



1st Quarter
2009

MICROSOFT DYNAMICS SL NEWSLETTER

Now's the Time To Improve Productivity

There's little you can do to solve our world's financial woes. So why not focus your effort on something you can control – making your organization more efficient and productive in a tough economic environment. Our Q1 2008 newsletter introduced the Dynamics SL Business Portal and how it could be used to organize and access information from anywhere at anytime. In this issue, we'd like to expand on this topic a bit and explore ways to reduce IT costs and improve efficiency.

Your Portal to Efficiency

The Dynamics SL Business Portal is a collection of predefined, Web-based pages that interact directly with Dynamics SL data. Samples of preconfigured pages include time and expense entry, purchase requests, and employee self-service. The Business Portal is built on Microsoft Office SharePoint Server ("SharePoint") technology. As such, its utility extends beyond your Dynamics SL system. SharePoint can act as a central repository that **manages all of your organization's documents**, allow you to collaborate with others inside and outside your organization, and automate many common business processes.

SharePoint also reduces IT administration expense as it provides web-based access to Dynamics SL, eliminating the need to load software (and subsequent updates) on every user's workstation.

One View, One Set of Project Documents

SharePoint is a great tool for managing project documents. Think of the productivity gains you'll experience by merely clicking on a Dynamics SL project and accessing a centralized library containing related consulting contracts, statements of work, change orders, project plans, status reports, and project meeting minutes. No more wasted time digging through file cabinets or searching the network for misplaced documents.

Project data from Dynamics SL can be combined with other important sources of information including spreadsheets, graphs, and notes. Perhaps best of all, everyone is working from the same SharePoint portal so your project team is always working with the most recent documents.

Improving Communication

With project calendars, team member information, announcements, and meeting notes all centrally located and available over the Web, SharePoint significantly improves communication within your team. What's more, you can extend SharePoint technology to your customers. With appropriate security, they can access important project information online and reduce the time your staff spends responding to project status inquiries. You can even include a process for your customers to view and approve your invoices online which will speed-up payment and improve cash flow.

Who's Managing This Project?

With a multitude of graphs, tables and even "green/yellow/red" conditional alerts, Project Managers can use Dynamics SL Business Portal and SharePoint technology to track key performance indicators (KPI's) such as staff utilization, project milestones, and actual vs. budgeted project expenses. SharePoint can also be used to automate time consuming, manual processes like approving change orders.

Curious about what SharePoint can do for you? Learn more online by visiting the [SharePoint](#) or Microsoft Dynamics SL [Business Portal](#) information pages. Or [contact us](#) and we'd be happy to talk about how to leverage SharePoint technology for your business.

In This
Issue:

Now's the
Time to
Improve
Productivity

Dynamics SL
Project
Controller

Important
Support
Update

Microsoft
GOLD CERTIFIED
Partner

DYNAMICS SL PROJECT CONTROLLER

When it comes the government bailout initiatives of late, our legislators and news analysts seem to repeat the same words over and over again ... transparency and accountability. It's interesting that these same words can be associated with the Dynamics SL Project Controller module, thankfully, in a much more positive way. Let's take a closer look.

Removing the Devil from the Details

Project Controller allows you to design your projects to mirror your business processes including all of the details that support sound decisions. These customized project structures not only conform to your business best practices, they provide better visibility into project performance. When setting up project and task structures, you can include up to twelve levels of detailed information such as client, contract, job, phase, task, sub-task, activity code, work breakdown structure and cost code.

Better Visibility

Project Controller provides a complete view of project performance, along with detailed expenses. When combined with Microsoft Office Project, managers and accounting staff can view all phases of a project, from planning to final billing, through real-time data sharing between Project Controller and Microsoft Project.

Known or expected expenses can be taken into account by sharing information across Dynamics SL. Project expenses for subcontractors, purchasing and unposted labor charges can be recorded as commitments as soon as they are entered – even before the end of an accounting period – to allow for future cost.

Project Reporting That's Transparent

Accountants and Project Managers alike benefit from using the same system and set of data for better analysis and

project accountability. Standard reports reflect all of a project's detailed financial information which is presented in a format that's easy to understand – even if you're not a "number cruncher." Financial information is presented in a familiar profit and loss (P&L) format with categories such as "labor," "travel" and "materials," instead of cryptic account codes. You can also analyze project data in a summary view, then drill down to the underlying details of specific project transactions when needed.



[Contact us](#) to learn more about Dynamics SL Project Controller.

Important Support Update

Last year, Microsoft introduced the new **Dynamics SL 7.0 Feature Pack 1** ("FP1") that includes a variety of new features, updates, and hot fixes. If you haven't had an opportunity to review FP1, take a look at our [2nd Quarter 2008 newsletter](#) for an overview.

It's important to note that there are now **two distinct versions** of Dynamics SL depending on whether you've installed the Feature Pack or not. 'Microsoft Dynamics SL 7.0' and 'Microsoft Dynamics 7.0 Feature Pack' are very different versions, **each with their own updates and service packs**. Installing the wrong service pack or update may negatively impact your system.

Please be sure to contact your local NexTec office if you need assistance determining which update to install for your version.

INNOVATIVE SOFTWARE SOLUTIONS | NATIONWIDE PRESENCE

NEXTEC GROUP OFFICES ...

Los Angeles
(310) 479-7701

Cleveland
(330) 928-7300

Pacific Northwest
(206) 505-7980

Houston
(713) 957-8350

New Jersey
(201) 933-0707

New York City
(212) 372-8999

www.nextecgroup.com

info@nextecgroup.com

