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grows in the

Middle East



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ARQUI NEWS





EDITORIAL

20 years building the future



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In 2024, Arquiconsult celebrates 20 years of a journey of growth and innovation at the forefront of business management software implementation consultancy. Founded in 2004, the company quickly became a reference in the implementation of Microsoft Dynamics solutions, helping companies to optimise their processes and achieve their goals. The year of 2023 was marked by exceptional results. We registered a consolidated growth of 13% corresponding to a consolidated revenue of 24,4 million euros, fundamentally driven by the increased demand for Microsoft Dynamics solutions in various sectors, the company's operations growth in new markets and the launch of new products and services.

Throughout our history, we have recorded an organic and sustainable growth, expanding our operations into new markets and consolidating our presence in Portugal. Today we have a team of more than 300 highly qualified and experienced employees spread across 10 offices (Lisbon,



Arquiconsult would like to thank all its clients, employees, and partners for their contribution to the company's success over the last 20 years. The company is committed to continuing to be a trusted partner in the success of companies and a ERP consultancy leader in the years to come."

Oporto, Vila Real, Madrid, Barcelona, Salamanca, Seville, Bilbao, Luanda, and Riyadh) located on three continents. The expansion into new markets represented an important milestone in the company's history. We face the challenged of adapting our solutions and services to the cultures and specific needs of each country. To this end, we have invested in creating teams made up of professionals with extensive knowledge of the local market.

Always aware of the latest trends in the ERP market, we continually invest on research and development. We are constantly looking for new ways to improving our solutions and services to offer our clients the best tools for success. We are a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner, which means we have a high level of expertise and technical knowledge of Microsoft Dynamics solutions. We continually invest on employee training and certification, ensuring that they are always up to date with the latest Microsoft innovations.

We are confident that we are well placed to continue to be a leader in ERP consultancy in the coming years.

ARQUICONSULT



INTERVIEW

From Portugal to the World – Arquiconsult celebrates 20 years

rquiconsult is celebrating 20 years of activity in the information systems implementation and consultancy market. We talked with Rui Santos e Sérgio Espírito Santo, two of the company founders, to understand how it was possible a Portuguese company expand their business and get to the four corners of the world.

Arquiconsult was more 20 years ago. What difficulties / adversities did you face in the beginning and in the growth of the company in the market?

Rui Santos (RS): All companies face difficulties in 20 years. We also had a few, namely a complicated period in the first

year. We couldn't do business with Microsoft for ten and half months, and that was probably the most complicated period. After that, we were working perfectly normally. The great difficulty that we had was being able to choose people. The main thing was to be able to hire people and, even at that time, it was difficult in Portugal to hire people who had the knowledge or the training necessary to have that knowledge. Apart from that, it wasn't too difficult.

What made Arquiconsult stand out as a Microsoft Partner in Portugal?

Sérgio Espírito Santo (SES): It was essentially the competence of our employees, our colleagues, our partners. In 2004, I would say that 70% of the people that worked in



the right partner to be in that geography. Having learnt that lesson, we started operating in Angola. Angola, and Africa as a whole, are markets of great value to European companies, unlike the local economy and the like. There is a lot of work to be done there and there is a lot of value to be delivered by us to the market, and this is recognised. We then started operating in Spain, acquiring two companies, each focussed on its own ecosystem of solutions. Two years ago, we recently started operation in Saudia Arabia and Dubai. And we are consolidating our position in these markets because they are also very valuable markets.



Arquiconsult has been able to differentiate itself both on national and international market because we decided to verticalize by activity sector. We realised at outset that the products we were working with would much more useful to our clients if we worked vertically."

Rui Santos

this market, who were certified by Microsoft to work in this market, worked at Arquiconsult. Our investment has always been in intellectual capital, in giving people the ability to bring value to our customers. We only go to market when we have mastered, from A to Z, the solutions that Microsoft makes available to us and that we deliver.

When did you realize that it was time to internationalize the company and why? What was the first geography you bet on?

SES: From the first hour we understood that the Portuguese market wasn't enough for us. In reality, Portugal was too small for our ambitious. 500 years ago, at the time of the Discoveries, there was already this feeling. So, we did exactly the same thing as our discoverers, we went in search of other value-added markets where we could position ourselves. The first geography we tried was Spain. It didn't go well at the time, somewhere near 2007/2006, and that was one of the most important lessons we had. We understood that we couldn't do anything alone. The initiative failed because of the choice of partner, he wasn't

How is Arquiconsult preparing its teams to keep up with the rapid evolution of Microsoft solutions?

SES: There's a constant effort in that area. We are talking about training, investigating processes and creating our own IP. Today we have a budget around 1.5 million euros in working hours, of people who are dedicated and are researching what Microsoft's new solutions are, adapting them to what we offer, creating new solutions based on what Microsoft provides. Artificial Intelligence (AI) is increasingly a reality today. There are a few challenges that we are working on together with Microsoft. It delivers solutions that partners can then distribute to customers, adding value, as probably very few companies in the world do. The issue of safety or the issue of low code, are all related or complementary areas to what our core area is, which is management systems. We are ensuring that we are as good or better in these are than we are in ERP.

RS: Our model has always been to create the knowledge first, hire the people first, invest in training first, and only then attack the market. The normal thing in this market is for companies to first try to sell and have the opportunities, and only then invest in executing them. We do exactly the opposite.







We created horizontal solutions with our own IP, and we always tried to have all the certifications, give training, before we go to the market with the different products. We have always managed to have better knowledge than our competitors. That's the strategy we've always followed and continue to follow."

Rui Santos

Voltando à IA, que referiu há pouco, como veem o futuro da tecnologia também associada aos ERP a nível nacional e internacional?

RS: Há quem acredite que muitos dos avanços que atualmente falam em IA ligada aos ERP (ou a outras áreas), serão disruptivos e podem vir a retirar muitos postos de trabalho. Nós acreditamos exatamente no contrário. Acreditamos que vai ser preciso muita gente especializada, devida

What is your assessment of the journey and work carried out by Arquiconsult over the years?

