GP
OPTIMIZER
MAGAZINE

Self-service Business Intelligence for GP:
What does that mean for me?

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Microsoft Dynamics GP
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GP OPTIMIZER
MAGAZINE

Welcome to the Summer 2015 Edition of the GP Optimizer Magazine. Our original goal of The GP Optimizer Magazine was to reach 15,000 Microsoft Dynamics GP Users. Last publication, we exceeded this goal by reaching over 50,000 users.

The GP Optimizer Magazine contains articles written by Microsoft Dynamics GP Add-On Partners; these articles are focused on making your investment in Microsoft Dynamics GP more worthwhile by solving an issue that you might be experiencing.

Rockton Software has been in the Microsoft Dynamics GP Channel for over 15 years. You may have seen us at Convergence dressed up as bartenders, pirates, Vikings, or cavemen. Regardless of our crazy costumes, we've established ourselves as fervent supporters of the greater GP Channel, and we want you to excel in business by leveraging other tools and knowledge from our friends in the community.

The GP Optimizer Magazine shares industry expertise from the perspective of an Independent Software Vendor (ISV) focusing on how to solve problems in Microsoft Dynamics GP that users face in their day-to-day business. Over the years, I have heard of many requests for a solution catalog that lets GP customers know about "what is out there" to solve real business needs.

We want to thank all participating ISVs—JOVACO, ICAN Software, Avidxchange, Solver, T3 Information Systems, Metafile Info Systems, and Horizons International—for their help in producing relevant content, which is accumulated into this issue of the GP Optimizer Magazine, as well as their commitment to the Microsoft Dynamics GP Channel.

Take a look and let my team know what you think—candid thoughts welcome.

Enjoy!

Mark Rockwell
President, Rockton Software

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On the Cover

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GP Optimizer **Sponsors**

Upgrade Offer for MR / FRx Customers

Time to upgrade from FRx to a new, ultra-modern financial reporting solution?

Microsoft has officially retired FRx. How many times have you exported an FRx report to Excel?   When considering a replacement for FRx, why not consider a Report Writer that starts in Excel!

NOW is the right time to look at BI360 because we have crafted this time-limited offer for existing FRx customers that are ready to upgrade:

FRx *Upgrade* bi360

$1,995

Upgrade from FRx to BI360 to enjoy these benefits and more:

• Get the report design interface all finance people have always wanted: Excel

• All the Excel formulas, formatting, charts, printing and more that you have come to love about Excel is now a native part of your BI360 report experience

• Full, customizable user security

• Ability to upgrade to report on ALL of your ERP modules, not just the GL*

• Opportunity to later add other BI360 modules (for web and mobile reporting, dashboards, budgeting, report distribution or data warehouse)*

• Free, optional FRx report conversion tool*

solver

Self-service Business Intelligence for GP:
What does that mean for me?

Written By Aaron Chirolo, Marketing Director at Solver.

There are plenty of buzz words in the data analytical software world. One term in particular should guide your software search: Self-service Business Intelligence. When it comes to accessing, managing and analyzing your data to make richer decisions about the future of your business, you should be seeking software solutions that you can manage without having to involve the IT department. And the good news: the best software options are all on trend. This article is going to explore exactly what self-service BI means for you, specifically zooming in on the tools, features, and functionalities that can upgrade your Microsoft Dynamics GP experience.

First of all, let's talk about your integration options. Some solutions offer a live integration to GP, which translates to real-time analytics. Other options rely on a BI data store integration, specifically an online analytical processing (OLAP) cube or a fully built, configurable data warehouse. BI data stores offer stable, high performance analytics without slowing down your GP server. And while both are popular options, OLAP cubes do require personnel with OLAP-specific skills and experience to manage. Commercial data warehouses like BI360, on the other hand, offer you a customizable and easy-to-use space to store multiple types of data for business end user management, access, and analysis. Ease of use is a primary characteristic for self-service BI.

Arguably the most popular software around the globe for finance teams is Microsoft Excel. Does your financial reporting tool run on an Excel platform? It can – and in terms of business user friendliness, Excel add-in tools, like Solver's BI360, offer finance professionals a familiar interface to hit the ground running with more powerful, GL and sub-ledger reporting, budgeting, and dashboards, whether you're running analytics live from Dynamics GP or from a data warehouse. Proprietary platforms, with formatting and formulas outside of Excel, will likely require a tougher learning curve to get to a point of self-service BI, but there's also the web as a platform option.

Web-based BI tools are all the rage right now – and for good reason. In terms of flexibility and mobility in access, both browser-based and mobile application tools for analytics will allow professionals at all levels of an organization to query and analyze data from anywhere they can connect to the internet – and/or carry their mobile devices. The capability to manage your analyses and contribute to decision-making on the go is a powerful and nearly necessary option for professionals in today's business world. And it's all self-service BI.

