ACHIEVING SUCCESSFUL
MICROSOFT DYNAMICS 365 DEPLOYMENTS WHILE
SAVING TIME AND MONEY

AN INTRODUCTION TO HEAD**START** FROM SIKICH

SIKICH

HEADSTART ℠

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> When our original implementation partner for Microsoft Dynamics 365 Finance and Supply Chain Management was unable to help us successfully complete our project, we contacted Sikich because of their ERP Rescue and Recovery offering. During that evaluation process, Sikich demonstrated a sound knowledge of our business (including configure-to-order and engineer-to-order solutions). They proposed using their HEADSTART program, supplemented by the work we had already done with our previous technology partner. Very soon, the Sikich team was ready to demonstrate ERP functionality for our business. Leaders from across our company were impressed that the preconfigured solution provided with HEADSTART did a better job of meeting our business requirements in just weeks than the previous partner had been able to deliver after more than a year.
>
> *I wholeheartedly recommend considering Sikich as an implementation partner. The tools they bring to the table can be game-changing."*
>
> – ALEX INGRAM, IT DIRECTOR
>   HAMILTON COMPANY

INTRODUCTION

When companies decide to deploy a modern, cloud ERP or CRM solution like Microsoft Dynamics 365, they want to reap the transformational benefits of the technology as soon as possible. At the same time, they hope to avoid the disruption, budget and schedule overruns, risk, and uncertainty of poorly planned deployment projects. To streamline Dynamics 365 deployments and ensure the right outcomes, Sikich has developed the **HEADSTART** approach. We use **HEADSTART** in nearly every project to our clients' benefit, and continue refining the methodology as Dynamics 365 evolves along with organizations and industries. No matter if you're a business leader looking to modernize your technology or a Professional Advisor helping clients find the best partner' advising companies, **HEADSTART** could give you a critical edge.

DEPLOYING MODULAR SOFTWARE SYSTEMS IN THE CLOUD ERA

Modern business applications require a modern approach to delivery. Not only have applications matured in recent years, the expectations of the businesses implementing them have also evolved.

Today, we think of enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems as business applications or platforms. These systems incorporate not only the functionality that enables business transactions and processes, but they also connect with the newest technologies. Options such as cloud connectivity to data lakes, which extends traditional analytical reporting to artificial intelligence and machine learning, are part of what organizations look for when they want to maximize the value of their back-office systems. When data is business-critical, a company's ability to take advantage of digital feedback loops is key to justifying investments in technology.

Another current development is a move away from monolithic applications that have to be implemented all at once. Instead, software implementers decouple major workflows so that it becomes possible to refresh aging legacy systems individually. This trend accommodates the rapid change in today's business environments and the need for software systems to keep pace.

In the past, business applications like ERP could take years to deploy, disrupting team productivity and business operations. Their scope and deep functionality presented such a complex set of processes that it was nearly impossible to deliver the outcomes desired without turning on all capabilities. ERP systems might then last 10 to 15 years or more, their complexity escalating with add-ons, modifications, and ancillary systems, often supported by large numbers of Excel spreadsheets or disconnected databases. The costs of maintaining these legacy installations quickly ballooned. Companies also spent money to deploy new apps to address needs that ERP upgrades might have met. Over time, integrations become more difficult. Specialized or disparate systems and workarounds fostered shadow IT.

Today, companies simply cannot afford to wait that long to realize the value of their investment. The urgency presented by changing market conditions means that being too late to adapt can be catastrophic.

THE NEED TO DELIVER DISRUPTION-PROOF TECHNOLOGY QUICKLY

Today, companies can no longer afford to wait that long to realize the value of their investment. The urgency presented by changing market conditions means that being too late to adapt can be catastrophic. They also cannot justify investing in a system that might work perfectly today but which cannot adapt to future requirements, or one that makes it easy to enter data but won't allow strategic data analysis to drive decision-making. In a recent paper, industry analysts at Gartner noted that the 2020 pandemic highlighted the fragility of many corporate systems. Designed to be ultra-efficient, many systems and processes in companies have become brittle. When disruption occurs, brittle systems tend to break.

While leading vendors of business applications have looked for ways to deliver products that address customers' ever-changing needs, system integrators like Sikich quickly adapted to ensure that their clients could realize the promise of this new way of thinking about business applications.

A SIMPLE APPROACH TO DEPLOYING MODERN ERP & CRM

To streamline business application deployments and shorten clients' time-to-benefit, Sikich has combined its industry and technology expertise with the new vision of modular, agile solutions in a comprehensive deployment approach called **HEADSTART**. The following principles guided the development of **HEADSTART**:

- Projects that are based on agile principles and are adapted to work with pre-built software applications can reduce the risk and cost of deployments. The old way of implementing packaged software, based on a waterfall approach to project management, takes too long and does not consistently result in successful projects.

- Starting implementation projects from a blank slate, beginning with lengthy requirements discovery and documentation, is a well-intended process that nonetheless cannot guarantee the best possible project outcomes. Such efforts result in too much focus on past practices and not nearly enough attention to how the business should operate in the future.

- Implementation partners and system integrators must increase the speed at which they deploy systems so that clients can realize value faster. At the same time, technology partners and their clients have to expand project scopes to incorporate data analytics and insight solutions as part of the initial deliverable.

- Clients rightly expect that the quality of the delivery services they receive should reflect their partner's cumulative, vertical expertise and will not vary greatly with the experience of the individuals on their project team. Every client deserves the vendor's A team, every time. Clients' project success should not be at risk because a trusted vendor includes junior professionals in the team.

WHAT IS HEAD**START**?

HEADSTART is the Sikich approach to accelerating the delivery of high-value industry business solutions.

METHODOLOGY

PRECONFIGURED SYSTEM

DOCUMENTED BUSINESS PROCESSES

INDUSTRY POWERPACK

CORE ISV INTEGRATIONS

BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE

SIKICH.
HEAD**START** ℠

A NEARLY PERFECT SOLUTION CAN BE THE BEST

Sikich has many years of experience in implementing business applications. We find that new clients typically share one of two opposing points of view that one could summarize as follows:

"Our business is unique, and we rely on a lot of 'secret sauce' in the way we work. It is doubtful that a one-size-fits-all business application will meet our needs. Given that how we have done things in the past got us to where we are today, why should we change how we run the business?"
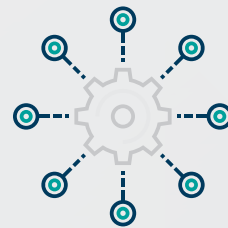
"We are not unique nor special. Many other companies do exactly what we do. We should be able to use standard software exactly how it is designed. We trust that software will work as we need it to, and we will not require any customizations or add-on applications."

How does Sikich respond to these perspectives? Both have their shortcomings, although the second one is closer to the truth for many companies.

We understand that each client business has its individual conditions that we need to bear in mind. However, when you commit to certain industries like we do, you realize that you can address close to 90 percent of all business requirements for a given industry segment with a single set of configurations, ISV products, lightweight extensions, and minor process changes in clients' businesses. One other thing: whenever clients have an unrealistic expectation for a 100 percent software fit, they may risk incurring significant, avoidable, and unjustifiable costs and delays.

"Let's create a vision of the almost perfect solution with few gaps that can keep pace as clients needs change."

– DEBBIE ALTHAM
SENIOR DIRECTOR, SIKICH

In creating **HEADSTART**, Sikich has invested thousands of hours to create a working model of Microsoft Dynamics 365 that can, without significant adjustments, provide a high degree of fit to most equipment manufacturers, distributors, and other companies that want to move from a legacy system to modern technology. We are committed to building on our investment and continually review and improve the **HEADSTART** model. We start most projects by deploying **HEADSTART**, because doing so reduces implementation efforts and costs, accelerates project completion, and delivers software functionality to users as quickly as possible.

Theoretically, once data migration, testing, and training are complete, the preconfigured system could already support live operation. However, deployments involve more than applications and data. Because they have an impact on how people do their jobs, we also need a process for allowing individuals and teams to validate the design, learn the application, apply it to their work, accommodate exceptions, and gaining competency in its use. Getting this right is a key aspect of successful project delivery and requires time and planning.