RS: From the start Arquiconsult has been able to differentiate itself on the national market, or even in the international market for deciding to verticalize by sector of activity. We in the beginning understood that the products with which we worked with were much more useful to our customers if they were worked vertically. We made partnerships immediately for retail, created an add-on, in this case, for human resources, within Navision, the current Dynamics BC.

We create horizontal solutions with its own IP, and we always tried to have all the certifications, give training, before we go to the market with the different products. That's the strategy we've always followed and continue follow.

Later on, we wanted to make the company as pleasant possible for our employees. We have tried by the most diverse means (there's no point in listing them all, but there are many), to create a working environment in which people see themselves and want to continue. In this business is perfectly possible to earn more money, by switching people, but when you have an experienced person, we can't lose her even if she costs more. If I have people who are happy, they'll be happy with the client and will create more business with the same clients. If I have happy customers, they'll introduce me to their friends, to the opportunities they know about and they'll lead us to other companies, which in turn will repeat the cycle. Well, we've managed to do that with some success. We've tried to pass on this way of being and working, and the way people feel within the company, to Spain, which will be our biggest market now. We have a very elaborate annual appraisal process in which everyone takes part, without exception.

SES: This work that Rui talks about has already been recognize last year with the Great Place to Work award and this year we're going to repeat the feat. We can therefore see that this work is also being recognised by employees and is one of the factors that has led us to have a very high retention rate, or rather a relatively low turnover of people and well below market metrics. From transparency to the trust that employees have in the management, these are all indicators that we are somehow proud of.





Right from the start, we realised that the Portuguese market wasn't enough for us. In fact, Portugal was too small for our ambitious."

Sérgio Espírito Santo

How do you see the future of Arquiconsult in terms of growth?

SES: We have several vectors of growth here, the main one being the talent we have within the company. There are two main areas, one has to do with the product, and the other with geography. In terms of products, the area of artificial intelligence, low code, which is now perfectly available in our labour base. The whole security aspect, which is becoming more and more of a concern. There is also a great deal of investment in what is our IP, which are our solutions that add business and value to what Microsoft delivers. It's also one of the growth vectors in terms of the Microsoft ecosystem. On the other hand, from the geography point of view, it's our goal, in short term, stabilize our operation in Middle East - North Africa, and therefore the region of Saudia Arabia, Jordan, Dubai. The Dubai office and the Jordan office are being opened with a view to strengthening that geographical region. Next, we intend to acquire a small-medium sized company in South Africa later this year, with a view to covering the entire African continent. So, we already have a starting point, which is Angola. As far as North Africa is concerned, it will be maintained by a subsidiary in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. And we're currently lacking, to cover Central Africa and South Africa, an office in South Africa to cover this whole region. It also has the great advantage, given that South Africa's native language is English, of also being able to provide services to the rest





Artificial Intelligence (AI) is an increasingly reality today. There are a number of challenges that we are tackling together with Microsoft. It must be said the Microsoft is clearly a reference partner in this whole area."

Sérgio Espírito Santo





We wanted to make the company as pleasant possible for our employees. We have tried by the most diverse means, to create a working environment in which people see themselves and want to continue. In this last 20 years we manage to retain the people who had knowledge."

Rui Santos

of Europe and act as a backup for the Portuguese operation. In the medium term, the American market is being analysed. This market requires a lot of investment, as each state has an economy ten times larger than Portugal's. California alone is the seventh largest economy in the world. California alone is the seventh largest economy in the world. We continue to make investments in this region in order to find a profile that fits our DNA. In the meantime, there's an opportunity for us to start operating in Brazil as well. Brazil itself is a huge economy with its own particularities. We've already found the right partner and we're currently challenging them to start up. There could be news in 2025.

Watch the full interview with Rui Santos and Sérgio Espírito Santo.

Click here

INTERNACIONALIZATION

Angola, Spain and Saudi Arabia: growth and stability

Arquiconsult began its internationalisation process first in Angola, then Spain and more recently in Saudi Arabia. We spoke to the representatives of the different subsidiaries.

Since we started our activity in April 2023, we have seen growing interest in our solutions and methodologies. We have built strong relationships with Microsoft in the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia because of good relationship and feedback form our clients, who have consistently praised our commercial value, innovative solutions and dedicated support. Currently, we are proud to announce that we have been awarded more than six major projects from world-class companies and we are developing a very interesting pipeline.

With substantial financial resources and a vision focused on the technological advancement, companies in the region are eager to integrate Al into their operations. There's growing interest in Copilot and Al for predictive analytics, customer service automation and operational efficiencies. We are actively expanding our Al offerings to meet this demand and help our customers harness the full potential of Al to drive innovation and growth. In the future, our goal is for the majority of our sales to be driven by customer nurturing and references, reflecting customer trust and satisfaction. In addition, we intend to substantially expand our presence in these two geographies, while at the same time entering and stablishing a presence in other markets in the region.



Solayman Refae

Managing Partner MENA



Maurício Domingues Managing Partner Angola

Arquiconsult's business in the Angolan market has undergone various fluctuations over the years as a result of economic situation at any given time, but there has always been a stable growth trend in the activity, which has always been the target of high demand from economic agents operating in Angola, but also from the flow of new businesses setting up in the country every day. In recent years there has been a notable growth in Cloud and SaaS services, in line with global markets. There is currently a demand for the application of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in business processes, which reflects a noteworthy maturity of the Angolan market, and which is expected to consolidate in the coming years.

The Arquiconsult brand has been strengthening its image based on the quality of its services and the scope and added value of the solutions we offer to our clients. Today, Arquiconsult is the most trusted partner in Angola for business management solutions based on Microsoft technologies.



Marco Olderman
Spanish Co-Manager Partner BC

Arquiconsult invested in the Barcelona market in 2017. Initially, we took advantage of the products lines and experience of our colleagues in Portugal, such as Waste Management market and the various contacts with the international network of partners. At the same time, we invested in the training of new people and developing our own PI in order to seek competitive advantages. Our specialisation in key sectors of the industry has been fundamental to our past growth and our future in Spain. We recently opened a new office in Bilbao, a region of the Basque Country that is know for its strong industry and technological innovation. Our aim is for 25 per cent of our turnover in Spain to come from this office. Our main challenges are to incorporate all the new technologies on the market, such as AI (Artificial Intelligence), into our portfolio to help our clients digitalise their businesses. The second challenge is to find, train and incorporate sufficient resources into our team.

