



Whitepaper- Solutions for Professional Firms

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Project Accounting Solutions

Microsoft Navision is an ideal solution for project accounting in professional and service businesses. That's because Navision provides seamlessly integrated modules for Job/Project and Resource accounting, Customer Service, Human Resources and Payroll, and CRM. Furthermore, these modules are seamlessly integrated with the Billing, Accounts Receivable, General Ledger, Inventory, and the rest of the Navision modules.

With a Microsoft Navision solution you can:

- Track an unlimited number of jobs/projects per customer
- Create multi-level job estimates and budgets
- Record employee time and expenses against projects
- Track resource usage for people, machines, and equipment
- Post subcontractor expense and vendor invoices against jobs/projects
- Record materials usage and other expenses
- Automatically calculate mark-up on expenses
- Selectively bill activity on any cycle
- Perform resource capacity planning
- Analyze resource productivity and increase job profitability

Job Accounting

The Job Accounting module of Microsoft Navision simplifies detailed planning and cost management of jobs and projects. It is ideal for job costing and service-oriented time tracking and billing.

The Job Accounting module helps you:

- Prevent costs from going unbilled
- Analyze and increase job profitability
- Use budgets and estimates for detailed capacity planning
- Manage employee, machinery and other resource allocations

Successful job and project management requires up-to-date information, as well as detailed planning capabilities and comprehensive follow-up analysis. The Job Accounting module gives you this functionality to help you improve your project accounting, billing and planning. It can help you build detailed costing plans and analyze job profitability as jobs are completed.

Standard reports allow you to compare actual to budget costs, actual to budget prices, as well as suggested billing reports to see what you should be invoicing your customers. It also helps you keep track of inventory, resources and other usage on jobs.

As costs are incurred on a job, they are automatically recorded in the job ledger and posted to the relevant accounts in other areas of the system, such as accounts payable and accounts receivable. Billing is then automatic for all costs that are chargeable, thus preventing your costs from going unbilled. Job sales transactions can also be entered through the job journal or through the Customer Invoicing option. Likewise, the Vendor Invoicing option can be used to record purchases directly to jobs instead of inventory.

Job Accounting enables you to plan and execute usage-value analyses, as well as follow up on projects, quotes, invoicing and costing. Use the Budgets/Estimates function to assign budgets or estimates to jobs. Create budgets and estimates that include inventory items, resources and other expenses. Link actual usage and sales directly to individual budget lines for detailed comparison with the estimated costs and sales prices.

The Job Accounting Module can optionally be used with the Resource Accounting module, which includes a Resource Capacity Planning function, allowing you to develop detailed capacity plans.

Resource Accounting

Resources are some of your company's most valuable commodities, but making good use of them is no easy task. Capacity planning, monitoring availability and keeping track of costs are just some of the factors that can demand your constant attention.

Navision helps you optimize management of your people and equipment. The Resource Accounting module allows you to:

- Track the cost and usage of resources
- Predict availability of resources
- Plan capacity
- Integrate job costing with time allocation and billing
- Assign alternative prices and costs to different types of jobs

Navision helps you to optimize the use of your people and equipment. It allows you to accurately monitor the cost and usage of resources, and by setting resource capacities, it allows you to predict the availability of those resources. Integration with the Jobs and Sales & Receivables application areas provide you fully integrated job costing and time and billing capabilities.

The Resource application area includes a resource table, a ledger and a journal for recording resource transactions. Navision lets you set up specific costs and sales prices for each resource. Resource ledgers keep track of usage and sales of resources.

Capacity management facilities let you assign capacities to resources, resource groups or both. When the Resource application area is integrated with Jobs, resources can be allocated to job budgets to provide complete capacity planning on an hourly basis. Tools for reallocating jobs to different resources and resource groups allow for a detailed resource plan. Availability windows show how a capacity is allocated to active job orders and what has been allocated for potential orders.

As with Multiple Sales Prices in the Inventory application area, you can assign alternative prices to resources according to the type of customer as well as the type of job. When resources perform different types of work, different prices can be assigned to each type. Prices can be defined in multiple currencies. Alternative costs for resources can also be assigned depending on the type of job. When resources perform different types of work, different costs can be assigned to each type of work. The costs are used in budgets/estimates as well as in sales invoicing and usage recording.

