Summer 2016

GP OPTIMIZER MAGAZINE

Streamlining Incoming Shipments
with Container Management

What to Consider Before Taking
Off Into The Cloud

Supercharging Your
Dynamics GP Investment

GP OPTIMIZER MAGAZINE

Welcome to the 2016 Summer Edition of the GP Optimizer Magazine! After four years in circulation, we are proud to continue offering this valuable resource to Dynamics GP users everywhere. Not sure what exactly you're reading? The GP Optimizer is a digital magazine comprised of articles provided by Microsoft Dynamics GP Add-On Partners. Each article focuses on making your investment in Microsoft Dynamics GP more worthwhile by addressing issues that you may be experiencing and providing ways to remedy them.

Over the years, I have heard of many requests for a solution catalog that lets Microsoft Dynamics GP customers know "what is out there" to solve real business needs and here it is! The Independent Software Vendors (ISVs) that contributed articles to this edition use their years of industry expertise to highlight solutions to problems that GP users face in their daily routines.

Rockton Software has been in the Microsoft Dynamics GP Channel for over 17 years. We've established ourselves as fervent supporters of the greater Dynamics GP Channel, and we want you to excel in business by leveraging other tools and knowledge from our friends in the community.

We want to thank all participating ISVs—AvidXchange, Binary Stream, Blue Moon Industries, FASCOR, GPUG, Greenshades Software, Horizons International, ICAN Software, Journyx, JOVACO, k-eCommerce, Metafile, Olympic Systems, and Paramount WorkPlace—for their help in producing this great magazine, as well as their commitment and support to the Microsoft Dynamics GP Channel. We also invite you to engage with one of our Featured Resellers when it comes time to purchase any of these outstanding products.

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

Mark H Rockwell

Mark Rockwell
President, Rockton Software

On the Cover

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Hide & Seek for a Prize!

Hidden in the contents of this magazine is this sunglasses emoji, representing the Summer 2016 Edition. This Hide & Seek contest is easy:

1) Find the emoji 

2) Click here to submit which page # you found it on

3) You'll be entered to win one of four $25 Amazon Gift Card prizes up for grabs!

Thanks for reading the GP Optimizer Magazine and happy searching!

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CONTRACT

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How Microsoft GP Users Created Efficiencies for Their Organizations with Automation

Written By Jen Ittenbach, Marketing Communications Manager, **AvidXchange**

Creating Accountability and Efficiency: Check out some firsthand examples of how Microsoft GP users optimized their AP processes with AvidXchange™ automation.

In the accounts payable space, AP automation is becoming a hot topic. If you're unfamiliar with the term, it's the streamlining of the accounts payable process. Automation adds significant value to the AP department, including real-time visibility into performance and financial status, increased accuracy, and improved compliance with tax laws and industry regulations.

Many Microsoft Dynamics GP users are already taking advantage of AP Automation. Why are so many companies getting on board? They are realizing that by eliminating the manual tasks associated with paper invoices and checks, they can reduce their AP and payment processing costs significantly. Organizations can track invoices electronically and search a central repository for invoice data that can be accessed anytime, anywhere.

AvidXchange™ helps organizations gain greater control over their financials and make informed decisions that help drive success. In a recent survey of verified AvidXchange™ users by TechValidate, we were able to see just how much AP automation improves business processes for companies similar to you!

Located in Nashville, Tennessee, SMS Holdings Corp. is a holding company that provides services to multiple industries including healthcare, hospitality, retail, sports and leisure, transportation, and aviation. SMS Holdings Corp. uses Microsoft Dynamics GP and automated their AP process with AvidXchange™ three years ago. Since then, they've improved controls and visibility into spending, and reduced their invoice and payment processing costs by as much as 40%.

SMS Holdings' AP Manager, Lori Williams, says that automation has alleviated the burden of chasing down approvers. "AvidXchange has helped put accountability on the coders and approvers, and taken it off of the accounts payable department."

Photo by rafal_olechowski/iStock/Thinkstock.com

Another Microsoft Dynamics GP user, a medium enterprise health care company, reduced the amount of time used for filing, improving the invoice approval process by 80%. In verified data from TechValidate, this company's AP manager told us, "AvidXchange has improved our overall operational efficiency, and we can't imagine going back to our old process."

With automation, you can easily remove repetitive and time-consuming tasks like opening and sorting invoices, manual data entry, and waiting for interoffice mail or overnight courier for approvals. Automation reduces invoice approval time from an average of 28 days to just 2.7 days. Think of all the things you could accomplish if you weren't busy copying and scanning files to archives, searching for lost or misplaced invoices, and fielding inquiry calls!

Are you interested in automating your payables, and creating efficiencies for your AP team? Our automation specialists will create a customized demo and walk you through the streamlined workflow of an automated AP process. For more information, visit http://marketing.avidxchange.com/ap-automation-for-dynamics-demo-request. GP

Investment Assets for Microsoft Dynamics GP

Written By David Eichner, **ICAN Software**

Inglewood Park Cemetery is located in the state of California, and handles approximately $70M in investment assets. Inglewood Park Cemetery, and its sister company, Park Lawn Cemetery, each have several funds in addition to the State required Endowment Care Fund, the earnings from which are used to maintain the cemetery grounds and facilities. The other funds include Commodities and Services purchased in advance by their clients, the earnings from which offset the price increases over time. Jacqueline Gonzalez, Vice President of Fund Management, works directly with the Companies' Investment Committee in managing these investments.

Inglewood Park Cemetery used to leverage AS400 CCMS software, which had a General Ledger (GL) package designed for cemeteries. This meant that any asset reporting had to be processed manually using Microsoft Excel spreadsheets. Jacqui recalls, "This worked fine in the '80s when we had just 4-5 investment managers and 10 investment portfolios, but we've grown into a well-diversified operation with thousands of investments, such as equities, real estate, fixed income, mortgage backed securities, and much more, across our 42 portfolios."

Their month-end and year-end processes became very tedious to get through. It used to take them a full month to get through month-end processing, reporting and reconciliations. They were also very prone to error when dealing with their manual processes. "What we put in, we got out, and too much of our time was dedicated to checking and reconciling reports." Jacqui shares.

The volume of work required to handle monthly amortizations and interest accruals made it necessary for those entries to be captured on a year-end basis. Due to the manual reporting of investments, the preparation for the yearly audits was extremely time-consuming. Jacqui shares, "Our auditors needed to do more testing on our investment holdings to make sure the information we were using was accurate."

ICAN Software Solutions came to Inglewood Park Cemetery's aid and everything has since changed. The cemetery went live on Microsoft Dynamics GP with ICAN Investment

Assets in 2012 and they now have complete and accurate tracking and history of each investment holding, complete with customizations specific to their industry and so much more.

Closing books each month is now accomplished in approximately 10 days. "We can pull monthly amortizations, interest, and income accruals. The reconciliation process is so smooth, it takes literally a push of a button to initiate a reconciliation report back to our statements." Jacqui continues, "I'm still amazed and still enjoy learning all the ways ICAN is able to help us." InvestmentAssets is just one of many great products from ICAN Software Solutions. We make solutions that turn hours into minutes…

We Work Late So You Won't Have To!

Want more information? Check out InvestmentAssets and our other products like Mass Apply Receivables, Mass Apply Payables, Print Cash Receipts, Automatic Cash Receipts, and Vendor Price Matrix at www.icancloudapps.com GP

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The Possibilities are **Grand with Omni Price!**

Written by Angela Melhus, Technical Support Lead, **Rockton Software**

Are you one of the thousands of users that is limited by pricing within Dynamics GP?

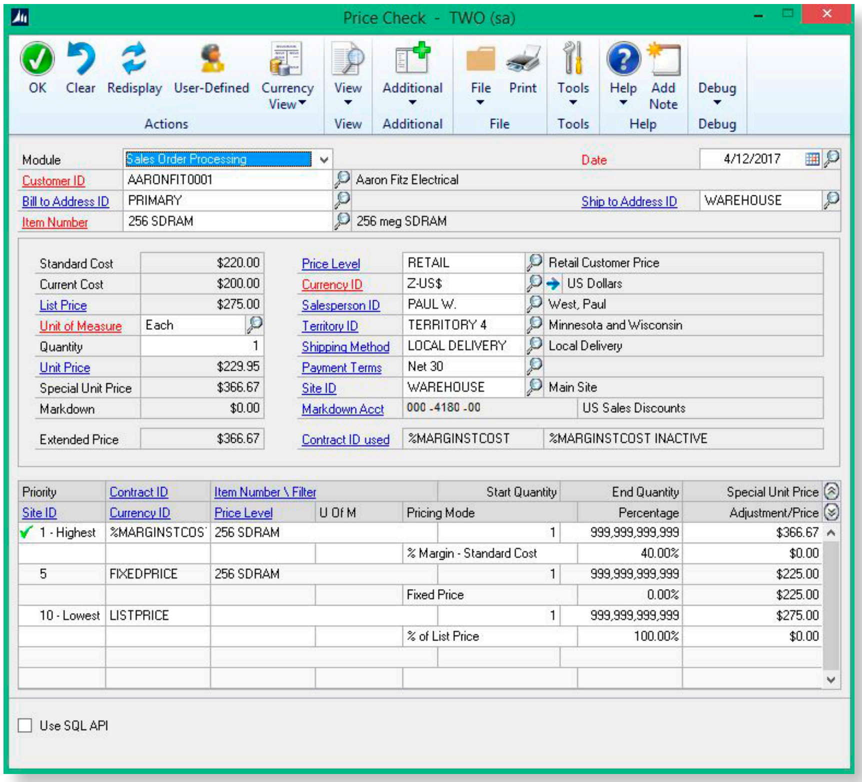
Well, it's time to let go of those frustrations! We're here with good news: the possibilities are grand with Omni Price. Do you need to . . .

- Create Multiple Contracts with Different Priorities?
- Utilize multiple pricing modes?
- Select specific Customer Numbers and/or Item Numbers within a range?
- Bring in a price based on a Sales document value?
- Define Contracts using date ranges?
- Simplify creating and/or updating Contracts?

