TOP 9 CONCERNS: MOVING FROM
GP TO CLOUD ERP

SIKICH

DYNAMICS GP **ROADMAP**

2016 H1	**2016 H2**	**2017**	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**
GP 2016	**GP 2016 R2**	**GP 2018**	**2GP 2018 R2**	**GP 'NEXT'**	**GP 'NEXT'**
• Enhanced user experience for web client • Multiple browser & device support for Web Client • Workflow 3.0 • Power BI: Odata 1.0 • Top feature requests	• Power BI: Odata 2.0 • Home page refresh • Web client evolution • Top features requested by customers	• Workflow 4.0 • Doc Attach • Fin/HR Optimization • Power Suite • Top feature requests	• Intelligent edge • Financial enhancements • Purchasing usability • Sales optimization • Top features requests	• Ongoing development • Intelligent edge enhancements • Top features requested by customers & community	• Ongoing development • Intelligent edge enhancements • Top features requested by customers & community

THE FUTURE OF GP

If we look at the roadmap for GP, the future is a bit unclear. The next versions of GP have not been defined yet. Unlike in past roadmaps, Microsoft has not promised to deliver any new, predetermined feature functionality, so we're unclear about what's going to happen with the next few potential iterations of GP. What we do know, is that Microsoft has made an extensive investment in their Dynamics 365 platform, and GP will not be a part of the future of Dynamics 365. In looking at the GP roadmap and Microsoft's solution lifecycle, **within the next five to ten years GP may or may not be supported further by Microsoft.**

WITH OVER FORTY THOUSAND COMPANIES running Dynamics GP today, Microsoft has a vested interest in making sure their clients have a path forward. Microsoft's path forward is moving to one of their Dynamics 365 solutions: <u>Business Central</u>, for less than 250 users, and <u>Finance & Operations</u> for over 200 users and companies with complex business processes.

However, many Dynamics GP users we talk to, still have some reservations about moving to the cloud. While they are aware of the benefits of moving to Cloud ERP, like not having to upgrade, mobility, scalability and no capital expenditures; a lot of our clients that are coming off GP or other on-premise applications have different concerns, that they have voiced to us over the years. We've tried to summarize the top concerns and address them for you in this ebook.

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1. WILL MY CLOUD SUBSCRIPTION PRICE KEEP INCREASING?

Well, there's certainly a possibility that that can happen. However, most of the platforms have been very stable throughout the years in terms of pricing. When price increases have come, it's a result of extensively expanded capabilities of the platform. While it really hasn't happened too often throughout the years, there's certainly a risk when you go to the cloud that that price could increase from year to year.

Dynamics 365 has different options in terms of years of commitment, so you can create price certainty for longer periods of time. There are different options available to set prices for a fair amount of time into the foreseeable future.

2. IS IT SAFE?

The applications that Sikich has chosen to work with are through leading software companies like Microsoft. They spend billions of dollars on data centers to make sure that those environments are safe and secure from people with bad intentions to get to your data. There's little that you could do with an on-premise deployment on your own that would be more secure than what Microsoft is doing today.

Many incidents of data theft and compromised security are inside jobs by unhappy, current or recently departed employees and contractors. They will try to do damage to whichever systems they can reach, in the cloud or on-premise.

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3. WILL MY THIRD-PARTY SOLUTIONS WORK?

That's going to be a case-by-case basis. There are some applications that are embedded inside of our ERP systems that we'll have to look at, and potentially find different options.

However, most partners and ISVs supporting leading ERP solutions are creating and evolving their products to follow the standards for interoperability established by cloud ERP leaders. However, because the most advanced cloud ERP environments support integrations with cloud, as well as on-premise software, you typically have a greater choice of available solutions or can continue run preferred software products you already own.

4. HOW WILL THE CLOUD IMPACT MY MULTIPLE INTEGRATIONS?

There are a number of middleware applications available, if there isn't a native integration between the applications you're running today and the cloud ERP solutions we support. It doesn't matter if it's cloud-to-cloud, or cloud-to-on-premise, there are a lot of different solutions we can leverage to make sure that any applications you need to integrate will integrate to your Cloud ERP platform of choice.

5. ERP IMPLEMENTATIONS ARE EXPENSIVE AND DISRUPTIVE, WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?

We understand that implementing a new ERP system isn't a walk in the park; however, ERP implementations are much more streamlined today, for several reasons, the cloud being one of them. The hardware element of the project is eliminated, mitigating environment and infrastructure issues. Due to advances in collaboration technology, you can engage stakeholders in multiple locations, without having to bring everybody into a room together. Project stakeholders can often participate from anywhere, making the implementation process a bit easier to swallow and quicker to deploy.