Thinking in the long term, in five years' time we hope to have around 100 consultants in Spain, in our three main offices (Barcelona, Bilbao and Madrid) and to be in the top 5 of the main Microsoft Dynamics 365 partners in Spain, helping our clients to succeed in their businesses.

At the time, the merger with Arquiconsult was an extremely important decision for what and who we were at QAPoint, and it was surprisingly easy due to compatibility between companies. In the day-to-day basis, we realised that in order to remain an attractive player, we need to grow both in terms of responsiveness and product portfolio. After three years we can say that we've had to adapt to new ways of working driven by the evolution of the market, and we can guarantee that this adaptation wouldn't have been possible with our initial model. In Spain, as in most European countries there is a great emphasis on AI solutions. In our market, a lot of our current and potential clients intend to incorporate this technology in the medium term, but its fast becoming the short term. That's why any service provider who wants to be at the forefront must actively invest in these solutions, at the risk of being left out of the market if they don't.

Arquiconsult has offices in five Spanish cities, Madrid, Barcelona, Bilbao, Salamanca and Seville. The Dynamics F&O team is spread across the country and is made up of 28 people, 25 of whom are consultants, and the aim is to grow.

At Arquiconsult Madrid, we have always been clear that our main asset is our team and our know-how. So, in the last three years we have managed to: double the team; create a strong sales team; increase average salaries by more than 50 per cent; increase revenues by 220 per cent; improve the efficiency of our work, although there is still room for improvement in this area.



Marco Nufrio
Spanish Co-Manager Partner F&O







COMPANIES

KLOG optimizes RH department

n the last few years, KLOG has recorded an accentuated growth of the business and consequently its team.

Though to that development, the company felt the need to implement management solutions of human resources (HR) more robust and capable of keeping up with that evolution.

In the first stage, the company decided to move forward with the implementation of Dynamics 365 NAVHR, with the goal of increasing the productivity of the RH department. This measure made it possible to streamline a series of procedures, such as payroll processing, attendance management, renumeration and expenses. When it comes to filling in the annual single report, a time-consuming and complex process that usually requires several weeks of dedication, NAVHR makes it possible to do it in just one week.

"Having this process streamlined is something that, in fact, represents a bigger increase of productivity for any RH department. In the case of KLOG it makes all the difference", mentioned Leonor Machado, People and Communications Manager of KLOG.

The company then upgraded the solution by integrating Employee Portal. This decision was specifically because of the large amount of data transferred within the company





Having this process streamlined is something that, in fact, represents a bigger increase of productivity for any RH department. In the case of KLOG it makes all the difference"

and the need to guarantee process efficiency. This upgrade allowed for better employee data management, as each employee was given autonomy to manage their own personal data, access their documents and request changes without the need of direct intervention by the RH department.

At the end of 2023, at a more advanced stage, the company focused on training users so that they could get the most out of the implemented solution. Currently, in partnership with Arquiconsult, they are preparing to develop methods that enhance each user's experience, in order to ensure that KLOG's key users are fully trained to use the new solutions.

From the initial needs assessment to the go live, the company highlighted Arquiconsult's concern to understand its needs and provide personalised support throughout the process. "I would say that something that stands out in this process is the first phase, because there was a concern to truly understand what our needs were, as a department, as a business and try to adjust the existing solutions, and that is undoubtedly differentiating," stated.

As a result of the long-standing partnership, Arquiconsult was able to add value and, in the end, present a solution that was much more in line with KLOG's needs. "We found very dedicated consultants. Whenever we contacted them with a problem or difficulty, their support was very personalised and they were tireless," emphasised.







SOLUTION

Employee Portal for time management and control

ne of the most important tasks for organisations is to control the working hours of their teams, whether for salary processing or attendance control. Given that the labour market is evolving and remote or hybrid working is becoming a reality, controlling the hours worked brings new challenges. With a view to improving our HR solutions to meet today's challenges, Employee Portal offers the Time & Attendance module, where you can control employees' movements in and out of work, associating them with their working hours in order to account for working hours and absences.

The module allows users, in the Attendance area, to manage the daily records of the Time and Attendance System. Work periods are defined and used to construct employee timetables.

2 • dance System into the Employee Portal, this is also possible. The solution provides an API that allows the Time & Attendance System to communicate information about check-in and check-out movements, absences, supplementary work or variable movements that are relevant to the employee's processing. As an alternative to receiving the employee's check-in and check-out entries via API, there is also the possibility of entering them directly into the portal.

Employees can control their working periods via the Employee Portal. The employee's work schedule is built based on the timetable to which they are contractually bound and according to the period defined. Generating the work schedule helps the employee to understand the daily working time they must fulfil, the time they have available for holidays and to manage their absences.

4 • hours worked and/or absences for each day, because the system, after obtaining the clock-in and clock-out records, associates these movements with the employee's

working hours. Based on the defined timetable and the picks made by the employee on a given day, the system will generate movements, either of working hours or anomalies (absences, if any).

When an absence is generated and processed, each employee must justify it using the attendance codes defined. There is also the possibility of entering licences and authorisations in the Portal for a certain period so that the system automatically associates the absence records of users with licences created with their justification based on the licence.

There are several advantages to the Employee Portal for managing and controlling hours worked and the attendance of your teams:

- Efficient timetable management;
- Recording of picks and management of hours worked based on the schedules defined;
- Browser access to existing information;
- Absence management and attendance monitoring;
- Making the work of the HR Department more flexible.











CLIENT

Konica Minolta takes a "giant leap forward" in technology

onica Minolta, a global leader in IT solutions and services, multifunction printers and professional printing, decided to implement a new solution in the Human Resources (HR) area that would keep up with market developments, legal updates and enable an agile data extraction and analysis process. The need for a more modern system became clear, as the previous one no longer met the company's requirements. Given the existing relationship of trust resulting from a long-standing partnership, Arquiconsult was the partner selected by the multinational for the implementation of NAVRH and support in this transition process.

