



From On-Prem to Online:
**How CEI Europe Migrated
60+ Clients to Business Central
with 50% Less Effort**

About the Company

CEI Europe is a Spanish technology consultancy specializing in Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central and industry-specific business solutions. With over 80 professionals in Spain and more than 600 around the world in CEI America and India, the company serves clients across Manufacturing, Distribution, Services, and especially Tourism.

Originally known as Quonext, the company was acquired by CEI America in 2021. CEI America, founded in 1992, focuses on delivering technology services - including consultancy, implementation, and support - across Microsoft, AWS, AI, and automation platforms.

CEI Europe's core market is the hospitality sector (50%), where it offers a Property Management System for vacation hotels, covering digital housekeeping, check-in/check-out, and integrated hotel operations. The company also delivers vertical solutions for construction and real estate (23–25%), small airports, charter airlines, leisure parks, and standard Business Central deployments for manufacturing and distribution.

The Challenges

As part of their hotel solution based on Microsoft Dynamics NAV, CEI Europe supported 5,000 - 6,000 users across various hospitality clients. In 2021, they began migrating this solution to the modern Extensions model, completing the process in 2023.

As CEI Europe transitioned its hospitality clients to Business Central online, its deep industry specialization brought unique challenges. For hotels that operate around the clock, even short system downtimes are unacceptable, making seamless, low-disruption migrations critical. Additionally, the large volume of historical data in these systems presented significant technical hurdles.

"Another key issue in these projects is reassuring clients that they won't lose their existing customizations,"

José Ángel López Aguilar

Technical Leader for Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central at CEI Europe



"They also need to understand they'll benefit from the enhancements in the latest versions. Solving this from a technical standpoint is critical."

The Solution

To support the ongoing transition of its customers to the cloud, CEI Europe leveraged its long-standing partnership with Companial and adopted the Migration & Modernization (M&M) program to accelerate and simplify the process.

The collaboration between both companies dates back to 2013, when Companial was known as Quattro Business Solutions (QBS), and has remained strong ever since. With Companial's expertise and the tools provided through the M&M program, CEI Europe was able to overcome key technical challenges and deliver smooth, low-risk migrations - particularly for its complex hospitality and industry-specific solutions.

The M&M program has also proven highly effective in standard Business Central projects. For manufacturing and distribution clients, CEI Europe uses it to conduct cloud-readiness assessments and provide clear, data-driven cost and scope estimates - building customer confidence and supporting faster decision-making.

Outcome

The M&M program proved to be a critical asset in CEI Europe's cloud transition journey, helping address key technical and operational challenges.

Accelerated Technical Analysis

One of the most significant benefits of the M&M program was the reduction in time and complexity associated with technical assessments. Legacy NAV solutions often include deeply embedded customizations, making it difficult to identify and resolve conflicts with standard code during migration.

"The M&M tools helped us detect where .NET variables were used or where custom code was overly intrusive. This saved us a lot of time during analysis,"

José Ángel López Aguilar

Technical Leader for Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central at CEI Europe



"With M&M tools, we save between 25% and 50% of the time in technical analysis. Without them, we would have to manually review all code for conflicts - an extremely time-consuming task," adds Roger Pratdesaba, Chief Operations & Product Officer at CEI Europe.

Improved Decision-Making and Project Planning

The M&M program also helped CEI Europe provide customers with clearer insights during pre-sales. The AIM Assessment Report, automatically generated through the M&M tools, offers detailed guidance on which customizations to keep, refactor, or discard - making project scoping and budgeting far more transparent.

These reports also serve as official evidence for Microsoft, enabling CEI Europe to unlock partner benefits efficiently.

"The assessments are well structured - with spreadsheets, PDF reports, and detailed summaries. They're easy to understand and present to clients,"

Roger Pratdesaba

Chief Operations & Product Officer at CEI Europe



Real-World Impact: Solving Migration Blockers

The Companial team's expertise went beyond tooling. In one case, CEI Europe faced a critical blocker while migrating a 900 GB database to the cloud. Due to a rarely documented technical limitation with specific table fields, the publishing process failed.

"Even Microsoft didn't have a documented fix. But with the help of Companial's technicians, we were able to analyze the issue, identify the cause, and successfully publish the database," Roger recalls.

Clean Start Toolbox for Complex Cases

In scenarios where legacy solutions had highly intrusive customizations, CEI Europe opted for a Clean Start migration, transferring only essential data. The Clean Start Toolbox - included in the M&M program - was instrumental in this process. It provided C/AL delta files, PowerShell scripts, and app files tailored for the latest Business Central versions.

"For those complex migrations, the Clean Start Toolbox was extremely helpful," says José.

Final Thoughts and Recommendation

To date, CEI Europe has used the M&M program to successfully migrate 50 - 60 clients to the cloud. The company continues to report monthly user migrations through the M&M portal, describing the process as intuitive and efficient.

"I'd rate it 5 stars. The tools are powerful, and the team behind them is incredibly knowledgeable. The improvements Companial has made in their technology platforms have solved many of our pain points," says Roger.

Key Results



Both leaders at CEI Europe strongly recommend Companial and M&M program:

"I'd recommend Companial to any Dynamics Partner - especially those with a large customer base or complex industry solutions. The M&M program greatly speeds up analysis and execution," says Roger.

"The time savings and the comprehensive, automated analysis reports are what make the M&M program so valuable," concludes José.