Microsoft

Data Addiction sees Customer Insights as game-changer in the business of digital transformation

Data Addiction

About Data Addiction
Data Addiction is a Microsoft Data and AI and Dynamics 365 partner that uses the Microsoft stack to integrate data and produce insights that make a difference

Microsoft products
Microsoft Data & AI platform

Dynamics 365

Power Platform

Dynamics 365
Customer Insights Azure

Industry
Consumer-packaged goods

Local and state government

Financial services

Organization size
Small (fewer than 50 employees))

Headquarters
Australia

Microsoft partner since
2019

Customer Outcomes

Scaled CI implementations to be 15% of business

Delivered POCs in 1 week, full solutions in production within 3 weeks

Keeping customer data at the heart of a digital transformation

The YMCA of New South Wales (The Y NSW), which serves more than 3 million people at its fitness and aquatic centers across New South Wales, wanted to digitally transform its operations to put its members at the center of the business. But the mix of systems the organization used to track its members across various YMCA programs did not provide a unified view of individuals, leading to missed opportunities around recruiting new members, marketing additional services, and formulating pricing strategies.

The Y NSW turned to Microsoft partner Data Addiction, whose expertise in both Azure data and artificial intelligence (AI), as well as Microsoft Dynamics 365, helped the organization quickly achieve the consolidated view it needed to make smarter, faster business decisions. Though The Y NSW initially engaged Data Addiction to carry out an Azure migration, Microsoft released Dynamics 365 Customer Insights around the same time, and Data Addiction immediately saw the potential for streamlining the broader data estate modernization.

"Instead of going through a digital transformation and then thinking about customer data at the end, we built the data estate around Customer Insights, using the same integration patterns and source data," said Managing Director of Data Addiction, Ben Johnson. "This way, their goal around customer service could spearhead their transformation."

This approach provided a single source of truth for customer, which only became easier when The Y NSW also decided to implement Dynamics 365 Sales and Dynamics 365 Marketing to replace outdated CRM systems.

"Given the transformation, we had to keep customer data sacrosanct," Johnson said. "Customer Insights gave The Y NSW a golden record, and when they're ready to decommission an old system or migrate to a new one, they'll know exactly where their customer data is. The beauty is, they won't carry over duplicate or redundant records."

The solid foundation of customer data directly aligned with The Y NSW's overarching data strategy. "Data needs to be dealt with strategically and holistically," said Head of Information Communications Technology at The Y NSW, Paul Berryman. "It's about how you capture that data and pull it into the system and look at it all the way from acquisition, to reporting, to storage, to management, to enhancements."

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>
> —**Ben Johnson,** Managing Director, Data Addiction

With Dynamics 365 Customer Insights deployed, The Y NSW's sales team now has organized information about each customer and prospect at their fingertips. They can see the source of an opportunity, when the customer was contacted and by whom, and which sales playbooks were applied, as well as leverage machine learning (ML) models to send personalized offers and recommendations to members. Executives of The Y NSW also gained a deeper understanding of the financial performance of each YMCA center by running analytics on the unified data. The insights help The Y NSW develop better profitability models, pricing strategies, and new practices around engaging customers and supporting local managers.