If you answered yes to any of the above questions, let's take a look at these awesome capabilities gained by using Omni Price:

Multiple Contracts with Different Priorities

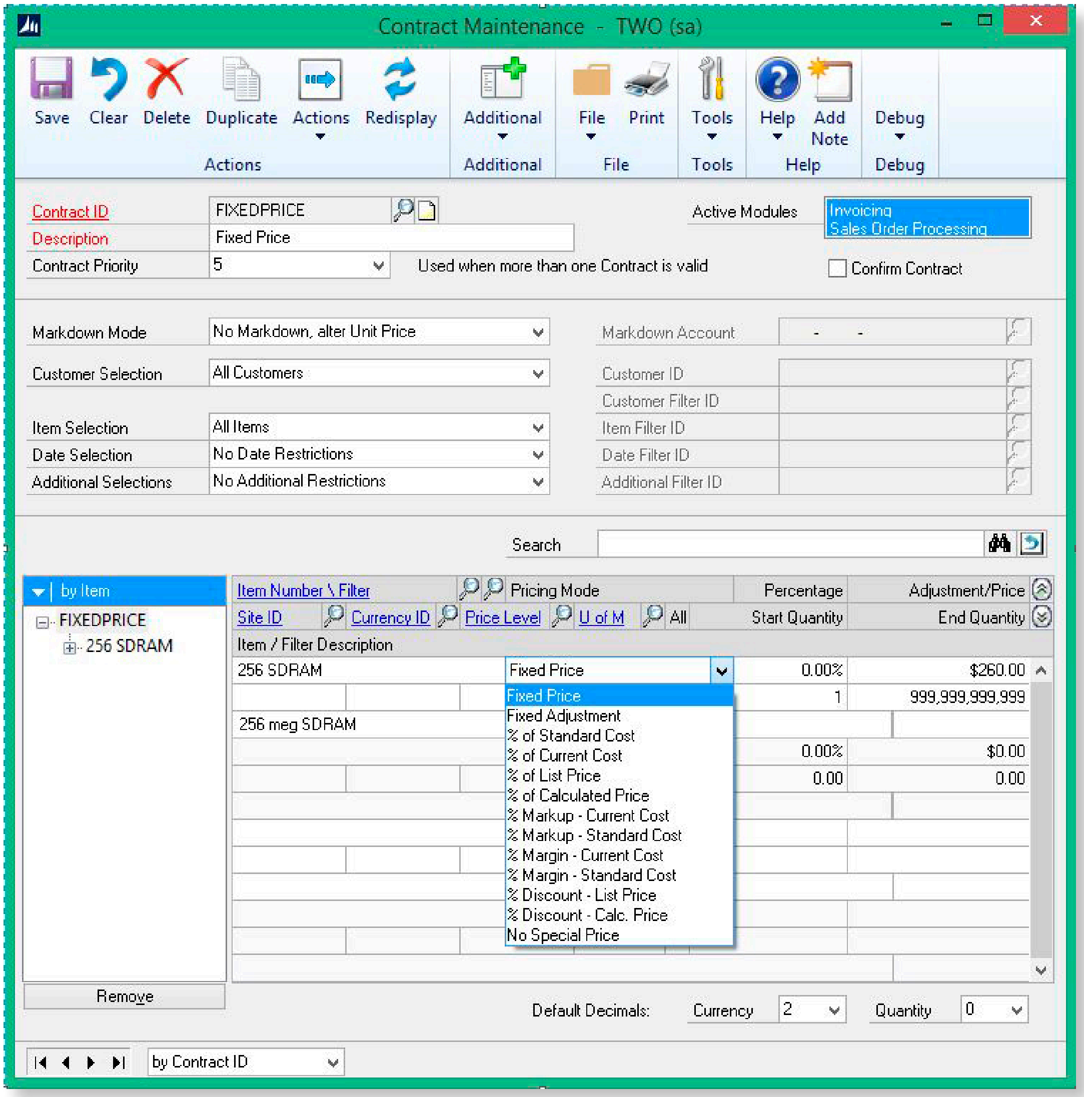
You might have multiple pricing scenarios where you need a few contracts setup with different priorities. For example, Contract A might be a higher priority than Contract B, even though the pricing on Contract B is less. You can set up Contract A to have a priority of 1 and Contract B to have a priority of 2 through 10. You assign the priority in the Contract Maintenance window (Cards | Omni Price | Contracts). Here is a quick view of how you would see the Contracts when doing a Price Check for a Customer and an Item Number:



Multiple Pricing Modes

Your company might have a need to set up contracts using different pricing modes. The most common ones used are Fixed Price and % of List Price. But, did you know you can do % Markup or % Margin on both Current Cost and Standard Cost fields? Or, sometimes you just want to give a range of customers an extra discount on their current calculated price using the % Discount – Calc. Price Pricing Mode.

Here is a screenshot showing all the Pricing Modes available in the Contract Maintenance window (Cards | Omni Price | Contract):



Restrict by a Sales Document Value using Additional Filters

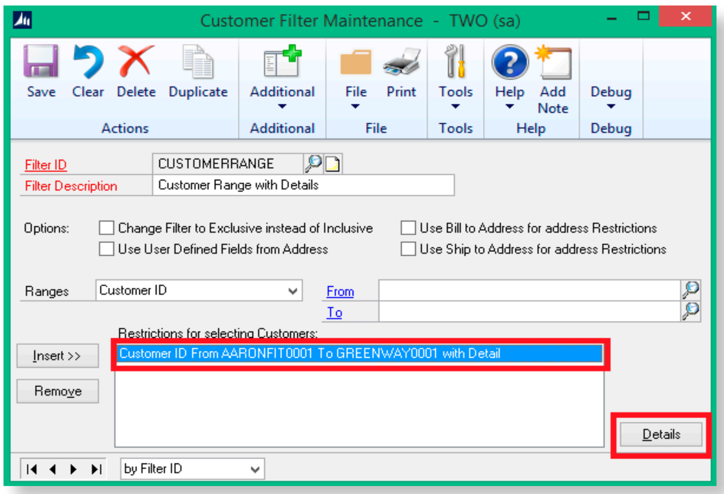
Have you ever needed a price to pull onto your Sales document based on the User Defined field value, Price Level, or Ship To Address ID? If yes, you can create Contracts and assign an Additional Filter ID to it where you have several ranges to select from.

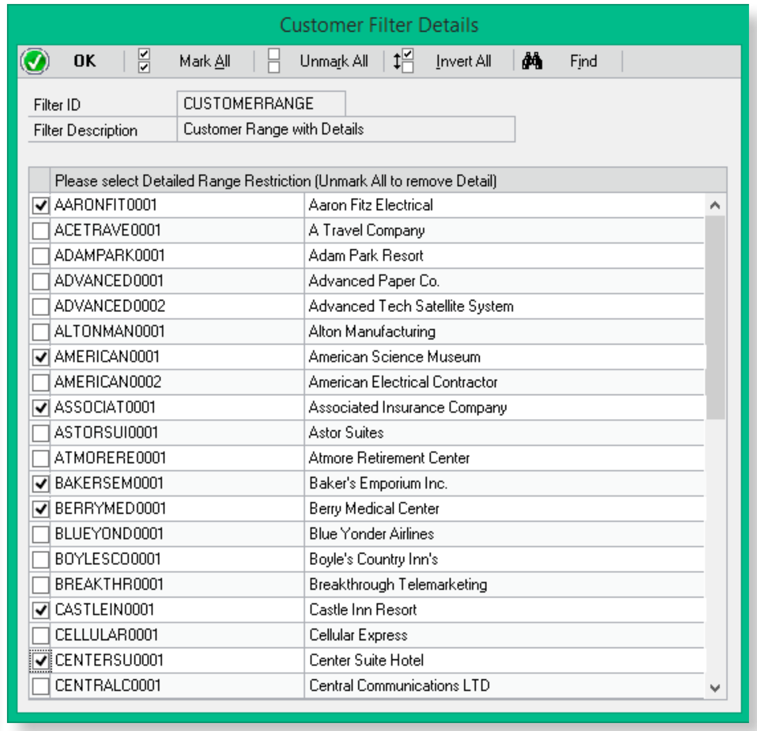
Restrict by Dates

Have you ever wanted to set up a contract with a Customer for a specific date range or needed to enter your pricing for the next period, quarter, or year prior without Omni Price selecting those contracts until that specific date has arrived? With the Date Filter ID in Omni Price, you can assign specific dates for when your Contracts are active.

Restrict by Customer Number and/or Item Number Ranges with Details

Have you ever needed to select a range of Customer Numbers and then within that range, select specific Customer Numbers to give them contract pricing? If yes, you are in luck with the awesome Customer Number restriction. Here are a couple screenshots showing how to set up the Customer Filter ID (Cards | Omni Price | Customer Filter):





Note: *You can also create an Item Number range with details (Cards | Omni Price | Item Filter). For example, you can use the Item Selection of Use Item Filter for all Items and then create a specific Item Filter ID for your Item Number range with Details.*

Creating, Copying, and Updating Contracts

- If you are creating new Contracts and you have the prices specified outside of Omni Price, you can look at Importing the prices using the Import/Export Contracts using Excel window (Microsoft Dynamics GP | Tools | Utilities | Omni Price | Excel Import / Export). ***Note:*** *If you are unsure of the format the Excel file needs to be in, it is recommend to create a Contract for one item, for example, and export a copy of it from the Contract Maintenance window.* Click here to learn more.

- Have you ever set up a contract and needed to create the same one for the next time period or for another customer? You can utilize the Duplicate feature in the Contract Maintenance window by clicking the Duplicate button, and then adjust the new Contract as appropriate.

- Have you ever needed to adjust your Contract pricing by a percent or a dollar amount? The Contract Mass Update window allows you to enter Contract restrictions, select specific Items on Contracts, adjust the Amount or Percent field, and update using change or replace amount or percent.

We've just highlighted six instances where Omni Price can make your ***work simpler & easier***® in Dynamics GP, but it doesn't stop there. The pricing possibilities truly are endless with Omni Price. We invite you to see for yourself with a free 30-day trial, watch this quick demo, contact our sales team, or simply learn more at our website. GP

Streamlining Inbound Shipments with Container Management

By Janice Phelps, **Blue Moon Industries**

As with most ISVs (Independent Software Vendors), the software we develop and sell as a product usually comes from solving a problem or addressing a need for a customer. The modules that make up our Operations Suite are no exception to this approach. However, rather than just rattling off the modules and telling you what you can read in the brochure, let's talk about the challenges, and how we can solve them and improve the lives of our customers by using functionality in one of our popular modules, Container Management.

Dynamics GP includes modules to manage purchase orders from vendors, sales orders to customers and inventory management to track the items bought and sold. Many people refer to this as the "Supply Chain", as it manages the complete cycle of buying, storing and selling 'durable goods'. We have customers that buy and sell everything from room-sized machines that make laminated cardboard game boxes to customers whose products are so medically advanced they are just gaining FDA approval. We have customers who buy and sell items in a variety of units of measures and are buying and selling all over the world. And let's face it – there are all kinds of challenges out there.

On the procurement side, we often talk to customers who buy from overseas and have their items delivered to them via shipping containers. Sometimes a "shipment" is actually multiple physical containers of items. Within those containers there could be items from one vendor, from multiple vendors, and even if the items are from one vendor there may be items from multiple purchase orders included in the shipment. That in itself can be a bit complicated. When you add managing the dates from the time of the creation of the shipment to the time it arrives at the door of their warehouse, the fact that generally, the customer owns the contents of the container as soon as it's placed "on the water", and even the requirement to calculate the landed costs of the shipment by apportioning the items by the amount of space they take on the container (dimensional weights), it can be downright daunting.