"Strive for continuous improvement, instead of perfection."[1]

– KIM COLLINS,
  SPRINTING WORLD CHAMPION

[1]Referenced at https://www.quotetab.com/quotes/by-kim-collins and in many other resources
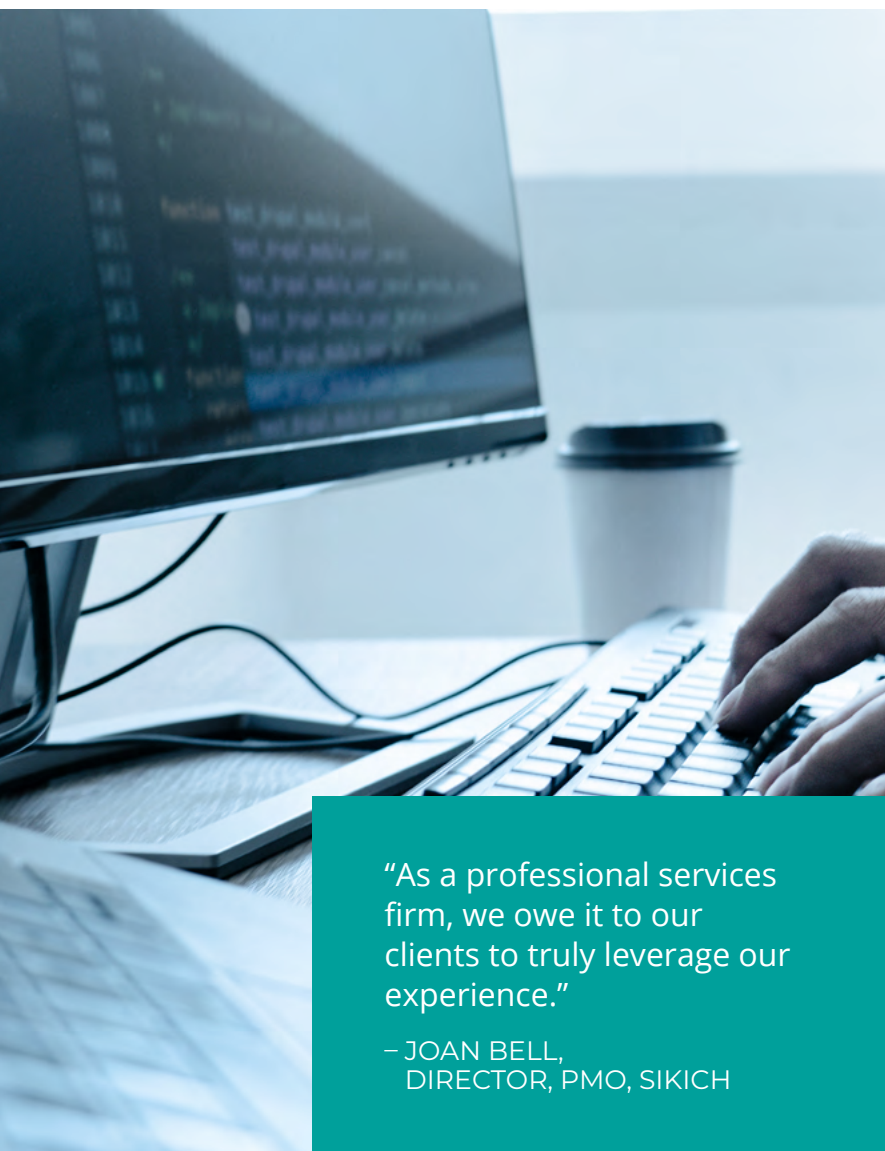
"As a professional services firm, we owe it to our clients to truly leverage our experience."

– JOAN BELL,
  DIRECTOR, PMO, SIKICH

THE EXPERIENCE DIFFERENCE

Coding by developers and configuration by the implementation team determine how an ERP or CRM system handles business processes. When it comes to configuration, Sikich implementation teams reflect their understanding of clients' needs and how they can optimize the application for them.

Many solution integrators still approach each implementation as a unique activity, and deliver projects from scratch by implementation teams that have been gathered based on the scope of the project and who is available. As a result, there can be a wide variety in how implementers configure an application for different clients—even businesses that are very much alike—because this approach is vulnerable to gaps in individual consultants' experience and skill.

In developing **HEADSTART**, we gave our most experienced practitioners free rein to create a proven, powerful benchmark configuration for each of our industry verticals. We then built a digital feedback loop to ensure that we would continuously improve this benchmark as Microsoft releases new features and our consultants encounter new client scenarios and use cases. Today, Sikich **HEADSTART** implementations start with this configuration. Our clients benefit from getting a working system and can be confident that their solution was configured by talented, creative people who know industry and technology. They can focus on meaningful activities and capabilities, rather than processes that do not add value nor create a competitive advantage.

DRIVING FOR THE RIGHT OUTCOMES

Project participants are not in the best position to articulate their requirements if they don't understand what a new system can help a company accomplish or how it works. They typically rely on their knowledge of their existing technology. It may also be difficult for them to make a distinction between *why* they perform certain tasks and *how* they perform them. This is often the case when legacy software enforces certain ways of working. In the past, most projects began with an intensive study of business requirements that involved copious amounts of interviews and documentation. Participants shared their experience and often felt that the consultants' acknowledgement that they understood the process was also a confirmation that this was what they would get in the new system.

However, following such detailed discovery sessions, close to 80 percent of the system configurations performed by consulting experts were identical across projects within the same industry. It made next to no difference how a company operated or what was communicated during in-depth interviews. In the consultants' minds, on the other hand, the main value of these interviews was to establish project scope and identify capabilities gaps early.

Starting with the greatest impact

Sikich focuses client discovery on understanding the high-level impacts of a project and its desired outcomes, not the processes themselves. By delivering an industry-specific, preconfigured system as a technology foundation, we avoid the effort and change management issues that are typically associated with traditional, all-in-one approaches.

We help client stakeholders understand that the working system they see early on is just a starting point. They learn how we advance from "generic" to "good enough" functionality and on to "works for me." This process of refinement occurs as they evolve the preconfigured system through collaborative pilot workshops to land on a solution that is an excellent fit for them. Often, people are more ready to embrace change when they play an active role in driving it. When client stakeholders participate in system configurations, they deeply care about the reasons why these should happen in addition to how to adjust them.

CREATING VALUE FROM EXPERT CHANGE AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT

The Sikich **HEADSTART** methodology assumes a standard system configuration and outlines a process for justifying changes to it. Our consultants are rigorous about making a business case for any system changes, which could be implemented through extensions that modify the software or through enhancements by means of Microsoft Power Apps or independent software vendor (ISV) innovations. They always ask clients, "Why does the standard configuration not work for you?" This approach helps project stakeholders maintain control of project scope, schedule, and budgets.

In general, certain conditions need to be in place so organizations can realize value from their technology investments. ERP systems need to:

| DELIVER BETTER CUSTOMER EXPERIENCES | HELP WORKERS BE MORE PRODUCTIVE, ACHIEVING MORE WITH LESS EFFORT | CONTRIBUTE TO REDUCING COSTS, ERRORS, AND RISKS | OFFER OPPORTUNITIES FOR INCREASING REVENUE BY ENABLING NEW BUSINESS MODELS OR MAKING IT POSSIBLE TO ACCESS NEW MARKETS AND GROW MARKET SHARE | HELP COMPANIES ADAPT FASTER TO MARKETPLACE CHANGES AND COMPETITIVE PRESSURES | ALLOW EXECUTIVES AND OTHER ROLES TO MAKE BETTER DECISIONS, FASTER |

The discipline of business application deployment requires engagement at a high level of detail. When Sikich consultants review the standard business processes with client resources, they are often able to demonstrate ways the application can be used to improve client's business practices. This is where strong project messaging and disciplined project leadership are essential.