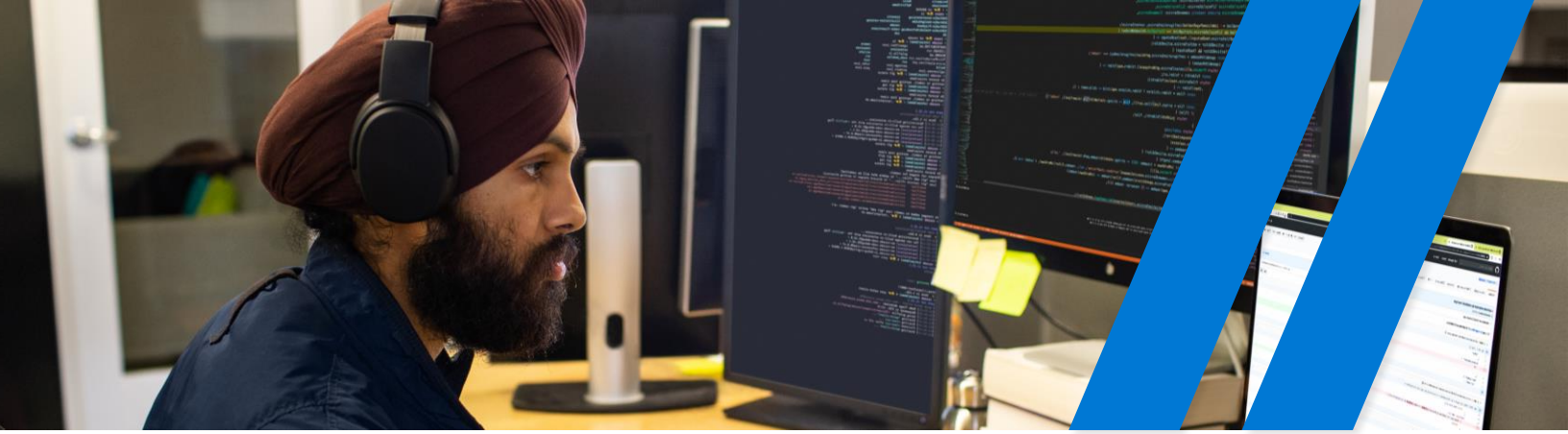## Extending skills to new practice areas

Made up of developers and actuaries who share a common love of data, it's no surprise that Data Addiction quickly developed and delivered strong results for
The Y NSW. The business is built around all things Microsoft data and AI, with the majority of work in data estate modernization. Though the company largely focuses on Azure, when Dynamics 365 Customer Insights was released in 2019, Data Addiction expanded its practice to incorporate Dynamics 365. Today, Dynamics 365 Customer Insights accounts for 15 percent of the company's overall business.

"The Microsoft cloud is a tapestry, with a lot of value in the crossover between Dynamics 365 and data," Johnson said. "When Customer Insights came out, it was the first time we had seen a tool for data orchestration, consolidation, and reporting within the Dynamics SKU. We launched into it head on because we could use the same data and AI skills to make it shine."

The incorporation of Dynamics 365—and then Power Apps and Power Automate—into its portfolio allowed Data Addiction to augment its value proposition to customers.

"The whole stitching together of the Microsoft platform has really worked for us," Johnson said. "Now that Customer Insights is out there, we've evolved our approach from a channel perspective and partnering perspective to land new deals."

![Data Addiction]

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Using IP to accelerate digital transformations

Just 18 months since CI was released, Data Addiction has led several implementations, delivered three times as many proof of concepts (POC), and has more on the horizon. Across its customers, CI has provided a single data repository for data with on-demand segmentation and ML-powered insights that drive efficiencies, help increase revenue, and reduce risk.

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While bringing together elements of the Microsoft platform has been a differentiator for Data Addiction, the company is also able to stand out against competitors with its intellectual property (IP).

Data Addiction developed LakeFlow, a data engineering service, to accelerate its implementations and stand up an Azure data estate 30–50 percent faster than traditional, manual techniques. LakeFlow acquires source data, puts it into Azure Blob Storage or an Azure Data Lake, masters it, and ensures the data is reliable once loaded into CI. It automatically maintains a historical dataset for continuity across different points in time.

"Having that transparency through LakeFlow is so important in the customer matching world, because if it's not there, people start questioning whether your golden record is right, and then the whole solution is in trouble," Johnson said. "We have to be squeaky clean on the rules we used, why we used them, and at what point in time. It has to be traceable and transparent."

Reaching into new market segments

As its business grows, Data Addiction sees another benefit from its practice around Dynamics 365 and Customer Insights—a stronger foothold in the enterprise. Throughout 2020, the company grew its revenue from enterprise accounts and expects to continue the trend in the coming year.

"The Dynamics team has been outstanding in helping us connect with more customers," Johnson said. "Doing more with Microsoft on that trifecta of data, Dynamics, and Azure, presents a ton of opportunity."

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—Paul Berryman
Head of Information
Communications Technology
The Y New South Wales