



SUCCESS STORY DEEP DIVE

How a unique configuration of Microsoft technologies is ensuring Western Australia's popular container recycling scheme continues to make an impact

Western Australians purchase more than 1.45 billion drink containers every year, many of which are still thrown away rather than recycled. In July 2019, Western Australia Return Recycle Renew Limited (WARRRL) was created to combat this waste problem by establishing and running the state's container deposit scheme, Containers for Change.

The scheme aims to reduce the number of drink containers that are commonly littered or sent to landfill by offering a 10-cent refund for each container returned.

Western Australians can get involved in Containers for Change by returning their 10-cent containers to any of the 260-plus refund points across the state. Each refund point is independently owned, providing services to suit its local community's needs.

Since Containers for Change launched in October 2020, over two billion 10-cent containers have been saved from landfill, injecting more than A\$200 million into WA's economy through refunds.

The scheme has also helped bring in over A\$8 million in donations to WA causes and charities. It's also created 821 jobs – many of which have been taken up by people with disability, those who were long-term unemployed or First Nations people.

In further proof of its impact, Containers for Change was rated the most well-known recycling program in WA in independent online qualitative surveys. Over 83 per cent of respondents also said they were likely to use the scheme in the future.

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Kristen Britz, Head of Information Technology, Processors and Logistics for WARRRL's Containers for Change scheme, says the WA Government is seeking public feedback on possibly expanding the scope of eligible containers.

If this scope expansion occurs, there would be a significant increase in the number of first responsible supplier registrations – potentially over 1,500 new registrations,” he explains.

“Because contract management, master data and relationships are independently managed across the business, there have also been high levels of reworking, duplication and manual activities across the organisation.

And vendor costs for administration of existing contract management software has significantly increased coming into 2023.”

A FIT-FOR-PURPOSE SOLUTION

WARRRL engaged local Microsoft partner iCatalyst in August 2022 to design and build a scalable customer relationship management (CRM) solution that would enhance its operations, reduce its IT costs and help meet its ambitious FY23 container redemption targets.

Given the not-for-profit organisation's breadth of requirements across multiple areas, WARRRL and iCatalyst created a multi-feature release roadmap with six modules:

- first responsible supplier (FRS) contract management
- refund point operator (RPO) site and contract management
- scheme integrity management
- logistics and processors, materials recycler facilities, recyclers and exporter contract management
- business lead and business relations tracking
- external relations case management.

“Initially, we prioritised contract management because of the high support costs associated with the legacy software,” says Britz.

“However, we have since recognised the advantages of implementing a CRM system across the entire organisation.”

WARRRL and iCatalyst released the FRS and contract management module in January 2023. This was followed by the RPO site and contract management module two months later.

Now, WARRRL can manage its FRS and RPO processes end to end – from first contact with a potential participant to generating documents and tracking interactions; closing a contract and integrating the relevant changes into third-party systems.



Justin Martin, Director at iCatalyst, said he and his team took a 'configuration before customisation' approach to building and deploying the solution. It leverages the Microsoft Dynamics 365 (D365) Sales application, Microsoft Power Platform (including Power Automate and Power Pages) and Microsoft Azure services such as Azure Service Bus.

"Power Platform was critical in the overall design and implementation of the solution," Martin explains. "It was the low-code foundation to configure the necessary requirements to meet WARRRL's operational needs."

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One of those needs is ensuring that crucial master data updates made in D365 are promptly communicated to WARRRL's scheme partner. iCatalyst was fundamental in implementing a complex design where key fields from multiple tables in D365 are aggregated to form a single JSON object payload. This payload is then sent to the scheme partner's Zendesk helpdesk ticketing system.

Dawn Thiart, D365 Implementation Manager for WARRRL's Containers for Change scheme says WARRRL has established a unique partnership with iCatalyst, where the two organizations collaborate and share development responsibilities.

This co-creation enables active participation and feedback and takes fit-for-purpose to a new level, resulting in a faster time-to-market, increased flexibility, and reduced costs.

"Working with iCatalyst as our Microsoft partner has been a rewarding experience. Their team is professional, responsive and technically capable across the Microsoft products. Their willingness to listen to feedback and collaborate has been instrumental in achieving on this project."

"Implementing the Dynamics 365 and Power Platform solution has allowed WARRRL's Finance and Operations teams to have a more connected experience across our customer base and have more time available for value-building activities," she explains.

Contract, Regional and Operational Managers now have customer and site information at their fingertips. They can quickly review site visits, phone calls and emails, and centrally manage all scheme participant contracts.

"Having built our solution on the Power Platform allows us to quickly respond to changing business needs.

As WARRRL's needs evolve, the platform can be easily extended and customized to accommodate new capabilities, thus ensuring long-term value for WARRRL.", says Thiart.



REALISING THE ROADMAP

With the first two modules of WARRRL's multi-feature release roadmap now operational, iCatalyst will provide ongoing support and managed services to enhance the CRM solution and onboard additional business divisions.

"We're currently implementing a solution for the organisation's Scheme Integrity division, and WARRRL will start to leverage the rich data and insights in the system using Power BI," says Martin.

Contractor and stakeholder access via Power Pages is also on the extended roadmap to provide self-service capabilities for participant onboarding, to update account records, view contract information, update compliance records, submit monthly or quarterly reviews and KPIs, and engage with WARRRL contract management and compliance teams.

The partnership with WARRRL stakeholders and their vision to leverage a single platform is very exciting for iCatalyst.

We love nothing more than showcasing what Microsoft technologies can offer organisations, no matter how complex and broad their requirements may be.

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