Depending on what data analysis processes you need to improve, now or in the not-so-distant future, it would be smart to consider BI tools that are part of a full suite of BI solutions. BI suites offer the ease of use you can achieve with one team of consultant, partner, and support professionals, while also highlighting the flexibility you can have in configuring your best-of-breed toolbox for your specific business demands. BI360 is a comprehensive suite offering financial reporting, planning, data visualizations, and a fully built, configurable data warehouse. Furthermore, you have the sensible flexibility to choose whether you'd like to integrate live from GP or a BI store, as well as whether you'd like to work on-premises in Excel or on an Excel-powered Web platform. Recently named to the Gartner Magic Quadrant for CPM for the second year in a row, Solver is proud to truly embody self-service BI in a robust product like BI360. If you'd like to learn more about self-service BI in terms of ease of use and flexibility, Solver, Inc. would be happy to answer questions and generally review BI360's web-powered, easy-to-use Excel and mobile BI tools with both real-time or data warehouse integrated analysis, budgeting and collaboration as a way to accelerate company performance management beyond Dynamics GP. **GP**

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#GPUGSummit
#INreno15

Excel Based Budgeting at its Best
with Full Circle Budget

Written By Virginia Weinstein and Sarah Ziegler, <u>T3 Information Systems</u>

L et's face it – accountants LOVE to use Excel. From budgeting and forecasting to financial reporting and account reconciliations, Microsoft Excel is the most widely used software in accounting departments. Even as technology evolves and software is developed to replace processes commonly performed in Excel, accountants always seem to gravitate back.

Many Microsoft Dynamics GP end users utilize the "Budget Wizard for Excel" – Dynamics GP's built-in budget functionality. The Budget Wizard is easy to use. It supports multiple Budget IDs and easily imports/exports budget data from Dynamics GP. However, there are some short comings when using the Budget Wizard for Excel.

Dynamics GP end user experience with the Excel Budget Wizard:

- Create budget/forecast entry template in Management Reporter/FRx and export to Excel.
- Manually re-format, re-enter calculation formulas, apply page layout specifications and protect cells in Excel.
- Enter budgets in Excel.

- Link multiple workbooks/worksheets together to view budget totals (and if one thing is changed, it messes everything up).
- Copy and paste data from Excel workbooks to format required by Budget Wizard and import into Dynamics GP.
- New General Ledger accounts aren't created during budget import.
- Spend hours reconciling the budget after importing.

Full Circle Budget is an essential tool that overcomes the pitfalls and frustrations of budgeting in Excel.

<u>Full Circle Budget is NOT budgeting software</u>. It is an essential tool that overcomes common pitfalls and frustrations of budgeting in Excel. During the budget process, Full Circle Budget saves your budget data from Excel directly to Dynamics GP enabling analysis of budget information via any reporting software.
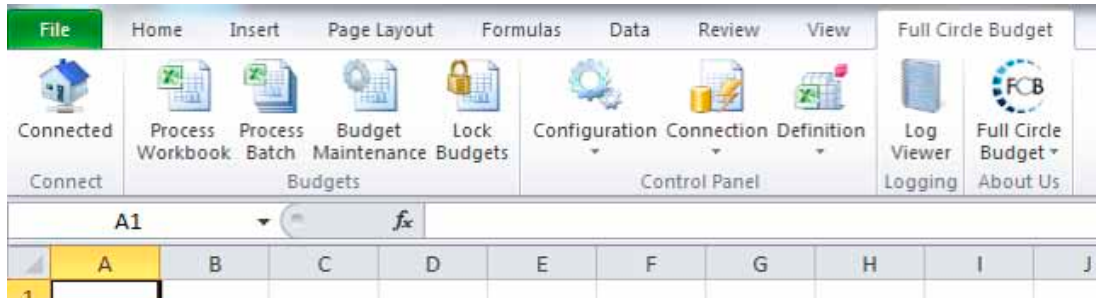
How does Full Circle Budget simplify budgeting?

- Budget in an Excel worksheet format designed by YOUR company. Don't have to stick to the Excel Wizard column layout.
- Supports multiple budget IDs in the same worksheet and detail line item budgeting.
- Supports four comments/descriptions fields per budget amount (as well as unit quantity and amount).
- Save budget amounts in real time or batch mode.
- Automatically create new accounts in Dynamics GP from Excel. Great for adding GL accounts on the fly or creating new cost centers/projects.
- Audit log tracks what budget amounts saved successfully and those that didn't update and why. This makes reconciling very easy.

How does Full Circle Budget work?

