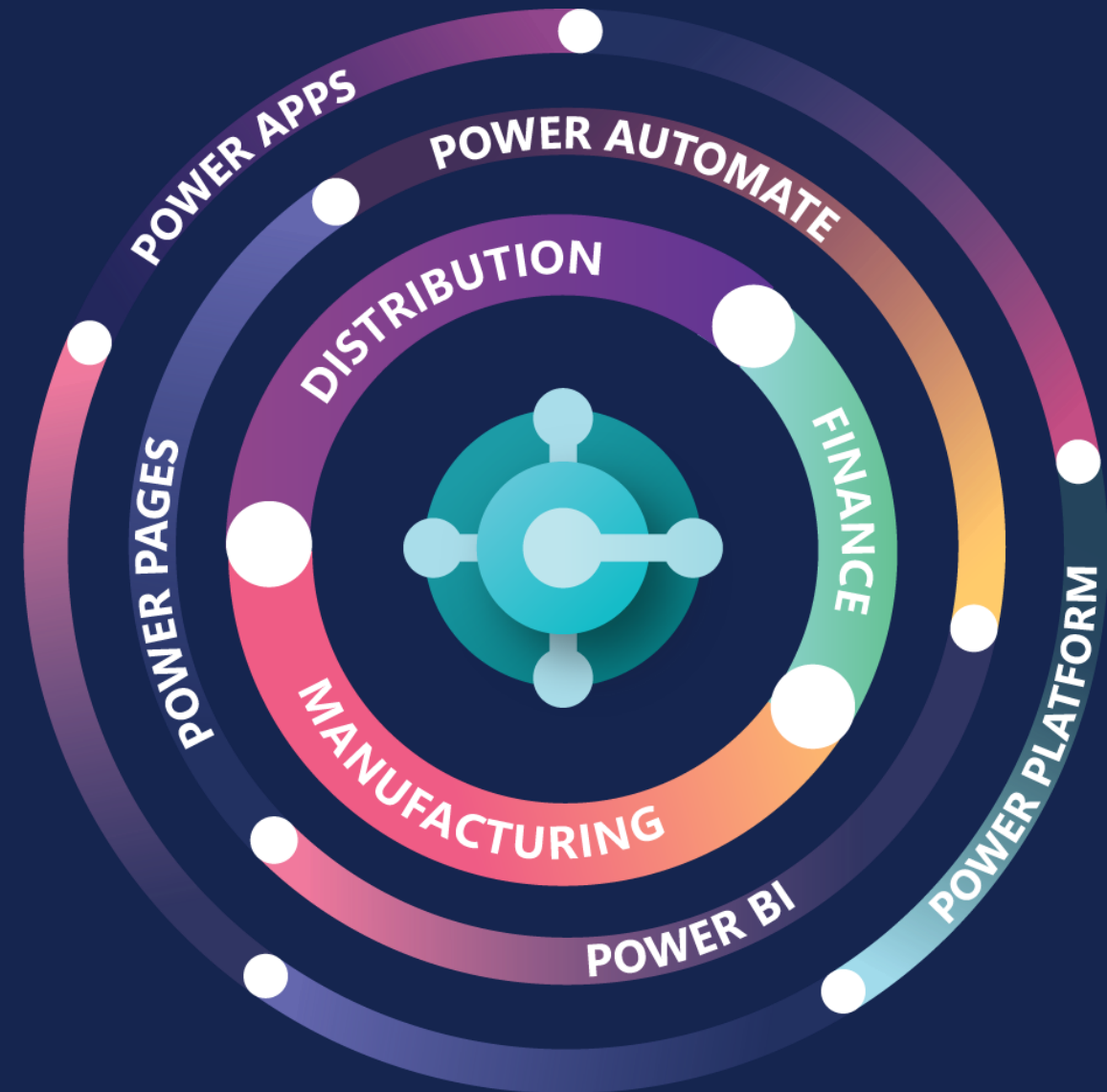


# BUSINESS CENTRAL connect

AI today: expensive hype or  
productive tool?





Can you hear me?



Is everything clear?