Photo by William Bacon/Hemera/Thinkstock.com.

Our Container Management module not only allows you to create individual containers with the items that make up the shipment, we allow you to post those containers into an "In Transit" location. This gives visibility to the items and shows them as owned while they are in transit, along with the associated landed costs attributed to the shipment. We give you the ability to enter in the dimensions and weights to apportion landed cost at the cube level. The dates you are managing at the shipment level will roll down to the individual purchase order lines so that users can see when the items are expected to be received, simply by updating the container.

Contact our Channel Management team for more information about Container Management! GP

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Maximize profits.

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- **Eliminate** errors with automated data validation.

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Understanding the State of Your Profitability Union **with Time Tracking**

Written By: Curt Finch, CEO, **Journyx**

As someone in an accounting or financial role, you likely love numbers. So do I – data is the catalyst of everything we do at Journyx. As such, I'd like to open with a few interesting statistics.

Journyx, in partnership with MSDynamicsWord.com, conducted a survey at the beginning of 2016 of Mircosoft® Dynamics™ GP users and published a whitepaper of the results, The State of Time and Expense Tracking for Microsoft® Dynamics™ GP. According to this survey, sixty-four percent of respondents indicated a need to track time in their organizations. Fifty-three percent of those respondents did not, however, have a time tracking solution in place.

Of those who did have use a time tracking solution, sixty-four percent did not integrate with Dynamics™ GP. Why? Two of the top reasons for this were either they didn't know it could integrate or the solution they had simply could not integrate.

The survey also found that the top three challenges faced by Dynamics™ GP users when it comes to timesheets are

1) getting timesheets submitted on time,

2) correcting erroneous timesheet data and

3) not being able to integrate time tracking with other business applications.

The Cost of Non-Existent (or Inefficient) Time Tracking

I'm sure you've heard the old saying many times: "Time is money." It's our mantra at Journyx, and the reason I created the software and founded the company in the first place.

If you're not tracking time at your company, you're lacking a crucial piece of information that directly correlates to

profitability. If you don't have visibility into where your employees' time is being spent, and projects are consistently over budget and late to delivery, then you're bound to be losing money.

Even if you are tracking time at your company, but constantly having to struggle with late timesheets, collecting time data from disparate locations (spreadsheets, pieces of paper, multiple timekeeping systems that don't integrate with GP), and/or correcting bad data, then you're losing countless hours just from inefficiency – resulting in higher stress levels, employees not getting paid on time, and lost profits.

Misunderstanding profitability drivers is costing American companies many millions of dollars, cumulatively. While time tracking may seem boring from an outside perspective, it actually provides you with the key insights you need to know your profitability, and therefore to develop good business strategy. Without it, your CEO is operating with a blindfold on - which is certainly in your competitors' best interest, but not in yours.

Photo by Lai Ieng Yiap/Hemera/Thinkstock.com

What You Should Demand in a Good Time Tracking System

The philosophy driving a good time tracking system should be centered around two things: Minimize effort. Minimize errors. That's it.

How can you minimize effort? For users, they need time entry to be simple – track all their time (payroll, billing, project costs, vacation and other time off) in one system. In addition, they need an easy-to-use smartphone app for tracking time anywhere, automatic reminders for submitting their timesheets, and memorized entries so they can quickly enter time for frequently-used tasks.

For managers, approvals must be flexible enough to meet the workflow of the business, but simple enough to do on a smartphone. For administrators and accountants, the product needs to be designed to integrate into relevant business systems, such as GP, ADP, or Microsoft® Project Server, all at the same time.

How do you minimize errors? First and foremost, make it impossible for users to enter bad data in the first place by automating the validation of time data, and include a robust approval workflow that allows the most relevant people to reject time when it's clearly wrong. Furthermore, it is never acceptable to manually reenter data that is already in a computer system. This leads to delays and mistakes.

Additional Things You Should Demand from a Timesheet Vendor

Dynamics™ GP has a great user interface for accountants; but a timesheet for end users needs to feel more like a typical web application you see on the internet. Great smartphone capability is a must for entering time from anywhere and any device.

The needs of your legal and IT departments must also be considered early in the buying process. Therefore, the security and integrity of the data in the vendor systems is critical. That's why both the vendor and (separately) their data centers must comply with the relevant SOC standards for internal controls. A vendor that can provide either a cloud or on-premise solution is helpful, as regulations and standards change.

Multi-level approval systems and automated data validation capabilities ensure that bad data cannot make it through the time tracking system and impact your GP database.

Battle testing integration technology will guarantee no reentry of data, ever.

By seeking out a timesheet vendor that checks all of these boxes and fits your organizational needs, you can make the boring timesheet system the crowning achievement of your Accounting department – decreasing work for your and increasing profits for your company. GP

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Simplify Searching with SmartFill!

Do you get tired of the endless searching in Microsoft Dynamics GP if you can only recall a few letters of a name or part of an item ID? Don't make searching a chore!

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SmartFill makes searching feel like fun & games

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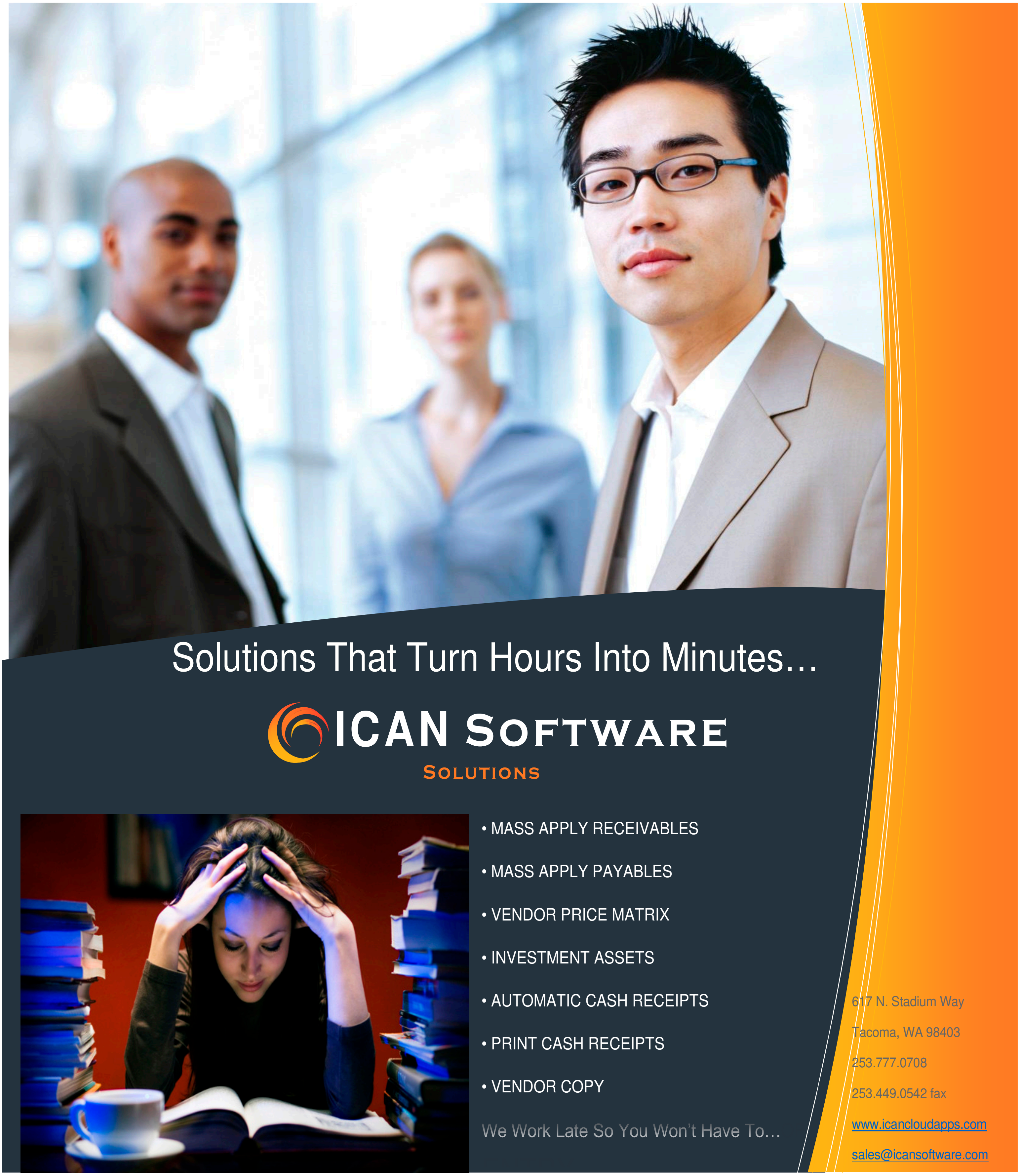

Photo by Mathias Rosethanl/iStock/Thinkstock.com

Easier Cash Receipts in **Microsoft Dynamics GP**

Written by: David Eichner, **ICAN Software**

Dynamics GP users who enter cash receipts that are to be applied to a single invoice often wish that they could just enter the invoice being paid and have the entire cash receipt entry done for them.

One such Dynamics user had modified their sales invoice document to include a barcode for the invoice number on the invoice stub that would be returned with payment. With **Automatic Cash Receipts**, they are now able to barcode read or manually enter the invoice number on a floating window above the cash receipt window. The entire cash receipt window will be populated and the apply to the specific invoice is done automatically. They can change the cash receipt amount if full payment of the invoice was not received. Otherwise, they can simply hit the ENTER key and move on to the next invoice being paid. This allows them to enter a large number of cash receipts in a very short period of time.

Other users of Dynamics GP need to be able to provide a cash receipt to customers when payment is received. Print Cash Receipts allows them to print a cash receipt document from the cash receipts window or from the AR transaction entry window. Users can also reprint cash receipt documents from the AR inquiry windows. The cash receipt document can be modified with Report Writer to include company logo or other changes necessary.

When entering a cash receipt for a large number of invoices, many Dynamics GP customers grow frustrated with the lag that occurs as each invoice is marked for apply. Mass Apply Receivables allows one customer to enter a cash receipt for a very large amount and then import the apply data for that payment against hundreds of thousands of invoices. Once imported, Mass Apply Receivables can be run in a mode that automatically applies the specific one-to-many apply records imported.

Many customers record returns in Sales Order Processing that need to be applied to a specific invoice. If they store the invoice in the Customer PO Number field, Mass Apply Receivables can be run in a mode that searches for and automatically applies any payments, returns or credit memos that reference a specific invoice.