Customer Service

Your customers expect great service, and you can't afford to disappoint them. You need to respond to customer requests with improved reliability and quick response times. The Microsoft Navision Customer Service module will help to improve the level of service you provide to your customers.

The Customer Service module allows you to:

- Access customer service histories easily
- Anticipate customer needs
- Win customer loyalty by exceeding expectations
- Place tighter controls on costs
- Organize your resources for maximum efficiency

The Customer Service module is designed to help you streamline all facets of service management from service contracts to inventory management. Customer profiles help you keep track of the changing needs of each customer.

Contract, warranty and service information is immediately available, saving customers the frustration of repeating information to service representatives over and over again. You can even offer your customers the opportunity to specify preferred technicians and service times. Respond to customer needs quickly and exceed expectations with highly personalized service.

The Customer Service module also helps you control costs. Pinpoint the out-of-date, defective and expensive parts and service items in your inventory at a glance. More importantly, identify your most cost-effective parts and service items, as well as the hidden costs that may be affecting your operations.

To really be cost-effective, you have to plan ahead. The Customer Service module gives you the tools you need to plan and prepare for future resource allocation. It helps you make good purchasing decisions because you know which orders need to be filled and when. You can identify service requirements in advance because you have accurate and up-to-date information on future demand. Avoid the surprise factor and focus instead on preparing your employees, inventory and organization for upcoming service orders.

Human Resources and Payroll

Human resource management systems (HRMS) and payroll systems are a critical component of every business, as well as one of the most complicated. A powerful, integrated human resources and payroll solution can improve labor productivity and labor efficiencies, as well as help you control labor related costs—all of which directly contribute to your company's bottom line.

The Microsoft Navision Human Resources and Payroll modules, which can be used together or separately, enable you to perform the most complex payroll processing, analyze your workforce, and strategically manage the company's human capital, while serving as a conduit for information to employees.

The Human Resources and Payroll modules offers you:

- Employee time and attendance tracking
- Payroll processing with completely flexible payroll calculations
- Payroll direct deposit
- Applicant tracking
- Employee and manager self-service portals
- Employee attribute analysis
- Benefit administration
- Review tracking with alerts

Effective human resource management has given companies a new way to create a competitive advantage in their market spaces. Accordingly, the Microsoft Navision Human Resources and Payroll modules were designed to give companies a streamlined labor management tool that increases the efficiency and responsiveness of human resource administration and payroll processing. The system helps to simplify processes and improve the overall quality of human resource management within the organization, resulting in improved employee satisfaction and reduced costs.

Internet technologies have also brought about dramatic changes in HRMS. The Internet has given human resource departments new opportunities to communicate directly with employees and interact with them online. The Web-based, user-friendly Employee and Manager Self Service portals allow the Human Resources department and employees throughout the company to share information easily. Online communications help you to streamline processes and improve labor productivity.

CRM (Customer Relationship Management)

Conventional wisdom says that holding on to an existing customer is cheaper than attracting a new one. If you don't keep your customers 100% satisfied, you risk losing their business. The CRM module helps you provide superior service during every customer interaction with easy access to real-time information. Everyone in your company can become a customer service expert. As a result, your customers enjoy a better level of service. Most companies are also looking to CRM tools for a marketing and sales edge.

The Microsoft Navision CRM module is designed to help you streamline all facets of relationship management from sales force automation to campaign management.

The Microsoft Navision CRM allows you to:

- Personalize your approach to your contacts
- Improve customer satisfaction
- Manage marketing campaigns
- Keep track of your sales pipeline
- Integrate with Microsoft Outlook Calendar, Contacts, and Tasks
- Automatically log customer interactions including e-mail

When you have accurate information on all your contacts, you can make better decisions about them. The CRM module makes it easy for you to see which accounts need your immediate attention. You have easy access to information about previous sales and future opportunities with each contact. Your contact and receivables information is always accurate, helping you to make strategic decisions promptly.

Once you have a clear overview of your contacts, you can analyze future demand and plan accordingly. The CRM module enables you to segment your contact database, helping you to plan effective campaigns as well as one-to-one marketing. It also gives you the means to measure the results of your campaigns.

Outlook Integration

The CRM module also offers direct integration with Microsoft Outlook. By Integrating with Outlook, users gain more efficient real-time information workflow and eliminate redundancy between the two systems. When fully integrated, the calendar, reminder, planning and scheduling, as well as task management, are simultaneously updated in both systems.