Easing change management with project messaging

Part of overall change management, project messaging is critical for everyone who will be impacted by system changes. People need to understand that, in order for the implementation project and themselves in their roles to be successful, they will have to change how they do their jobs. When you develop project messaging and test it in communications, you need to find the right balance between desirable outcomes that can be of value for the company and individual contributors. Sometimes it can help to set expectations and prepare a project if there is less messaging that implies that people's jobs may become significantly easier or faster, but more regarding that the company sees the system implementation as a strategic step and how valuable employee participation will be in pulling it off.
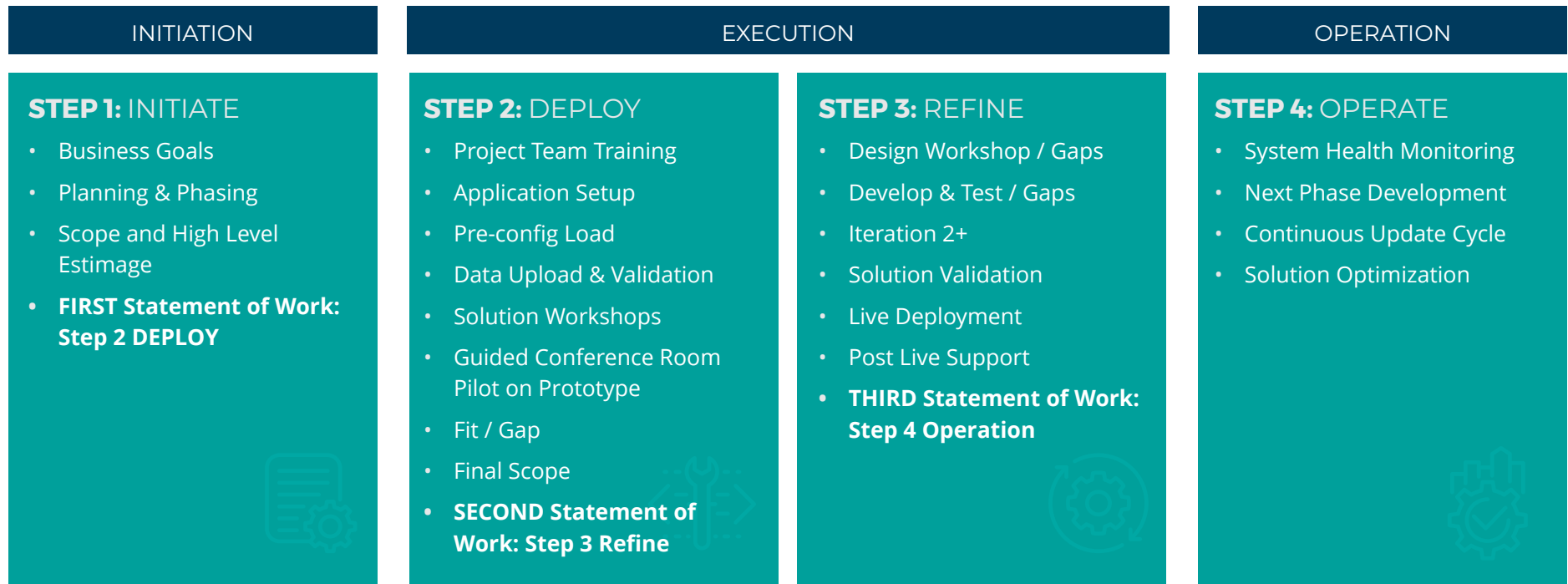
Project leadership should focus on standards and business value

At a minimum, resolute project leadership is about learning when to say yes or no to requests for changing the software standard. Ideally, project leaders should be able to insist on a value-based business case for any changes to the standard system. They should also follow a standardized

process for evaluating and justifying such changes. Some important considerations in this context:

- Often, businesspeople make their most valuable suggestions for system changes after they have used the software for some time and they are more familiar with the new way of working. You need a way to gather and benefit from their experience.

- A system roadmap should help prioritize the timing of enhancements. Consultants and stakeholders should feel free to respond to change requests by asking, "Can it wait?" As an alternative to the often heard, unsatisfying statement, "This is for the second phase," we recommend that our clients set up a team for driving continuous improvements. This team can regularly evaluate and sponsor ideas for enhancing the system.

- Sikich also suggest that clients include in their project budget unallocated funds that can be used for justified changes to the standard system. We usually recommend 15 percent of the total estimated project cost as sufficient for covering unanticipated requirements that pop up while a project is underway.

HEADSTART ENGAGEMENT OUTLINE

INITIATION	EXECUTION		OPERATION

STEP 1: INITIATE

- Business Goals
- Planning & Phasing
- Scope and High Level Estimage
- **FIRST Statement of Work: Step 2 DEPLOY**

STEP 2: DEPLOY

- Project Team Training
- Application Setup
- Pre-config Load
- Data Upload & Validation
- Solution Workshops
- Guided Conference Room Pilot on Prototype
- Fit / Gap
- Final Scope
- **SECOND Statement of Work: Step 3 Refine**

STEP 3: REFINE

- Design Workshop / Gaps
- Develop & Test / Gaps
- Iteration 2+
- Solution Validation
- Live Deployment
- Post Live Support
- **THIRD Statement of Work: Step 4 Operation**

STEP 4: OPERATE

- System Health Monitoring
- Next Phase Development
- Continuous Update Cycle
- Solution Optimization

HOW THE HEADSTART METHODOLOGY WORKS

The Sikich **HEADSTART** methodology is simple. It's designed so that our clients can achieve a successful project of clearly defined scope, generating a high value in the shortest time possible.

Our partnership begins before we sign a statement of work (SOW). Before you, the client, decide to sign an SOW, we will jointly define and agree to a high-level scope for the project along with a basic estimate of services to complete delivery.

The ensuing project execution comprises two steps. First, we deploy the preconfigured application and the full suite of **HEADSTART** management and system maintenance tools. We populate the application with a comprehensive set of sample data and facilitate workshops to prepare and execute a virtual conference room pilot (CRP). A CRP involves hands-on, guided training and testing that allow team members to explore in-scope business processes in the configured system, working with data they know. This first iteration of the application is as much a training session as a testing activity. Once the CRP is complete, the project team

identifies any perceived gaps between the business process outcomes they need to achieve and what the system offers.

Consultants and client stakeholders review the resulting gap/fit report. The team determines which business processes could be changed to fit the software, what alternatives could help achieve the desired results, and if it is necessary to develop a business case to justify any desired system modifications or the introduction of third party products. Following this step, we refine project estimates to reflect the agreed scope of work as we complete the deployment.

In the refine step, we address functional gaps in the way we and our clients agreed, which could involve re-engineered business processes, alternate processes, ISV solutions, or system modifications. We perform CRPs to close all gaps. Once the project team signs off, the system can go into production. This method prioritizes strategic enhancements, puts them into practice, and builds on them by means of continuous testing.

As these iterations progress, the team also works on data migrations and prepares for live operation by scheduling final user acceptance testing (UAT), performance load tests, and end user training.

"With 10 years of experience in Microsoft Dynamics 365 and AX, I've never seen a solution that offers such an incredible combination of process improvements, functionality, extensibility, and use of the Power Platform together with a proven implementation methodology. **HEADSTART** results in faster deployments and better project collaboration, and allows employees to focus more on value-adding activities."

– JEREMY CENTNER,
  DYNAMICS 365 ENTERPRISE PRESALES ARCHITECT, SIKICH

NO NEED TO STOP YOUR JOURNEY

Traditionally, at the end of lengthy deployments stakeholders and their organizations hoped never to have to go through a similar effort. They wanted to be able to focus on reaping the value of their investments and labor. Even many of the capabilities anticipated for a second project phase were often set aside because of fatigue or a lack of funding. As a result, many organizations never achieved their goals for implementing solutions like ERP, even if the project happened 15 to 20 years ago. Wary of the risks of schedule and budget overruns or process disruption, some companies never upgrade the system after the initial deployment. Very few Sikich clients have taken advantage of every available software upgrade. Many delay until they have a backlog of years of upgrades. While it's generally understood that this is not a great idea, many still feel that it's best to avoid upgrades.

With today's software-as-a-service (SaaS) applications, you are on a journey that does not need to have an end point. This is also a much better fit for thriving businesses—nobody builds a company with the intent of closing it at a certain time, never growing, or operating forever in the same way. However, for business applications the concept is still relatively new.

If your company is on an ongoing journey with cloud technology, the software can always be current. Ongoing innovation and enhancements by the developer means that you should expect to deploy an update roughly every six months. Updates can be significant, requiring processes, extensions, and integrations to be re-tested and validated. When organizations today plan their business application deployments, they also need to create the accountabilities and processes to keep the system fully current.

With Sikich **HEADSTART**, we make it easier for companies to keep their systems current with as little manual work and maintenance effort as possible. As part of **HEADSTART**, we deliver the tools and training necessary to keep the software fully up-to-date.

> "With these new SaaS applications, you invest in a journey, not a destination."
>
> – DEBBIE ALTHAM, SENIOR DIRECTOR, SIKICH

RIDING THE WAVE OF CONTINUOUS SOFTWARE IMPROVEMENT

According to Gartner[1], major system changes took place roughly every three to five years when companies ran their business software on-premises. However, when these systems run as a cloud-based software service, change is constant. Companies can take advantage of this endless software evolution to become ever more valuable, competitive, and accomplished.

[1]See Smarter with Gartner article at https://www.gartner.com/smarterwithgartner/top-10-technologies-driving-the-digital-workplace

From real-life tasks to software capabilities

Microsoft ships a regression suite automation tool (RSAT) with Dynamics 365, thereby greatly reducing the time and cost of UAT. UAT is typically required before you apply Microsoft application updates or custom code and configurations to a production environment. RSAT lets functional power users record business tasks by using the Task Recorder and then converts the recordings into automated tests without having to write code.

Out of the box, however, Dynamics 365 does not come with a complete set of robust task recordings. Some recordings are shipped with the demo data, but a majority of our clients had reported that they were not good enough for use in production. Therefore, Sikich has created task recordings for the thousands of processes at work in the businesses of our clients. These task recordings, updated every time an update is published, are part of **HEADSTART**.

