

THE SUPPORT QUESTION

Two Release Rhythms, One Support Team

Business Central updates every month and Dynamics 365 finance and operations apps follow their own schedule. Keeping up takes people, not just licenses.



Microsoft's ERP products update more often than many customers expect. Business Central has two major releases a year, in April and October, with minor updates in every other month, and Microsoft strongly recommends testing critical business scenarios before production is updated [1]. Dynamics 365 finance and operations apps receive One Version service updates, applied first to a test environment and then to production, and customers can pause for at most one consecutive update [2]. Both are gentler than the upgrade projects of the past. Neither is hands-free.

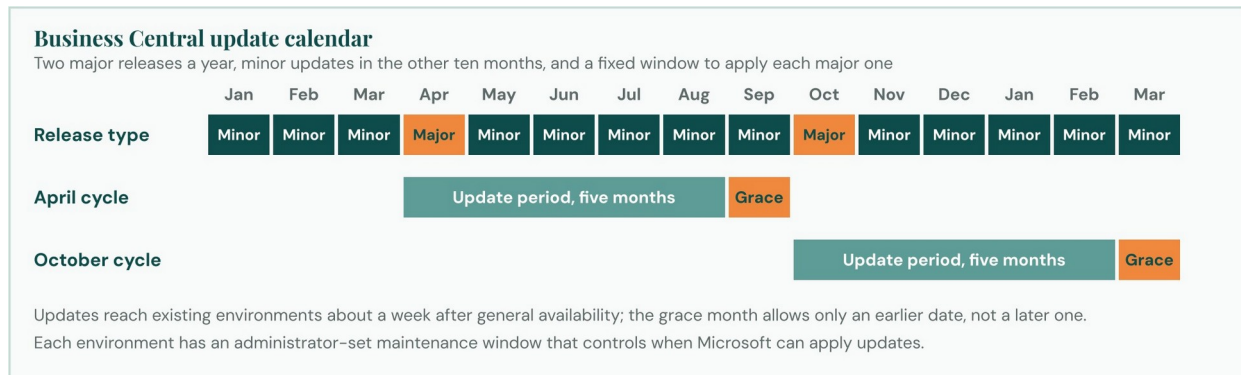


Figure 1. Business Central update calendar, as set out in Microsoft's update cycle documentation [1].

1. What “automatic” still leaves to you

Microsoft is direct about this. One Version does not mean customers have no responsibilities: they still need to plan for each update, assign ownership of the tasks, raise awareness of coming changes and support adoption, and Microsoft recommends regression testing in a nonproduction environment [3]. That is a standing job with a monthly or quarterly rhythm. It also sits alongside the ordinary work of tickets, reports, integrations and training. A project team built for go-live is not the group that picks it up.

2. The market for people who can do it

Finding them is harder than the job description suggests. A 2021 Gartner survey found 64 percent of information technology executives naming talent shortage as the most significant barrier to adopting emerging technologies [4]. When many Dynamics customers are looking for the same finance and supply chain skills at the same time, permanent hiring becomes slow and expensive.