- Create budget template using any financial reporting software that exports to Excel.
- Create Full Circle Budget report definition specifying location of required budget fields.
- Apply data entry formats, calculation formulas, page layout specifications and protect cells with Full Circle Budget.
- Enter budget amounts in Excel.
- Use Full Circle Budget to save budgets back to Dynamics GP, and review and analyze budget totals via any financial reporting software.

Bonus Functionality!

Full Circle Budget formatting functionality transforms this export from Management Reporter::

To this:

Full Circle Budget's formatting functionality extends beyond reformatting budget entry templates exported to Excel from Management Reporter or FRx. Use Full Circle Budget to reformat **ANY REPORT** exported to Excel from Management Report, FRx or any other report writer.

If Excel is your Budget Software, then you need Full Circle Budget! See a demo and read customer testimonials on how Full Circle Budget has simplified the budget process for other Dynamics GP users. GP

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Not your average Family Vacation
with Dynamics Report Manager

Written by Alicia Weigel, Technical Sales Team Lead at Rockton Software

Picture that iconic family. Picture that snazzy green and wood paneled station wagon. You can almost smell the heat coming off those vinyl backseats. Oh yes, it's happening, it's a summer family vacation! And better yet, it's a road trip!

The dates are set. You are ready to embark on the journey, but first, you have to map this out! With Rockton Software's Dynamics Report Manager (DRM) working in your Microsoft Dynamics GP–you can now prepare for that family vacation!

Schedule: Does that group of Month End reports need to be done while you're out? No problem! With DRM you can set up a reporting schedule to generate a PDF and email the report to your finance team.

Navigate: Use our Launch Points to easily attach reports anywhere in GP! No more hunting for that sales report.

Explore: Use the DRM Report Explorer window to easily group and folder all of your reports so they're organized and easy to access! Instead of launching multiple reporting programs, now you can import all your reports–Excel, SSRS, Crystal, FRx and more, into Dynamics Report Manager. Simply choose the report you want to see and open it– all in one window!

Relax: Thanks to Dynamics Report Manager, you know that your reports are working, even when you're not!

Watch our webinar recording, You're Clear to Launch with Dynamics Report Manager, to learn about Dynamics Report Manager in your Microsoft Dynamics GP. You also can email sales@rocktonsoftware.com to learn about our 30 day free trial period to test DRM in your current GP. GP

An Insider's View of GPUG Summit:

Shared Experiences, Impactful Sessions, & Solving Problems

Written By: Whitney Derks, Event Marketing Manager, **Dynamic Communities, Inc.**

Every fall Microsoft Dynamics GP users gather for three days to share an experience that helps them grow professionally within their current organization as well as in their career. GPUG Summit provides Dynamics GP users the opportunity to develop relationships that often turn into impactful connections extending well beyond the three days.

Aaron Back, formerly with Gorilla Glue® Information Technology Systems Administrator has been the beneficiary of new connections as a result of GPUG Summit.

Since first attending GPUG Summit in 2013, Back has found the event to be a place for solving problems both within his GP Administrator role and for the Gorilla Glue organization. His role involves fixing issues or leading projects, and getting answers to those issues and directions for project management at GPUG Summit has saved him "hours of time" as well as "changed [his] thought process or project direction."

"Knowing that something is either being phased out, or there is a specific add-on I wasn't aware of not only helped me, but helped my company," says Back.

Searching for solutions and answers to organizational dilemmas is a common thread among users at GPUG Summit. Back enjoys connecting with other people who have been through similar projects or situations. These connections have helped him gain insight into good solutions and taught him how to avoid pitfalls. Breakout sessions are also a significant contributor to Back's positive GPUG Summit experience, "The knowledge is in the small things and large things. Even the smallest tip learned can have a big impact in someone's role or in a project we are working on."

GPUG Summit strives to optimize the user-experience for all Dynamics GP users, regardless of role, industry, or skill level. Each attendee will walk away from the event with actionable training experience to implement back at the office. For Back, it's the efficiencies learned at GPUG Summit that play into his ROI for attending. "Knowing that there are better ways to do things has helped improve how I approach folks with answers and solutions. The old saying, 'Knowledge is Power,' holds true when attending Summit."

In 2015 there will be 200+ individual sessions for GPUG Summit attendees to choose from during the event, the largest expo hall Summit has ever seen, and countless dedicated networking opportunities built into the schedule. Throw all this in with pre-conference training, and it's easy to be overwhelmed once you step off the plane. As an attendee the last few years, Back has learned tips to benefit an attendee's overall experience and help anyone prepare for the event:

1. Be prepared to soak up a lot of information, but the key is to be prep in advance and review the session catalog before arriving onsite.

2. Find out what projects you have on yours or your company's roadmap and use that information to target the sessions you attend and the vendors you meet.

3. Be open to networking. GPUG Summit is much more than sessions and vendors. GPUG Summit is a place to meet similar individuals, who may provide you with insight, or become a great go-to person for answers.