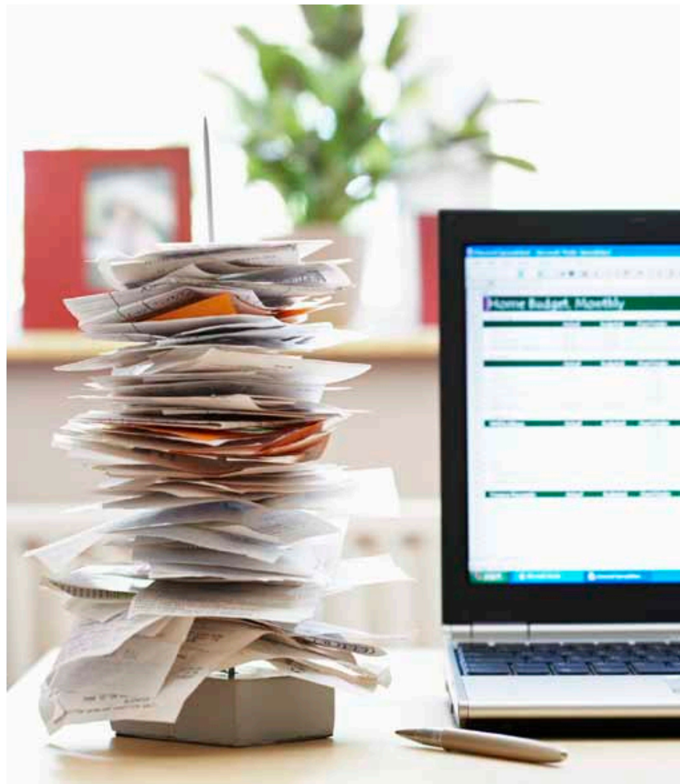

Photo byMartin Poole/Photodisc/Thinkstock.com

Other customers just want to run an auto apply process across a wide range of customers and document dates—without having to do it one customer at a time. Mass Apply Receivables can also be run in a mode that auto applies open documents for a range of customers and document dates. It also can be restricted by customer class if needed.

These products are just a few of the many great products from ICAN Software Solutions. We make solutions that turn hours into minutes…

We Work Late So You Won't Have To!

Want more information? Check out the products above and our other products like Mass Apply Payables, Vendor Price Matrix and InvestmentAssets at www.icancloudapps.com GP

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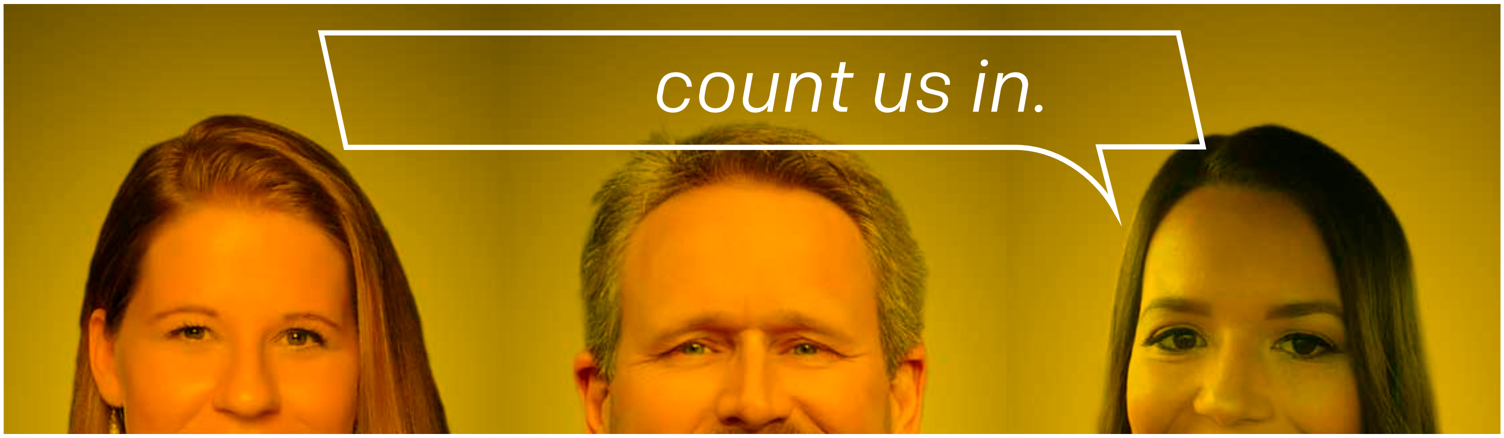

When CGB Enterprises, Inc. decided to send 9 team members to Summit 2015 in Reno, Nevada, the organization looked at the investment as an opportunity to educate their staff on Microsoft Dynamics GP and Dynamics CRM. The value they achieved at last year's annual conference was so great, CGB plans to send 12+ team members to Summit 2016 in Tampa, Florida this October 11-14. Dynamic Communities, Inc., the parent company of the Dynamics GP User Group (GPUG), was able to sit down with CGB and learn more about why, as an organization, CGB continues to invest in sending a team to Summit each year.

About CGB Enterprises

CGB ENTERPRISES, INC.

CGB has been an innovative and progressive leader in the grain and transportation industries since 1970, when it began modestly in a small office in St. Louis, Missouri with 3 employees. Today, CGB operates a global enterprise with over 2,000 employees overseeing a diverse family of businesses.

The company provides an array of services for grain farmers, from buying, storing, selling and shipping of the crop, to financing and risk management. CGB continues to be one of the largest shippers of grain on the inland river system, and operates off both Microsoft Dynamics GP and CRM platforms. Summit provides their admins and end-users with high-level insider knowledge from Microsoft and user-produced education on how to maximize the performance of GP and CRM.

Count On Your Team at Summit

"We consider [Summit] an opportunity for continued education and for our team to broaden their horizon," said Sean Goodgion, CGB Director of IT. "We will send all of our GP and CRM Admins to Summit 2016."

Summit is the leading live event where expertise is shared openly and honestly in an authentic community-driven environment that allows attendees to hone in on their product version, industry and role—providing the ultimate customized experience that offers return on investment year-round. Knowledge gained at Summit has real-life application and the potential for remarkable results.

"The ROI, in our case, is found in the less tangible takeaways," said Larry McGee, GP Systems Project Manager. "It's found in the knowledge gained at Summit that allows our team to support CGB's implementations."

Goodgion also mentioned how the ROI they achieve is measured in the "a-ha moments," which are "priceless and immeasurable." "Summit is an investment in our people, which benefits the company. You can't put a real number on the ROI of Summit when the knowledge gained is immeasurable."

The CGB team attending Summit year after year has found that they bond over this shared experience. An organization, such as CGB, who implements both GP and CRM doesn't always find the time for the admins and users of each product to discuss their projects and systems. Summit allows these teams to cross-over and hold discussions about the organization in a broader format, thus creating a mutual understanding of each team's goals.

How will you *Count On* your team at Summit 2016? By sending team members from a variety of roles, your organization will canvas the can't-miss annual conference for users of Microsoft Dynamics GP. Blending special access to Microsoft leadership with credible peer-to-peer knowledge exchange – this event delivers electric keynotes, visionary product roadmaps, focused learning and optimal networking as users gain instrumental solutions for their everyday GP challenges and larger organizational goals. In a multitude of industries, Summit is well known as a **premier** user-centric experience.

Discover for yourself why organizations like CGB Enterprises continue to send their teams to Summit. Register your team by visiting: www.gpugsummit.com/GPOptimizer. Learn more about Summit by visiting: www.gpugsummit.com.

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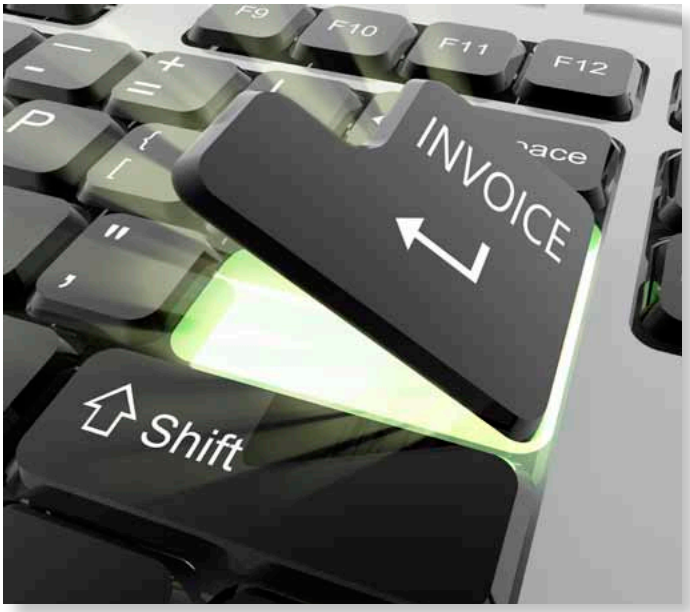
Automate the Sales Order Transfer Process with SOP Auto Invoice

By Janice Phelps, **Blue Moon Industries**



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The order to cash cycle is one of the most critical functions within a company. This cycle starts with taking and entering a quote or a sales order for a customer, then as quickly as possible, getting the order approved, allocated, fulfilled, shipped and invoiced to the customer. Hopefully, the customer will then pay you as soon as possible. Sounds easy, right?

There are many challenges that may come up when trying to streamline this process. Often, the order cannot be fulfilled upon receipt, and additional quantities of items need to be ordered from a vendor and/or manufactured before they can be shipped to the customer. Another barrier can be the process itself. Existing Dynamics GP functionality is a manual, multi-step process between the fulfillment of the orders, knowing which orders to transfer and then the action of transferring the orders to invoices. Then there is printing and posting the invoices, and creating any back order documents for unfulfilled quantities. When you factor in that these rules may be different depending on the order type being processed, it may seem impossible to find a way to streamline the steps.

This is where our SOP Auto Invoice module comes in. After evaluating the different order types of an organization and how the rules apply to each type, you can configure them to automatically transfer fulfilled quantities to invoices and concurrently create back orders for the unfulfilled quantities on orders. Order fulfillment is detected either by the SOP Order Fulfillment window, the SOP Entry window, or by integrating with our Operations Core module, which updates fulfillment from your warehouse or 3PL system. There is also the option to immediately print the invoice using Word Templates, Forms Printer from Accountable Software, Dynamics GP Report Writer or to auto-email the invoices to customers by leveraging standard Dynamics GP email functionality.

Not only does it handle the functions surrounding the order to invoice process, it also allows you to setup automatic posting of the invoices on a preset schedule. This means that the invoices are sent to customers and updated in the Dynamics GP system automatically – thus shortening the cycle between order entry and invoice delivery.

The functionality described above can significantly improve the process, however there are always exceptions. For example, what happens if the customer goes on hold between the time the order is shipped, and the invoice needs to be generated? We have an option to either allow transfer or not. What if the invoice date needs to be today's date, not the original order date? We have an option to update the field.

