



CONSTRUCTION

Building Success

 Microsoft Dynamics

Successful contractors have a reputation for delivering projects on time and on budget. Contractors who invest in information technology are executing projects more efficiently, delivering a higher quality product, and improving employee satisfaction.

The right financial and operational software translates into a clear competitive advantage that reveals itself not only in the project bidding and execution phases but, more importantly, in the company's bottom line.

Contractors seeking to thrive in a competitive market need to focus on managing the risk associated with fixed-bid contracts and eroding profit margins. Because the construction industry is complex, business infrastructure must support the complex needs of the contracting operation.

General and specialty contracting firms are highly customer- and project-focused, with a long list of interrelated business operations such as:

- **finance**
- **project management**
- **purchasing**
- **field operations**
- **management of labor costs**
- **project scope changes**
- **material costs**
- **field service work orders**

All operating activities require integrated information systems. Disconnected spreadsheets, databases, or stand-alone applications can lead to process inefficiencies and inconsistent information. The sheer volume of spreadsheets and paper associated with an organization or job can be an indicator that systems are not integrated or are not meeting the needs of all team members.

Contractors looking to improve their bottom line can benefit from implementing integrated software systems that support key business processes, with the flexibility to adapt to changing business requirements. These integrated software systems allow all stakeholders to work in unison, with common information and management tools at their disposal. The result is organizational efficiency and improved profitability.

Effective project management

Microsoft Dynamics™ has a lengthy history of providing financial and operational software tools for the construction industry. Most contracting organizations today are already using integrated Microsoft software such as Microsoft® Office, Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel®, and Microsoft Project. These tools—when combined with the power of integrated business solutions for the construction industry—allow immediate access to data across the entire organization. With this, project managers receive timely and accurate job cost reporting. Integrated project management decreases the amount of non-value-added time that project managers spend on administrative tasks and provides them with integrated planning tools that permit hands-on scheduling of labor, materials, and subcontractors. This assures that construction activities are scheduled and executed in a timely manner. With contract management, owner and subcontractor change orders can be managed more efficiently, providing both Finance and Operations with greater detail and accuracy on the actual performance of the project.

Timely and accurate information leads to better decision making, with a positive impact on the bottom line. Contractors can have an instant snapshot of project performance and what to expect for the duration of the job.





Smoother operation

Automating business processes can help increase profitability by minimizing the time spent on non-value-added tasks. Many successful general contractors are using Microsoft software platforms to simplify and automate their business processes. Automating time and material billing has been a key efficiency gain. Labor and material invoices are created automatically using predetermined business rules to mark up costs. Invoices are then routed to the project managers for approval. This automation streamlines the generation of invoices and improves cash flow. Automating these critical processes means more time spent on value-added services, directly contributing to increased ROI results.

Improving analytical functions across all areas of business create an ability to forecast outcomes, monitor trends, and view the impact of change orders. Revenues and expenses can be tracked from initial budget through project closure, without waiting for accounting periods to close.

Streamlined internal communications

Project managers, technical consultants, executives, subcontractors, and other personnel all need access to different sets of job-related information, which is often spread across disconnected applications, spreadsheets, and paper files. Providing a centralized, role-specific way to access this information can help increase the sharing of accurate, timely project information, increasing process standardization and reducing errors caused by incomplete or outdated information.

The Microsoft Dynamics portal solutions help you deliver a collaborative, browser-based, rich interface into project, materials, budget, customer, sales, and other key business information. From the portal, users can review and

publish role-specific documents, reports, queries, and announcements. Key business indicators and functions can be tailored to a specific role or project, providing managers and employees with information to better manage their jobs.

Portals can be used to share project document libraries and greatly improve the quality and efficiency of developing and organizing project-related teams, meetings, and document deliverables. In addition, portals enable project managers and supervisors to easily find and make use of people, teams, and existing best practices. User-based access and robust security assure that critical client and internal information are protected, while remaining accessible to credentialed team members.

The customer front and center

Creating strong client relationships is a critical success factor in today's highly competitive construction and contracting businesses. Each project provides the opportunity to add to a knowledge base that can be leveraged for future projects, resulting in improved customer service and more efficient projects. This client- or industry-specific knowledge is a valuable asset—it provides the opportunity to improve profitability and customer service and provides an edge in a competitive market.