Without an obvious, consistent starting point, many clients in the past neglected technical process documentation. Using our library of task recordings, we expedite testing, so clients can deploy the next update and benefit from new features faster. We have successfully decreased the time needed for update testing from as much as four weeks to just eight hours. It's an enormous benefit for Sikich clients to be able to rely on the **HEADSTART** task recordings. They support training, accelerate implementation, and establish a model for creating documentation and thorough testing scripts.

SIKICH HAS SUCCESSFULLY DECREASED THE TIME NEEDED FOR UPDATE TESTING **FROM AS MUCH AS FOUR WEEKS TO JUST EIGHT HOURS.**

"If you had to set up a system from a blank canvas, a six-week timeframe would be nearly impossible. With HEADSTART, we can start tuning configurations to be set up in six weeks to get to a prototype."

– MICHAEL BELL
  D365 ENGAGEMENT DIRECTOR, SIKICH

HOW PRECONFIGURATION ACCELERATES YOUR SYSTEM DEPLOYMENT

Business applications like ERP are designed to support transactional workflows. The more workflows a system is able to support, the more configurations are usually required before it can work as intended. Technologists achieve such configurations by adjusting parameters—the switches and dials that determine how a particular workflow operates. A newly deployed solution generally has very few out-of-the-box parameter settings. Companies hire consultancies like Sikich to review the application and optimize parameter settings based on their understanding of transactional workflows.

In addition to these parameters, an application typically has fields that are used to classify, group, or summarize similar processes. Posting profiles are a good example: the settings for these fields determine how a particular transaction posts into a general ledger. Payment terms are another simple example. Businesses can use fields to set up the various payment terms they offer and apply them to customer accounts in line with their policies.

EXPLOITING COMMONALITIES TO GAIN MOMENTUM

As mentioned, comparable businesses in similar industries, geographies, or markets tend to have much in common.

HEADSTART comes with nearly 2,000 pre-set parameters for each of Sikich's industry verticals. Our clients can immediately benefit from our collective team expertise regarding how those settings impact the system and their business processes. In addition, we have defined many other fields that determine how the system will function. For example, we've identified and pre-populated the most commonly used posting profiles, based on a templated chart of accounts, and payment terms.
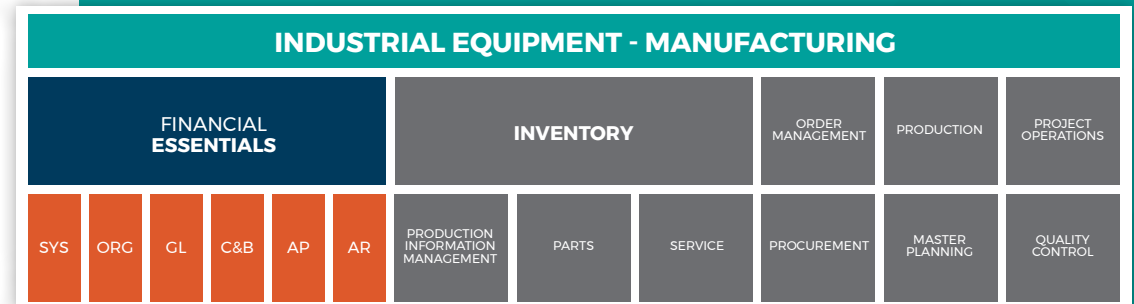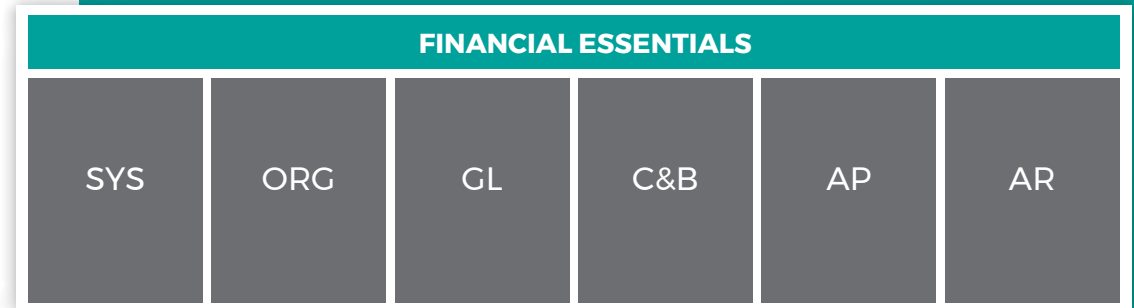
A preconfigured system is unlikely to support everything our clients need without any specific configurations—not modifications—and we don't claim that it will fit every process. However, our clients' experience demonstrates that **HEADSTART** is an effective way to accelerate implementations. Seeing your new system in action allows you to make educated decisions about configuration adjustments. It's the 80/20 rule - we spend 80 percent of our effort on the 20 percent of the system that reflects what makes your business unique. Let's take a closer look how these preconfigurations work in practice.

WORKING WITH STANDARD APPLICATION PRECONFIGURATIONS

Each main suite of applications has its own preconfigurations. For Dynamics 365 Finance, we have preconfigured the organizational structure, along with the general ledger, cash and bank, accounts receivable, and accounts payable functionalities. These are the capabilities most businesses need to manage their financial transactions. They can be deployed stand-alone, in conjunction with other Dynamics 365 suites, or integrated with third-party software tools.

We have also fully preconfigured the core modules within the Supply Chain Management and Project Management suites. For industrial equipment manufacturers, for example, we expanded the preconfiguration for financials to include the foundational functionality required to support the selling, configuring, manufacturing, shipping, and servicing of equipment and the production and distribution of spare parts and consumables. Field Service is also preconfigured and can be deployed to complement Dynamics 365 Finance.

For wholesale distribution companies, our preconfiguration omits functionality related to production and projects,

FINANCIAL ESSENTIALS

SYS	ORG	GL	C&B	AP	AR

INDUSTRIAL EQUIPMENT - MANUFACTURING

FINANCIAL ESSENTIALS						INVENTORY		ORDER MANAGEMENT	PRODUCTION	PROJECT OPERATIONS
SYS	ORG	GL	C&B	AP	AR	PRODUCTION INFORMATION MANAGEMENT	PARTS	SERVICE	PROCUREMENT	MASTER PLANNING	QUALITY CONTROL

WHOLESALE DISTRIBUTION

FINANCIAL ESSENTIALS						INVENTORY		ORDER MANAGEMENT	WAREHOUSING	TRANSPORTATION
SYS	ORG	GL	C&B	AP	AR	PRODUCTION INFORMATION MANAGEMENT	WAREHOUSING	TRANSPORTATION	PROCUREMENT	MASTER PLANNING	QUALITY CONTROL

"HEADSTART from Sikich is a great way for Manufacturing and Distribution organizations to move to Dynamics 365 in the cloud and accelerate time to value. The HEADSTART framework provides a business process library that you can use to model your organization's business processes, and then leverage the provided pre-configurations to setup the application and begin testing. This is truly a game changer."

- MOHAMED MTIMET, DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION ADVISOR, MICROSOFT

but adds capabilities for warehousing and transportation.

Sikich teams continue to build on our portfolio of preconfigurations to meet changing client needs and expectations. For example, many of our manufacturing clients find that they have to provide ecommerce portals for their customers when in the past they only sold through distributors. What's more, the growing as-a-service market has prompted many formerly product-centric clients to create service businesses.

When businesses engage with Sikich, they can rely on us to map our preconfigurations to the agreed project scope. We work with them to ensure that any needed workflows which are not pre-configured are listed in the implementation backlog. In addition to the standard configurations for the Microsoft Dynamics 365 applications, sometimes ISV solutions are the best way to meet clients' specific requirements. Below, we describe how we identify, evaluate, and onboard Sikich ISV partners.

"Companies are looking for ways to not only improve their internal processes by selecting a proven solution like Microsoft Dynamics 365 Finance and Supply Chain Management, but they need a way to implement it fast, with proven practices and delivered by a trusted Microsoft Partner. With HEAD**START**, Sikich provides a zero-risk solution to meet those needs."

– JON BYRD,
 SENIOR ENTERPRISE SALES MANAGER, SIKICH

COMBINING MICROSOFT LIFECYCLE SERVICES AND HEADSTART BUSINESS PROCESS LIBRARIES TO STREAMLINE DEPLOYMENTS

Sikich **HEADSTART** complements and extends the capabilities of Microsoft Lifecycle Services (LCS). That's why we should take a closer look at how LCS can help in your Dynamics 365 implementation. In simple terms, LCS improves the predictability and quality of implementations by simplifying and standardizing them.