In our experience, we have learned that almost every organization using Dynamics GP is looking for ways to work more efficiently and to use their staff for more than just data entry. With our SOP Auto Invoice module, users can spend more time looking to drive new revenue, get invoices paid faster, and in general, provide better service to their customers.

Contact our Channel Management team for more information about SOP Auto Invoice! GP


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What to Consider Before Taking Off Into The Cloud

By Salim Khalife, CEO, Paramount WorkPlace

You can't talk technology today without talking about "the cloud." Cloud-based business software continues to gain popularity and is at the top of the agenda of most technology speakers. It has been estimated that 72% of organizations have at least one application in the cloud, or a portion of their computing infrastructure in the cloud. Virtually every major software developer has a cloud-based offering and is planning further innovation in the cloud. Clearly, the market is headed in this direction.

Cloud-based spend management solutions, for example, offers finance and operations access to one system and anytime, anywhere collaboration. Everyone is viewing the same picture. This single view is also possible when using web-base and mobile solutions that are not hosted in the cloud. However, the cloud offers developers and users more flexibility to incorporate change and introduce new innovations relatively quickly. In a Saugatuck Technology survey, 65% of participants said a finance systems change is being considered, planned, or implemented at their organizations. "Inflexibility & fragmentation" were noted as limitations of their current systems, limitations that the cloud can mitigate. The cloud can also eliminate the expenses associated with the upgrade, implementation, and customizations of multiple versions of your software.

Focus on solving the problem - not on the deployment

Moving to the cloud should begin by identifying specific goals, mapping the potential benefits of the application to those goals, and mitigating the potential drawbacks. Ask yourself, is the cloud going to expedite a specific process, or solve a problem our current technology is not solving? Will it provide better security, access, and collaboration than what we currently have? Will it offer us a better ROI? We've all seen flashy presentations that promise various benefits. The question is, do they apply to your specific situation, and are they aligned with your company strategy? Any technology should be thought of as a means to an end - a solution to a specific problem.

It's not all or nothing

When you align your business goals with potential benefits, those goals and benefits may differ across departments, locations, users, and functional demands. It may be best to implement a cloud application in one area first. In our experience, most successful companies make the move in steps. Rather than attempting to standardize on one offering or strategy, their priority is to obtain measureable benefits that help achieve specific goals. Hosted and on premise solutions can co-exist happily – and can even be tightly and seamlessly integrated.

Don't move simply for cost savings

Cost savings is a commonly cited reason for moving to the cloud. Before you make a decision primarily on this premise, though, it's worthwhile to know that it ultimately may not save money, and may possibly cost more than remaining with a traditional deployment model. Gartner's 2014 CIO survey shows that cost savings account for only 14% of the reasons for organizations' use of the public cloud. While prices in some areas are dropping, not all cloud service pricing is coming down – in fact many software-as-a-service vendors (SaaS) raise their subscription prices annually, escalating the cost of ownership.

Saving money may end up as one of the benefits, but it should not be assumed. Utilize total cost of ownership models and check with a financial specialist about the implications that a switch from capital expenditure to operating expenditure may have for your organization.

A developer's viewpoint

At Paramount WorkPlace, during our weekly executive meetings, feedback from customers and prospects is part of our discussions. That feedback confirms that the interest in cloud-based applications is strong, and a move in that direction is inevitable. While our strategy is innovating in cloud solutions, as a software development company, we have many specific considerations. Are we creating a cloud solution simply to check the box, or will we solve real business problems our clients are experiencing? Will the cloud further simplify pricing? Will it help us enhance our services and process, how, and by how much? What innovations do we develop and introduce to clients who are not yet ready – and may never be ready?

The forecast

The cloud deployment model is here to stay and moving at least some components of spend management software to the cloud makes smart business sense for most organizations. We have chosen to dedicate our development to creating no-compromise web-based, mobile, and cloud-based solutions that address our clients' needs today and into the future. Solutions that add value and help clients work smarter and more efficiently.

So should you take off into the cloud?

The likely answer is yes, but don't rush. As our CTO Chris Baird, who is a pilot, puts it, don't take off before you follow flight procedures. Do your pre-flight check; know your critical airspeed, weather forecast, frequencies, airspace, destination airport, and alternate contingency plans. Do your performance, and weight and fuel calculations. Don't rush. The key is to have a solid business case supporting the move. Take the time to make careful, data-backed decisions. Develop a strategy and plan before you take off, and you'll be able to take full advantage of the benefits cloud technology has to offer.

About Salim Khalife

Salim Khalife is the Founder and CEO of Paramount WorkPlace. He holds Master of Science in Computer Science from the University of Detroit. Paramount WorkPlace develops, provides, and supports advanced spend-management solutions focused on requisition and procurement and travel and expense for mid-market and enterprise organizations worldwide. With over 750 active clients and over 110,000 active users, Paramount WorkPlace is recognized both as an intuitive stand-alone solution, and as an out-of-the-box seamless integrated extension of Microsoft Dynamics GP, AX, NAV, and SL; Sage 100, 300, and 500; and Blackbaud Financial Edge. Paramount WorkPlace is headquartered in the metro Detroit area, with offices in Georgia, North Dakota, Ohio, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, and Ontario, Canada. Reach the company at http://www.paramountworkplace.com/ or 800-725-4408. GP

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Integrate Your **Project Planning** to Dynamics GP

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Planning the Way to Your Project's Success

By Jonatan Coutu, **JOVACO**

When an organization decides to take on a project, it is understood that it is because they believe it will be profitable. But in order to reach that ultimate goal, multiple aspects must be monitored to ensure that the bottom line meets the expectations of those across the entire organization. The success of every project largely depends on how well it was planned and managed, in regards to time, cost, budget and risks.

Project planning is the key to success for any project. This means that project managers have an important role across all of the different phases throughout the lifecycle of a project. During the planning phase, they must detail and allocate tasks to their staff members and/or sub-contractors. Then once the project has started, they need to track the progress to make sure that the different individuals or teams involved are meeting their deadlines, and that the project is remaining on budget and on schedule. Project managers need to be able to quickly react to changes (as that is the one thing that is inevitable!) in order to make informed decisions. Finally, once the project has been completed, they need to be able to go back and analyze what made this project a success or what they need to improve on if a similar project is to arise.

In order to support their operations, it is important for project managers and staff members to be using the appropriate tools that will give them the ability to stay on top of their projects. Here are the some of the important factors to keep in mind:

Open the lines of communication

By giving your employees visibility into the tasks that have been allocated to them by their project manager, they will have a better overview of their workload, deadlines to complete their work, as well as instructions relating to a specific task. By introducing an intuitive timesheet integrated to a

planning tool, there are fewer requirements to discuss with their team lead before they begin their tasks and keep their team members informed of their progress.

Stay up to date on your projects' activities

Project managers must know at all times what their staff members are currently doing, what has already been done and what remains to be completed. They need to be able to identify in a timely manner if there are any gaps, if the schedule is at risk and whether any adjustments to the project are necessary. These issues need to be addressed as soon as possible in order to reduce the impact on the rest of the project, so it is important to have a tool that updates this information in real time to quickly react to any changes.

Maximize your staff's and equipment's capacity

For project-based companies to stay profitable, they need to ensure that all their employees are working to capacity in order to maximize their operations. By thoroughly planning all projects, this gives an organization a complete overview on where there may be under or over capacity so they can make the appropriate modifications in order to level their teams.

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When leveling teams, there may also be the need to simulate different scenarios to assess the impact of allocating certain tasks to different people. Project managers must therefore be able to ensure that the right resources are being assigned to bring a project to timely completion. Furthermore, monitoring staff utilization levels can give an indication of whether the project team will be at risk for busy and stressful periods throughout the project. This can provide the team leads with cues as to when they should be more aware of possible decreases in motivation levels and increases in stress.

Monitor spending and budget

Just like there can be an impact on the time required to complete a project, having different staff members perform a particular task can also have an effect on the budget. Managers need to be able to forecast their spending, as well as their earnings to completion, based on the particular staff members allocated to certain tasks. By evaluating the various scenarios, they could assess what would be the impact if it were a junior or senior that would be completing the work. Allocating the junior to the work may be less costly to the budget, but if they take three times as long, the impact on the time to complete the task should also be taken into consideration.

Justify the effort spent

By including more elaborate descriptions on the task that was completed and how much time it required, the staff's efforts are justified and these specifications can be used to deliver more detailed documentation to the client when needed. This transparency raises a client's confidence and diminishes the risks of conflicts in regards to hours that have been billed to a project.

Using the right tools, such as a robust project planning tool that is integrated to the employees' timesheets and a project management solution like Project Suite, project managers are able to easily communicate information between them and their team members. Everyone has access to accurate, real-time information to manage their operations, and can stay up to date on the status of ongoing projects. A project becomes even easier to track when all this data is integrated to Microsoft Dynamics GP, which then allows both the project manager and management executives to review project costs and revenue and have a better understanding of the profitability of a particular project, typically one of the key metrics in reviewing its success.

Visit our website or contact us to learn more about JOVACO's project resource planning solutions. GP

Sell Smarter, Faster, and Easier.

Make Dynamics Sell For You.

Written By: John Pollard, **k-eCommerce**

With online business-to-business sales alone projected to break 1.1 trillion in the US by 2020 (to say nothing of business-to-consumer sales), it's clear that the Web is the marketplace of the future.

And it's not hard to see why: eCommerce is quick and convenient for buyers and sellers alike. Customers can hop on their tablets from the comfort of their own living rooms, find the products they're looking for, read reviews, compare, and place their orders. The merchant receives payment within seconds, and can send the shipment on its way from anywhere in the world.

The same is true of business-to-business clients, who prefer the ease and efficiency of online trade to the endless catalog-flipping, phone calls, and faxed-in orders of the traditional method.

But as with any other venture, eCommerce presents its own set of challenges, which would-be online businesses must meet if they are to succeed.

And for most companies, the biggest issue comes down to integration.

On the one hand, you're running your office from your ERP, which has all the information on your product catalog, your customers, sales records, and more. On the other hand, you've got your business running from your web store… which has all the information on your product catalog, your customers, sales records and more.

See the problem?

For companies like this, it becomes a juggling act to copy or re-enter information from the web store to the ERP and back again every time they add a new item, change a shipping method, or make a sale. Transactions that

might otherwise be swift and simple become complicated, repetitive, and tedious.

The worst of it is, this jumble of information can actually back up the flow of your business, forming a bottleneck that slows everything down and keeps your company from reaching its true potential for success.

So what's the answer?

Easy: get your business an eCommerce solution that integrates with your ERP.

By connecting your web store to your ERP, any data you add or change in your ERP is automatically sent to your store in real time, from products and prices to shipping and customer info. Orders placed in your store, meanwhile, go directly to your ERP for fulfillment.

No more dual data-entry. No more inventory errors and canceled orders. Just simple, streamlined control of your business: one system, one store, one synchronized database.