4. Bring plenty of business cards.

5. Wear comfortable shoes.

6. Lastly, attend the evening events. This is a great time to connect with folks and have fun!

GPUG Summit is hosted by the Microsoft Dynamics GP User Group (GPUG), a volunteer-driven organization. Likewise, GPUG Summit is executed by a dedicated team of Dynamics GP users and partners passionate about the prosperity of the entire Dynamics GP community. Back, who became the GPUG Advisory Committee President in 2015, has been an engaged member of the community for several years as a chapter leader (Ohio), webinar presenter, and GPUG Summit session presenter, earning him the GPUG All Star Award in 2014.

"My involvement with GPUG has changed my viewpoint on how I work. Knowing there is a community that is willing to support each other, provide advice and answers, and encourage one another has given me confidence in my day-to-day activities," Back said.

Join Back and your fellow Dynamics GP peers this October 13-16 in Reno-Tahoe, Nevada and experience the energy that comes with solving issues, connecting and developing relationships with users from around the world, and learning from subject matter experts in your field and industry. GPUG Summit is the premier opportunity to affect positive change in your career as well as your organization's growth and success. This is your time to **_Go All IN_** and experience conference training like never before–register for GPUG Summit today. www.gpugsummit.com | Learn more from Aaron Back by watching the GPUG Summit video on our homepage! GP

Update: Since publishing this article Aaron Back has recently left the Gorilla Glue organization and is now fulfilling a similar role with CareSource.

Automating Accounts Payable & Accounts Receivable Processes

Written By: David Eichner, CEO, **ICAN Software**

Dynamics GP users who deal with a large volume of payments, credit memos, or returns within Accounts Payable & Accounts Receivable know the pain of having to manually apply a large number of those types of documents against debit documents like invoices.

Additionally, many users need an import tool for vendors, payables vouchers, manual payments, & credit memos. **Mass Apply Payables** provides the ability to import these as well as the apply relationships between them. No longer do users have to spend a lot of time clicking the apply checkbox for each document being applied. Import them, preview them and click one button to have all of them applied against each other quickly and easily.

Other users of Dynamics GP often have many payments, returns, or credit memos with amounts remaining that they wish to auto apply purely based on document date. **Mass Apply Payables & Mass Apply Receivables** allow users to auto apply all open documents across a range of vendors/customers and document dates.

Mass Apply Payables also provides the ability to restrict the auto apply functionality so that it auto applies within documents with matching prefix (length of prefix is user defined). The prefix of the invoice can also be matched against prefix of the value stored in the comment/PO number field of the credit document if the user chooses.

Mass Apply Receivables provides the ability to restrict the auto apply functionality based on customer class and a maximum credit document amount threshold.

When customers have to deal with multicurrency payments, they are forced to use the manual apply window which can be time-consuming and tedious. **Mass Apply Receivables** allows for automation of the apply process in these cases by allowing import of apply information, saving users time and effort.

And when customers would like to have returns automatically applied to the correct invoice, they can make this happen by using another feature of **Mass Apply Receivables**. If the invoice number, to which the return should be applied, is stored in the Customer PO Number field on the return, then **Mass Apply Receivables** can be run to automatically apply all such returns with one click. This feature can also be used to apply payments to invoices on a one-to-one basis when the invoice number is stored in the payment comment field.

Mass Apply Payables & Mass Apply Receivables are just several of many great products from ICAN Software Solutions. We make solutions that turn hours into minutes.

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The Dynamics Duo:
Microsoft Dynamics GP and AP Automation

Written By: Daniel Hartis, Content Writer, AvidXchange

Think back to whenever it was you decided to make Microsoft Dynamics GP your accounting system of record. Do you remember why you chose this accounting system, as opposed to so many others?

It likely wasn't a decision made in haste. You probably re-searched many others before choosing Dynamics. If you are like many Dynamics users, you did so because Dynamics is easy to integrate, offers real-time visibility, and can scale to accommodate growing companies. You might have made the switch to Dynamics due to a surge of growth, or perhaps you started with the system because you anticipated that growth in the future.

At AvidXchange, we know these reasons well. These are some of the same reasons cited by many of our clients who have decided to automate their AP process. We admire Microsoft Dynamics GP because we have a lot in common with that accounting system, namely in our desire to simplify the AP process and provide greater control to growing companies.

If you'll forgive the pun, we like to think that users of the accounting system partner with AvidXchange to form something of a Dynamics Duo. Think of AP automation as an enhancement upon all of the great features that Dynamics already offers, the Batman to your Robin. Or the Robin to your Batman. At any rate, Dynamics users that partner with an AP automation solution have a distinct competitive advantage over those that still use a manual process.