LCS is a Microsoft Azure-based collaboration portal that provides a cohesive, collaborative environment along with a set of regularly updated services that help you manage the application lifecycle. The purpose of LCS is to deliver the right information to the right people, at the right time, and to make the success of implementations, updates, or upgrades predictable and repeatable.

By providing a shared workspace for clients and their technology partners, LCS enables closer collaboration, which in turns helps speed implementations and reduces the time-to-value. It also enables Microsoft experts to contribute their insight.

The Business Process Modeler (BPM) is part of LCS. BPM is designed to help users align their business processes with industry-standard processes that are defined by the American Productivity and Quality Center (APQC).
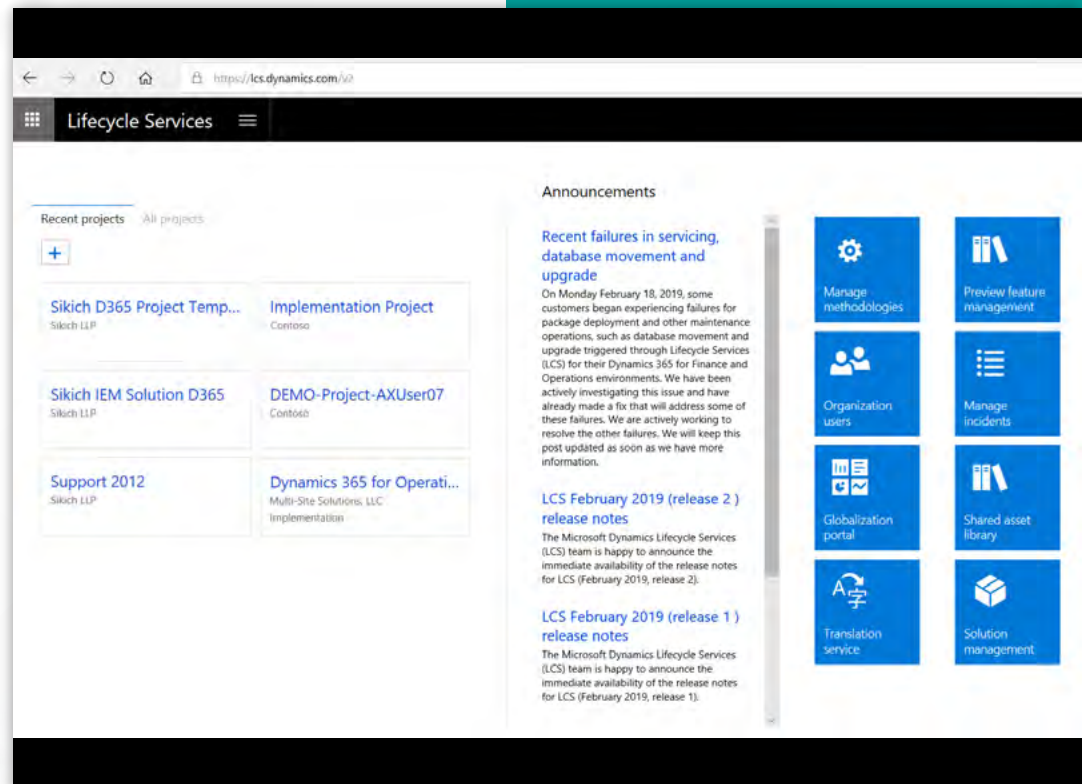
These APQC processes are shipped with Microsoft Dynamics 365. Sikich finds that the APQC business processes in LCS are a great start, but they typically do not fully address our clients' needs. Some clients may follow undocumented processes or their process documentation may be incomplete.

To address the requirements of our clients, Sikich created a comprehensive set of industry-specific business processes for **HEADSTART**, organizing them in three sections: Configure, Transact, and Analyze. Sikich industry experts built, tested, and validated these processes. They continuously review and improve them when software updates are issued, and during and after deployments.

With the Sikich Excellence Hub—our project management office—enabling a continuous feedback loop, we routinely ask project participants to provide feedback on any business processes they have deployed. We monitor the Microsoft roadmap, test new features, and incorporate them as they become available. We also dive into the reasons why processes have to be changed from the standard. Over time, as we road-test and enhance processes, we evolve the best practices that support standard deployments.

To give an example, the illustration to the right illustrates the core business process library Sikich includes in **HEADSTART** for industrial equipment manufacturers.

SIKICH.
HEADSTART ℠
EQUIPMENT MANUFACTURING

CORE BUSINESS PROCESS LIBRARY

⌄ **01.00** Administration

⌄ **02.00** Record to Report

⌄ **03.00** Design to Release

⌄ **04.00** Plan to Produce

⌄ **05.00** Procure to Play

⌄ **06.00** Quotation to Order

⌄ **07.00** Order to Cash

⌄ **08.00** Inventory Management

⌄ **09.00** Warehouse Management (WMS)

⌄ **10.00** Project to Profit

⌄ **11.00** Acquire to Retire

⌄ **12.00** Hire to Release

⌄ **13.00** Transportation Management System (TMS)

⌄ **14.00** Budgeting

⌄ **15.00** Quality Management

⌄ **16.00** Asset Management

⌄ **17.00** EDI

⌄ **18.00** Install to Service

⌄ **19.00** Revenue Recognition

⌄ **20.00** Cost Management

DELIVERING PROCESSES ACROSS INDUSTRIES

Our ability to standardize processes in **HEADSTART** differs across industries and their lines of business. For instance, compared to other lines of business and given that compliance requirements are largely consistent, cross-industry variations among finance management processes are minor, compared to other lines of business. With certain exceptions, how organizations set up and operate their general ledgers, cash, banking, and accounts receivable and payable, is largely consistent.

Of course, the financial processes in some micro-verticals are considerably more complex. For example, automotive supply chain companies in their accounts receivable typically have to accommodate a special process for managing customers' invoice deductions, and often also need advanced payment notification by means of EDI. Providers of medical devices may have to use highly complex billing structures. In some sectors, almost all companies pay by using a lockbox, whereas in others, payments are most often automated through ACH. In the software industry, companies expect that processes can support revenue recognition.

No matter what the specific requirements of micro-verticals are, Sikich aims to meet 80 percent of the most common process requirements of finance teams across targeted industries with the financial-essentials library of business processes and preconfigurations in **HEADSTART**. Other, similar **HEADSTART** business process libraries supports the supply chain management, project management and commerce suites of Microsoft Dynamics 365. In these areas of business, and therefore also in the Dynamics 365 solutions, clients' business processes vary far more than they do in finance management. While **HEADSTART** very well facilitates many business processes in these disciplines, the development efforts are more challenging. Our goal is to meet at least close to 65 percent of our clients' process requirements with **HEADSTART**. We collaborate with all clients to map their needs to our library and quickly identify those key workflows that are not yet part of our solution.

NO MATTER WHAT THE SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS OF MICRO-VERTICALS ARE, **SIKICH AIMS TO MEET 80 PERCENT OF THE MOST COMMON PROCESS REQUIREMENTS** OF FINANCE TEAMS ACROSS INDUSTRIES WITH THE FINANCIAL-ESSENTIALS LIBRARY OF BUSINESS PROCESSES AND PRECONFIGURATIONS IN HEAD**START**.

Keeping HEADSTART current

Sikich process and industry experts, together with our solution architects, anticipate upcoming software updates as early as we can, so we can finetune **HEADSTART** processes and save our clients time and effort in re-creating their configurations. Our solution architects review early release notes from Microsoft and our **HEADSTART**-certified ISV partners, which allows us to make timely revisions to **HEADSTART** processes whenever they are impacted by software innovation.

When new software releases become available, we update our template libraries and communicate changes to any project teams using capabilities that might be impacted. Clients whose systems are live and who subscribe to our support service receive notification and a copy of the new process. Sikich solution architects also evaluate new Dynamics 365 and ISV software features to determine whether they should be included in **HEADSTART**.

What's more, we are always creating new operational business process models for **HEADSTART**. That helps us support the diverse businesses in our target industries and achieve a better fit for the clients we serve. We stay abreast of industry trends so that our process library can accommodate processes that are newly emerging as standards. For example, the rapid adoption of drop-ship deliveries by our wholesale distribution clients has caused us to build and include that process in **HEADSTART**. Similarly, the increased use of consumer-facing ecommerce sites by manufacturing companies will result in more and different process configurations for the **HEADSTART** commerce suite.

YOUR ERP DEPLOYMENT, DONE RIGHT

As a client, the first time you experience **HEADSTART** is during the project initiation, when the team first meets to review the project plan. **HEADSTART** provides the steps we take to implement the scope we defined and agreed on with you. From the beginning, your project plan and the work breakdown structure associated with it are based on the process defined by **HEADSTART**.

Deployment comes next. This is where you start to see certain **HEADSTART** assets. What does that look like?