This is exactly the solution k-eCommerce built for Whitaker Brothers.

Going strong since 1945, Whitaker Brothers was no stranger to smart business—having risen to become a

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global leader of the data destruction equipment industry from a company that got started selling paper shredders.

But when it came to online commerce, there was room for improvement.

Whitaker Brothers' web store ran on Magento open source… a platform that doesn't integrate with their Microsoft Dynamics™ Great Plains ERP system. So that meant any time a client placed an order on the web store, Whitaker Brothers had to print out copies of the order and send them to every department involved in fulfilling it, from invoicing to shipping.

As if that weren't bad enough, they also had to re-enter every order from the web store back into Microsoft Dynamics™ GP just to complete processing. This would be a time-consuming chore even for a moderately successful business… but Whitaker Brothers' web orders just kept on piling up.

Everything changed when they switched to an eCommerce platform developed specifically for Microsoft Dynamics™ GP. Their new k-eCommerce solution integrates seamlessly with GP, effectively automating the order process. Now, whenever a client places an order, it goes directly to their ERP where all the departments involved can simply invoice, pack, and ship the order.

Integration improved every aspect of Whitaker Brothers' business. Customer service reps, for example, now have instant access to complete customer account information pulled right from the company's ERP.

Thanks to the power of k-eCommerce, Whitaker Brothers has been able to leverage their web presence to extend the reach of their business farther than ever—all without having to increase their staff or make cuts to their current departments.

But just as integration can help your business simplify, it can also help you diversify.

Wireless Giant is a company with highly developed business-to-business and business-to-consumer sales channels alike. Founded in 1996, they originally sold pagers, and branched out over the years into mobile phones and accessories.

Today, offering more than 90 wireless phone concepts for retail and acting as national distributors of their own product lines, Wireless Giant needed a solution capable of meeting their needs on both the B2B and B2C levels.

And once again, k-eCommerce rose to the challenge through full integration with Microsoft Dynamics™ GP.

As with Whitaker Brothers, ERP integration fully automated the order process for Wireless Giant while maintaining an accurate inventory to prevent orders of out-of-stock items. k-eCommerce's design team even worked with Wireless Giant to develop a customized look and feel for their retail portal. B2C clients now enjoy fast, efficient shopping on a sleek, fully-responsive, mobile-friendly site.

B2B clients, meanwhile, take advantage of personalized catalogs and unique pricing tailored to the numerous dealer accounts with whom the company does business. Clients log into the B2B portal and can make quick, hassle-free orders from the range of products and prices specially configured to their individual accounts.

Online commerce can expand reach, reduce overhead, and diversify sales channels for any company from local businesses to multi-national corporations… but providing clients and staff alike with a smart, smooth, efficient experience is critical. By integrating your k-eCommerce web store with Microsoft Dynamics™ GP, you arm your business with all the power you need to succeed. GP

Visit www.k-ecommerce.com for more information.

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From Paper to Paperless: Document Management for Controllers

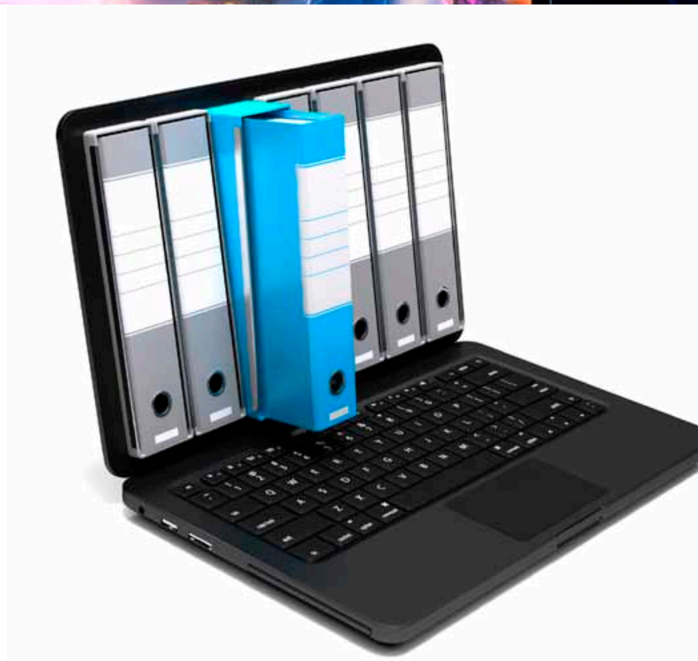
Written by Alyssa Putzer, Marketing Communications Specialist, Metafile Information Systems

In your organization, controllers have the responsibility and challenge of making sure the accounts payable department is running smoothly, being cost-effective and staying compliant. Automating paper processes in the accounts payable department is a way that controllers have helped to mitigate compliance, control and cash flow issues within their organizations.

The issues of paper-based processes

Accounts payable departments suffer when there is a lack of visibility. In fact, according to the Institute of Financial Management, 45 percent of controllers surveyed in 2014 claimed that a lack of visibility into invoices and payables was their top challenge in terms of payables. Forty-two percent of controllers said that difficulty handling, managing and finding invoices was their biggest challenge. It is difficult for organizations to manage cash flow when accounts payable processes are manual and inconsistent and visibility is lacking. Approval processes are drawn-out, resulting in penalties and fewer early-payment discounts. PayStream Advisors found that only 29 percent of organizations always get early-payment discounts.

In addition to struggling with visibility, a paper-based process makes it extremely difficult to implement control measures. According to Ardent Partners, the average organization receives 74 percent of its invoices in paper, email, PDF or fax format. Without an automated document management/AP automation solution in place, information



needs to be keyed in manually and paper documents need to be hand-delivered, organized and stored. This lack of control makes it easy to lose documents, mis-key information and decrease accounts payable efficiency.

Paper processes also hinder an organization's ability to maintain compliance and security. These days, it is becoming simpler for people both outside of and within your company to gain access to financial information. Without an audit trail and a tool to help you remain compliant and automate your accounts payable processes, your financial information becomes more vulnerable and at risk for unintentional errors and alterations.

How can a document management/AP automation solution help?

Controllers have realized the detriments of paper-based accounts payable processes, and the benefits of document management to help curb these challenges. Document management/AP automation solutions utilize optical character recognition (OCR) technology, which automates the capture of data from invoices and other documents. This means that paper does not need to be scanned and information entered manually. When this information is extracted, the solution matches all related documents to a transaction and links it to the information within a Microsoft Dynamics ERP solution.

AP automation automatically routes documents to appropriate staff members for review and approval. This is based on your organization's unique business rules and can be adjusted. As documents are being automatically routed, document management also allows for real-time visibility into the process. Managers and executives can see the status of invoices, identify bottlenecks and improve their decision-making. This all comes together in the seamless integration of a document management solution with your company's Microsoft Dynamics ERP system. It eliminates manual data entry and consolidates all financial documents into a streamlined paperless business process.

Document management technology enhances your company's cash management. In fact, 41 percent of senior finance executives surveyed by IOFM said that improved visibility into invoices and payables information was the biggest benefit of AP automation. Data captured in real-time with a document management system can be used to budget and make better, more informed decisions. AP automation comes with dashboards, charts and graphs to give insight and visibility to controllers so they can better monitor due dates and capture more early-payment discounts. Additionally, controllers can access financial information any time, from anywhere with mobile technology and cloud-based computing.

Control is also improved with document management as it decreases the approval cycle time, streamlines exceptions resolution and ensures accurate and timely payment. Controllers are automatically alerted about bottlenecks and invoices that are coming due to better prioritize. Ardent Partners found that it costs organizations using a document management solution only $2.20 to process an invoice, while other companies pay an average of $19.10.

AP automation also helps businesses reduce the risk of compliance and security violations. With document management, your processes become more well-defined and consistent, reducing unintended changes and mistakes from being made to documents. Your organization can better comply with government and internal document retention requirements, as well as keep a complete audit trail for activities occurring with invoices and other financial documents. This audit trail increases security by eliminating back-dating of invoices, as well as unauthorized payments and internal fraud. Controllers can easily segregate duties and manage who has access to which documents. Electronically storing information also eliminates the chance of misplacing invoices, so your accounts payable staff can always pull up a specific document when requested by an auditor.

If you're a controller, making sure your accounts payable team is running smoothly, operating in a cost-effective manner and remaining compliant is at the top of your priority list. With a document management/AP automation solution, like MetaViewer from Metafile, you can make sure that you have better cash management, control and compliance that a paper-based process just can't provide. GP

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Supercharging Your **Dynamics GP Investment**

Written By: Robert Farrell, Marketing Director, **FASCOR**

Those relying solely on Dynamics GP, or another ERP system, to effectively manage supply chain data may be fighting an uphill battle. So what's the answer and what does this mean for your ERP investment?

ERP or WMS?

Each scan of the bar code, each click of the mouse, and each push of the button says something about your business. Tools, technologies, systems, and personnel throughout practically any business are generating data at an unprecedented clip. As a result there is more information available than at any time in history; and this means more opportunity to leverage technologies, streamline operations, boost efficiency, and accelerate productivity. So what's the best way to manage this broad spectrum of information within your supply chain?

Today's Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems, such as Dynamics GP, are capable of handling vast amounts of data. And while not specifically designed to operate within the supply chain realm, these systems are generally adequate for smaller, low volume distributors. But as companies grow, those in warehousing, distributing, manufacturing, and other supply chain-driven industries will need to replace or enhance ERP capabilities with a Warehouse Management System (WMS).

Just as ERP systems were created to operate within the world of finance, a WMS is specifically designed to handle the types and volume of data being generated throughout supply chain and/or manufacturing processes. Sales, order fulfillment, shipping, replenishment, inventory, tracking, manufacturing raw materials and beyond, are all areas of the operation must be tightly integrated as part of a complete supply chain management strategy. A WMS drives responsiveness and supports critical decisions with the most up-to-date and accurate information. This in turn synergizes the entire operation turbo-charging efficiency, productivity, and ultimately improving the bottom line.

In today's world, warehouse, distribution, and transportation management systems are affordable for virtually any size company and offer various levels of functionality to meet varying needs, including your unique requirements. Fortunately for smaller to mid-size businesses a WMS doesn't need to break the bank. Now even modest sized companies can get the same results as their Tier 1 counterparts without spending millions.

If you have already deployed Dynamics GP, or another ERP system, a WMS leverages the strengths of each to deliver a truly automated and responsive distribution environment. The result is a clear, accurate, and on-demand view of the complete operation.

Dynamics GP Integration

Today's complex supply chain operations must be well-choreographed to generate, feed, process, update, receive and disseminate information at every stage. From sales, order fulfillment, shipping, replenishment, inventory, tracking to finance and beyond, all areas must be part of a complete warehouse management strategy. A tightly integrated ERP/WMS delivers the level of visibility, control and responsiveness needed to support such a strategy.

