MICROSOFT BUSINESS SOLUTIONS FOR
Project
MANAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTING - Solomon
PROFITABLE PROJECT MANAGEMENT DEPENDS ON THE RIGHT INFORMATION...

...at the right time. This focused insight is crucial to applying appropriate resources, carrying out key tasks, managing profitability and making wise decisions.

With Microsoft® Business Solutions Project Management and Accounting—Solomon, you can empower your organization’s professional project managers with a flexible, integrated solution tailored to unique business needs. From smoothly launching new projects and tracking their progress to analyzing opportunities and assessing results, Project Management and Accounting helps keep projects on track and your business thriving.
DRIVE PROJECTS WITH A SOLUTION TO WORK THE WAY YOU DO.

EFFICIENT ORGANIZATION

• Quickly set up, track, and maintain key project information, budgets, contracts and documentation requirements. Automated messages keep you on top of deadlines, pending tasks, and key indicators you choose.

STRICT CONTROL

• Strengthen fiscal management with real-time access to project revenues, costs, and margins. Manage change-order processes by viewing schedule and budget impacts before alterations proceed.

INCREASED PROFITABILITY

• Create custom pricing structures, rates, and mark-ups for billing, and tailor them to individual projects and customers. Shorten billing cycles and leverage cash flow when project costs flow directly to invoicing processes.

INTEGRATED ACCOUNTING

• Streamline financial management with flexible, automated processing and seamless links across financials, projects, inventory, work order, field service operations, and the Microsoft Office Enterprise Project Management Solution.

PRODUCTIVITY ENHANCEMENT

• Boost productivity with powerful tools for employee time keeping, utilization management, automated notifications, and the ability to work from the field via Web-based access to information and processes.

CONVENIENT ANALYSIS

• Assess performance and manage profits across multiple projects with easy access to summaries and details, plus integration with industry-standard reporting tools.

“Microsoft Solomon provides us with the ability to manage the company in a timely manner instead of with information that is 30 days old. We used to have a gap in information. Now, we can actually see where the company is at day to day and month to month.”

DENNIS LEARY
VICE PRESIDENT AND DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS
ASPEN MARKETING SERVICES
Meet the most complex operational requirements with agile efficiency. Microsoft Solomon provides the custom operation, reliable processing, and depth of function you need to exceed expectations, delight customers, and outpace the competition.

One integrated system connects every aspect of your business, from financial and project management, e-business, and payroll to distribution, field service management, and reporting. The result is accurate, timely, and detailed information that provides the insight for precision control and shrewd decision-making.

Leverage this competitive advantage into the future with limitless customization and potential for growth. Wherever your business growth takes you, a vast network of dedicated Microsoft Certified Business Solutions Partners and independent software vendors (ISVs) will be there to offer reliable service and long-term support. Enhanced performance, greater profitability and expanding success—it’s all within reach.
MICROSOFT SOLOMON PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTING AT A GLANCE

PROJECT CONTROLLER
Quickly set up projects to fit your business, then manage them effectively with timely, detailed revenue and cost information.

TIME AND EXPENSE FOR PROJECTS
Streamline labor reporting with timesheets and expense reports that can be accessed anywhere, anytime over the Web.

FLEXIBLE BILLINGS
Improve cash flow by automating invoicing processes and converting unbilled receivables more quickly to revenues.

ALLOCATOR
Efficiently manage project finances with customized rate structures, automatic allocation of charges and revenues, work-in-process tracking, and accurate project data for billing and posting.

PROJECT BUDGETING
Gain control of profitability with powerful tools to create budgets, track results, and preview the impact of changes.

CONTRACT MANAGEMENT
Ensure timely and profitable project completion with features that help you track documents, handle change orders, manage subcontractor performance, and link payments to successful delivery.

COMMUNICATOR
Keep projects on track with automated notification for deadlines, approvals, escalating costs, or other messages you choose.

EMPLOYEE UTILIZATION
Improve human resource productivity by tracking availability and billable time, setting utilization goals, and managing performance against them.

ANALYZER
Enhance decision making with the ability to conveniently summarize, analyze, present, or compare project data.

“Previously, we relied on each division to tell us how they were doing. With our new software, we have become all seeing and all knowing and it is changing the way we make decisions.”