EXECUTION

STEP 2: DEPLOY	**STEP 3:** REFINE
• Project Team Training	• Design Workshop / Gaps
• Application Setup	• Develop & Test / Gaps
• Pre-config Load	• Iteration 2+
• Data Upload & Validation	• Solution Validation
• Solution Workshops	• Live Deployment
• Guided Conference Room Pilot on Prototype	• Post Live Support
• Fit / Gap	• **THIRD Statement of Work: Step 4 Operation**
• Final Scope	
• **SECOND Statement of Work: Step 3 Refine**	

Once your software subscription is active, and the software environment in your tenant and your Dynamics 365 Sandbox environment have been deployed, Sikich does the following:

1. Set up an Azure DevOps project.

2. Create the project in Lifecycle Services.

3. Establish the environment or environments.

4. Load applicable preconfigurations.

5. Load your sample data.

6. Copy the business process library to Lifecycle Services.

7. Sync business process libraries and test cases with Azure DevOps (ADO) and establish processes.

8. Set up core team users.

9. In the near future, Sikich will also deploy Azure data lakes.

We aim to demonstrate the value of **HEADSTART** to our project collaborators immediately. Some Sikich clients using **HEADSTART** have, within a week of the initial software deployment, chosen a templated chart of accounts, explored the system, and tested simple financial transactions, supported by the provided task guides.

ONE KEY GOAL DESIGNED INTO HEAD**START**
IS **ENABLING RAPID KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER
AT A HIGH LEVEL OF TRANSPARENCY.**

TRANSFERRING KEY SKILLS TRAINING TO YOUR TEAM

One key goal for **HEADSTART** is enabling rapid knowledge transfer laid out in a very clear path. We begin by training your technical team or lead on the tasks included in Microsoft Lifecycle Services. Your project participants learn about deploying and managing the Dynamics 365 environment while we provision it together with your technical leads. Typically, Sikich recommends that you deploy one tier-1 **HEADSTART** environment hosted on Azure, plus two tier-2 environments. These will be used for your "golden", testing, and UAT activities. We may recommend additional environments based on scope and transaction volume.

Next, we train your system administrators on how to import and configure users in Microsoft Dynamics 365 Finance and Supply Chain Management, LCS, and ADO, and show them how to apply the appropriate privileges based on their roles.

Then we move on to data management. By using the **HEADSTART** data migration templates, we review the data required to populate the templates to facilitate the first conference room pilot.
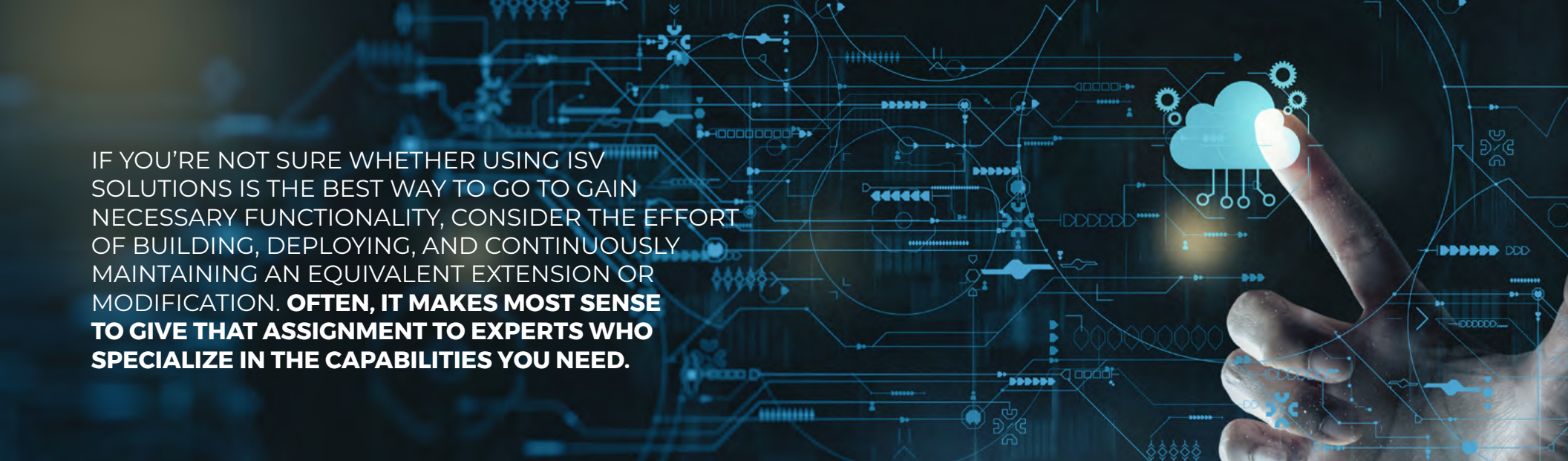
We are keenly aware of how important your data will be to the outputs of the system and the accuracy and value of the analytics produced. Where our clients are unsure regarding their Data Strategy, we may call in our Data & Analytics team to assist with both strategy and migration.

During deployment, Sikich also conducts training for clients with their own development team. For all participants, development training includes:

- Development and environment setup, including setting up dedicated virtual machines for developers locally or in the cloud
- Source code management, achieved by connecting a virtual machine used by developers to ADO source control in order to review source-control processes and best practices
- Introductory X++ training and using extensions for X++ development in Dynamics 365 Finance and Supply Chain Management
- Code building and deployment
- Reviewing ADO hosted builds and the setup of the deployment pipeline, which is used for deploying code to non-production environments
- Update management process review, including applying Microsoft updates to developer virtual machines and virtual machines hosted by Microsoft, and using LCS options for pausing and postponing scheduled updates

For project managers, training also covers several additional topics:

- Entering support tickets
- Searching issues
- Microsoft methodology and interactions through LCS
- Updating the business process library

IF YOU'RE NOT SURE WHETHER USING ISV SOLUTIONS IS THE BEST WAY TO GO TO GAIN NECESSARY FUNCTIONALITY, CONSIDER THE EFFORT OF BUILDING, DEPLOYING, AND CONTINUOUSLY MAINTAINING AN EQUIVALENT EXTENSION OR MODIFICATION. **OFTEN, IT MAKES MOST SENSE TO GIVE THAT ASSIGNMENT TO EXPERTS WHO SPECIALIZE IN THE CAPABILITIES YOU NEED.**

HEADSTART-CERTIFIED ISV SOLUTIONS ADD SPECIFIC, HIGH-VALUE CAPABILITIES

As you know, Dynamics 365 may not provide all the functions a company needs to support all its business processes. For some businesses, Dynamics 365 provides functionality that is not rich enough to cover their specific use cases. It may also be that needed capabilities are neither currently available in the core product nor are they on the release roadmap.

Microsoft product design meets the broad needs of a wide variety of organizations. When industries need specific functionality, the Microsoft ISV community can bridge remaining gaps in business applications. Some ISVs are highly specialized and provide extensions or add-ons for particular industry segments. Other ISVs provide broader, horizontal solutions—such as tax software—that add rich functionality, flexibility, or automation to the activities in many businesses.

Putting ISV solutions to work

Sikich generally recommends that clients consider ISV solutions whenever practical to add necessary functional depth as an alternative

to custom development. Given today's continuous update cycles and always-current cloud software, custom development is harder to justify. For one thing, it can cause more effort in managing frequent updates at short intervals.

Also, when clients were used to have more time between upgrades, they could spread the costs of modifications out and thereby control system maintenance costs. That is no longer possible. By releasing highly usable Power Platform tools with minimal coding requirements, Microsoft is encouraging companies to use these resources with Dynamics 365 as an effective way of addressing software capabilities gaps in the software and reduce the number of custom extensions.

If you're not sure whether using ISV solutions is the best way to go to gain necessary functionality, consider the effort of building, deploying, and continuously maintaining an equivalent extension or modification. Often, it makes most sense to give that assignment to experts who specialize in the capabilities you need. What's more, qualified ISVs are accountable to Microsoft for meeting coding and functionality standards, not just individual client businesses.

Stringent ISV criteria help avoid software management headaches

Sikich has worked with many ISVs and knows how to configure, deploy, and support their solutions. We follow a rigorous process for certifying and onboarding ISV solutions into **HEADSTART**. We qualify ISV solutions according to the following key criteria:

- The solution must materially enhance or fill fundamental gaps in Dynamics 365 in such a way that it delivers measurable value to clients.

- The solution must be proven, supported by references, have an overall positive reputation, and be trusted by the partner community and clients.

- The solution has to be able to run completely in the cloud.

- The developer must follow best practices for software development and maintenance, including a documented commitment to keep pace with Microsoft update release schedules.