For example, you can schedule a meeting in Outlook and have the meeting automatically updated in the Navision CRM module. And when the meeting is completed, the follow-up activity registered in the Navision CRM can be synchronized with your Outlook task list.

In addition, this functionality enables you to take advantage of the offline accessibility available in Office, ensuring that you always have access to your contact information, whether it is entered in Attain or Outlook.

Microsoft Exchange E-Mail Logging

In addition to taking advantage of Outlook's meeting and scheduling functionality, the CRM module also integrates directly Outlook's e-mail capabilities. When using this functionality, you can share both inbound and outbound e-mails to and from clients with any designated employees, regardless of whether the e-mails were directed to a specific person. You can log e-mails sent from both Navision and Outlook, and you can even decide whether to log them

automatically or manually. This gives you all the flexibility you need to choose the right settings for your business processes.

Unique Technology

Unique technology makes Navision different and better than any other business software. Here are 10 very powerful and beneficial features of Navision that, to our knowledge, are not available in any other business software.

Click on a feature to learn more about it and the benefits it provides.

1. **Flowfields and SIFT**
2. **FlowFilters**
3. **Navision Drilldowns**
4. **The Navigate feature**
5. **Field and Table Filters and the Find Feature**
6. **C/SIDE (Client/Server Integrated Development Environment)**
7. **Date Driven Accounting Architecture**
8. **Account Schedules**
9. **Database Versioning and Optimistic Concurrency**
10. **User Customizable Tabular Forms**

FlowFields and SIFT

"SIFT" stands for Sum Index Flow Technology. Sum Index Flow Technology permits Navision to calculate numeric totals instantly, even on many thousands of records. SIFT uses an ingenious proprietary method to rapidly accumulate totals when transactions are entered and store them in the Navision database index structure.

In other systems, the system is forced to access each record in a set of records to calculate an account balance or a total on that set. This is a very time consuming process in a database with thousands of records.

How does Navision use SIFT to your advantage? SIFT is the basis for Navision "FlowFields". FlowFields are used wherever account balances and totals are displayed in Navision. They are called FlowFields because detail transaction amounts flow dynamically into the account balance or total for a given set of records. This happens instantly, no matter how many records are in the set.

General ledger account balances, customer and vendor account balances, and inventory quantities on hand, are just a few examples of account balances and totals that are calculated and displayed using FlowFields in Navision. Wherever totals like these appear, whether in online screens or in reports, Navision uses SIFT and FlowFields to instantly calculate and display the amounts.

FlowFilters

"FlowFilters" provide a powerful tool for online analysis by allowing you to control how [FlowField](#) values are calculated and displayed. Let's say, for example, that you want to perform online analysis of a travel expense account. By default, Navision displays the year-to-date travel expense account balance for the whole organization. Now, let's say that you want to see the travel account balance for a specific department, project, and timeframe. With a few mouse clicks, you can quickly set a FlowFilter specifying the department, project, and date range. The

travel account balance for travel expenses meeting those criteria is instantly recalculated and displayed.

FlowFilters can be used with any FlowField, and FlowFields are used wherever account balances or totals of any kind are displayed in Navision. FlowFilters, therefore, provide you with a powerful tool for slicing, dicing, and analyzing account balances and totals wherever they are displayed in the Navision system.

Navision Drill Downs

Navision drill downs allow you to click on any [FlowField](#) displaying an account balance or total to see the underlying detail that flows into that total or balance. Two things make Navision drill downs different from drill downs in other systems.

First, drill down is available for EVERY account balance or total displayed anywhere in the Navision system. Second, you can apply [FlowFilters](#) to account balances and totals before drilling down, to selectively filter the detail records displayed by the drill down.

Navision drill downs provide you with an ability to "[SIFT](#)" through your data in a way that is unparalleled by any other system.

The Navigate Feature

The Navigate feature provides a quick navigation point from any [drill down](#) record to all of its associated ledger entries and source document records.

Let's say we are working through the [FlowFilter](#) example above, and we are now looking at the drill down detail records that make up the travel expense account balance for a specific department, project, and timeframe. For each travel expense drill down record, you can see the transaction date, the amount, and other fields related to the record.