~ 45 mins



Q & A



Hi!  
Colin Bell  
Jason Tromans

# What we'll cover

1. Using AI to understand how industry has changed
2. How being productive has changed
3. What is Co-Pilot Page or Studio
4. Co-Pilot Studio in action





# AI? Is it expensive hype or a productive tool?

# Does AI rate itself?

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL `https://m365.cloud.microsoft/chat?auth=2`. The page displays a chat interface with the Copilot logo and a search bar. The chat history shows a user asking, "Is AI just expensive hype or productive tool?". Copilot responds with a detailed analysis, divided into two sections: "Productive Tool" and "Expensive Hype".

**Copilot**  
Is AI just expensive hype or p...

**You**  
Is AI just expensive hype or productive tool?

**Copilot**  
AI can be both, depending on how it's implemented and used. Here are some key points to consider:

**Productive Tool**

1. **Efficiency and Automation:** AI can automate repetitive tasks, freeing up human workers for more complex and creative work.
2. **Data Analysis:** AI excels at analyzing large datasets quickly, providing insights that might be missed by humans.
3. **Personalization:** In customer service, AI can offer personalized experiences, improving customer satisfaction.
4. **Healthcare:** AI is being used to diagnose diseases, predict patient outcomes, and even assist in surgeries.


**Expensive Hype**

1. **Cost:** Implementing AI can be expensive, requiring significant investment in technology and expertise.
2. **Overpromising:** Sometimes, the capabilities of AI are exaggerated, leading to unmet expectations.
3. **Ethical Concerns:** Issues like bias in AI algorithms and data privacy can be significant hurdles.
4. **Job Displacement:** There's a fear that AI could replace human jobs, leading to economic and social challenges.

Ultimately, whether AI is seen as hype or a productive tool often depends on the specific application and the value it brings to the organization or individual using it. What are your thoughts on AI?

Message Copilot...

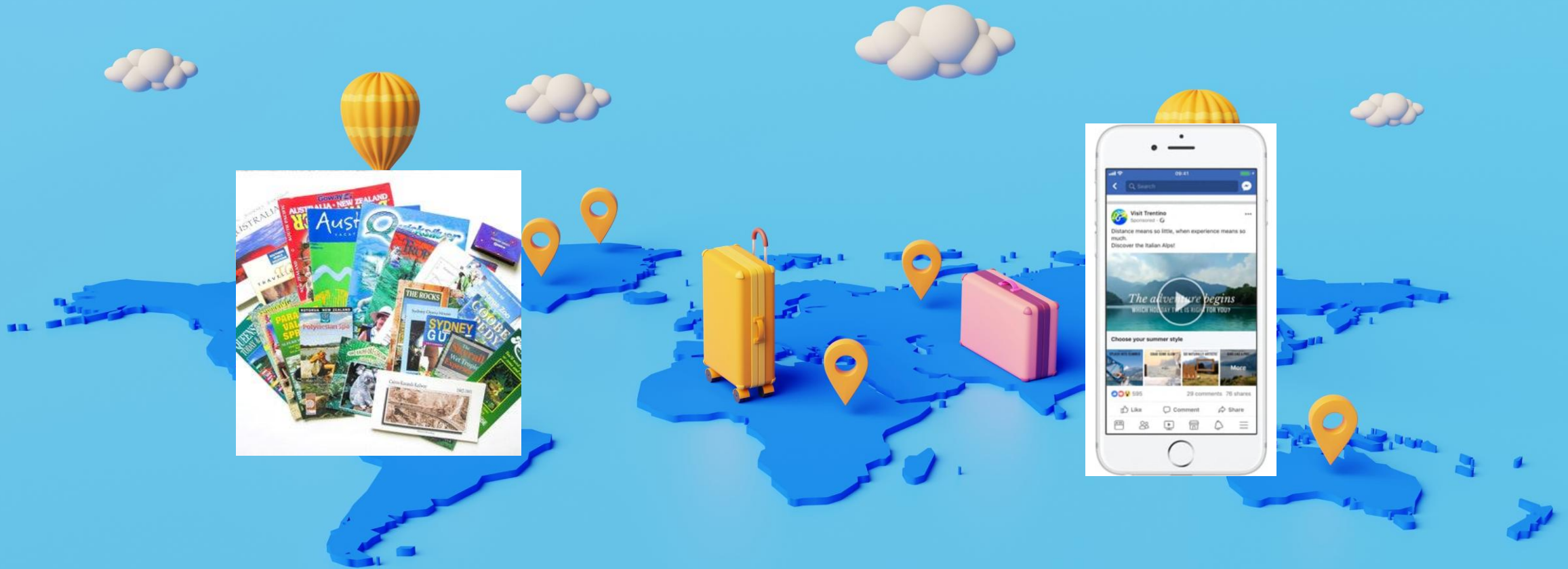
Need help?