6. WHAT IF I LOSE INTERNET ACCESS?

By and large, internet access has become much more stable over the years in most areas, making it less of a concern. If this is a major concern for you, we can set you up with a "hot spot" assessment to provide a connectivity heat-map and address any vulnerabilities we detect.

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7. WHAT ABOUT COMPLIANCE?

We often get the question around compliance with different things, like ITAR, FDA compliance, or HIPA compliance. Many of these compliance requirements, depending on the platform, have been addressed by third-parties, to make sure that there is additional security in place to protect that data.

Some industries will have to stay off public cloud environments, which we are happy to discuses on a case-by-case basis.

8. WILL FORCED UPGRADES BREAK MY SYSTEM AND DISRUPT MY BUSINESS?

In most cases, no. One of the key features of Cloud ERP is automatic upgrades, the idea of version-less software. Most of the cloud ERP solutions we're looking at have two primary releases throughout the course of the year. So, two times a year, your application is updated to incorporate the latest and greatest features and functionality available in the market. Microsoft uses a managed version upgrade process to minimize business disruption. Customizing ERP applications in the cloud is a lot faster and easier than on-premise solutions because the code base is standards-based instead of proprietary. So, when your cloud application is upgraded to a newer version, customized components are brought over to the new version seamlessly, without the need for painful re-programming or development. As you know, business critical customizations do not automatically migrate over to the upgraded version of GP or other on-premise solutions, increasing the cost and complexity of upgrades with on-premise ERP.

Cloud ERP solutions are a great way to stay ahead. You don't have those big upgrade events that you had in the past with on-premise software and it's a much more seamless way to continue to evolve your use of the application.

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9. WE ALREADY KNOW GP, WHY CHANGE?

We understand that change is never easy. You've likely been using GP for a long time and you know the nuances of the solution and how to best use it to run your business. While moving to the cloud will require some changes to the way you operate today, you might be surprised at how quickly you'll adjust to Dynamics 365, and the operational efficiencies you may be able to achieve along the way.

Cloud solutions, like Dynamics 365, are designed to be user friendly and intuitive, much like the mobile applications users are familiar with today. Solutions come with their own native mobile apps, making remote access even easier. Employees can be productive whenever they wish to be, and they can also engage with their colleagues, customers, and trading partners at any time, anywhere.

Finally, the right technology can make a vast difference in your ability to compete for talent, recruit people who are a great fit with your company and retain them through a significant stage in their careers. Millennials and younger people expect powerful technology tools without the hurdles and inefficiencies of older software. Your employees are highly motivated to achieve their personal and professional goals by working in your organization. They will welcome modern mobile, collaborative, and productivity tools to help them advance. For them, the design of interfaces and workflows makes a big difference in their every-day success and satisfaction at work.

> CLOUD SOLUTIONS ARE DESIGNED TO BE USER FRIENDLY AND INTUITIVE, **MUCH LIKE THE MOBILE APPLICATIONS USERS ARE FAMILIAR WITH TODAY.**

SO, NOW WHAT?

You can do nothing, continue to invest in GP despite the uncertainty, or you can start exploring your best path forward.

FIRST STEP

First and foremost, start assessing the risk to your organization should your GP solution reach end of support, or should GP be phased out all together.

IS YOUR SOLUTION SAFE?
Find out if your version of GP has reached end of support.

1

SECOND STEP

Next, start exploring the cost savings and benefits of moving to a Cloud ERP platform. A lot of times when folks initially look at the price of a Cloud ERP, it seems expensive. But when you really start comparing it to the different costs that you're incurring with an on-premise application, it's much more in line than folks realize.