"We recognised the value of Arquiconsult's teams and their human resources knowledge. So, it turned out to be a natural choice," said Patrícia Pereira, HR director at Konica Minolta.

One of the main benefits of NAVHR, being a cloud solution, is that it allows access to information at any time. The platform is intuitive and offers data organisation that improves the efficiency of the HR department. All data imports are very agile, so the change results in significant time savings, especially in salary processing.

"What we feel is that compared to what we had before, it's been a giant leap forward, because we've saved a lot of





time on the actual salary processing part," explained Patrícia Pereira.

Adaptation to the new solution was quick and within a few months the HR team was already comfortable with the platform. Arquiconsult offered continuous support throughout the process to ensure the efficiency of the new system.

"We worked closely with our partner to ensure that the whole process would be a success," said the HR director. With the system already live, Konica Minolta plans future improvements to automate internal processes and further improve the department's efficiency. The company will continue to rely on Arquiconsult to ensure that the new solution meets its constantly evolving needs.



We recognised the value of Arquiconsult's teams and human resources knowledge. So, it turned out to be a natural choice."

CLIENT

ABaC Group makes technological transition in record time.

TThe ABaC Group, one of the biggest hoteliers' groups in Barcelona, Spain, is a reference of excellency in the sector, with four hotels and four restaurants under its management. The entire gastronomic department is led by the renowned chef Jordi Cruz, holder of 6 Michelin stars, the first of which he won when he was just 24 years old, marking the start of a remarkable career. Founded in 2000, the ABaC Group has grown significantly over the 23 years of its existence. In 2022, the group made the strategic decision to go ahead with the implementation of Dynamics 365 Business Central, which represented a crucial milestone in the modernization and optimization of its operational and management processes. This cloud-based solution, known as SaaS (Software as a Services), has numerous advantages for the Group's business.

Awarded the contract in December 2022, the solution was quickly implemented and became fully operational in May 2023, and was considered an operation carried out in record time. This achievement was due not only to the perceived urgency of replacing the obsolete ERP, but also to the ability of the Arquiconsult team to conduct a smooth and effective transition.

Arquiconsult was the company responsible for mana-





ging the entire process and, with the expertise of its specialists, was able to play a key role in configuring and customising the solution according to the client's specific needs.

Dynamics 365 Business Central is an ERP that provides a comprehensive, real-time view of all the company's activities, enabling more agile and informed decision-making. The solution also has the advantage of easily interfacing with other internal solutions, facilitating the transition, and promoting more robust operational efficiency by consolidating data and processes.

Furthermore, Dynamics 365 Business Central is not just a response to ABaC Group's current needs. It is a scalable solution that will evolve in parallel with the growth of the business. The roadmap presented by the platform allows the Group to have continuous access to innovations and updates.

The transition to this new solution was due to the need to replace an ERP that was already somewhat obsolete and could not keep up with the dynamic pace of operations. The current solution not only





A Arquiconsult desempenhou um papel fundamental na configuração e personalização do ERP de acordo com as necessidades específicas do ABaC Group. A parceria entre o Grupo hoteleiro e a Arquiconsult demonstra o compromisso mútuo com a excelência e a entrega de soluções de alta qualidade.

solved this shortcoming, but also brought modernisation in line with the best practices in the sector.

Arquiconsult played a key role in configuring and customising the solution according to ABaC Group's specific needs. The partnership between the hotel group and Arquiconsult demonstrates the mutual commitment to excellence and the delivery of high-quality solutions.

A decisão de implementar o Dynamics 365 Business Central foi impulsionada por diversos fatores. Entre eles, a necessidade de melhorar a integração entre departamentos, facilitar a gestão financeira e operacional e proporcionar uma plataforma que suportasse o crescimento contínuo do grupo. Com a antiga solução de ERP, o ABaC Group enfrentava limitações na visibilidade de dados em tempo real, o que dificultava a rápida adaptação às mudanças do mercado e a tomada de decisões informadas.

O processo de implementação foi rigoroso e detalhado. A Arquiconsult começou com uma análise profunda das necessidades e desafios específicos do ABaC Group. Posteriormente foi desenvolvido um plano de implementação que incluía a migração de dados, personalização do sistema e formação dos colaboradores. Esta abordagem garantiu que todas as operações continuassem a funcionar sem interrupções significativas durante a transição.

A Arquiconsult forneceu sessões de formação abrangentes aos colaboradores para garantir que todos estivessem confortáveis e proficientes com a nova plataforma. Este investimento em formação ajudou a minimizar a resistência à mudança e garantiu uma adoção mais rápida e eficaz do sistema.

Com a nova solução em funcionamento, o ABaC Group tem agora uma plataforma centralizada que proporciona uma visão unificada de todas as operações. A capacidade de aceder a dados em tempo real permite ao grupo tomar decisões mais informadas e estratégicas, melhorando a eficiência operacional e a satisfação dos clientes.

Além disso, o Dynamics 365 Business Central oferece uma série de funcionalidades avançadas, como relatórios personalizados e análise de dados, que ajudam o ABaC Group a monitorizar e avaliar o desempenho em diversas áreas. A solução também suporta a integração com outras ferramentas e aplicações, proporcionando uma flexibilidade adicional para adaptar-se a futuras necessidades do negócio.

Em resumo, a implementação do Dynamics 365
Business Central pelo ABaC Group, com o apoio da
Arquiconsult, representa um marco significativo na
modernização das suas operações. Esta transição
não só resolveu os desafios apresentados, mas também posicionou o grupo para um crescimento futuro
sustentado e alinhado com as melhores práticas da
indústria hoteleira. A parceria continua a demonstrar o
compromisso com a excelência e a inovação, elementos chave para o sucesso contínuo do ABaC Group.





HUMAN RESOURCES

Artificial Intelligence in Management of People: Transforming the working environment

eople management has always been one of the fundamental pillars of any organisation. The ability to recruit, develop and retain talent is crucial to the long-term success of any company. With the technological advances of recent years, Artificial Intelligence (AI) is emerging as a powerful tool to boost the efficiency and effectiveness of people management processes.