Business productivity has evolved somewhat over the last 40 years.

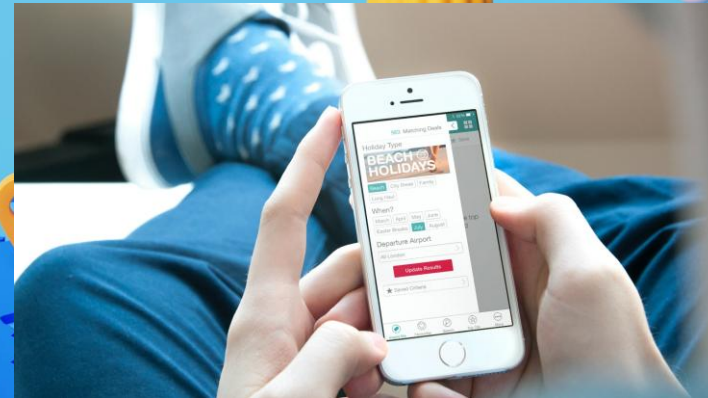
How?

# A Travel Agents Route to Market -1984 vs 2024





# Buy a Holiday - 1984 vs 2024





Teletext holiday & Ceefax Holidays – were they ahead of the curve?

**So, in 1984, what could have been the cost of sale of selling holidays as a travel agent?**

Let's ask AI to help...



You

What did it cost a travel agent on average in 1984 to send brochures out across the country to 30,000 residential homes



Copilot

In 1984, the average cost for a travel agent to send out brochures was about **£1 per brochure**<sup>1</sup>. So, for sending brochures to 30,000 residential homes, it would have cost approximately **£30,000**.

That's quite a significant investment! Do you have any other questions about the travel industry or anything else?

Learn more <sup>1</sup> [steveendacott.co.uk](https://steveendacott.co.uk)



2 of 30 responses

AI-generated content may be incorrect

How has technology changed travel marketing since then?

What other costs did travel agents face in the 1980s?

Tell me more about brochures as a marketing tool.

Message Copilot...



You

What was the average running cost of a Travel Agents in 1984 compared to 2024

Copilot

### Summary

While the basic categories of expenses have remained similar, the nature and scale of these costs have changed dramatically due to technological advancements and shifts in marketing strategies. This evolution has allowed travel agencies to operate more efficiently and reach a broader audience.

Do you have any other questions or need more details on a specific aspect?

Learn more [1 businessplan-templates.com](#) [2 M money.com](#) [3 atol.org](#)



6 of 30 responses

AI-generated content may be incorrect

How have commissions and fees changed over time?

Tell me about the impact of online booking platforms on travel agencies.

What challenges do modern travel agencies face in terms of costs?

Message Copilot...



### 2024

In 2024, the running costs for travel agencies have evolved significantly:

- **Office Space and Utilities:** Similar to the 1980s, but with the addition of remote work options reducing some costs.
- **Staff Salaries:** Salaries have increased, with additional costs for specialized roles like digital marketing experts.
- **Marketing and Advertising:** A significant portion is now spent on digital marketing, including social media, SEO, and online ads.
- **Technology and Software:** Substantial investment in advanced booking systems, customer relationship management (CRM) software, and AI tools.
- **Training and Development:** Ongoing training for new technologies and customer service skills.
- **Insurance:** Comprehensive business insurance, including cyber liability insurance.
- **Travel Expenses:** Costs for familiarization trips remain, but virtual reality (VR) tours are also used.