- Developers have to provide excellent support for their product both before and after a purchase. Support services must be readily available either directly to our client, or to Sikich if we contract to support the client's use of the product. Alternatively, an ISV has to offer a certification program that allows our team members to become trained and qualified to offer first-line support and expedite issue resolutions.

- The developer must be in good standing with Microsoft. Our preference is for the solution to be part of Microsoft ISV Connect or a similar program.

- The solution must be relevant for the industry verticals that Sikich targets with **HEADSTART**. We would expect to deploy it repeatedly, making the best use of our team's skills and experience.

- The ISV has to provide documentation for inclusion in our business process libraries.

- We understand that technology is not static and that our clients' needs will change. As new solutions enter the market, we are always open to evaluating them and verifying how they can offer value to our clients. Often, clients suggest ISV products for inclusion, and we will consider them.

Evolving the software standard

We are aware of the possibility that Microsoft may create new functions within the Dynamics 365 standard which will reduce or eliminate the need for ISV solutions. For instance, Microsoft is adding new vendor invoice automation functionality, but this won't initially be as complete as the SKG solution Sikich uses. But it will be perfectly appropriate for those clients who don't immediately need a full-fledged solution and might want to transition to more automation by and by. This kind of progressive, expanding innovation happens sometimes, and it's one reason why trust is fundamental in our ISV relationships. Our clients can be assured that we are prepared to ask the hard questions regarding an application's future value proposition, differentiation, roadmap, and expected continued development investment.

Some clients prefer to run their own ISV selection and ask us to work with their chosen provider. While such solutions might not become part of **HEADSTART**, we respect our clients' decisions and promise to be a good partner with their preferred vendors. If you want to know which industry ISV solutions are certified for **HEADSTART**, we will be happy to provide a list.

EXTENDING HEADSTART FOR INDUSTRY REQUIREMENTS

Sikich aims to provide clients with scalable and flexible solutions that fit their needs and allow them to maximize the value of their software by reducing manual efforts, resolving process bottlenecks, enhancing the experiences of business stakeholders, customers, and vendors. All of which are optimized for regular updates.

We have implemented Microsoft Dynamics 365 since early in its availability to the general market. We understand and appreciate its strengths and are also aware of its gaps. We exercise great care and discretion in deploying extensions and add-ons. Each modification, extension, or enhancement causes a maintenance overhead. This is less of an issue, but still an important consideration, when we use software tools from the Microsoft Power Platform, like Power Apps, Power Automate, and Power BI. However, sometimes extensions and add-ons can be critical for a process to run as it needs to.

When it comes to our focus industries – industrial equipment manufacturing and wholesale distribution – we know that Dynamics 365 will typically address 70 to 75 percent of what clients needs. By using ISV solutions, we can often get closer to 85 or 90 percent. However, the last 10 percent can be as important to clients as they may be challenging to deliver. Even relatively small, recurring gaps can make a critical difference in clients' experiences.

Sound use cases for Sikich intellectual property

To bridge such remaining capabilities gaps, Sikich includes a small number of custom modifications or extensions in **HEADSTART** deployments. These enhancements may make users' lives easier by saving time or manual effort, reducing the likelihood of errors, or providing key analytics. Sometimes they help meet essential, industry-specific needs. Sikich is not primarily a software developer, but we offer

ISV SOLUTIONS
85-90%

DYNAMICS 365
70-75%
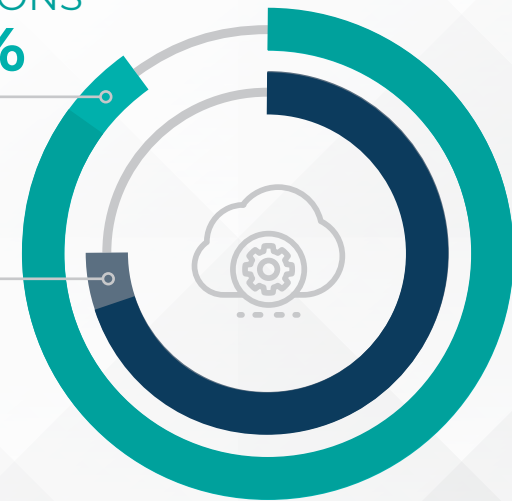
WHEN IT COMES TO OUR FOCUS INDUSTRIES, WE KNOW THAT DYNAMICS 365 WILL TYPICALLY ADDRESS 70 TO 75 PERCENT OF WHAT CLIENTS NEED. **BY USING ISV SOLUTIONS, WE CAN OFTEN GET CLOSER TO 85 OR 90 PERCENT.**

a license-free, non-retractable set of useful functions—a suite of apps we call an Industry PowerPack. Just like other software changes, these are part of UAT when updates happen. Their practical value is worth the extra effort. We deliver test cases and task recordings for each of these apps and test them thoroughly before including them in our development backlog.

In addition to these extensions and the Power Apps and Power Automate tools we deploy, we have also built a suite of Power BI visualizations that improve on those provided with Dynamics 365. They benefit most of our clients, across all industries. Our current Power BI development backlog includes industry-specific industry metric charts and graphics, which we will release as we complete them. While we keep adding capabilities, we also monitor the Microsoft roadmap and releases in case any of our apps can be replaced by standard functionality.

USING AZURE DEVOPS TO MANAGE YOUR PROJECT

Sikich is proud to be one of the more advanced adopters of Azure DevOps (ADO). We make extensive use of ADO, from project planning and execution, to issue management, to task planning. Clients can use ADO for managing their own inputs into Dynamics 365 deployments and carry all that information forward by using it for post-implementation support. The strengths of this unified collaboration environment include:

- Within ADO, users can see the entire project plan, including the work breakdown structure. ADO delivers full visibility of the development lifecycle from functional requirements, to development tasks, and on to test cases. Developers can use the bugs feature to create release notes for each set of code changes.

- Excellent visibility of project progress and task status is available to all parties working on a project. They can clearly identify gaps and document decisions regarding configuration choices (particularly those that depart from the preconfiguration).

- ADO integrates fully with other collaboration tools, including Microsoft Lifecycle Services, Microsoft Project (requires Project licensing), Microsoft Teams, Planner, and Outlook. You can create an embedded project workspace from within Teams.

- Embedded in your Dynamics 365 system, ADO gives Sikich consultants complete transparency. They prefer to use ADO instead of external documentation tools like Word or OneNote. ADO can serve as a valuable knowledge repository, when processes are changed or redeveloped, or when decisions need to be reviewed.

- ADO is deployed with standard charts, queries, and dashboards to enable project oversight.
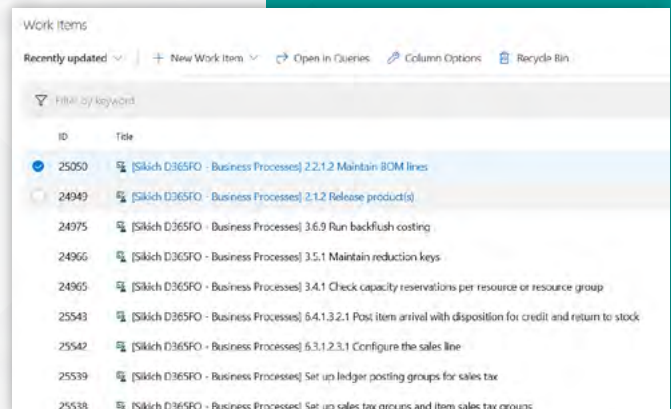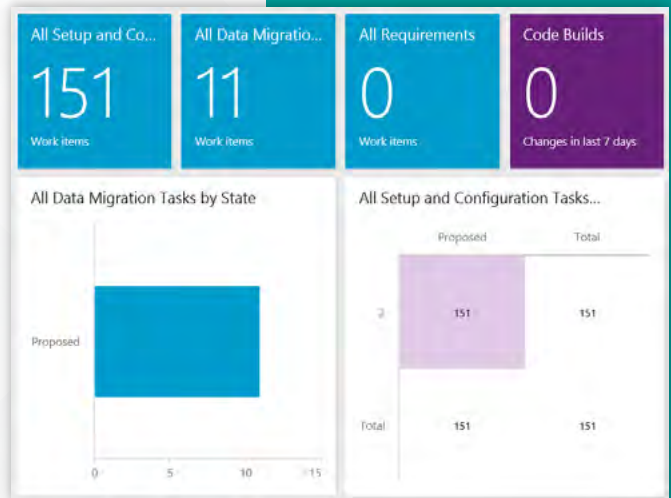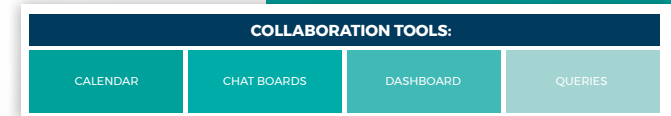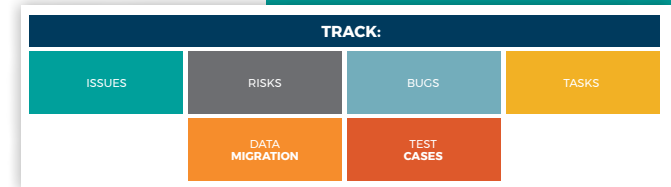
How does ADO work with Jira?

