

# Mars Fishcare Digitally Transforms

With Microsoft Dynamics  
365 Business Central



## About Mars Fishcare

The pandemic brought many unexpected changes with it, including an explosion of pet adoptions—with reports of a 30-50 percent increase over 2019’s numbers. Along with adoptions came enormous growth in the pet care and supply industry. The American Pet Products Association projects Americans will spend \$99 billion in 2021—breaking the record, and online pet food sales increased 77 percent in the U.S. in March 2020 year over year.

Spent in 2021  
for Pet Care



On the Mars Petcare website, you’ll very quickly learn how much they truly care about pets. The company’s 85,000 Associates spend their days (and nights!) thinking about the pets of the world and how to improve their lives through nutrition, medical care, and innovation. Brands include PEDIGREE®, ROYAL CANIN®, BANFIELD® Pet Hospitals, and the WALTHAM Petcare Science Institute.

You’ll also find this phrase in big, bold letters: “Pets truly make the world a better place. That’s why we’re inspired to live our Purpose: A Better World For Pets™, a world where they’re healthy, happy and welcome.”

Anyone who has ever depended on the love and companionship of a pet—especially during the pandemic—can attest to that. And that love and companionship is found not just through dogs and cats.

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Mars Fishcare

In 2003, Mars purchased Aquarium Pharmaceuticals (API), a manufacturer and distributor of treatment, testing, and nutrition products for both indoor aquariums and outdoor ponds, which has passionately supported the aquatic industry for 60 years. With 30 global patents for breakthrough innovations, Mars Fishcare is always looking for new ways to improve and simplify the fish-keeping experience and expand the hobby.

## The Challenge: Increasing Complexities Around Growth Prompted the Need for New Technology and a New Partner

According to Lewis Rosenberg, IT Manager of Mars Fishcare, what differentiates the company from other providers is R&D—the science and quality behind the products. “The products actually do what they say they do. Our medications and food products are regulated by the FDA, and other products like algae killers are regulated by the EPA—more so than any other Petcare group.” It is a premium brand, so it is imperative for the company to preserve it. One avenue for accomplishing this is through technology.

After completing a Microsoft Dynamics NAV upgrade in 2015, the company realized that, unfortunately, they were already behind the curve and made the decision to upgrade to Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central. That was one issue.

In addition, the company’s UK location was on a different database that would be losing support for their hosting platform and needed to upgrade. With this, Mars Fishcare took the opportunity to move everything to the US database and immediately saw cost savings by using the same add-ons, including EDI, Demand Planning, and EasyPDF, as well as sharing support costs and optimizing licensing.

Increase in Online Pet  
Food Sales from 2020



Finally, while Mars Fishcare had a good relationship with their Dynamics partner, the partner was not equipped to handle increasing complexities due to growth and significant changes:

- Expansion into eCommerce
- Purchase of Buckeye Nutrition—now Mars Horsecare—which was using an AS/400 solution and would be running as a separate company but would be rolled into the U.S. database
- Initiative in conjunction with a rate shopping group

In short, the company and its subsidiaries needed to be on the same modern ERP with strong manufacturing capabilities and on a single database—and they needed a partner that could handle the many diverse and complex needs that would come along with it.

## The Solution: A Multi-stage, Wholesale Move to Business Central

Lewis, who has been on the board of the NAV User Group for over a decade, knew about ArcherPoint and was impressed with what he saw, but he was convinced after meeting CEO Greg Kaupp at S&M Nutek (now Greenies, part of Mars Petcare), who were evaluating NAV partners and then seeing the ArcherPoint team interacting with users at the annual NAV/BC User Group conference.

After an in-depth discovery and analysis, the ArcherPoint team began executing a multi-stage plan to get the entire organization on the same track, including:

- Upgrading Mars Fishcare to Business Central
- Moving Mars Fishcare UK to the company's U.S. servers
- Merging all databases
- Upgrading the new, central database to Business Central
- Implementing ArcherPoint Channel Sales Manager (CSM), an integrated management tool that connects a sales platform like Amazon with Business Central, allowing them to manage every aspect of their eCommerce business in one place

Ensuring the company's manufacturing requirements were accounted for, including integration with key tools like Lanham's EDI and eShip:

- Manufacturing is done both in house and at subcontractors, but all products ship out of the company's facility in Pennsylvania, which also houses raw materials and finished goods, represented by two virtual warehouses in Business Central. Most products are heavily regulated, so they are lot controlled and go through a quality release, which is also represented by a virtual warehouse, where they are held until approved for release.
- It's a high-volume business, with some orders that are very large in terms of number of SKUs and others in terms of quantity, making it a challenge to pick and build a pallet.
- The company distributes through large chain stores and chain distribution centers in the U.S., which requires EDI; large containers are shipped to a 3PL in the UK, where the company has another sales office that handles shipments to Europe. Shipments to other parts of the world are shipped from the U.S.

“I loved the way Greg and the entire ArcherPoint team was always not only there but involved in providing educational opportunities and willing to talk to anybody looking for help. When I talked to our senior management team about that, it was really a no-brainer.”

Lewis, Mars Fishcare

Increase in Pet Adoptions in 2020

40%

## The Success: Immediate Cost Savings, Expansion into New Markets, and More

Aside from saving money on Business Central licensing, support, and add-ons, Mars will never have to go through such a significant upgrade process again as the company elected to sign up for ArcherPoint's Upgrade Subscription plan to stay current.

The company is also venturing into new markets and expanding eCommerce with the support of ArcherPoint's Channel Sales Manager (CSM) product, opening the door to additional revenue. One very exciting new channel is Shopify, which ArcherPoint enabled with a customization to Business Central. Pet supply stores select three products from a list on Shopify, which then sends a "box" order to Mars Fishcare. The order is matched with an assembly bill of material (BOM), which is picked, packed, and shipped.

And then that makes sense. So, you've got the huge BOM that has all of the options that they could pick from, but they only get three, they pick their three, and that's what is pulled from the BOM. In short, the order for the "box" has an assembly order behind it that defines what goes into the box.

## What's Next: Continuing the Transformation Journey

The next step is to move Mars Horsecare from a legacy AS/400 system to Business Central, merge Mars Horsecare with Mars Fishcare, and ensure all systems, including add-ons are Evented for Business Central so that the entire organization stays current, which will mean that upgrades become a non-event, regardless of the complexity of their business processes.

Every step the company takes provides new opportunities for revenue while keeping customers happy and their hard-earned reputation in place.

## Learn More: The ArcherPoint Difference

Our clients prefer software and technology to support their business processes, not the other way around. They're looking for a strategic partnership with the company that implements their software, not just a vendor. They demand the most talented, experienced professionals who understand how to quickly, efficiently solve their business issues. If this describes you, we invite you to contact us to learn more about our people, company, and solutions.



Learn More about [Mars Fishcare](#).

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