Selecting a drill down record and clicking the Navigate button displays the Navigate window, which shows a summary of the associated ledger entries and source document records for that travel expense item. The Navigate window is a sort of window into the whole audit trail for the transaction. It shows the impact of the transaction on the General Ledger and other subsidiary ledgers in the Navision system in summary form. It also indicates what the posted source document for the transaction was.

You can select the General Ledger or subsidiary ledger items in the Navigate window and click the Show button to follow the transaction trail into the ledger detail. Or, you can select the source document record in the Navigate window and click the Show button to call up the original posted source document details.

You will be amazed at how the Navigate feature allows you to navigate from drill down detail to all of the associated information in your Navision system. And your auditors will be amazed by how quickly and easily a transaction can be traced back to supporting detail in the audit trail.

Field and Table Filters and the Find Feature

Filtering large amounts of data down to manageable subsets, and finding the specific records you are looking for is easy in Navision. We've already talked about [FlowFilters](#). Navision Field and Table Filters, and the Find feature, give you rapid, flexible filtering and find capability on all fields in the Navision system.

A Navision Field Filter can be applied to ANY field anywhere in the Navision system to filter out records that don't match the filter criteria. Simply click on the field you want to filter, then click the Field Filter button or press the F7 key. The Field Filter window is displayed where you can enter the field value that you would like to match. The Field Filter window allows you to specify that you want an exact match with single or multiple values, a partial match using a wildcard character, a match on greater or less than a value, or a match with a range of values. If the field you are filtering is a code field like an account or customer code, the Field Filter window provides a convenient lookup list of the valid codes for that field. After you enter your filter criteria in the Field Filter window and click the OK button, the Navision screen, window, or form you are working with will filter out records that do not match your filter criteria.

Table Filters work the same way as Field Filters, but they allow you to specify filter criteria for more than one field at a time. Additionally, when you run any Navision report, a report request form is displayed which, along with options for running the report, provides the table filtering function to specify filters for the report.

When Field or Table filters are active an indicator appears, alerting you that a filter is set. One click on the "Show All" icon removes any filters set on the data you are working with.

The Find feature provides a quick way to locate one or more records that match a search value. The Find feature can be used with ANY field anywhere in the Navision system. Simply click on the field you want to search on. Then click the find icon, press Ctrl-F, or, if you are working in a display-only window, simply begin typing your search value. A Find window is displayed where you can finish entering the search value. If the "Find as You Type" option is turned on, then the system instantly locates letter by letter the first record matching your search value as you type. The Find window also lets you specify whether you want to match on the whole field, the beginning of the field, or any part of the field, as well as whether you want to match exactly on upper and lower case letters.

C/SIDE

The core of Microsoft Navision is its Client/Server Integrated Development Environment (C/SIDE). C/SIDE is a 100% graphical development environment and, like the Navision program, it has a graphical user interface. C/SIDE, together with [SIFT](#), gives Navision its power and flexibility. With C/SIDE, any of Navision's source code objects including database tables, screen forms, reports, codeunits, and dataports, can be customized to meet any unique requirement.

C/SIDE consists of three systems: the 4GL development system, the database management system, and the client/server communication system. These three systems are fully integrated with one another and the Navision program. These systems are designed to create a complete solution for accounting and business management that is simple to use and maintain at all levels, from the user interface to the operating system. They are designed to function together as a single unit, giving Navision qualities and capabilities that are not available in solutions assembled from separate software development tools.

Date Driven Accounting Architecture

Unlike other systems, Navision does not use fields or "buckets" in the database to store static account balances and totals. Nor does it need to use fixed accounting periods. Instead, Navision uses [FlowFields](#) to dynamically calculate account balances. Navision's SIFT technology instantly calculates and displays account balances and ensures that they are always accurate and up to date. The system uses [FlowFilters](#) to filter account balances by dates and "Dimensions" or accounting structure segments.

In Navision, a fiscal year can be comprised of up to 365 accounting periods defined by the period start and end dates. But you can run financial reports for any date range, not just the pre-defined accounting periods. This means that you can easily report on projects, programs, or other dimensions, that cross fiscal years or have arbitrary mid-period start and end dates.

Users can be restricted to specific posting date ranges. To close a fiscal year, Navision "date locks" fiscal periods for the closed year. A "closed" fiscal year cannot be opened again, and accounting period dates in a closed year cannot be changed. But you can post closing and adjusting entries in the closed year before clearing revenue and expense accounts to the balance sheet.