Recrutamento e seleção

In the context of recruitment and selection, Al offers several advantages. Al algorithms can analyse large volumes of CVs quickly and efficiently, identifying candidates with the skills and experience required for certain roles. Al-based recruitment platforms can also help identify patterns in candidate profiles, contributing to more informed decision-making.

Contratação

Following hiring process, AI can play an important role in the onboarding process of new employees. Al-powered chatbots can provide essential information about company policies, internal procedures and answer frequently asked questions from new employees. This allows for a smoother and faster transition to the new working environment.

Avaliação e desempenho

Evaluating employee performance is an essential component of human resources management. Al can help automate and enhance this process, providing valuable insights into individual and collective employee performance. Al algorithms can analyse data such as productivity, quality of work and interactions with colleagues to identify patterns and trends, helping managers make more informed decisions about promotions, training and bonuses.

In addition to performance evaluation, AI can be an ally in the professional development of employees. Machine learning systems can identify gaps in employees' skills and recom-

mend personalised training and development courses to help them grow and evolve in their careers.

The importance of AI in HR management software lies in the ability to optimise processes, make data-driven decisions, and improve the employee experience, thus contributing to the overall success of the organisation. As technology continues to evolve, AI is expected to play an even more significant role in the digital transformation of HR departments and in boosting organisational performance.

Find More **7**





Conclusion

In short, AI is revolutionising the way organisations manage their teams. By automating processes, offering valuable insights, and improving the employee experience, AI is enabling companies in Portugal and around the world to reach new heights of efficiency and excellence in managing their people. However, it is important to note that the successful implementation of AI in people management requires a careful and ethical approach, with due respect for the privacy and rights of employees. By doing so, companies can reap the benefits of AI while promoting a fair, inclusive, and sustainable working environment.



SOLUTION

The evolution of Retail

he evolution of Artificial Intelligence (AI) is redefining the business world, and the retail sector is one of the most effected by the expansion of this technology. IA provides unprecedented opportunities and tools to help retailers improve the customer experience and optimize commercial operations.

Arquiconsult offers management solutions designed specially for retail, developed to help retailers optimize their operations and capture and retain clients, regardless of their area of activity or type of business. Considering the technological evolution in retail is crucial being alert to the trends that are going to mould the sector in 2024, in order to provide a better answer to the market challenges.

Omnichannel Commerce:

Today's customers expect a consistent shopping experience in all touchpoints, and IA enables the integration of data and new operations to provide the same content, products and personalized services across the different channels and touchpoints, whether online or in-store.

Hyper-personalization of Contact:

Customers expect to be treated in way that is tailored to their preferences and consumption trends. All provides tools such as chatbots and predictive analysis that help retailers collect and analyse all customer data. Contacts are therefore truly targeted and in line with the customer's choices.

Intelligent Stock Management Systems:

Nowadays, fast delivery of orders is an essential criterion when buying online. Therefore, IA presents tools such as demand forecasting algorithms and intelligent stock management systems that support stock and delivery management, accurately predicting demand and supply through predictive analysis.

Advanced support and follow-up resources:

Providing effective customer service and having loyalty programmes is key. Support tools, combined with IA, offer a personalized and efficient service experience that makes it possible to create loyalty systems and other rewards that encourage customer loyalty.

Prepare for the retail future with a specialized team with extensive experience in the sector. Whatever your business, we have the solution and the resources that you need to expand your activity and keep up with market trends.

LS Retail Solution

As AI-driven trends shape the future of retail, LS Retail stands out as a solution that makes a difference for retailers looking to capitalise on these opportunities.

- 1 Control all your business processes,purchasing, stocks, front office, distribution,franchising, and accounting, on a single platform.
- 2 Get a comprehensive view of your company and a 360-degree view of your customers, keeping all your essential business information in a single database.
- 3 Centralised management of products, prices, campaigns, and promotions for all your physical or/and e-commerce points of sale.
- 4 Take control of all vertical retail and catering services throughout your company in a single solution with specific and detailed functionalities for each sector.









SOLUÇÃO

Microsoft Copilot for Sales

he exponential evolution of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has become increasingly ubiquitous. It has influenced the way we communicate, how we conduct business transactions and how we process information. This context has led to a spontaneous change in customer expectations, resulting in the need to adapt and evolve sales strategies.

Today, customers value digital interactions in sales over personal interactions. They are better informed, interact through various channels and value authentic experiences.

It is the responsibility of companies to help salespeople thrive in the current market conditions by providing them with Al-enriched sales solutions and tools, such as Microsoft Dynamics 365 Sales with Microsoft Copilot for Sales.

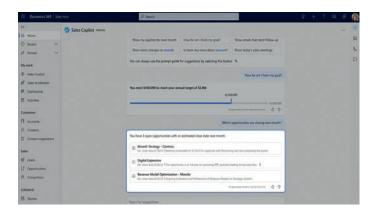
How does Microsoft Copilot improve sales performance?

1. Increases the productivity of the sales team

One of the main advantages of Copilot for Sales is that can help salespeople save time and focus on their core sales activities by automating and simplifying some everyday tasks. For example, the solution can help salespeople quickly write and process emails with the right context, generating content based on CRM and Microsoft 365 data and suggesting personalized adjustments, it can automatically record and transcribe meetings, and generate meeting summaries with key highlights, questions asked and next steps.

It also allows salespeople to book meetings more quickly, with pre-populated meeting times, and to view Al-generated email summaries that capture action items and follow-ups and save them in the CRM with a single click.









"One of the main advantages of Copilot for Sales is that can help vendors to save time and focus on their main activities of sales, automating and simplifying some daily tasks."

2. Personalize customer interactions

Another benefit of Copilot Sales lies in its ability to help salespeople improve interactions with customers. By providing Al-driven insights, content suggestions and recommendations, this tool allows salespeople to prepare more efficiently for customers engagement. For example, by offering a 360° view of an account or opportunity directly within Dynamics 365 Sales, Microsoft Outlook or Teams, Copilot for Sales empowers salespeople with up-to-date and relevant information, such as client details, history of previous meetings and emails, pertinent new and an action item.