The average running cost for a travel agency in 2024 can range from **\$10,000 to \$50,000 annually** depending on the scale and services offered [2](#) [3](#).

# Conclusion – AI has helped us understand

## Technology

In 1984 they used the resources available at the time

Today's technology means utilising best resources available to be more productive

## Cost

Difficult to say whether it is 'cheaper' today.

Today we have costs to websites, SEO, Google Ads, social media, TV ads and we used to have perhaps more physical costs (shop, brochure)

## Self Service

Buyers have the information they need at fingertips at their own convenience on any day, any time and can engage from anywhere

But you would argue it is more efficient to reach your audience with technology

# Conclusion – How has AI helped Travel Agencies

## Selling the holiday

Timely In App notifications 'don't forget the holiday you were looking at'

App/email reminder 'if you were looking at XXX why not also look at XXX'

Data + AI understanding the behaviours and trends of consumers to influence communication

## Servicing the consumer

Website / App chats – helping book the holiday and answer questions – don't need a human to answer every question

Being available at the convenience of the consumer

# So, was buying a holiday in 1984 productive?

## Buying a holiday in 1984

- **Fast – 2 to 3 weeks**
  - Receiving brochures (1-2 weeks)
  - Visiting the Agent (1-3 days)
  - Booking with the Agent (30 mins to 1 hour)
- **Reliability** - Dependency on Travel Agents, Manual processes, slow confirmation, Overbooking, Limited access to information.
- **Efficiency** – Time consuming, Manual Inventory Management, no flexibility, Slow payment process
- **Profitable** – between 7%-12%

## Buying a holiday in 2024

- **Fast – 30 minutes to 1 hour**
  - Researching where to visit (30 minutes)
  - Booking flights and accommodation (10 minutes)
  - Booking additional services (10-20 minutes)
- **Reliability** - Automated processes, instant confirmation, removed from availability while selected, easy access to information.
- **Efficiency** – Quick processes, Flexible adjustments and payment processes, instant access
- **Profitable** – between 10%-20%

*Not if we are comparing what technology and resources we have available today.....*





How can AI tailored to you, help  
your business with productivity?

# Co-Pilot is here to help, not take over

## Co-Pilot - ENGAGE

- **Dynamic Canvas**
  - A flexible space for creating and organizing content
- **Real-time collaboration**
  - Allows multiple user access and editing
- **Integrated Suggestions**
  - Enhances your work through intelligent recommendation
- **And more...**

## Co-Pilot Studio - BUILD

- **Customisable**
  - Build AI-powered copilots that are tailored to your business
- **Automation**
  - Custom triggers for automated processing utilising Power Automate and Custom trigger phrases
- **Scalable**
  - Can be integrated with Microsoft 365, Azure AI and other data sources across Multiple channels like Websites and Social Media

# Microsoft Copilot Studio



Microsoft



# Let's build our own Co-Pilot

# Demonstration Example



## The Business Challenge:

Retro Stop needs to reduce the demand on their Service Engineers and Customer Service Team, the Customer Service Manager says her staff are being over stretched and are asking for additional resource.

Analysis has shown that a large proportion of incoming queries have the same solution. They would like a way to streamline and automate troubleshooting their incoming queries and automatically raise cases for the Customer Service Team or Service Engineers based on the client need.

