



Microsoft Dynamics Customer Solution Case Study



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Overview

Country or Region: Australia
Industry: Rights management

Customer Profile

Copyright Agency Limited (CAL) is a copyright management company that manages payment for the use of content produced by its membership, which includes journalists, publishers and authors.

Business Situation

CAL needed to replace multiple legacy systems and reporting tools with a stable and consistent platform that captured and reported its financial services data more efficiently and openly.

Solution

Microsoft Gold Certified Partner Hands-On Systems implemented Microsoft Dynamics® NAV to consolidate and seamlessly integrate CAL's business management processes with Microsoft® Office.

Benefits

- Reduced staff overheads by around \$500,000
- Improved reporting and financial intelligence
- Reduced requirement for IT support
- Enhanced productivity

Rights management agency lifts productivity with an end-to-end ERP

“The system has enabled us to refine our reconciliation and reporting processes and restructure our division, so we can run a more efficient operation.”

Ans Hamid, Chief Financial Officer, Copyright Agency Limited

Copyright Agency Limited (CAL) is an Australian copyright management company. It manages payment for the use of content produced by its membership, which includes journalists, publishers and authors as well as surveyors, artists and photographers. The company's financial operations were supported by six separate legacy systems and five reporting tools that required a high level of manual data entry and produced low-quality reports. CAL chose Microsoft® Gold Certified Partner Hands-On Systems to implement Microsoft Dynamics® Navision (NAV), enabling CAL to replace all its existing systems. With a single enterprise database, Microsoft Dynamics NAV captures real-time information and produces high-quality reporting instantly. CAL has reduced staff numbers, boosted productivity, and can now take more informed business decisions.

“Often, when a company goes through a growth phase, its data volumes grow, and internal support systems tend to lag behind.”

Ans Hamid, Chief Financial Officer, CAL

Situation

Copyright Agency Limited (CAL) is a copyright management company that represents a wide range of content creators – from journalists, publishers and authors to surveyors, artists and photographers – and collects payment for the use of their work from the corporate, government and education sectors.

In the past several years, CAL has grown rapidly. Increasing membership, burgeoning digital content and legislative changes have expanded the range of content that CAL represents. Over this period, the agency doubled both staff and turnover, and now has just over 100 employees and an annual revenue of around \$100 million.

“Often when a company goes through a growth phase, its data volumes grow, and internal support systems tend to lag behind,” says Ans Hamid, Chief Financial Officer, CAL. “Our systems were getting close to a decade off the pace.”

After joining CAL in 2005, Hamid undertook a review of its financial information technology (FIT) systems that support business processes and staff resourcing. Initially, the review focused on the financial side of the enterprise, with a view to addressing its bespoke rights management system further down the track.

Individual divisions had previously purchased their own IT solutions. These were disconnected and required intensive support.

“We had six separate systems and five reporting tools to manage licence fees, members’ funds in trust and payments to CAL employees,” says Jim Alexander, Chief Executive Officer, CAL.

For example, CAL used four Microsoft® Excel® spreadsheets – with separate business codings – to track licence fees and projects. These codes were also used to manage time recording and the general ledger, although staff were required to input their time and job billing into two different systems.

This lack of integration in financial systems meant that the process of generating licence invoices and receipts took 11 steps.

“Our sales order management process was cumbersome,” says Hamid. “In the previous sales order process, we had to move items through a series of stages before an invoice could be issued.”

The diversity of systems meant staff were required to execute a significant amount of processing manually. Double entry meant a higher risk of error and low productivity. Because the quality was unreliable, reports had to be manually checked.

As CAL’s business expanded and it negotiated new copyright licences in the digital and corporate environments, it sorely needed to rationalise its systems.

“We wanted a single system to manage our financial responsibilities – as a collecting agency, we need to maintain a high level of integrity but also show a high degree of transparency,” says Alexander.

Solution

CAL approached vendors looking for an end-to-end solution that could integrate its accounts, assets management, payroll, activity-based management (ABM), human resources and customer order management into a single database.

The system also needed to integrate with the company’s proprietary Copyright Management System (CMS), which is key in

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Ans Hamid, Chief Financial Officer, CAL

managing the distribution of rights money to members.