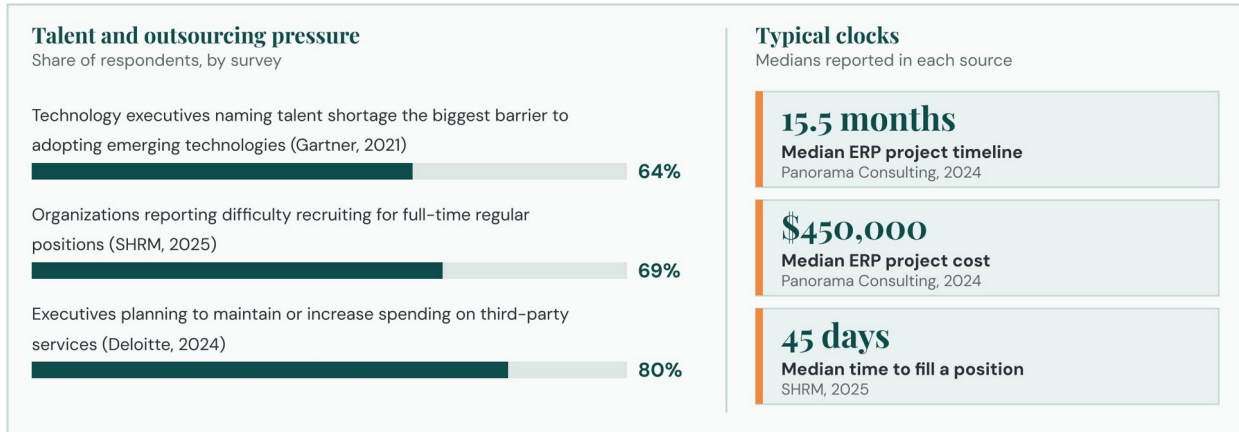


Figure 2. Left: Gartner [4], SHRM [6] and Deloitte [5], each measuring a different group. Right: median ERP project timeline and cost [7] and median time to fill a position [6]. Panorama surveyed 131 organizations.

3. Match the people to the rhythm

Updates arrive in windows, so the workload comes in waves. Deloitte's 2024 Global Outsourcing Survey, covering more than 500 executives, found skilled talent and agility now sitting beside cost reduction as reasons to outsource, with 80 percent planning to maintain or increase their investment in third-party services [5]. A sensible split keeps ownership of processes and administration in house and brings in specialists for the testing and the backlog. [Orpington Technologies' ERP staff augmentation](#) is one way to do that, with certified consultants joining the client's team for the stretch that needs them.

Table 1. Microsoft update terms at a glance

Item	What the vendor states	Source
Business Central major updates	Two a year, in April and October, with a preview about a month earlier.	[1]
Business Central minor updates	Every month except April and October, generally available at the start of the month.	[1]
Update period	Five calendar months from general availability, followed by a one-month grace period and then an enforced update.	[1]
Finance and operations apps	One Version service updates reach a test environment first and then production; customers can pause at most one consecutive update.	[2]

Table 2. Four questions for any Microsoft support partner

Question to ask	Why it matters
Who employs and vets the consultant?	Keeps payroll and compliance off your books and puts credential checks in expert hands.
Has the consultant supported Business Central, finance and operations apps, or both?	The two products update on different schedules and carry different customization patterns.
Who directs the day-to-day work?	The client should direct the work while the provider carries employment and credentialing.
What happens if the fit is wrong?	A replacement commitment turns a hiring mistake into a scheduling problem.

4. Where Orpington Technologies fits

Microsoft Dynamics 365 is among the platforms Orpington Technologies covers, with functional consultants, technical developers and program roles such as data migration, testing and change management. Its consultants are credentialed by certified ERP practitioners, the same reviewers who audit implementations, and they stay on Orpington's payroll while working remotely under the client's direction.

Three matched candidates arrive roughly four weeks after the engagement fee is confirmed, the monthly invoice is all-inclusive, and a 90-day replacement guarantee covers the fit risk. Orpington's own estimate puts the loaded cost of a direct hire at 1.25 to 1.4 times base salary once employer tax, benefits and compliance are counted. For a Microsoft estate that needs steady support, that is a strong choice, and the details are at <https://www.orpingtontech.com/erp-staff-augmentation/>.

Sources & Further Reading

[1] Microsoft Learn – “Update cycles” (Business Central)

[2] Microsoft Learn – “One Version service updates overview” (Finance & Operations)

[3] Microsoft Learn – “Stay current with Dynamics 365 service updates”

[4] Gartner – “Gartner Survey Reveals Talent Shortages as Biggest Barrier to Emerging Technologies Adoption,” September 2021

[5] Deloitte – “Global Outsourcing Survey 2024”

[6] SHRM – “2025 Recruiting Benchmarking”

[7] Panorama Consulting Group – “The 2024 ERP Report”