AvidXchange integrates with more than 50 different

accounting systems. While several of those accounting systems are used by specific verticals, Microsoft Dynamics GP users span a variety of industries.

One such Dynamics user is Humphrey Management, a full-service property management firm that oversees 5,000 apartment homes throughout the Mid-Atlantic region. Before they grew to that size, Humphrey Management was processing more than 4,500 paper invoices a month – and they were doing so with just four AP personnel and one AP manager.

The company was growing fast, and the buckets of paper being sent to communities to be stamped, signed and sent back were proof of that. Sheri McGowan, the firm's CFO, knew this wasn't sustainable. They were doing everything they could, but they couldn't go it alone. Hey, even Batman needs a sidekick occasionally.

In looking for that sidekick, they found AvidXchange. Humphrey Management integrated in 2005, making them one of our earliest adopters. By automating a decade ago, the firm enjoyed a competitive advantage and was able to achieve an annual savings of $70,000.

In the ten years since, hundreds of other Dynamics users have automated their AP process and have saved their companies considerable amounts of money and time. Very skilled AP professionals like yourselves are no longer bound to manual tasks, and as a result are able to pursue higher-level, more profitable objectives.

You chose Microsoft Dynamics GP for a reason, and you will find its features enhanced by automating your AP process with AvidXchange. We're not changing your accounting system. And why would we? We just want to be your sidekick.

We won't argue over who gets to be Batman, and who is Robin. The real super hero is the AP professional who knows that Dynamics GP and AvidXchange work best in tandem.

If you would like to learn more on how AvidXchange can reduce your costs, improve efficiency and prepare your company for future growth, schedule a free, customized demo today. GP
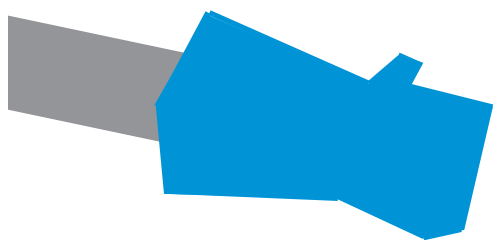
DYNAMICS DUO
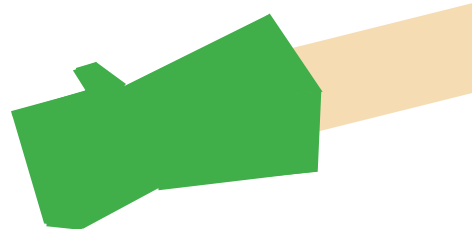
avidxchange

Our Automated AP Process:

2.7 Days

Our clients' average time to process an invoice vs. an average of 28 days when using the manual process.

ELECTRONIC INVOICE RECEIPT

INTELLIGENT INVOICE APPROVAL WORKFLOW

ANALYTICS AND REPORTING

INTEGRATED TO MICROSOFT DYNAMICS

AUTOMATED PAYMENTS
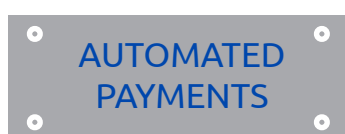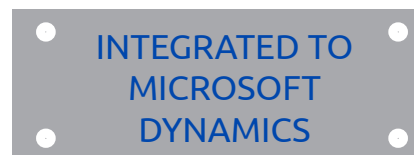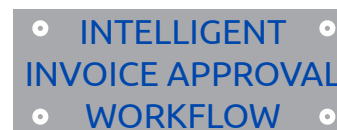
WHY SHOULD DYNAMICS USERS AUTOMATE WITH AVIDXCHANGE?

2005

We integrated our first Dynamics GP client ten years ago and have welcomed hundreds more since then.

98%

Our customer retention rate. We pride ourselves in keeping our clients happy and seeing them grow.

70%

The average percentage of invoices our clients convert to electronic submission in the first year.

The project accounting solution

that elevates
your Dynamics GP
experience

Understanding the Subtleties of Staff Lending:
Keeping Your Department Managers Happy

Written By Jonatan Coutu, General Manager, Jovaco Solutions

Companies are realizing the importance of having their departments organized by specialization. The result: departments are being tracked more closely to have a better understanding of their contribution to the entire organization. Department P&Ls are scrutinized by upper management and this is why department managers are looking for compensation when they are lending their employees to other departments.

For example, with professional service firms such as engineering or accounting firms, departments are normally grouped by discipline as well as by specialization. There are other industries where departments are typically divided by type of business function like in the case of IT firms, where research & development, consulting, support, and sales & marketing are separate cost centers.

By separating and setting up departments as their own cost centers, you can easily have a snapshot of the profitability by department, and by having this detail at a more granular level, it is easier to quickly roll it up into a global view of your entire organization.