Some of our clients have embedded Jira product management software deeply into their processes and organization. ADO can work in tandem with Jira. However, organizations without a preference for Jira can use the Sikich Support Ticket work item as a great alternative without any additional cost.

Which licenses do you need for ADO?

Five Basic licenses are free, and the cost for each additional Basic license is $6* per month. Stakeholder and Visual Basic licenses are free. You can find more information and current pricing at https://azure.microsoft.com/en-us/pricing/details/devops/azure-devops-services/. Some additional details on ADO access and capabilities:

- **Stakeholder:** Provides partial access to ADO and can be assigned to unlimited users for free. A Stakeholder license is usually best for team members who will be creating and updating work items.

- **Basic:** Provides access to most ADO features. A Basic license is required for project owners, administrators, and anyone who changes the project setup.

- **Basic + Test Plans:** Provides access to all ADO features included in the Basic license, as well as Azure Test Plans. This is required for any users will be working the RSAT tool.

- **Visual Studio subscription:** A Visual Studio subscription should be how your developers are given access to an ADO project, because it also provides them with a Visual Studio application license. Of course, this is a great option for users who already have a Visual Studio subscription.

ADO Dashboard and KPIs

Subscription price current at time of publishing.
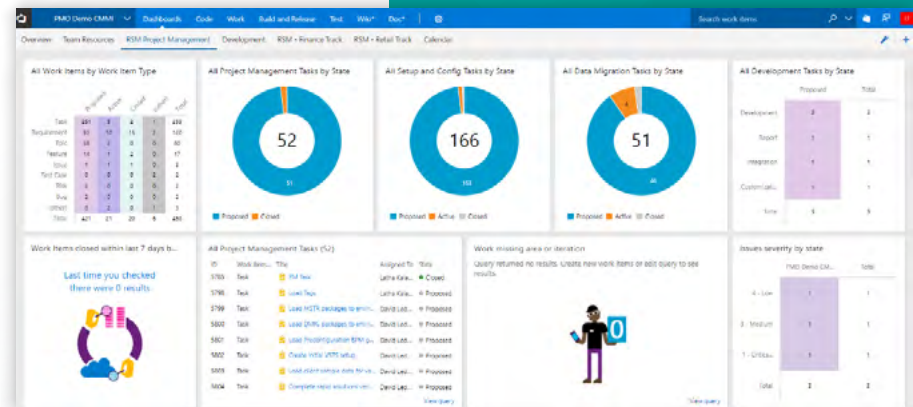
WHY SIKICH SHOULD BE YOUR DEPLOYMENT PARTNER

Many implementing technology partners claim that they have a methodology based on implementation accelerators, but their clients may struggle to see more than standard setups with generic data provided by Microsoft. On the other hand, in deployments managed by Sikich, **HEADSTART** addresses much of the complexity, difficulty, and risk of deploying new business applications and offers our clients significant and measurable value.

HEADSTART implementations involve a high level of visibility and accountability. They accelerate your go live with predictable project success. They're embedded with quality and change management features, and they deliver a system that is easier to support long-term. Our goal is that the go-live milestone is a smooth transition that lets you proceed to daily production operation. We do our best to ensure that you will be comfortable with your new system and can focus on strategic decisions and growing your business.

At the beginning of your project, Sikich charges a one-time fee for **HEADSTART**. As described above, once **HEADSTART** is deployed, we quickly launch an initial, guided conference room pilot that covers as many in-scope processes as possible. Faster than other approaches we know, we deliver in this pilot a working system with your sample data loaded. We work with your team in a collegial, collaborative manner to prioritize needed changes, identify solutions, and create the final scope that will take the project through to live operation.

"We were able to achieve tangible costs savings by reducing our investment in on-premises hardware, maintenance and support costs of the old, disparate software apps."

– BRUNO ARNASSAN, CFO, AMF BAKERY SYSTEMS

PROFESSIONALS YOU CAN TRUST

Over many years in business, Sikich has performed hundreds of successful ERP, CRM and business application deployments for companies across the industries we support. Some of our clients are well-established brands, others are relatively new and growing quickly—and all of them want to address their challenges and achieve their goals as quickly and efficiently as they can. The Sikich technology practice comprises of people who have spent a large part of their careers in the industry. We have the expertise and empathy to help you assess how the platform can help your company and the people who keep it going and growing day after day. What's more, Sikich is a transformative organization. In our own experience, we have repeatedly adopted and deployed software systems like Microsoft Dynamics 365 to run our business and achieve audacious goals. That experience has given us the insight to help clients achieve their own transformations by taking the most direct route, avoiding unproductive detours.

We understand that a major software undertaking impacts everybody in the organization, and that user acceptance can help your deployment sink or swim. We collaborate with your stakeholders to help the organization minimize disruptions resulting from this effort, allowing employees to benefit from their new software quickly. Change management from Sikich keeps your goals front and center while ensuring that employees and teams thrive on the cloud technology journey.

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Once we understand what matters most to you, we aim to deliver your solution in such a way that it's future-proof while allowing a high level of agility in accommodating change and growth. If we feel that process changes would streamline your project and lead to better outcomes, we will communicate that as soon as we see it, rather than let process bottlenecks and inefficiencies stand in your way. We also will make recommendations for integrations and data strategy that can make a real difference, and put them in practice for you.

Once your solution is deployed and live, it's up to you whether you want to continue with a support plan or simply manage on your own. We provide a variety of help-desk and other support services. We can also help with planning and procurement guidance for your upcoming technology decisions. If you want to focus your own IT team on different tasks, we can manage the ERP, CRM environment and other technologies for you. Some clients contract with Sikich to help them drive technological transformation at a more strategic level and request us to augment their team with a virtual CIO.

HEAD**START** FAQs

Q: Is HEAD**START a service or a product?**

A: Both! It's a group of services tied to accelerators we've created for Dynamics 365. Ultimately, it's the Sikich approach to accelerating the delivery of high value industry business solutions.

Q: Does this approach use a well-known implementation methodology?

A: Our approach originated with a Waterfall perspective, but has evolved to leverage Agile fundamentals. This is a major driver in shortening the time to go-live and allows major cost savings. Faster time to go-live means fewer consulting hours needed, which translates to your budget going further.

Q: Does HEAD**START work with Jira?**

A: Some of our clients have embedded Jira product management software deeply into their processes and organization. HEAD**START** leverages Azure DevOps (ADO) and can work in tandem with Jira. However, organizations without a preference for Jira can use the Sikich Support Ticket work item through ADO as a great alternative without any additional cost.

Q: How much time does HEAD**START typically save in an ERP project?**

A: In a traditional ERP deployment that would take 12 months, HEAD**START** can save roughly 5 months, so you can complete it in 7 months instead. That is a time savings of 42%.

Q: How much time does HEAD**START save for a typical CRM deployment?**

A: For a CRM project that would take 6 months to go-live, HEAD**START**can save about 2 months, offering a time savings of 33%.

Q: What cost savings can I expect with HEAD**START?**

A: On average, our clients see a 25% reduction in their ERP project budget when they use HEAD**START**, as opposed to the traditional approach to implementation.

Q: What is the impact on the discovery process?

A: Using a traditional PMP approach like Waterfall, discovery is a very lengthy and in-depth process. By using HEAD**START**, you eliminate Visio diagrams and can immediately walk through a system that is already set up, where you can clearly see if it meets your process needs. Decisions are made with the refence to capabilities of the new system, not your current/former one. This is a very hands-on approach. You come away with a working prototype instead of spending months on design work.

Q: How do you get HEAD**START?**

A: You will be working with the Sikich Sales and Service teams. We will walk you through all the details. In a nutshell, it's purchased with a one-time pre-payment, at the start of your project.

TAKING THE NEXT STEP

If you're interested in exploring what your **HEADSTART** deployment of Microsoft Dynamics 365 might look like, here are some great jumping off points:

- Contact the Sikich consulting team

- See how other companies benefited from **HEADSTART**

- Find out about Sikich ERP services

- Understand how Sikich helps you manage change

- Share feedback and ideas that could help us improve **HEADSTART** and our Dynamics 365 deployment practice

SIKICH ®

1415 W. Diehl Rd., Suite 400
Naperville, IL 60563
sikich.com/technology

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 partners with the industry leaders, including Microsoft, NetSuite, and SonicWALL. 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**