

A modernization and right-sizing comparison for manufacturers

For organizations evaluating whether to retain an older Epicor Classic estate or move to a cloud-first Microsoft ERP with lower operating complexity.

At a glance

Where Epicor 9/10 Classic can remain the stronger fit

- Manufacturing is the center of gravity and the business relies heavily on Job Management, APS, MES, quality or configurator capabilities.
- Make-to-order, make-to-stock, repetitive production and detailed job costing are deeply embedded in the operating model.
- Customizations and integrations remain business-critical and are expensive to replace or redesign.
- The organization needs to preserve specialist manufacturing depth that Business Central may require extensions to match.

Where Business Central can be the right-sized modernization

- The business wants cloud-first ERP, simpler administration and a current Microsoft release model.
- Finance, purchasing, inventory, order management and moderate manufacturing cover the core operating need.
- Microsoft 365, Power BI, Dataverse and Power Platform are strategic priorities.
- Standardization matters more than preserving every Classic-era customization.

Executive comparison

Decision area	Epicor ERP 9/10 Classic	Dynamics 365 Business Central
Best-fit purpose	Manufacturing-centric ERP for product companies with deep job, production and shop-floor processes.	Broad SMB/lower-mid-market ERP for finance, operations, distribution and moderate manufacturing.
Manufacturing depth	Deep Job Management; licensed APS, MES, quality and configurator modules add specialist manufacturing control.	Production BOMs, routings, work/machine centers, production orders, consumption/output and subcontracting in the Premium experience.
Architecture / deployment	Commonly operated in customer- or partner-managed on-prem/hosted environments with Classic Windows UI and a version-specific customization estate.	Cloud-first Business Central online with web client, regular service updates, extension model and Microsoft-managed SaaS operations.
Planning / scheduling	APS supports constraints, visual scheduling, capable-to-promise and multi-resource scheduling.	MPS/MRP, planning worksheets, action messages, routing-based scheduling and capacity/load planning.
Shop floor / quality	MES captures labor and inventory transactions on the shop floor; EQA supports inspection plans, specifications and calibration.	Production journals and warehouse activities capture consumption/output; validate advanced MES, inspection and calibration needs against standard BC or extensions.
Operating fit	Strong when specialist manufacturing depth and embedded legacy processes outweigh modernization pressure.	Strong when simpler operations, Microsoft ecosystem alignment and cloud operating model are more strategic than preserving every Epicor-specific capability.

Business capability comparison

Capability	Epicor ERP 9/10 Classic	Dynamics 365 Business Central
Finance	GL, AP, AR, cash, assets, currency, multi-company and manufacturing/job costing capabilities vary by licensed modules.	Core financial management, multiple currencies, consolidations, intercompany and reporting for small/midsize businesses.
Supply chain	Purchasing, order management, inventory, material management and pack-out are integrated with production.	Purchasing, inventory, order fulfillment, returns and connected supply chain management.
Manufacturing	Strong job-based manufacturing with routing, scheduling, costing, engineering and repetitive production support.	Production BOMs, routings, work/machine centers, production orders, scrap, subcontracting and costing. Premium experience required.
Planning	MRP plus optional APS with material constraints, CTP, scheduling boards and load graphs.	MPS/MRP and planning worksheets net demand/supply and suggest production, purchase and transfer actions.
Warehouse & mobile	Inventory and material-management capabilities are integrated; warehouse/mobile depth varies by release and licensed modules.	Bins, warehouse receipts/shipments, directed put-away and pick, bin ranking, FEFO and warehouse movements.
Quality / engineering	EQA inspection plans, attributes/specifications, skip-lot and calibration; configurator and engineering capabilities are available in E10.	Manufacturing connects to quality management and subcontracting; validate specialist engineering/QMS requirements and required extensions.
Integration / extensibility	Classic-era customizations can be deeply embedded; transition planning must account for version-specific custom forms and integrations.	AL extensions, APIs, AppSource and expanding Dataverse/Power Platform integration reduce the need to modify the base application.
Microsoft ecosystem	Microsoft tools can be integrated, but they are not the native center of the Classic ERP experience.	Native positioning around Outlook, Excel, Teams, Power BI plus Power Platform/ Dataverse and Copilot/agents.
Global / multi-company	Multi-company and multi-site functionality existed in E10, but scope depends on edition, localization and implementation.	Supports multiple currencies/languages, consolidations, intercompany transactions and tax regulations for SMB/mid-market operations.

What a move to Business Central can change

- Replace an older Classic ERP footprint with a cloud-first, web-based Microsoft operating model.
- Reduce dependence on Classic-era customizations by using extensions, AppSource and standardized processes.
- Bring ERP closer to Outlook, Excel, Teams, Power BI, Dataverse and Power Platform.
- Standardize finance, purchasing, inventory and moderate manufacturing on one Microsoft application.
- **Decision principle:** validate APS, MES, quality, configurator and job-management requirements first. BC can simplify the estate, but it is not automatically a deeper manufacturing replacement for Epicor 9/10.