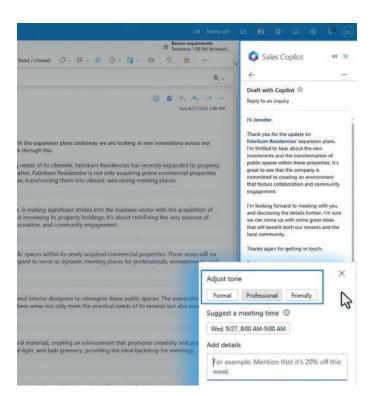


Uma das principais vantagens do

Copilot for Sales é que pode auxiliar os vendedores a poupar tempo e a focarem-se nas suas atividades principais de vendas, automatizando e simplificando algumas das tarefas quotidianas.

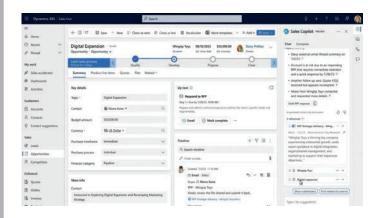
3. Stay in the workflow

A third key advantage of Copilot for Sales is its ability to help salespeople stay in the flow of work, minimizing switching between applications and data loss. It allows seamless interaction and data updates without interruptions between Microsoft 365 applications and CRM applications, Microsoft Dynamics 365 Customer Engagement. For example, when salespeople receive a new lead or client information via an email or conversation in Teams, they don't need to switch to the Microsoft Dynamics 365 Sales application. The salespeople can create or edit a customer record directly from Outlook or Teams, and it's automatically synchronized with the CRM.



CONCLUSION

Microsoft Copilot is a powerful took that can boost the productivity and performance of the sales teams throughout the sale cycle, taking advantage of artificial intelligence to offer assistance. This resource allows salespeople to boost their productivity, simplifying routine tasks that take up valuable sales force time. Besides that, provides a personalization of customer interactions by offering Al-powered insights and content suggestions. Finally, it helps salespeople keep up with the pace of work by reducing switching between applications and minimizing data loss.



INTERNACIONALIZATION

Arquiconsult in the world



Africa do Sul Albania Alemanha Andorra Angola Argentina Áustria Azerbeijão Bahrain Bélgica Benelux (Bélgica) Bosnia and Herzogovina Brasil Bulgária Cabo Verde Canadá Chile China
Chipre
Colômbia
Croácia
Dinamarca
Dominica
Dubai
Egipto
Emirados Árabes Unidos

Eslováquia Eslovénia Espanha Estónia EUA Finlândia França Gabão Gana

Grã-Bretanha Holanda Hungria Índia Irlanda Islândia Israel Itália Japão Jordania
Casaquistão
Libano
Lituânia
Luxembourgo
Macedónia do Norte
Malta
Marrocos
México

Montenegro Nigéria Noruega Omã Perú Polónia Qatar Rep. Dominicana Roménia Sérvia Singapura Suécia Suíça Ucrania Usbequistão





EVENTS

In 2024 we are focusing on strategic events in different sectors



































European Power Platform Conference 18-20 JUN 2024 Madrid, Espanha



20 JUN 2024 Lisboa, Portugal



21-28 JUL 2024 Luanda, Angola





















Find More **7**



COMPANIES

Microsoft 365 Intelligent Order Management for seamless commercial operations

n today's fast-paced economic landscape, the ability to efficiently manage requests is key to ensuring customer satisfaction and maintaining a competitive edge.

Dynamics 365 Intelligent Order Management (IOM) is a cloud-based platform that integrates seamless with other Microsoft Dynamics 365 applications, offering a unified approach to order processing. Leveraging Al and Machine Learning resources, this solution empowers companies to orchestrate complex order flows, anticipate customer need and adapt to the changing market dynamics in real time.

Dynamics 365 IOM can aggregate order from various channels, including online stores, mobile applications or traditional physical stores. By consolidating order in one place, companies gain greater visibility to their sales pipeline, allowing them to allocate resources more effectively and optimize stock levels.

The platform applies predictive analysis, enabling companies to anticipate fluctuations in demand and adjust their stock accordingly. This proactive approach not only minimizes stock-outs and overstocking, but also increases client satisfaction by enabling order to be fulfilled quickly.

Dynamics 365 IOM offers traceability features, that allow companies to optimize the delivery process based on



Dynamics 365 IOM offers a comprehensive solution for companies that want to optimize their order processes and stand out from the competition."



Dynamics 365 Intelligent Order Management (IOM) is a cloud-based platform that integrates seamlessly with other Microsoft Dynamics 365 applications, offering a unified approach to order processing."

various criteria, such as cost, proximity and service lever agreements. By automatically selecting the most efficient shipping method and carrier for each order, companies can reduce shipping costs, shorten delivery times and improve the overall customer experience.

The solution offers advance order coordination capabilities, allowing companies to set up complex workflows and business orders to automate order management. Whether it's splitting orders across several distribution centres, allocating stock based on predefined criteria or managing returns, Dynamics 365 IOM simplifies the entire order lifecycle, from entry to delivery.

In conclusion, Dynamics 365 IOM offers a comprehensive solution for companies that want to optimize their ordering process and stand out from the competition. By harnessing the power of IA and automation, companies can streamline operations, improve customer satisfaction, and drive sustainable growth. Dynamics 365 IOM is suitable for all companies that are looking to improve their operations for the future and thrive in the digital era.







Sérgio Espírito Santo CEO, Arquiconsult

HUMAN RESOURCES

Arquiconsult considered one of the best places to work

or the second year running, Arquiconsult has been named a Great Place to Work (GPTW). In the ranking of companies with between 201 and 500 employees, the companies came 6th, with 88% of employees saying it is "an excellent place to work". A percentage considered to be very satisfactory by the company, since this year it also had the participation of Spanish employees.

"When I compare how we started 20 years ago, with just 15 people, and what we have grown and are today, with almost 300 employees, I feel a deep sense of pride. Without dedicated people who believed in the Arquiconsult project, we wouldn't have come this far. That's why building a healthy and pleasant workplace and providing the best working conditions are goals that are always present in our management

Knowing that 94% of our employees rate the leadership of this company as ethical and honest means that we are in the right track. And 96% consider that they are welcome when they join the company, meaning that the integration work is paying off. For a technology consultancy, despite the





"Knowing that 94% of our employees rate the leadership of this company as ethical and honest means that we are in the right track."