# Proposed Solution



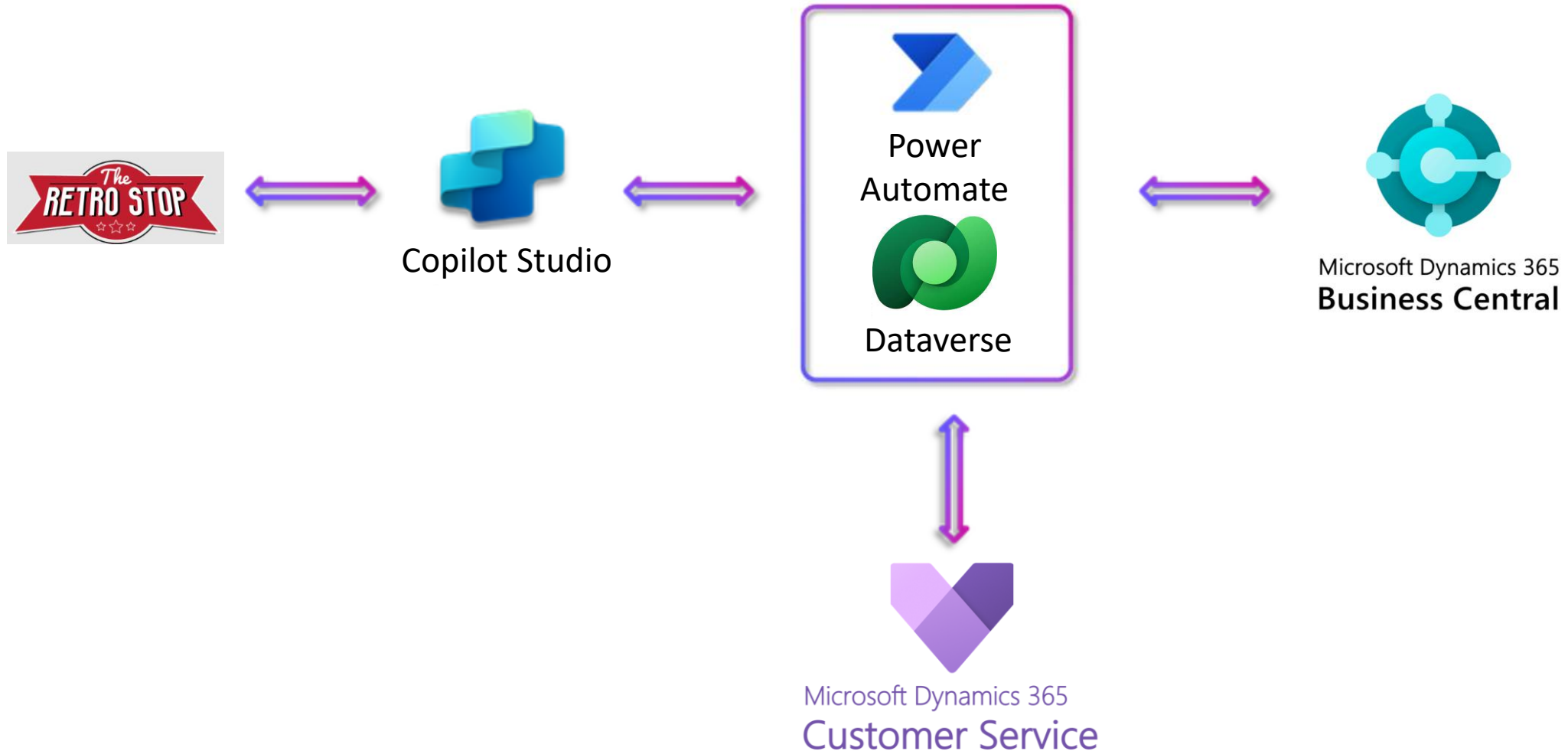
Utilising Co-Pilot Studio, Retro Stop will have a Chat function on their website that will ask specific troubleshooting questions about the client requirements and make suggestions before then raising a Case to either a Service Engineer or their Customer Service Team.

The business therefore will save time and not need the additional head count to be more efficient in their customer engagement process, and ensuring the customer gets a consistent experience every time.