More than one fiscal year may be open, allowing you to make entries in a new year before the prior year is closed. Authorized users can perform the year-end process to clear revenue and expense accounts to the balance sheet more than once if additional closing entries or prior year adjusting entries are required. So with Navision, you can take as much time as needed to perform your year-end close, without holding up the posting of transactions for a new year.

This date-driven accounting architecture provides unparalleled flexibility and control for financial reporting and fiscal period processing.

Account Schedules

The Account Schedule facility is Navision's integrated tool for producing financial reports and analyzing financial information. The Account Schedule facility allows you to create an unlimited number of financial report definitions. You can create Account Schedules with completely customizable row and column calculations and presentation quality formats.

After an Account Schedule is created, Navision's built-in report generator can be used to print or preview the financial report in presentation format. Or, the Account Schedule can be run online, displaying the financial information in the same row and column layout, and providing powerful filtering, drill down, and analysis capabilities.

Navision uses [FlowFields and SIFT](#) to instantly calculate and display Account Schedule information online. [FlowFilters](#), [Dimensions](#), and the [date-driven architecture](#) described above allow you to instantly filter, recalculate, and display the report amounts based on any criteria you choose. "TrendScape" buttons allow you to view report data by year, by quarter, by accounting period, or by day, with a single mouse click. Drill down data reflects any filters that are set on the Account Schedule. And report data displayed in an online Account Schedule view can be copied and pasted into an Excel spreadsheet with a few mouse clicks.

With the reporting and online analytical power provided by Navision's integrated Account Schedule facility, you don't need to resort to external reporting and analysis tools.

Database Versioning and Optimistic Concurrency

Other business software products use locking techniques to protect the integrity of the database by locking other users out of a record while one user is viewing or changing the record. This can be a real problem when locks are held during a long running report or posting process, or when a user takes a coffee break in the middle of making a change to a record. Furthermore, with other systems, if a glitch like a power failure or hardware problems occurs during a change or posting process, the database integrity is often damaged, results in lost data, and can only be repaired through a complicated recovery process.

With Navision, you never have to worry about the integrity of your data, and users never get locked out or slowed down by other users. That's because of two technologies that we have not seen in other business software. These technologies are called Optimistic Concurrency and Database Versioning.

With Optimistic Concurrency, two or more users can access or modify a record at the same time without locking each other out or holding each other up. This is possible because Navision uses something called Database Versioning. Every time a user saves a new or changed record, which is something that happens automatically in Navision, a new version of the database view is created. When you enter new data, your changes are private. It is not until your entry is saved that the new data becomes public, and the newest version of the database view is established. Navision enables several users to access and modify the database concurrently by letting them work on individual versions of database views, which are merely snapshots of the database at the time they first accessed it.

If two or more users access the same record at the very same time (something that rarely happens), the user who first tries to make changes to the record is allowed to do so. The other user(s) receive a message notifying them that their view of the record is not current, that their changes will not be saved, and that they must refresh their view of the record before making the change. This situation happens very rarely. Therefore, Navision's Optimistic Concurrency and Database Versioning prevent user lockouts and hold-ups, while at the same time protecting the integrity of the database.

User Customizable Tabular Forms

Many of Navision's data screens are designed in a simple, user-friendly, tabular, row and column format. Wherever Navision displays records in a tabular format, each user has the ability to show, hide, or reorder the columns based on their own preferences.

The Navision database contains hundreds of database fields in each module which may or may not be used depending on a company's or a user's unique data requirements and processes.

Navision allows users to show or hide fields on tabular screens as required or according to their own preference. To hide a column, a user simply clicks the right mouse button on a column heading, and selects the "Hide" function to temporarily hide that column. To show columns that are not visible, the user right clicks any column heading, and selects the "Show" function, which displays a pick list of columns available for display on that screen.

To put screen columns in a different order, a user simply needs to click on a column heading, hold down the mouse button, and drag the column to its new position.

This capability allows users to adjust their screen layouts as needed to help speed data entry and remove unnecessary clutter. Each user can set and change screen layout preferences without affecting the same screen layouts for other users. Any such change that a user makes is automatically saved and will be retained for that user until they make another change.