Today we are a Great Place to Work, and we want to continue to be it tomorrow.", said Sérgio Espírito Santo, CEO of Arquiconsult. ■



SOLUTION

"One year into operation, we're winning projects of some size."



The solution Microsoft Dynamics 365 F&SCM (also known as Microsoft Dynamics 365 FO) was the big bet for the Middle East market right from the start. What makes this ERP an attractive solution for companies based in the MENA region?

Hugo Azevedo (HA): Microsoft Dynamics 365 FO is mainly aimed at a segment of companies called Corporate, i.e. companies of a certain size and with specific needs that require a more comprehensive solution in terms of functional coverage and with a need for integration between companies that is a little more robust, while Business Central is more focused on SMB (Small to Medium Business) companies, i.e. those of a smaller size. In the MENA region, due to their size, companies tend to be family-owned, but they are much larger and have very diversified lines of business, so they are not companies

in the traditional sense, but conglomerates of companies.

Currently, the region is going through a digital transformation and, combining this with the investment that is being made locally, by the Saudi state's investment funds, there is a real opening up to the outside world (outside the Middle East) and with this there is an opportunity (I would even say a need) to adopt new technologies, and to invest in innovation regarding information technology, with particular emphasis on the area of AI (Artificial Intelligence) integrated with the companies' operational and reporting processes.

The fact that Arquiconsult is based in Europe, but with local delivery capacity, is boosting our entry into this market.

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Microsoft Dynamics 365 FO has undergone transformations throughout its evolution and the future looks set to be in communion with the rise of Artificial Intelligence (AI). How do you foresee the incorporation of AI technology into the solutions offered by Arquiconsult?

HA: The issue of Artificial Intelligence, as far as Microsoft Dynamics platforms are concerned, is twofold. One is what Microsoft delivers directly and, at this point, there is clearly a huge investment that will bring added value to customers. Microsoft's aim is to provide a set of basic AI services that are already integrated with the Dynamics platforms and that can quickly be used in the context of business solutions and processes.

In addition, they also plan to deliver ready-to-use solutions for processes or functional areas, which by their nature cover the majority of companies. An example of this is Workspace Financial Insight, which gives an overview of the company's financial health. It allows you to see what will be expected in terms of receipts and payments, not in a linear way, but

with the possibility of understanding customer behaviour in terms of their payment patterns.

patterns.



system automatically processes the information, analyses the impact on the operation – from the manufacturing process to the sale – and gives a recommendation to the operator. The development process in artificial intelligence is similar to the development process of a child. If the parents aren't there to teach the child, it won't develop properly. Right now, the AI needs an indication to tell it what's right and what's wrong, so that it can then be trained to be more effective. Our job is to optimize the way we put together a solution, at the lowest possible cost to the client. The context in which Arquiconsult uses AI is very much oriented towards solving problems.



IOM, Intelligent Order Management, is in essence an orchestrator of processes and integrations. We are currently implementing an IOM project in one of the largest companies in the region, called Majid Al Futtaim, which owns the Mall of The Emirates."

Still on the subject of technological innovation, tell us about IOM (Intelligent Order Management), a recent Microsoft solution that Arquiconsult already offers its clients.

HA: IOM, Intelligent Order Management, is essentially an orchestrator of processes and integrations. We are currently implementing an IOM project at one of the largest companies in the region, called Majid AI Futtaim, which owns the Mall of The Emirates. They have several business units. One of the units captures information from stores and then must orchestrate the logistics of how the products arrive at the store or are delivered to the customer. That's the IOM. The IOM is an engine that works like a control tower. What IOM does is make it possible, in a simple way, to create messages, send those messages and at the same time be a platform for communicating with customers. The IOM receives and orchestrates the flow of information and, if necessary, converts these instructions into orders. That's the IOM. Or rather, it's one of the IOM's applications.

What efforts are being made to ensure that Arquiconsult consultants maintain their current knowledge in line with the rapid evolution of Microsoft solutions?

HA: We have two internal approaches. We have an internal research and development aspect, in other words, we have people who are dedicated to analysing everything that's going on, digesting a huge amount of information, because the pace at which Microsoft produces information is overwhelming. And so, the first thing is to distinguish, within this enormous information feed, what is relevant and what is not relevant to our teams and clients, what has an impact and what does not. What has an impact on our operation: platform changes, tool changes, technology changes, and so on, and what has an impact on our clients.

Then there are leads within the structure, that is, people who are leading certain areas of knowledge who also have this responsibility, and they do one of two things: internal workshops to train people. We have 300 people, so the context of use is very important for making the click, for the information to be absorbed more easily.

The leads are people who have knowledge of business processes and often specific industries. Then we have a research area that is more focused on technology, platforms, and changes. These two entities digest information and either propose new services and do internal training or promote practical workshops.



Do you consider the Middle East to be a market receptive to innovation?

HA: Yes, without a doubt. They are receptive and have a very accurate idea of the value. They're willing to reward the value we're able to deliver, but you must demonstrate it. There has to be continuous proof for there to be continuous trust. Once again, they are very open to innovation, but they need someone to clearly demonstrate the value associated with that innovation. As we already have this basic DNA, that of effectively demonstrating the value associated with

the solutions we implement, it has been interesting for them. Companies in this region are not used to investing in a relationship and in effectively demonstrating capacity and delivering value, they are not used to seeing a company invest without asking for anything directly upfront. It's sometimes a difficult balance because of these relationships of trust.

How do you foresee Arquiconsult growing in this geographical region? And what are the biggest challenges you expect to encounter?

HA: The prospects for growth are very good. We are generating enormous interest in the region, far beyond what we expected. With just one year of operation, we're winning projects of some size. Every week there are new projects, new things happening. However, there is an abysmal difference in the way things are done. Human relationships are totally different. The notion of society and social position are totally different.

