Recession Intervention: Why ERP is Critical Now

*Timely technology can help businesses battle
a down economy and spur recovery*

Microsoft Dynamics

Even with occasional glimpses of an upturn, the ongoing economic crisis shows little sign of loosening its choke hold on commerce anytime soon. As the resulting slump lingers, businesses are increasingly—some even desperately—searching for new ways to survive.

The effects aren't all bad. Extravagance is out; frugality is in. Poor business practices are being exposed. Necessity is driving fast implementation of new efficiencies. In the long run, that's better for everyone.

But to ease the crunch, businesses have turned to dramatic cuts: they've curtailed spending, restricted travel, reduced benefits, decreased workforce, scrutinized reporting, pushed mangers to do more with less....the list goes on. Still, many companies have trimmed all they can and their business is still not where it needs to be.

When cuts alone don't cut it

The hard truth: Cuts alone aren't always enough to endure hard times—and "cutting" is certainly not a solid sole strategy for long-term growth. Organizations that survive today's economy and thrive in the future will be those who not only cut costs, but those who improve operational performance and enhance employee productivity.

Here's a new approach: Consider a solid enterprise resource planning (ERP) system to optimize processes, accelerate productivity, identify trends, and help discover new opportunities for revenue growth.

If you've been thinking that an ERP system is too costly for your company, look into Microsoft Dynamics®, and you'll think otherwise.

Why ERP is more important than ever

During a recession, investing dollars in new technology to manage resources may seem counterproductive. But in fact, automated enterprise resource planning (ERP) can result in efficiencies you'd never achieve with the conventional practices your company may be used to. And those differences could make or break your company during tough economic times.

Here are just a few examples of how Microsoft Dynamics can really help you tighten your belt, navigate tough times, and emerge as a leaner, stronger, winning business:

Increase operational efficiencies

During a downturn, companies need to find more efficient processes and more agility to act quickly with confident decisions. Microsoft Dynamics lets you....

- Automate and maintain tight control of daily financial transactions, reducing errors.
- Provide instant access to up-to-the-minute, accurate information and reports to the right people at the right time.
- Reduce paperwork and rework by putting routine tasks online.
- Count on automatic notifications to alert key people to supply, inventory, financial and other conditions you've specified.
- Reduce transaction time and cost by providing business partners, suppliers, and customers with Web-based self help (and you'll improve their satisfaction too).

Improve employee productivity

To combat the harsh economy, businesses must find ways to empower their people with increasingly effective ways to complete tasks with pin-point accuracy. Microsoft Dynamics helps you...

- Give each person the exact information they need based upon their role—in a customizable view—so employees can prioritize and complete work faster.
- Reduce training and speed tasks with systems that are intuitive to your people (Microsoft Dynamics works like and with other Microsoft products that many people are familiar with).
- Give each person visibility into business activities and tools relevant to their role, such as company procedures, worksheets, notifications, lists, key performance indicators, and reports so they can do their job faster and make confident decisions.

"Before we implemented Microsoft Dynamics AX, my central distribution facility was staffed with around 105 people. Right now, I'm running the same volumes with a higher degree of accuracy, and I am using only 80 people."

— John King, Senior VP of Operations, Selecta

View the full customer story at
www.microsoft.com/casestudies (Search keyword Selecta)

So many new regulations (so little compliance-check time)

HIPAA. GASB. Sarbanes-Oxley. What was once trusted as corporate governance has increasingly turned into government-required compliance. Hardly any industry has escaped escalating compliance demands. New regulations have only added to the burden of running a business during already trying times.

Microsoft Dynamics can help you automate tasks, reports and checkpoints to ensure compliance to standards and regulation for your industry. In addition, robust and customizable reporting functionality makes up-to-date financial and procedural information accessible to anybody who needs them to achieve and maintain regulatory compliance. Here are some examples:

- Set and manage restrictions on specific information, including fields, windows, and reports
- Set up automatic audit trails and required electronic signatures
- Use RoleTailored functionality in Microsoft Dynamics to set up compliance workflow frameworks
- Monitor business events and conditions for compliance with automated alerts
- Minimize costs and time required for audits with automated transacting and audit tracking
- Reduce compliance risks from human errors in manual recording or repetitive data entry

Why it's more valuable than ever

In the past, ERP systems meant high upfront costs, expensive ongoing maintenance and updates, system downtime, inflexible systems, and dips in productivity as employees learned and adopted new systems.