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Initiate projects effectively

Customize project setup and organization with Microsoft Solomon Project Controller. Multiple levels of information, flexible billing structures, and user-defined entries capture the data you need and let you share it with people you specify.

Get accurate information about resources throughout your enterprise so you can assemble the best team for each project. Evaluate skills and assignments and resource utilization rates for optimal deployment of resources.

Maximize profits by efficiently, accurately, and consistently tracking employee utilization data. Track everything from goals for billable hours and revenue to actual hours billed and revenue earned.

Gain control over subcontractor performance and costs with Microsoft Solomon Contract Management’s powerful tools for tracking commitments and monitoring and motivating progress. Tighten financial safeguards by linking disbursements to deliverables, calculating retentions, and handling pay-when-paid agreements.

Manage time and expenses accurately, from any location

Capture time and expense at the project and task level for multiple purposes—costing, billing, payroll and project status update. Project and accounting staffs can capture labor costs, employee-related expenses, material costs, and other accounts payable transactions directly against projects and tasks, providing insight into all costs associated with your projects.

Easy-to-use, Web-based access lets team members and project stakeholders view, update, and submit project information—including time cards, expense reports, and analysis of project status with drilldown to detailed transactions—from any location. Review and approval capabilities streamline workflow and ensure timely and accurate submission of mission-critical data, allowing you to bill your customers, analyze profitability, and review project status faster than ever before.

Immediate integration of time and project expense capture provides all the information in one place for accurate, centralized reporting and can dramatically reduce the amount of time required to represent billable transactions on customer invoices.
Capture time information, even from employees working remotely, with data automatically routed to the appropriate managers.

Manage contract documents, change orders, and disbursements to optimize project cash flow and profitability.

At a glance, view key project billing and financial performance indicators.
M A I N T A I N  T I G H T  F I S C A L  C O N T R O L

Automate your management of unbilled receivables with billing methods and mark up rules to automatically post billings to Microsoft Solomon Accounts Receivable and General Ledger.

Help reduce the time and effort required to produce invoices—customers can be invoiced with different types of services and fees at the same time. Choose from time and materials, progress, and fee billing methods.

Track and control your budgets from project initiation to completion. See how change orders and revisions affect your budget throughout the life of a project.

Use Microsoft Solomon Allocator to design custom rate and billing structures, mark-ups and recognition rules, and then automatically distribute complex charges and revenues by using batch or automated processing.

Accurately recognize revenue by using flexible revenue recognition methods that meet your specific audit, business and project needs. Control your revenue by using cost plus, fixed price, and time and materials methods at the project phase level.


Enhance profitability with real-time views of detailed financial data from initial budget through project closure, without waiting for accounting periods to close.

Access project status and billed and unbilled Accounts Receivable information, then drill down to transactions details—all from a Web interface that can be accessed from any Internet-connected PC*.

Manage fiscal performance every step of the way with the ability to forecast outcomes, monitor trends, predict the impact of changes, and track estimate at completion and forecasts at completion, in addition to the original budget.

Create alert messages for revenues and cost budgets, making it easy for project managers to identify potential cost overruns and other problem that jeopardize project success.

*Microsoft Internet Explorer 5.5 or later required.
Receive messages that alert you to take action or address potential problems.

Invoice customers with different types of services and fees—all at one time.

Send messages to others to prompt them to take action.
Synchronize information, people and processes.

Enhance productivity with project information that flows seamlessly from one process to the next and across functional boundaries, geographical barriers, and the Internet to your desktop.

**CONNECT SMOOTHLY ACROSS APPLICATIONS AND PLATFORMS**

**Increase productivity** with the ability to perform key project tasks and manage progress anywhere you can access the Internet.

**Strengthen relationships** by giving customers and business partners secure, Web-based access to the shared information that can enhance your mutual success.

**Save time maintaining data.** Integration across Microsoft Solomon financial management modules gives you fast access to updated, accurate information.

**Connect Microsoft Solomon** the Microsoft Office EPM Solution—which includes Microsoft Office Project Professional and Microsoft Office Project Server—to create a seamless solution for task assignment, resource management, project management, budgeting, time and expense entry, invoicing, and more.

**Projects can be initiated and updated** in either Microsoft EPM Solution or Microsoft Solomon, with information flowing automatically across applications. This powerful integration enables project managers and accounting staff to use the tools appropriate for their roles.