Robust software applications offer sophisticated functionality to improve client relationships and increase customer retention and loyalty. Many construction and contracting organizations depend on customer relationship management (CRM) software to build a first-class service organization by managing and tracking all customer-facing activities. Starting at the initial contact stage, through the discovery and proposal stages, through each phase of the project and into the service and support phases of the project after completion, these software products can assist in managing customer contacts through a guided process with defined rules, automation of routing, notifications, approvals, and escalations.

Optimal performance with Microsoft Dynamics

Microsoft Dynamics offers a set of strong applications that, when combined with the underlying Microsoft technologies, deliver a compelling suite of tools for the construction market. Microsoft Dynamics provides systems that are specifically designed to help organizations manage complex business processes without the burden of building a large, expensive IT infrastructure.

The ongoing Microsoft Dynamics commitment to enhance our software provides a solid growth path for years to come, delivering greater value and dependability.

In short, Microsoft Dynamics can help contractors lower costs while increasing value, improve interactions with customers and suppliers, and make faster, smarter decisions.

Innovative integration

Microsoft Dynamics is built with the goal of delivering a flexible set of solutions that can be easily adapted to your business needs. Built on the Microsoft Windows Server™ platform, Microsoft Dynamics allows you to take advantage of technologies such as Microsoft Windows® SharePoint® Services for knowledge management and collaboration, Windows Terminal Services for extending access to data and processes, and Web services for even greater extension and integration with customers' and business partners' systems. Microsoft SQL Server™ delivers a solid foundation for collecting, analyzing, and reporting data across your organization's information management systems. And a deep integration with Microsoft Office System applications such as Microsoft Excel, Word, Outlook®, Internet Explorer, SharePoint, and Visio® allow you to design the forms and delivery systems that best suit your practices. As we move forward we will

INSIGHT

continue to focus heavily on designing and delivering the integrated systems that will give your organization the greatest flexibility and efficiency to increase the value of your offering to clients.

Partners with industry expertise

Microsoft understands that deep industry expertise is required to address the range of construction and contracting needs. Microsoft Dynamics solutions are delivered by a global network of partners who provide local, personalized service—from planning and implementation, to customization, to ongoing support and education. That means customers get world-class business solutions from a local professional who'll be there as business conditions change. In addition, hundreds of certified development partners provide specialized applications that integrate with our products to meet unique industry needs.

Plan for growth

Organizations need systems that can deliver a strong return on investment (ROI) in meeting current needs, while providing for the opportunity to scale dramatically to account for organic growth, acquisitions, changes in business focus,

and other foreseeable future changes to the business.

Microsoft Dynamics, along with Microsoft server technologies and productivity solutions, offers tremendous flexibility and scalability to implement the solution to meet today's requirements and to allow for substantial future growth and change.

Stay ahead of the competition

Affordable and easy to use, Microsoft Dynamics gives construction firms control across the entire project lifecycle—generating proposals, managing resources and materials, scheduling deliverables, creating reports, and invoicing. With our tightly integrated tools, firms can track and manage all aspects of their projects to help improve competitiveness and increase profitability.

We offer an outstanding portfolio of solutions combined with first-rate financial resources and the technical expertise to improve those systems over time. Plus, we offer an outstanding and cost-effective implementation channel to deliver solutions for professional services firms.

To learn more about how Microsoft Dynamics can give your firm the competitive edge in the construction and contracting industry, visit www.microsoft.com/dynamics/construction



Microsoft

© 2006 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved. This document is for informational purposes only. MICROSOFT MAKES NO WARRANTIES, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, IN THIS SUMMARY. Microsoft, Excel, Microsoft Dynamics, the Microsoft Dynamics logo, Outlook, SharePoint, Visio, Windows, and Windows Server are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries.

Microsoft Dynamics is a line of integrated, adaptable business management solutions that enables you and your people to make business decisions with greater confidence. Microsoft Dynamics works like familiar Microsoft software such as Microsoft Office, which means less of a learning curve for your people, so they can get up and running quickly and focus on what's most important. Built to work with Microsoft technologies, it works easily with the systems your company already has implemented. By automating and streamlining financial, customer relationship, and supply chain processes, Microsoft Dynamics brings together people, processes, and technologies, helping increase the productivity and effectiveness of your business, and helping you drive business success.

Worldwide (1) (701) 281-6500
U.S./Canada Toll Free (1) (888) 477-7989
www.microsoft.com/dynamics