The challenge is how to encourage department managers to work together and lend employees from one department to another when one is over capacity and the other has room to take on more work. When there is a cross-functional employee who could be available to assist on another team, they can be "lent" to the department that is under capacity to help fill the gaps. This also helps avoid going through the lengthy (and costly!) process of hiring a new employee or to also avoid any issues associated with a project falling too far behind.

To encourage this partnership, an organization needs to create the notion of inter-departmental billing, a concept where a department is compensated for lending its employees to another group. The employee's original department incurs the expenses for their salary, benefits, training, and especially for their down-time, so why should the department that is "borrowing" an employee receive all the profit? By offering this compensation to the department that is "lending" the employee, both can benefit since it is alleviating non-productive time of an employee and at the same time keeping the organization as a whole more pro-active and profitable.

Let's look at an example where Department A has an employee who is "sitting on the bench" and Department B requires an additional resource:

	Cost (hourly rate)	Benefits & Overhead	Billable Rate	Profitability
Department A	$20/hour	$4/hour	$30/hour	$6/hour
Department B	$30/hour	-	$40/hour	$10/hour

This situation is advantageous to both departments. It means that Department A is now working at capacity, and Department B can now meet immediate demand without rushing into any new hires. At this point, the second department should also consider its upcoming workload and hiring a new employee. An additional employee working directly for this department would increase the department's hourly revenue from $10/hour to $16/hour.

Why Should Department Managers Agree to This Concept?

This is where the subtle differences when calculating a department's profitability could be the most affected. If Department B "borrowed" an employee from Department A without compensating them, the profitability by department would be skewed. Department B would be seen as more profitable since there are no costs associated to

them that account for non-productive hours or overhead, and Department A would be assuming all these costs. This concept of inter-departmental billing therefore helps out the entire organization by attributing the proper costs and profits to each department and ensuring that everyone remains productive.

By utilizing JOVACO Project Suite, a project accounting solution fully integrated to Dynamics GP, it is easy to view P&L by department, as well as track and automatically distribute these inter-departmental charges when an employee enters time to a task within their timesheet and the owner of the project is a different department than the one they belong to. This application has the ability to create rules and charge-back rates depending on the project, level or task. By having managers accountable for their department's profitability, you will be able to keep managers aware of under/over-staffing and have more precise reports and trends in order to review how each department influences your organization as a whole.

Want to learn more about how you can optimize your staff lending process? Contact us or sign up for an upcoming demonstration on JOVACO Project Suite. GP

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Put Me in Coach!
I'm Ready to Play...
with Dynamics GP Toolbox

Written By Alicia Weigel, Technical Sales Team Lead at Rockton Software

Spring has arrived and that means baseball season is here!

If you're a fan of the sport, we would like to introduce you to the newest member of your Microsoft Dynamics GP starting lineup: Dynamics GP Toolbox. If you're looking to enhance your batting order, as well as fill in some gaps out in the field—Dynamics GP Toolbox is the all-star addition you need.

Season Opener: Use the Period Open/Close feature to open, close, and create a new fiscal year across all GP companies and series in one place.

Cover Your Bases: Security is key to any Dynamics GP Admin and we want to help ensure that you are giving the proper access to the right users. Security Manager will take the headache out of managing and changing security roles and tasks.

Don't Leave Runners on Base: Is everyone in GP an active session? With Inactivity Timeout you can make sure that all users currently accessing your system are actively working, and if they aren't, we'll let you log them out and free up that license for another user.

Hold up!: Let users know why you have customers and vendors on hold with the Reason for Hold tool.

Pop Fly: Even the pros hit them, but with the Dynamics GP Toolbox PopUps feature, it's not a bad thing. Use PopUp Notes and Objects to display information to your users on virtually any window in Dynamics GP.

Role Models: Every good team has the guy to look to for advice, use and Mentor fills that role for Microsoft Dynamics GP.

Mentor can find any window in GP—simply type in what you're searching for.

No Hitter: If you want to indefinitely lock your system from user access or just simply log users out while you're doing routine maintenance, then you need System Lockout.

3 Strikes, You're Out: With User Lockout, you're assured after 3 incorrect password attempts the user is locked out of Dynamics GP until you reset them.

Attend an upcoming webinar to learn more about Dynamics GP Toolbox! GP

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Managing Long-Term Investment Assets in Dynamics GP

Writte by: David Eichner, CEO, ICAN Software

Dynamics GP users who need to track holdings of long-term investment assets such as stocks, bonds, collateralized securities, gold, land, etc. know the difficulty of properly accounting for such holdings in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP).

In many cases, organizations have been tracking such assets within complicated Excel spreadsheets manually maintained by accounting staff. A normal scenario is one where all purchases and sales are manually added to the worksheet and where staff regularly have to manually update the current market value of the investment holdings. We met with one organization whose normal procedure was to spend hours each evening looking up each investment's market value on Yahoo Finance and copying/pasting that value into each row of the spreadsheet. They would also spend days at the close of each month trying to reconcile the spreadsheet and identify the inevitable human errors introduced by the manual processes of maintaining the spreadsheet.