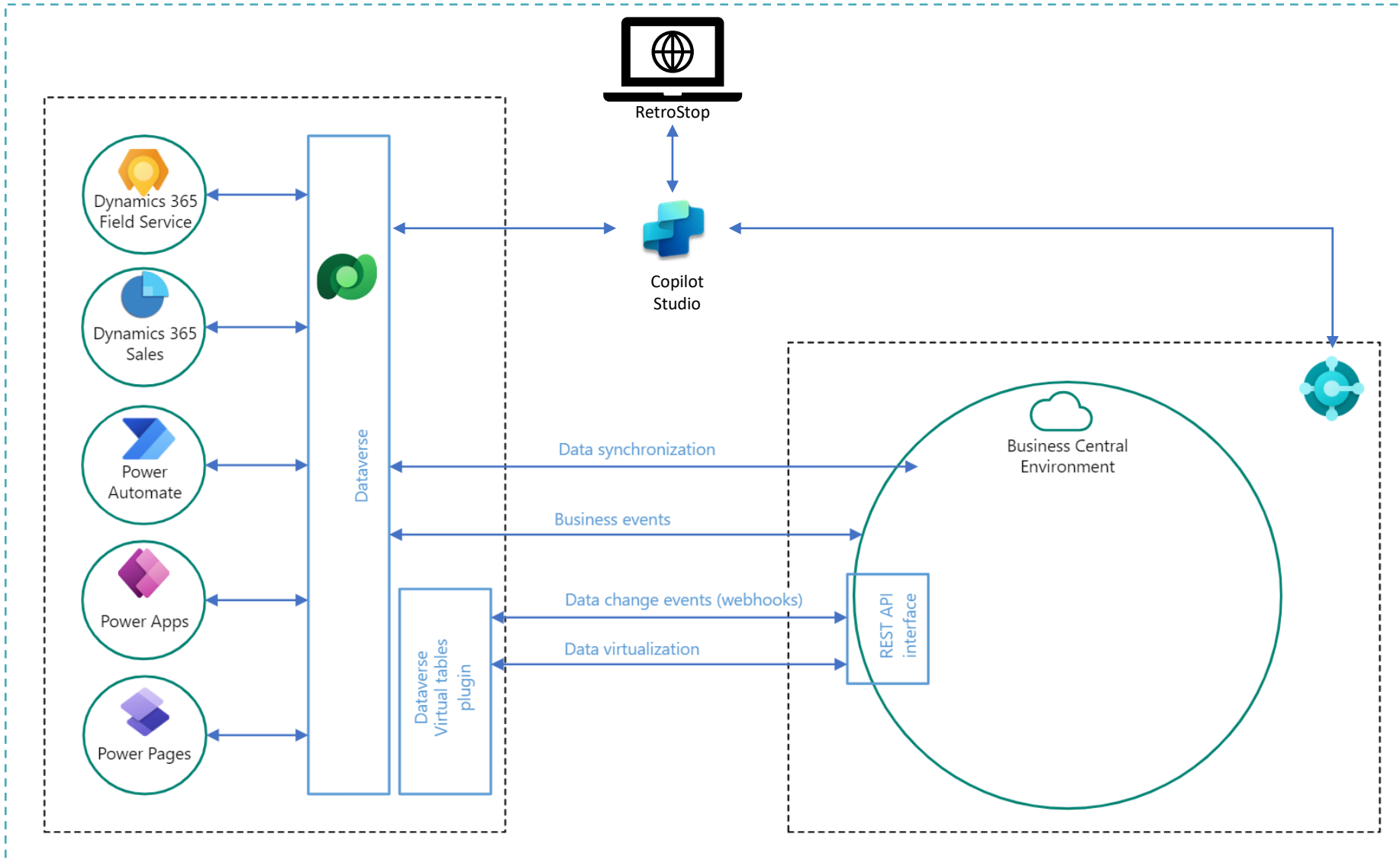
Let's see it in action!!!

# So, let's recap on what it's doing...





# Endless opportunities





So, what's your business case...

# How about...

## Item Availability

Employees (with no access to BC) or customers enquiring stock availability

Embed Co-Pilot in Teams, in a chat? In a App?

Maybe even allow customer to create a new order via a chat?

## Start a return

Start a returns process via Co-Pilot on a website, validate the order and the lines, ask the customer to confirm details and create the document in Business Central ready along with the case in CRM?

## Where's my order

Allow customer via Co-Pilot to ask where their order is, and returns tracking number and the courier along with a link to the courier webpage to enter the tracking ID



So, expensive hype or a productive assistant?

Thank you.

BUSINESS CENTRAL

connect

15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2024