TCO CALCULATOR
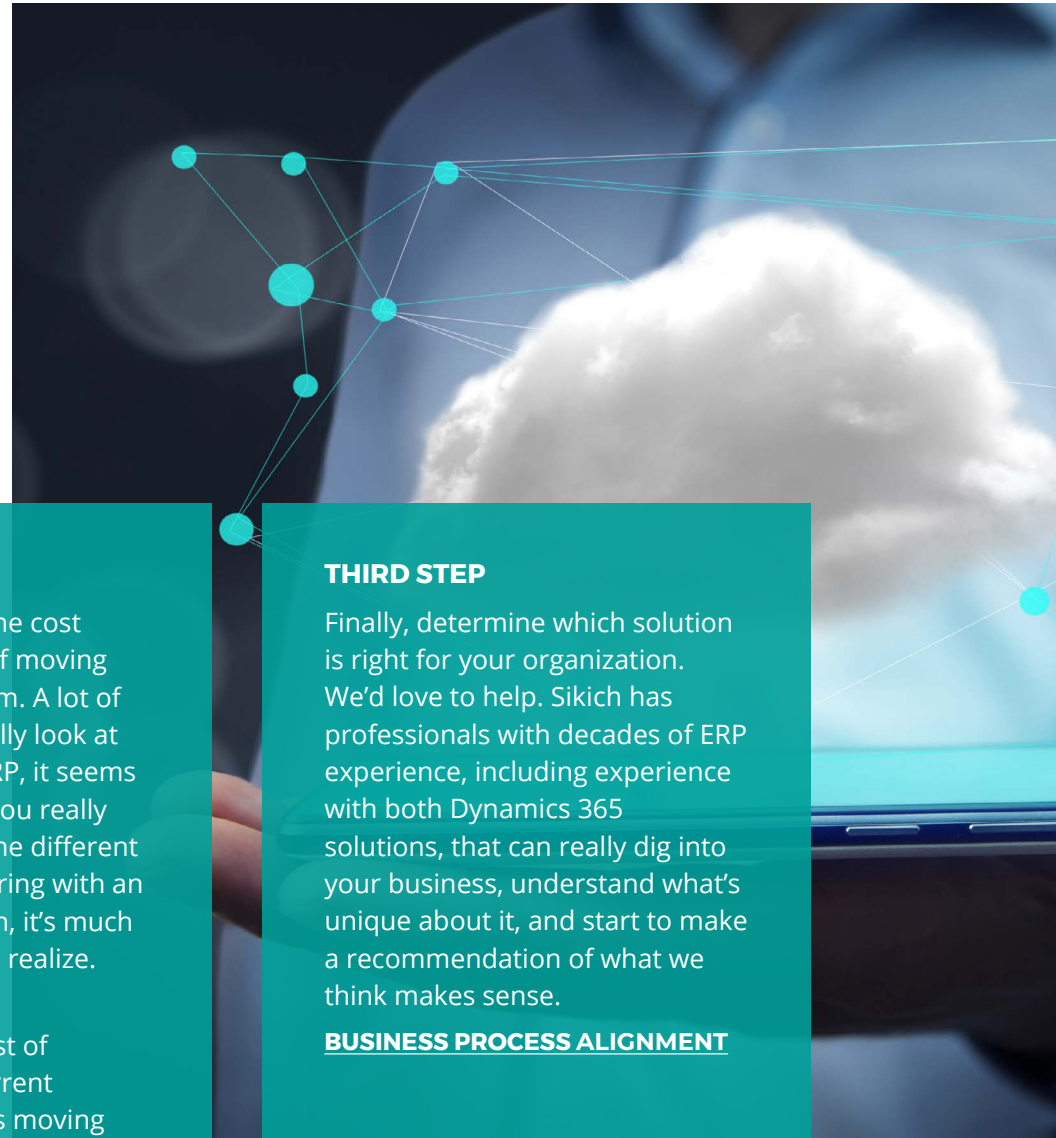Compare the Total Cost of Ownership of your current on-premise solution vs moving to the cloud.

2

THIRD STEP

Finally, determine which solution is right for your organization. We'd love to help. Sikich has professionals with decades of ERP experience, including experience with both Dynamics 365 solutions, that can really dig into your business, understand what's unique about it, and start to make a recommendation of what we think makes sense.

BUSINESS PROCESS ALIGNMENT

3

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ABOUT SIKICH

Sikich is a leading professional-services firm that is among the top 1 percent of all enterprise resource planning solution partners in the world and ranks as one of the United States' Top 30 CPA Firms. Sikich is also ranked as number 9 in the country's top 100 technology providers. To every project, Sikich ERP and CRM experts contribute more than 30 years of team experience and an outstanding track record with a success rate of 97 percent. Sikich is a Microsoft Gold and Microsoft Dynamics Inner Circle Partner focused on delivering technology solutions for tangible business improvement and organizational excellence.

To learn more about Sikich, go to **www.sikich.com/technology** or contact **info@sikich.com**.