Investment Assets for Dynamics GP provided them with a full sub-ledger module in Dynamics GP for tracking buys/sells of investment holding within different trading accounts. And with one click of a button, Investment Assets downloads market values off the internet for all of the thousands of investments within their system. It allows them to import investment masters, buy/sell transactions, investment-

related cash transactions like dividends and interest, and market values provided by their investment broker in a file format.

Some organizations need to be able to accrue interest on interest-bearing bank accounts in one month and then post the receipt of the accrued interest in the following month. Investment Assets provides this functionality with the ability to accrue with either Daily Balance or Average Daily Balance interest accrual method.

Other organizations spend time and effort tracking interest accruals and amortization of discount/premium on amortizable investments like bonds. Investment Assets automates interest accruals for interest-bearing investments and also automates the amortization of discount/premium of amortizable investments.

Family Office organizations that track investments for the members of high net worth families need to be able to track investments within trading accounts by the owners/beneficiaries of those trading accounts. Investment Assets tracks owner percentage of holdings so that a report can be generated for each family member showing their percentage of the market value of investment holdings in accounts that they have a percentage ownership within.

Investment Assets is just one of many great products from ICAN Software Solutions. We make solutions that turn hours into minutes…

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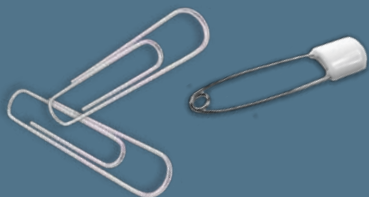
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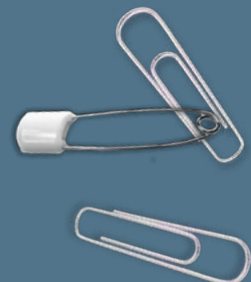
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Arkansas Insurance Company Achieves AP Automation

Written by: Alyssa Kadansky, Marketing Communications Specialist at Metafile Information Systems, Inc.

A great company is comprised of dedicated team members. For Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield, a group of accounts payable employees enhanced their AP system with automation tools in order to achieve greater efficiency, automated workflow, increased visibility and a single, streamlined system.

Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield, an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, was founded in 1948 and is the largest health insurance provider in Arkansas. It functioned for many years as a broken team, with its AP department bogged down with manual and inefficient processes. A document management solution that did not communicate with the company's accounts payable solution and nine separate databases made it difficult and time-consuming for Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield to effectively handle day-to-day accounts payable processes. Invoices could not be sorted and information had to be keyed into each system separately, doubling the work for each invoice.

Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield accounts payable supervisor, Joshua Lundin, knew it was time to upgrade to a system that was made for AP, would allow employees to run reports and increase the company's cash management.

The new accounts payable team that Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield deployed consisted of Microsoft Dynamics GP, MetaViewer document management solution and Binary Stream's Multi-Entity Management. The document management solution's ability to scan and read invoices, route them through workflow and manage much of the indexing was beneficial to the AP staff. It was also customized to fit the company's unique needs. Multi-Entity Management, a solution that manages multiple separate legal entities through a centralized GP database, integrated with the document management solution and allowed them to streamline analytics and increase the efficiency of their GP solution.

"Many of our processes have been simplified," Lundin said. "Now that we have a system that 'talks' with our financial system, we get much better reporting. Our check writes are also much simpler and we no longer have to tie out two systems."

Since implementing Microsoft Dynamics GP, MetaViewer and Multi-Entity Management, Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield has experienced a range of benefits including:

- A fluid, streamlined invoicing process

- Clear analytics and reporting

- Increased efficiency

- Better cash management

- Visibility of AP processes, invoice information and due dates

In addition, the Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield accounts payable staff can work more proactively rather than focusing on tedious manual data entry.

"Instead of being a 'heads-down' environment of mindless keying, we can have our 'heads up' and better keep up with our cost procedures," Lundin said.

The MetaViewer, Multi-Entity Management and Microsoft Dynamics collaboration has helped the AP department reach new levels of efficiency, accuracy and reliability. It's true that a great company is made up of a great team. GP

WORK SMARTER NOT HARDER

	GOOD	BETTER	BEST
	Microsoft Excel	**Microsoft Dynamics GP** Budget Wizard for Excel	**Full Circle Budget**
Import/Save budget amounts directly into Microsoft Dynamics GP.	✗	✔	✔
Utilize budget entry templates in a format defined by YOUR company.	✔	✗	✔
Save budget comments and supporting line item details to database with budget amounts.	✗	✗	✔
Create new accounts in GP when saving budget amounts.	✗	✗	✔
Automate formatting of budget entry templates created via export to Excel from Management Reporter.	✗	✗	✔
Full audit trail of all budget, comment and line item details; including workbook tracking.	✗	✗	✔
Efficient	★☆☆☆	★★☆☆	★★★★

If Excel is your Budget Software, then you need Full Circle Budget.