“Microsoft Dynamics NAV had all this out of the box,” says Pieter Reede, Sales Manager in Microsoft Business Solutions at Hands-on Systems, the Microsoft Certified Gold Partner chosen by CAL. “It provided a single system that managed all of CAL’s financial responsibilities, including licence fees, funds in trust and payroll.”

Using its own certified Microsoft Excel 2007 add-on, Hands-on Systems integrated Excel spreadsheets into Microsoft Dynamics® NAV and its activity-based costing processes so that the company could analyse the profitability of individual segments of time spent within a project.

“Dynamics NAV provided a single source of truth,” says Reede. “Information could be captured instantly in real-time in one database and instantly reported in Excel and Microsoft Word 2007, which were familiar to all staff. The solution really connected people and processes and assisted CAL to take proactive steps in managing its business.”

Benefits

Microsoft Dynamics NAV allows CAL to efficiently manage the financial side of its business and more openly account for money flowing in and out of the company. With more streamlined business processes in place, the company can look at improving how it manages the customer side of the business.

Efficiencies and savings in HR and payroll

By consolidating its multiple legacy and reporting systems into a single platform as well as automating its HR and payroll functions, CAL reduced the number of staff required for data processing.

Charmain Chan, Manager, Finance and Administration, was impressed by Microsoft Dynamics NAV’s ability to facilitate the removal of the various manual reconciliations and processes.

“The system has enabled us to refine our reconciliation and reporting processes and restructure the division, so we can run a more efficient operation,” says Hamid.

Removed reliance on internal IT support

CAL was able to make further savings because it no longer needed to rely on full-time IT support and contract staff to maintain its customised legacy systems.

“Over the past eight years, our systems required a lot of maintenance and support,” explains Hamid. “Dynamics NAV has changed that. We no longer need the same level of support and, if we do, it’s easier to outsource maintenance.”

Simplified invoicing process

By removing repetitious manual data entry, CAL simplified the licence-invoicing process to five steps.

“It isn’t only more efficient, it cuts the risk of error,” explains Hamid. “And because Dynamics works seamlessly with Excel, it’s easy for non-finance people to generate the data upload of sales orders.”

Greater financial insight and staff reductions

By having one application produce data in real-time, the quality of reporting is greatly improved. In addition, by reducing the manual effort required for weekly reconciliations and monthly reports, finance staff can focus on interpreting and analysing the financial data. We have been able to reduce reliance on clerical financial staff by two headcounts.

For More Information

For more information about Microsoft Dynamics products and services, call 1800 197 960.

To access information using the World Wide Web, go to:
www.microsoft.com/australia/dynamics/

For more information about Hands-on Systems products and services, call +61 2 9409 8189 or visit the Web site at:
<http://www.handson.com.au>

For more information about Copyright Agency products and services, call +61 2 93947680 or visit the Web site at:
<http://www.copyright.com.au>

“Rather than spending time simply crunching numbers, we can now focus our qualified staff on generating meaningful insights into our revenue growth, forecasts and budgets,” says Hamid. “It gives us time to explore in depth how we reach our numbers, how we can improve the sourcing of materials from suppliers and how we negotiate.”

“Through natural attrition and reassignment, we were able to reduce our headcount in HR and payroll as well,” says Hamid. “In dollar terms, we are saving around \$500k per annum, which is a very quick return on our investment.”

Knock-on effects

With the Dynamics NAV solution in place, CAL can now review its other proprietary rights management system.

“Essentially, Dynamics improved the monetisation of our rights business,” Hamid explains. “Now we can move to the next phase, which is improving the system and reporting tools around the management of rights – the operational side of the business.”

“By successfully implementing the Microsoft Dynamics solution on time and budget, we put some quick wins on the board, which has enabled the agency to focus its efforts on the second phase.”

“Overall there has been an increase in job satisfaction and productivity,” says Chan. “We have a happier work environment.”

Microsoft Dynamics

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. And because it is from Microsoft, it easily works with the systems that your company already has implemented. By automating and streamlining financial, customer relationship, and supply chain processes, Microsoft Dynamics brings together people, processes, and technologies, increasing the productivity and effectiveness of your business, and helping you drive business success.

For more information about Microsoft Dynamics, go to:

<http://www.microsoft.com/dynamics>

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