALTO's new needs.

Driving innovation:

Transforming employee workflows

AALTO partnered with Avanade to implement a Microsoft Dynamics 365 Finance and Supply Chain Core solution and launch processes across finance and procurement. More specifically, the team chose Dynamics 365 to establish modern ways of working and core systems.

Particularly for AALTO, Dynamics 365 offered several benefits given the team's focus on innovation, efficiency and autonomy, including:

- **Agile adaptation:** Dynamics 365 allows AALTO to scale operations as it adapts, competes and grows without constraints, supporting its ability to quickly respond to new market demands and expand service offerings globally.

Company Name: AALTO

Country: UK

Industry: Industrial

Solution: Microsoft Dynamics 365

- **Independent business relationships with suppliers:** These relationships are crucial to the success of scaling production and provides greater autonomy in engaging with suppliers to manage future demand.
- **Real-time data insights:** With access to real-time data and analytics, AALTO's teams can now make faster and more informed decisions, critical for maintaining its competitive edge in the rapidly evolving aerospace sector.
- **Streamlined and standardized processes:** By integrating finance, procurement and operations into a single platform, AALTO can now reduce manual tasks and improve overall productivity, allowing employees to collaborate on more strategic activities. This operational excellence continues as it begins to adapt to new ways of working and build core processes.
- **Enhanced security and compliance:** The team can now use robust security features to protect sensitive data, crucial for managing high-stakes connectivity.
- **Global reach:** AALTO's activities maintain a global reach across varying operational environments, and AALTO now has a platform to support current and future global operations in a robust, centralized way.

"Having the right foundations to base our global operations upon is critical as we continue to scale up the company, and the Dynamics solution implemented with Avanade was the best partnership for us."

**— James Pritchard
Director of Procurement, AALTO**

"We do our best to be a pragmatic, forward-thinking business that ensures we build everything upon solid foundations, and our partnership with Avanade underscored that approach. We're very pleased with the way the system was implemented," says James Pritchard, AALTO's director of procurement.

Achieving what matters: Charting a course for sustainable growth

Modernizing the core ERP foundation is essential as AALTO continues to scale its business. And its benefits collectively empower employees to operate more independently, efficiently and innovatively — supporting the company's mission to lead in stratospheric Earth observation and connectivity solutions globally.

"On one hand, we were increasing the speed of commercialization for our Zephyr HAPS aircraft, resulting in expanding our aircraft-related operations, and on the other hand, we were launching a new Airbus subsidiary that had to ensure high Airbus standards continue under new, more independent company processes", explains Pritchard.

"However, with Avanade's support in setting up Microsoft Dynamics, we are taking advantage of the platform to support a transition that was as smooth as possible, and user-friendly."

"With Zephyr, we are working toward putting game-changing technology in the stratosphere — and, we need optimal technology on the ground as well to support that stratospheric vision."

— James Pritchard
Director of Procurement, AALTO

About AALTO

AALTO, a subsidiary of Airbus, is a global leader in connectivity and earth observation services from the stratosphere. Based in Farnborough, UK, the Company designs, manufactures and offers services using its record-breaking Zephyr High Altitude Platform Station (HAPS). Powered by solar energy and operating above 60,000+ feet, Zephyr's persistence enables continuous flight for months at a time. Its current flight-time record is over 64 days in the stratosphere. As a payload agnostic platform, Zephyr can deliver several applications, including low-latency 5G direct-to-device (D2D) connectivity and high-quality earth observation services. Those solutions will deliver for several markets including mobile greenfield connectivity, disaster management, border protection, and precision agriculture. For further information, please visit www.aaltohaps.com.

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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 60,000 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

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