Full Circle Budget is an essential tool that helps overcome the frustration of budgeting in Excel.

Microsoft Dynamics GP

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Business Data:
What Comes after Cost and Count?

Written By Frances Donnelly, C.Q.P.A, Director of Product Development and Sales,
Quality Essentials Suite of Horizon International

The guiding documents for business performance are the balance sheet, the profit and loss statement and cash flow details. These stand the test of time for communicating a snapshot of the health of any business. They require no translations as they are in the universal language of finance. These tools have a primary focus on cost and count. This means they let you know how much of something you have (or plan to have), the cost to your organization of doing business and the value you put in (or have earned) on that business activity.

We all know the changing face of business requires data beyond these legacy documents and snapshot moments to find success. Simple snapshots of cost and count are just not frequent enough for dynamic decision-making. How then do we source instantly required data for our best decision-making beyond cost and count?

Dashboards: Certainly we are proceeding to solve a part of this information challenge with Business Intelligence dashboards. Dashboards provide more frequent slices or snapshots of our core data. Still, much of this Business Intelligence data is supported at the source by that same cost and count data that supports our legacy standards. So, without some additional effort, dashboard tools solve only a part of our total problem.

Devices: The burgeoning atmosphere of The Internet of Things provides a myriad of devices that can enable instant, or almost instant, communication. This, too, is another part of the solution. But, beyond today's weather, our best route to our next destination, or today's sales numbers, the

ease of access provided by these devices still may not mean better decisions. Once again this is because the business data provided so instantly is still sourced in those legacy cost and count systems.

Shifting from Business Intelligence to Decision Intelligence

Businesses often rely on a staff member with terrific spreadsheet and data extraction skills to create Business Intelligence reports. Part of this reliance was because historically the tools were challenging. Another was that staff members often supplied missing data needed for complete analysis. After all you can't compare sales performance to goal if you don't include the goal in the analysis.

What we see is that considerable effort occurs to extract data, massage it and publish it in static reports to management.   But after delivery of these reports is management doing anything more with the information than monitoring the status quo?

In seeking access to data that moves beyond these legacy uses do you understand:

1. What data you need for great decision making that is not part of your core cost and count systems?

2. The decisions and actions you expect managers and others to take based on the performance reflected in your dashboard data?

Without addressing these requirements, your business intelligence data cannot make the transformation to decision intelligence data.

Extending Traditional Cost and Count Data to Achieve Decision Intelligence

Software solutions, like Horizons' Quality Essentials Suite, can extend the traditional cost and count data of legacy ERP systems to capture and secure additional data needed to guide decisions. This tool allows organizations to collect a wide range of data that is not part of existing cost and count systems in an organized and structured fashion. These results can then be incorporated in traditional business intelligence dashboard gauges.

In today's enterprises, quality assurance and quality control activities apply to every business function imaginable. We may need to monitor temperatures in a production facility, or complete off-site vendor inspections for vendor qualification requirements. There may be customer bill-

ing errors that need to be reported and tracked as non-conformances and investigated for root cause analysis. We may need to monitor execution of activities for product safety and easily access records demonstrating conformance.

These wide ranging needs for data beyond cost and count are supported with nine data types for use in reporting the results or outcomes of testing, processing steps or other actions. These data types support a range of information capture from numeric data with precision up to five places of decimals, to dates and times. Capability for text content in the form of predefined lists, which reduce opportunities for human variation, to true/false selections or unlimited text input, ensures fullness and accuracy of reporting on most any observable or required result or event.

Of particular interest to most organizations is that the structural architecture of the software is designed to support defining records for a wide range of events or data collection points customized to the end users business environments. Result data can be captured or performance specifications defined for almost any business action desired. It can be applied to grading vendor performance or tracking vendor lot numbers, it can support defining process steps for customer credit approvals or to monitor lead time when responding to customer inquiries.

The built-in dashboard tools ensure that access to this wide range of data, beyond the core count and cost needs, is available in real time. The nature of the toolset as part of your improvement management system means you and your team will be empowered to go beyond the monitoring of data from moment to moment to achieve the desired decision intelligence for your business.

To learn more about transforming your cost and count data to achieve decision intelligence, visit our website www.qualityessentialssuite.com where you can sign up for email notification of the topics covered in our Summer Learning Video Series, including Decision Intelligence – Data that Goes Beyond Cost and Count. GP