



Case Study:

How Champion Windows Leveraged their IT Infrastructure to Support Business Growth by Partnering with WatServ



Champion Windows and Home Exteriors is one of the US's leading home improvement companies.

With over six decades of experience, Champion designs, builds and installs custom windows, sunrooms, siding and entry doors. The company has more than 50 retail locations and is headquartered in Cincinnati, Ohio.

A Strong Start to a Long-Term Partnership

WatServ began their journey with Champion in 2014 and since then has seen many successful achievements together as partners. The initial partnership began when Champion engaged a VAR partner to help update their financial solution by implementing Microsoft Dynamics AX 2003 R2. Champion's existing solution comprised of a custom-developed manufacturing software application bolted onto a financial application. These two solutions were not integrated and required more flexibility to support the growing business. Champion made the decision to transition to Dynamics AX to unlock better financial data, and to also leverage a fully integrated ERP solution.

WatServ was referred to Champion by their VAR partner. The VAR had worked with WatServ on several other accounts and knew that WatServ was recognized for its unique strength and expertise with cloud hosted solutions including the Dynamics product line. The joint delivery model included WatServ as the lead, supporting Champion's infrastructure and providing ongoing technical expertise, and the VAR partner as the Dynamics AX specialist.



Partnering with WatServ was one of the best decisions that Champion made when we embarked on our Dynamics journey. WatServ's expertise and responsiveness enabled us to rely on them to operate the Dynamics platform, and allowed my staff to focus on supporting our users and coming up with solutions for business process improvements. We have come to trust WatServ as an important extension of our IT team.



Dave Hofmeister

*Champion's Vice President of
Information Technology*

A Vision for Growth and Investment Realized

The Dynamics implementation project was kicked off in June of 2014. Management at the time scoped an aggressive phase one that would have included sales order functionality and significant modifications to the application. As a result, only two locations went live in late 2014.

2015 brought about a leadership change at Champion and Dave Hofmeister joined Champion Windows as the new VP of IT. Under Dave's leadership, the Champion team shifted gears and by the end of 2016 implemented company-wide a redesigned configuration of all financial Dynamics AX functionalities including GL, AR and AP.

Now with a solid Dynamics AX base deployed, the IT and business teams were able to move forward with new technology and business initiatives. Champion was beginning to see the real payback of their investment in Dynamics AX. During this time, WatServ brought valuable knowledge and best practices related to infrastructure and overall technology services. WatServ became Champion's trusted advisor and was often called upon to provide both hands-on support and strategic recommendations.

Driving Outcomes and Continuous Optimization

In 2016, WatServ recommended conducting a comprehensive review of Champion's environment. The assessment helped identify significant areas of efficiency including recommendations to decommission servers, ultimately leading to cost savings for the business.

During this time, Champion continued focus on several key technology initiatives and WatServ played an advisory role to support overall success and optimization. This included providing technical guidance and assistance with a new BI project, as well as helping with a major Dynamics AX upgrade from AX R2 to AX R3 by reconfiguring the infrastructure to support the new application and workloads.

Over the next several years, WatServ's relationship with Champion deepened and the team helped the company make significant updates and upgrades to their services and solutions. For instance, WatServ developed a solution to rebuild Champion's data-mart in a way that would eliminate unnecessary data replication and save costs. WatServ also provided assistance setting up the first integration point for the new CRM configuration into Dynamics AX.



Creating Lasting Business Impact


In 2018, Champion embarked on a multi-phase initiative to support the modernization and enhancement of business processes and client experience. Phase one aimed to upgrade the AX integration from CRM to capture payment and customer data. Phase two focused on integration with a third party configurator that would allow for detailed product design and pricing. Finally, phase three involved completing the integration with AX for the entire Quote-to-Cash process. WatServ successfully completed these integrations and rolled out the solution to over 50 locations across the US. This initiative has been a gamechanger for Champion.


Champion is now gearing up to migrate to Dynamics D365 Finance & Operations. WatServ has helped them prepare for this by providing a multi-year roll out plan. Most recently, WatServ also helped introduce Champion to Microsoft Azure by implementing a disaster recovery as a solution (DRaaS) in Azure.

More than simply a vendor, WatServ has acted as a strategic advisor and long-term partner to Champion, helping them expand their capabilities and grow their business.



Select Business Outcomes

 Integration of multiple business solutions enabled Champion to improve financial planning, gain better visibility, consolidate reporting, improve customer relationship management and more.

 WatServ hosted regular status calls with Champion and their VAR partner to ensure transparent communications with all parties. These calls ensured both a proactive and reactive focus on performance, technical tuning and application optimizations. Over the years of working together, this amounted to more than 225 status calls.

Services Provided

- Digital Transformation Planning 
- Cloud Consulting & Engineering 
- Technical Consulting 
- Infrastructure Design and Support 
- M365 Managed Services 
- Professional Services 
- Security Best Practices and Solutions 

WatServ

WatServ is an IT solutions provider helping clients digitally transform their businesses through cloud technologies and services.

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