When it comes to WMS / Dynamics GP integration, care should be taken to select a solution from a partner with proven Dynamics GP experience. Understanding the intricacies of Dynamics GP is key to accelerated implementation while fully leveraging the strengths and capabilities of each system.

Real-Time Visibility / Real-World Examples

As a Microsoft development partner, FASCOR has the expertise to seamlessly bridge WMS with Dynamics GP. Here are just a few examples of the results that are being delivered:

RepairClinic

RepairClinic relies on Microsoft Dynamics GP to automate, plan, and track business processes. Adding FASCOR's WMS to the mix provided real-time visibility across the entire warehouse and supply chain. The results were new levels of productivity, accuracy, and cost-savings. RepairClinic Vice President of Supply Chain put it this way: "People are amazed at the technology driving our distribution center. Adapting to changes in picking, packing and all other areas has increased productivity while improving quality."

Today the company is:

- Gaining real-time visibility and reducing bottlenecks by integrating WMS to MS Dynamics GP
- Operating an integrated and efficient distribution center resulting in a 100% productivity increase
- Streamlining picking and shipping to process over 8,000 orders on peak days with minimized headcount
- Boosting order fulfillment speed and accuracy
- Improving shipping efficiency while controlling related costs

ORR Safety

ORR's nine distribution centers process orders for equipment from more than 600 suppliers. Integrating ERP, Order Fulfillment, Inventory, and Shipping is critical to streamlining processes, ensuring accuracy, and controlling costs.

FASCOR's integrated solution provided ORR Safety with:

- Annual Freight & Labor cost savings of nearly $500,000
- Seamless Dynamics GP integration
- An integrated environment that doubled annual revenue growth.
- Sustained improvement in order fulfillment speed and accuracy

Minimal headcount increase

Real-Time visibility in orders, SKU movements, inventory status, individual/team productivity and other key metrics.

ORR's Corporate Distribution Manager stated: "FASCOR knows distribution. Their integrated WMS and shipping solution saves us nearly $500,000 each year in freight and labor costs."

Manufacturing & Distribution

Recently a well-known Midwestern consumer goods manufacturer made the decision to expand distribution to a national scale. Painfully aware of the logistical challenges that come with expansion, the company realized that they had reached the limit of Dynamics GP in this area. Managing these tools, processes and resources required new levels of control, visibility and automation. A new WMS solution with MS GP integration was critical to manage growth.

After an extensive search FASCOR WMS was selected. Today this company is documenting new levels of control, tracking, and efficiency. Furthermore the scalability of FASCOR WMS is providing just the levels of functionality needed to meet the demands of today while anticipating what lies ahead.

There are a number of other examples of how an integrated WMS/Dynamics GP solution is delivering measurable results:

- 99% + order accuracy
- Year-end inventory virtually eliminated
- 100% Productivity Increase
- Increased Order Processing with lower labor costs

Conclusion

There are a number of supply chain-related challenges facing companies today.

Real-time visibility: Immediate access to the latest information allows quick response to changes on the floor, provide continuous improvements, and hold everyone accountable. Within FASCOR WMS this is provided through a tool known as Web Tools™.

Flexibility: Businesses must have the freedom to choose the tools that fit their needs, direction and budget. Technologies should empower users – not limit decisions.

Integration: Technologies, tools, and processes must be seamlessly connected. In this way information flows across systems, departments, and processes to update, track, and manage the entire operation.

Scalability: Technology must be configurable, affordable, and grow to support future needs.

The key to overcoming warehousing and distribution challenges lies in the ability of a WMS to bridge disperse tools and processes found throughout. FASCOR's WMS with its Dynamics GP integration maximizes the return on your investment by augmenting ERP capability with WMS sophistication. Visit www.fascor.com to learn more about the structured flexibility of FASCOR WMS. GP

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Documents for the Quality Function are Not Just Reports

By Frances Donnelly, C.Q.P.A., Horizons International

Photo by TCmake_photo/iStock/Thinkstock.com.

When Printed Output is More than a Report

A frequent question from customers during the investigation of acquiring new software is always "What about reports?"

The great news is that when working with Microsoft Dynamics branded products the reporting options are legion. There is a range of tools from Report Writer, to SQL Reporting Services, to Microsoft Word templates, to the newly delivered Power BI tools. We are always very confident that the user will have more than adequate access to their data in the form of reports and inquiries.

However, we need to recognize that this question isn't always about reporting. Sometimes the question is really about the generation of business documents. The user is really asking "Will I be able to easily build or generate the documents needed specifically by my business?"

In the quality control function Item Specifications, Certificates of Analysis, and Certificates of Compliance are three such named business documents that are often initially dismissed as simple reporting. But, just like a check or an invoice that is used to authorize or confirm specific actions these quality documents need to be generated and controlled in a scalable manner. We need to ensure that the generation of these customer mandated quality documents does not drag down or delay our customer service commitments. This is why when selecting a quality management software solution we have to be sure it provides tools that fulfill the data needs of these documents.

Generating Certificates of Analysis and Compliance

A Certificate of Analysis or Certificate of Compliance reports the results of recorded tests and inspections and compares these results to the product specifications. Each customer receiving such a certificate may have very distinct requirements about the content of the certificate. The customer may also have specifications related to the layout of the content. This combination of variability for the document must be accommodated in the processes used to generate the document.

Quality Essentials Suite provides these accommodations with several distinct functions that support the process of generating a certificate. These are:

- User Defined Fields
- Certificate Templates
- Certificate Layouts

User defined fields are provided as part of the Certificate of Analysis (COA) print form. The user is permitted to define the data type and label of up to 12 fields found in the header function of the COA report. This functionality provides the flexibility to include in the printed COA content any data that is specifically required by customers but that might not be part of your traditional operating data. Examples of such content might be Rail Car ID, or origination numbers.

Certificate Templates are records created on a per-item basis using the COA Template form. They allow the user to define the results that will be supplied in each COA. The user will select from the available inspection and test records the specific test results that they want to include on a COA that is generated using that template. This aspect of the process focuses on ensuring the correct result data in the correct sequence is applied to the business document.

Certificate Layouts are developed using the report designer tool that is supplied with the software. We provide several generic reports for the collection and presentation of COA data. These default layouts have built-in behaviors to calculate averages and/or evaluate data in a range to locate the highest and lowest values. These default layouts may be copied, modified, and then renamed to create an unlimited variation of COA layouts. When executing the COA print process, the user selects one of these named layouts from a drop-down list.

Similar tools and functions are provided in the software to support generation of item specification reports. Our Item Specification report generation form provides broad capability to include or exclude content and our report designer tool provides for the creation of unlimited layouts of the desired content.

Closing the Loop Means Generating Documents On-Time

The process of defining product specifications, and then managing, evaluating, and confirming that the specifications are met is a mandatory requirement in many industries. When left to manual or paper-based systems for control and delivery of these proofs, the risks of non-performance can be significant.

The capability to automate and manage these functions ensures there is complete support for this closed loop process of confirming item specifications are met during the production process. The availability of the solution as a concurrent multi-user access tool ensures that generation of required documents to support the business processes can scale efficiently and accurately as the business grows.

To better understand how robustly the software supports these challenging requirements for custom and targeted documentation, we suggest you visit our web site, www.qualityessentialssuite.com or contact us to request a demonstration of the software capability targeted to your needs. GP

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Time to prepare
for FY2018 Implementation

Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) Revenue from Contracts with Customers (Topic 606)

Written by Jim Beers, **Olympic Systems, Inc.**

For those public companies wishing to prepare financial statements meeting Generally Accepted Accounting Principles, (GAAP), FASB 606 will be implemented in the first fiscal year beginning after December 2017. Nonpublic entities begin in the first fiscal year beginning after December 2018. However, because transitional reporting is required for the year preceding the implementation year, the time to prepare is now.

This article will provide a study guide and links to more detailed discussions about the issues related to the new revenue recognition standard. The exercises in the "Getting Started" section will prepare you to discuss the revenue recognition standards with your external financial advisors.

The standard itself can be downloaded from fasb.org. Click here to download.

The standard is 150 pages with the following sections::

Overview and Introduction	P. 1 - 11
The Standard, topics 606-10-5-01 through 606-10-32-45	P. 13 - 41
Financial Disclosure and Presentation	P. 42 – 47
Implementation and Guidance	P. 48 - 67
Examples and Illustrations	P. 68 – 150

Study Guide

1. Download Topic 606 and read the Overview and Introduction. It sets the stage.
2. Before plunging into the details of the standard, read a summary explanation of the processes used to recognize revenue. Click here to read.
3. Read the standard, pages 13-42, highlight the paragraphs pertaining to your business.
4. Read the standard, pages 68-150, highlight the examples pertaining to your business.

Getting Started

The new revenue recognition protocol requires more information to perform the earned revenue calculation. The items needed are:

- Contract Performance Obligations, i.e. Line Items
- Stand-Alone Price for Contract Line Items
- Contract Price
- Allocated Contract Price

Contract Line Items

List the performance obligations from prior contracts. Contract line items are capable of being delivered and consumed by customers separately from other contract line items. For example, equipment installations could be performed, tested, and control passed to the customer separately from operator training in the simulation facility. Performance obligations, or contract line items tend to be sold either separately or in groups. Think of them as a list of products and services your company provides to customers.

Stand-Alone Price

Think about stand-alone prices as list prices for contract line items. These prices are not necessarily the published prices on price sheets, but the price that is regularly received from customers. As part of this analysis, review the cost accounting build-up used to calculate the stand-alone price. It is desirable to be able to present the price build-up and to use the same methods for most contract line items. Stand-alone prices are not contract specific, but may be related to distinct product lines and service departments.

Contract Price

The contract price is the total amount that the customer agrees to pay for a collection of contract line items.

Allocated Contract Price

The allocated contract price is the portion of the contract price allocated to each contract line item based on its standalone price. For example, the Allocated Contract Price for a Contract Line Item is calculated as:

$$\text{Allocated Contract Price Contract Item xx} = \frac{\text{Stand Alone Price Contract Item xx}}{\text{Sum of all Contract Stand-Alone Prices}} \times \text{Total Contract Price}$$

This analysis will need to be performed each time there is a contract modification. The stand-alone prices used at contract inception should be reused unless the contract line item is changed. So it will be useful to keep a master list of stand-alone prices reflecting the company's current business practices and a separate list for each contract.

Contract Detail Summary

If the analyses suggested above are performed, you will have most of the components necessary to calculate earned revenue.

Types of Contract Line Items (Performance Obligations)

Revenue recognition is triggered by the completion, delivery, or passing of control of a contract line item to the customer. Once revenue recognition has been triggered by completion of a performance obligation, the amount of revenue recognized depends on the characteristics of the contract line item. There are three common types of performance obligations.