But it's high time to shed the outdated perception that ERP systems are inflexible, costly and difficult to implement. Microsoft Dynamics is loaded with new innovations (driven by users in businesses like yours) that have amplified the value, as well as extraordinary implementation methods—both of which have accelerated ROI.

Faster high-quality implementations

Microsoft Dynamics Sure Step program gives Microsoft partners access to a highly-tested implementation methods that helps ensure rapid and efficient implementations, including data migrations and major upgrade projects. Here's how it provides extraordinary value:

- Reduces downtime and costs traditionally associated with implementations
- Decreases risks and errors through highly-tested, repeatable procedures
- Helps ensure that implementations and similar projects are on time and on budget

Reliable performance against increasing demands

Through stringent testing and benchmarking, Microsoft Dynamics is proven to consistently meet and exceed increasingly demanding requirements of even the largest enterprise in the areas that matter to all businesses:

- Performance (processing speed, system stability reliability)[1]
- Scalability (responsive performance regardless of data volume)[2]
- Application flexibility (highly-customizable architecture)[3]
- Efficient manageability (multiple deployment models and tested methods)
- Network configurability (including bandwidth utilization)

Low upfront and ongoing costs

Microsoft Dynamics helps businesses keep technology spending in check and more predictable. It includes features and updates that you'll find often cost extra from other ERP providers. And special financing and offers are available now to help ease the cost crunch when you need an ERP solution the most.

- Total solution financing
- Out-of-the-box optional features
- Free templates
- Access to timely updates
- Exceptional customer tools and services
- Add-on components
- Flexible licensing options
- Ongoing special offers

1 Microsoft Dynamics GP 10.0 Benchmark Performance White Paper: 1,000 Concurrent Users with Microsoft SQL Server 2005

2 Improving Microsoft Dynamics NAV 4.0 Scalability and Performance by Using SQL Server 2005 Whitepaper

3 Microsoft Dynamics AX 2009 Enterprise Portal Benchmark Summary

"Now, when the CFO asks us to track data and turn around a report, we don't need to go to three departments to get the information and put it into a pivot table; all the information we need is available right in Microsoft Dynamics."

— Hope Clevenger, Corporate Benefits and Payroll Manager for G&J
Pepsi-Cola Bottlers

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www.microsoft.com/casestudies (search keyword Pepsi-Cola)

Leverage your current systems

Microsoft Dynamics works directly with other systems and productivity software that many companies use, so you can take full advantage of technology you've already invested in.

- Send Microsoft Dynamics information directly to one of many built-in Microsoft Office reports and templates. Let people work with applications they're most familiar with to improve productivity and optimize your investment in applications across the board.
- Allow people to tap into information from Microsoft Dynamics directly through Microsoft Office applications (such as Microsoft Word and Excel®, Microsoft SharePoint® Services, and more) and extend critical, up-to-the-minute business information to those who don't have or aren't familiar with Microsoft Dynamics.
- Expand reporting capabilities with built-in connections to Microsoft SQL Server® Reporting Services to combine the benefits of a centrally-managed reporting system with the flexibility of web-based, role-tailored reporting without sacrificing scalability for high-volume environments. Turn business data into powerful decision-driving information available to people with a wide range of skills and roles.
- Look to the expertise of a Microsoft Certified Partner to integrate Microsoft Dynamics with your other systems, and to tailor your complete solution to the unique needs of your industry and exact needs of your company.

A solid solution for today, a wise investment for the future

In tight times, don't squander precious budget on short-term quick fixes. Instead, invest in a solution that can help ease today's economic challenges while setting your business up for long-term growth.

Microsoft Dynamics ERP solutions can help control costs and boost efficiencies during hard times. And provide your business with a competitive edge to brandish as the economy begins its long awaited recovery.

Find out how. Find out now.

- Contact us to find a local Microsoft partner or Microsoft office.
- Ask us about financing options and special offers available to you.
- Visit www.microsoft.com/dynamics to learn more about Microsoft Dynamics ERP solutions.

"Microsoft Dynamics GP has helped us become better stewards of the public trust in many different ways."

—Henry Segalas, IT Director, AIDB

View the full customer story at
www.microsoft.com/casestudies (search keyword AIDB)

Microsoft®

Microsoft Dynamics is a line of adaptable, easy-to-use ERP and CRM applications that enable business decision-makers to run their business efficiently and drive business success. Delivered through a network of channel partners providing specialized services, these integrated, adaptable business management solutions work like and with familiar Microsoft software to streamline processes across an entire business.

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