The level of maturity of the market is very different from Europe or the United States, or the markets where we usually operate. This makes things a little more difficult because there is a process of adaptation. Even in the negotiation process, the basis of personal trust has to be much higher than in Europe. That's why it's very important to have a local partner who is culturally sensitive. Our partner in the region was educated in Canada, but has a Middle Eastern background, speaks Arabic, and has a native grasp of local social relations. We have to realize that the region has its own dynamics. And if we don't adapt to those dynamics, then there's no point in us being in the region.

What characteristics does Arquiconsult possess that make it the right technology partner for companies in the MENA market?

HA: I think that agility, dynamism, straightforwardness, defensibility, in other words, what we say happens, makes the difference. The fact that we are present and available has supported our growth, at least in the area of business development. We've been able to attract new clients and start new projects. The fact that we have a European background, know-how, a track record, the fact that we are a company with a global presence, also helps our work to be valued. Portugal is recognized in the Middle East for its technical capacity and its quality because there are already several companies entering this market, coming from the most diverse areas, and in addition to the historical context we have in the region, whether we like it or not, we have already had a historical context in the region, so there is this recognition.

EMPLOYEE TESTIMONIALS

What has it been like to watch Arquiconsult grow? How do you remember these 20 years?



Fernando Marques

In the beginning, there were 15 of us. Twenty years later, there are twenty times as many. First, we were all in Lisbon. Two decades later, we're in 10 offices, 4 countries, 3 continents. We also have projects in all four corners of the world. In short, what we have achieved since 2004 is worthy of note and ample proof of our value and the value of our resources, without which we would not be where we are, always ready to overcome the obstacles that the most challenging implementations throw at us on a daily basis. "Your success, our solutions?" Yes, the success of those who choose us as their partners depends

Sandra Delgado

20 years of Arquiconsult! 20 years at Arquiconsult! I'm proud to be an employee and a shareholder! I can't help but feel proud of Arquiconsult and everything the company and all of us employees have achieved. I'm not just talking about the results, but also the road we've travelled to achieve them. There have been many challenges and pitfalls, mistakes, and successes, but the path and results would certainly have been very different without the group of people Arquiconsult has been made up of.





Pedro Dupic

Things were quite complicated at first, the company wasn't well known, it was just starting out and it took more than two years for Microsoft to recognize Arquiconsult as a "partner" company. Arquiconsult was not only committed to ERP NAV, but also to its verticalizations such as NavHR (human resources), LSRetail (retail - stores), Navitrans (land transport), NavShip (maritime transport), etc. With verticalization, new clients were won and areas or units were formed within the company. I remember that although the financial and real estate crisis in the USA began in 2008 and lasted until 2010, in Portugal the economy was working well and Arquiconsult was thriving with international projects such as Amorim (Portugal, Italy, France and the USA). In 2017, Link's NAV unit was incorporated into Arquiconsult, one of its biggest competitors. With this merger, the company grew considerably. It even incorporated a unit in Barcelona, which allowed it to re-enter the Spanish market. On the other hand, the company opened an office in Angola, looking to expand its business in this market. Important projects were won in Luanda. In 2019, the Vila Real office was opened in partnership with the university (UTAD) with the aim of creating a "Nearshore" in the countryside, providing technical support. More recently, the company has expanded into Saudi Arabia and continues to grow, looking for new markets and acquiring multinational status. It's true that looking back and seeing what Arquiconsult has become today, you can imagine what it will be tomorrow!



Cláudio Carvalho

As part of the Arquiconsult team for 18 years, I've had the opportunity to witness the company's growth and evolution. Each project has brought unique challenges, but also opportunities for learning and personal growth. The spirit of camaraderie between colleagues and the support of the decision-makers have been fundamental in meeting these challenges. Seeing how far we've come in 20 years is a huge pride. Arquiconsult is a benchmark in the sector and has been recognized as a 'Best Place to Work' for two consecutive years. A testament to the commitment of all of us. My biggest challenge is leading a team of excellent professionals daily. Every day, I strive to meet expectations and ensure that the team and Arquiconsult continue to achieve exceptional results. Congratulations to Arquiconsult on 20 years and may we continue to build a bright future together!

Luís Osório

Looking at Arquiconsult today, with its current offices, employees, and resources, it's hard to imagine a dozen "kids" in their thirties, all with baby children, trying to create a name, draw up projects and lay the foundations for the company we know today. They were funny times, tiring, but funny. We lived almost communally, and the only way to reconcile work and family was to bring the two together. As an "old sentimentalist", today I look at Arquiconsult and feel a mixture of charm and nostalgia. I remember episodes, which were stressful at the time and are now funny, such as: being locked alone in a cork factory in France with the lights off and the alarm ringing. After two direct reports preparing everything so that new legal obligations were in place for all our retail clients, falling asleep at 8am in the office and 5 minutes later having all the phones ringing because we had mistakenly passed on the changes to a client in Spain who suddenly had 20 stores that couldn't sell. Most recently, being in Angola, seeing on the news that Portugal was considering closing the borders because there was a pandemic coming, changing the return flight for the next morning, and discovering that we had returned on the last possible flight.





Marta Almeida

Writing about my 18-year career at Arquiconsult makes me feel immense gratitude and nostalgia. Starting work in something completely unknown can be both frightening and exciting. But during uncertainty, there is enormous potential for growth and discovery. I discovered skills I hadn't thought I could have, embraced new challenges, and savoured and grew with each small success. Best of all, I've never been alone because I've had, and still have, the good fortune and privilege of working with extraordinary, talented colleagues with whom I've been able to share challenges, difficulties, laughter, deliveries on tight deadlines and (many) litters of coffee. As we continue along this path together, I treasure all the lessons learned and all the memories created, and I wish you many more years of shared success, laughter, and camaraderie. Congratulations, Arquiconsult!

Pedro Ferreira

The spirit at Arquiconsult of camaraderie, collaboration, involvement, legitimacy, the desire to build as a team and to make a difference is continually promoted, whether in projects, at our events or on a day-to-day basis. Every day they are candidates for increasingly demanding challenges, even in the most routine tasks. I proudly remember, from day 0, our resilience and unity in overcoming obstacles, in being able to develop new businesses, undertake, grow, and evolve in an increasingly competitive market. I am proud to see today, even with a much more complete and complex structure, that the same spirit is maintained and continues to be passed on to new generations of colleagues.





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