- The most common type of contract obligation recognizes revenue immediately upon completion. An example might be a training class.

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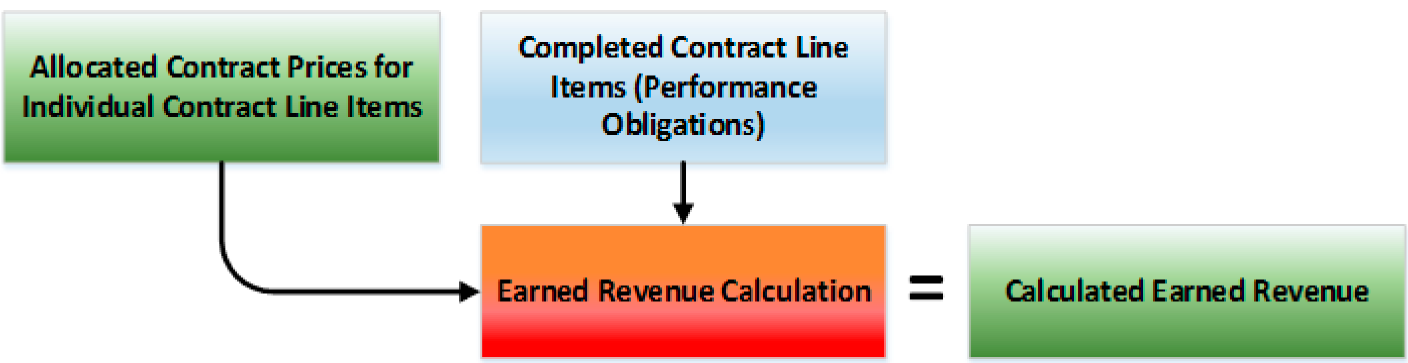
- The second type recognizes revenue over a fixed period. An example might be an annual software annual maintenance fee. In this case the revenue would be recognized equally over 12 months.
- The remaining types of performance obligations relate to less standard types of products and services. The revenue recognition calculations can vary widely based on the ability to recover costs incurred if the contract were to be cancelled and the likelihood that the product could be used for another contract without incurring undue costs.

Much of the new standard is devoted to issues experienced in more complex types of contracts. Understanding those particular requirements as they relate to your business may alow companies to adopt contract structures that make revenue recognition calculations easier to perform and more stable as contract modifications occur.

Revenue Recognition Triggers

Revenue recognition is triggered by the completion of a contract line item (perfomance obligation). Now that the revenue recognition characteristics of the individual contract line items have been determined, the last information needed before calculating earned revenue, is a list of the completed line items. Try to identify easy methods that personnel in operating groups may use to communicate completion and customer acceptance of individual contract line items to the finance group.

Implementation Planning



For an overview of Transition Methods and Options please read this article:

More Background and Discussion

For a historical view of the changes made since the May 2014 release of the ASU 2014-09 please read this article.

Olympic Systems Inc. - Revenue Recognition Solution

Visit our website at: http://www.OlySystems.com to learn more about our software solution for calculating and recognizing earned revenue. GP

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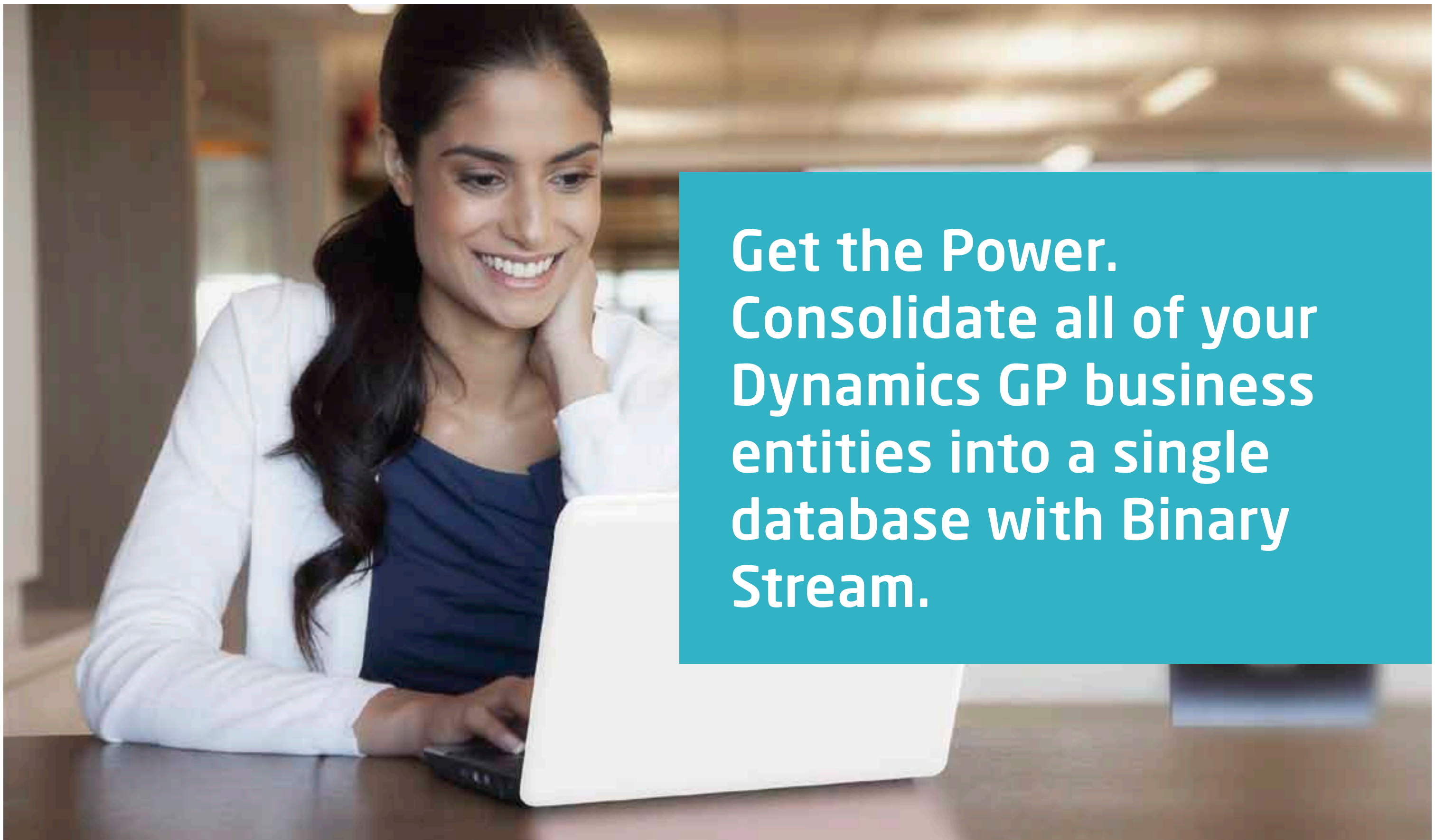

Microsoft Dynamics GP:

Top 5 Signs that your Team is Ready for Super-charged Productivity

Written By: Maria Louie, **Binary Stream**

Microsoft Dynamics GP was designed in a way that requires an organization to store data for each of its entities (companies, branch offices, divisions, etc.) in separate databases. For many, this fits the bill, but for other companies such as those on high growth trajectories, productivity could be hindered. It may seem like these issues are merely an annoyance to your accounting staff, but the effects of low productivity and inefficiency are felt throughout the company as a whole.

Depending on your company's individual situation, you may get an earful from your accounting team or IT staff that sounds eerily similar to the complaints below.

1) Manually consolidating reports is extremely time consuming!

On a list of productivity killers you would likely find "reporting" fairly high up there. Month end, quarterly, year end – it is frequently a sore spot with many accounting teams. Let's take a look at a standard scenario. Perhaps your team would like to know how much you owe a vendor, we'll call them Ace Travel. They would then go into the first database, get the total amount owed to Ace Travel, drop that total into a spreadsheet then repeat for every single one of your entities. Whether it's a rolled up aging report, a consolidated trial balance, or one of countless others, reporting on multiple companies in a consistent manner can be laborious regardless of whether you choose to link to SQL server reporting services or export to Excel. It's no wonder your ears are burning!

2) Chasing down unpaid invoices is a huge pain!

Sometimes finding information in various databases makes looking for a needle in a haystack seem like a piece of cake. For example, say that Ace Travel, is enquiring about an unpaid invoice but your clerk doesn't know which of your 22 companies they issued it to. To find this invoice, they need to search each individual database one at a time (which also requires the hassle of logging in and out). That ain't no walk in the park!

3) Intercompany transactions require a lot of unnecessary effort.

It is not uncommon for entities within the same organization to have shared transactions. For example, Head Office is responsible for paying the travel bills for all Branch Offices. A $1000 travel invoice paid by Head Office on behalf of the Miami branch results in a receivable for Head Office and a payable in Miami. The Intercompany feature in native Dynamics GP allows you to set up the relationship between two entities, enter a transaction in one and have it automatically sent to any or all other entities. However, there are shortcomings, and these could just prolong the pain rather than solve for it:

- It only works for journal entries and accounts payable transactions but not others such as banking, payroll and accounts receivable
- During the intercompany posting process, the destination company entries are sent to the destination company, but not posted. You need to log into each destination database to post them

- Intercompany journal entries need to be corrected manually

4) Month-end is a major headache!

We all know that month-end close can be challenging (at best), and that challenge grows exponentially with the number of entities. Gathering all of the required data and reports from each database is a time-consuming pain. Add to this the likelihood of transactions being miscoded and GL accounts not balancing and you'll have your team re-tasked onto a mystery worthy of Sherlock Holmes. It's a story all too familiar, and unfortunately happens when time is most scarce.

5) Your upgrade is going to be long, expensive, and you're going to be down for a couple days.

This one hurts, but once again it is all too common. Let's say that you have 22 databases, are currently on GP 2013 and you want to upgrade to GP 2015. That's now 22 backups that need to be run and 22 installs of GP, let alone the check that you're going to be writing to pay contractors or your employees' OT for all the work. Add to that the downtime to your operations and any other costs associated with doing all the maintenance. Ouch!

Binary Stream's Multi-Entity Management (MEM) product is the only solution that can take your Microsoft Dynamics GP databases and consolidate them into one powerful database. MEM improves your financial reporting and analysis, eliminates and automates repetitive tasks, and centralizes processes by gathering data from all your locations into one unified database.

Because data in Microsoft Dynamics GP is stored across disparate databases, Centralized Processing – such as one group performing the AP functions on behalf of multiple entities can become a major challenge. This is not the case with MEM. All of the aforementioned pain points plus more have an elegant solution in Multi-Entity Management.

To learn more about Binary Stream's Multi-Entity Management or to schedule a one-on-one demonstration, please email Marketing@binarystream.com or visit us at www.BinaryStream.com. GP

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