

Getting Smarter with Time Tracking and Microsoft Dynamics®

White Paper

Executive Summary

Let's face it: employees hate tracking their time. According to surveys of Dynamics users Journyx conducted with MSDynamicsWorld.com, the top challenge with tracking employee time in the organization is getting timesheets submitted on time. In addition, the task of processing timesheets manually for project accounting, payroll, and billing is another top challenge, because of the work, error, and inefficiencies it creates.

While Microsoft Dynamics offers basic functionality for tracking employee time, several benefits can be gained with an integrated third-party time tracking solution. Such a solution will not only make it easier and more efficient to process timesheets, but also make it easier for employees to fill out and submit their timesheets – on time, and with fewer errors.

When selecting such a solution, it is valuable to analyze it in the context of your business's specific needs with regards to ease of use, efficiency, compliance, and necessary approval levels. A smart time tracking solution will be able to provide capabilities for all of these and more. Because Microsoft Dynamics can integrate with different software add-ins, it is unnecessary and unproductive to purchase expensive standalone systems that do not work with it.

The Flexibility of Microsoft Dynamics

Microsoft Dynamics offers many advantages. One key benefit is the ability to integrate with software that will enhance flexibility while retaining the functionality that users have come to expect and enjoy. One concern that faces many Dynamics users is the utility of the included time entry system. While it is sufficient for many basic business tasks, it begins to falter with more complex projects that tend to emerge as businesses grow and mature.

For that reason, it is important that business owners choose a time tracking integration with expanded utilities that can grow with and enhance an organization.

The following are four benefits of a time tracking solution that integrates with Microsoft Dynamics – so tracking time becomes smarter, easier, and more profitable.





Improve Efficiency

Time tracking software can offer advanced functionality beyond the context of payroll and accounting. When properly configured, it can be used to ensure efficiency within an organization by tracking employee time at the individual level as well as by department or organization. The benefits are well worth the effort. By analyzing this information, it is possible to determine discrepancies in job role versus skill set. For instance, if one employee is assigned tasks in one area, but actually completes tasks in another with much more efficiency, it makes sense to assign him more of the tasks where he's most efficient. Organizational restructuring of this sort sounds complex, but it is possible to perform these minor corrections regularly if the information is accessible and apparent. In fact, experiments like this are necessary for optimal growth of an organization, though they are often overlooked.

Time tracking software can also make the task of filling out a timesheet easier and less painful for employees. By taking advantage of machine learning and artificial intelligence, time tracking solutions are developing "smart" features that practically fill out the timesheets for the employee – such as suggested entries based on calendar events and tasks that become more and more accurate over time.



Track Time Anywhere, from Any Device

Web-based timesheet solutions set the standard for time tracking at the end of the Twentieth Century, allowing timesheets to be accessed on any workstation, anywhere. Now, an increasingly mobile workforce across a variety of industries demands easy access to their time tracking application from their mobile devices. A robust mobile app is a feature that most time tracking solutions offer, but is currently not provided with Microsoft Dynamics.



Manage Strategic Approvals

Approvals are often limited to just one supervisor or administrator. Unfortunately, this limitation makes it difficult to capitalize on some of the more complex benefits that timekeeping can offer a company. At an even more basic level, though, it means that sometimes the right people will not see the information they need, or will be overwhelmed by unnecessary data that makes interpretation complex.

For instance, in an organization an employee might fall under the management of one executive. However, for a particular project a specific project manager will direct him. In order to determine the employee's efficiency on that project, the project manager will want to see the amount of time he is dedicating to tasks specific to that project.

However, if he only has the option to see the employee's time tracked to all projects and tasks, not simply his project, the project manager will have a much more difficult time wading through and categorizing unnecessary data. For this reason a third party time tracking system with customizable approvals is recommended if a business will be engaging in any sort of complex activities so that the right people will have access to the right information every time.



Automate Compliance

Formal policies and compliance requirements can govern employee timesheet usage, but it is inevitable that mistakes will occur. Often, this will take the form of simple human forgetfulness, because after all, employees have many things they must work on without worrying about tracking their time. In the basic time entry functionality included in Microsoft Dynamics, there is very little a business can do to make sure compliance is taken care of. Fortunately, third-party solutions can provide an answer in the form of automation.

With these programs, reminders and validations should be configured according to the specific needs of the company implementing the system. If, for instance, it is necessary to enter time daily, then an automated system will send a brief email reminding an employee to enter time each day. If that employee still forgets, the system will also notify him and point him to the timesheet that needs corrections. Similarly, if an employee is required to enter a certain amount of time, or should only track time to certain tasks, the system should be configured to make errors impossible. By limiting time entry options at the employee level, and automatically rejecting invalid timesheets, businesses can save quite a bit of time since errors will be drastically diminished, if not eliminated entirely.

Closing Thoughts

Because Microsoft Dynamics can be configured to integrate with advanced time tracking tools, it is unnecessary to roll out an entirely separate software system. In fact, it is counterproductive to do so. When choosing a time tracking solution to integrate with Microsoft Dynamics, it is important to identify the core requirement that the new software should address, and shop accordingly. Every good provider will be happy to discuss their product and how it relates to specific needs, often accompanied by a live demonstration. By taking advantage of key integrations, you can make smarter use of Microsoft Dynamics and get more value out of your investment.



Journyx is not your average software company. We strive to be relentlessly creative and to build tools that help you spend your time on things that matter. After all, time is all we have. Founded in 1996, Journyx offers customers two solutions to reach the highest levels of profitability: Journyx – project, time and expense tracking software – and Journyx PX – resource management software that provides work and financial forecasting for a complete picture of project and budget status, employee time and availability. Journyx has thousands of customers worldwide, including Crate&Barrel, Schlumberger, BP, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Callaway Golf, Honeywell and many others. For more information, visit www.journyx.com.