**SUPPORT ADVANCED MANAGEMENT FOR PROJECTS**

**Access information about employee availability** and use it to set goals for billable time, track results, and realize greater productivity by using Microsoft Solomon Employee Utilization.

**Keep on top of deadlines and the current status** of important documents. Tracking tools in Contract Management and messages from Microsoft Solomon Communicator help you ensure compliance with vital paperwork requirements.

**Manage resources effectively** throughout your organization. Provide a view of resource information and evaluate availability across multiple projects so back office staff and front line project managers have visibility on resource schedules and availability.

**Enhance business decision-making** with comprehensive performance data, quickly collected and summarized by Microsoft Solomon Analyzer for analysis and presentation.

**Seamlessly transfer data** to industry-standard reporting tools such as Microsoft Office Excel, Crystal Reports Professional, or Microsoft Business Solutions for Analytics–FRx Professional and Desktop for efficient, in-depth analysis.
Bi-directional integration with Microsoft Office Project 2003 makes real-time financial data available to project managers via a new window in Microsoft Project Professional, the ProfitPane™.

Quickly view resource goals and performance to adjust to new business demands.

Review invoice status to ensure timely billing and optimize cash flow.
Customer Success Story: Aspen Marketing Services

Founded in 1986, Aspen Marketing Services is the fifth-largest marketing services firm in the United States. The company provides integrated resources for direct-response marketing program, including branded products, interactive services, promotions/premiums, events (mall/mobile marketing through the use of displays and tractor trailers), and strategic planning.

Aspen serves more than 100 clients across the United States. It has approximately 300 employees with 100 full-time users and another 100 users with access through Web browsers.

As a roll-up of several acquired companies, Aspen was operating seven different general ledgers. “Consolidated reporting was done via spread sheets and a lot of elbow grease,” says Don Danner, CFO. Aspen wasn’t operating as a unified company.

Two major problems faced Aspen:

— An extremely long close (typically three to four weeks)
— Each division operated with its own identity, including discrete accounting systems

Aspen hired ePartners, a Microsoft Certified Business Solutions Partner, to help find a unified accounting system that could be implemented on an aggressive schedule and that Aspen could administer on its own. Microsoft Business Solutions—Solomon, with its strong components for project accounting, distribution, and inventory management, was the choice.

The Microsoft Solomon solution made the vision of company integration a reality at Aspen. Previously, one Aspen division would contract with a client and then “farm out” some of the services to other Aspen divisions. These contracts were not truly coordinated across Aspen’s many divisions. With Microsoft Solomon in place, Aspen pitches the company as an integrated marketing company able to perform a complete bundle of services. Now, three or even four divisions work closely on fulfilling integrated contracts which, at times, total several million dollars.
“Microsoft Solomon allows us to manage our company in a way that we really couldn’t before,” says Dennis Leary, Aspen VP and Director of Operations. “Previously, we relied on each division to tell us how they were doing. With our new software, we have become all seeing and all knowing and it is changing the way we make decisions.”

**BENEFITS THAT TRANSLATE INTO EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT**

Prior to implementation, it took Aspen as long as three to four weeks to close. Since implementing Microsoft Solomon, Aspen is able to close 68 percent faster.

“Microsoft Solomon provides us with the ability to manage the company in a timely manner instead of with information that is 30 days old,” says Leary. “We used to have a gap in information. Now, we can actually see where the company is at day to day and month to month. We can know where we are standing on a moment’s notice.”

Microsoft Solomon Project Management and Accounting gives Aspen improved management over integrated contracts. This tool allows the company to accumulate costs until the completion of a contract and identifies the portions of the contract that have reached completion. Project Controller allows scheduling of revenue and bills independent of each other and it automatically recognizes the amount revenue over time.

Project Management and Accounting enables Aspen to track project costs against the contract and it provides visibility of these costs, in real time, from every part of the company. This software also provides easy access to information about profitability on individual projects or portions of projects.

Microsoft Solomon financial management capabilities have provided Aspen with centralized billing. With improved coordination and a common software solution, Aspen has eliminated inter-company billing. The company can focus on sales and operations to an unprecedented degree.

“People are now doing higher level activities,” says Leary. “Employees were previously consumed with data entry of transactions; they are now able to do light analysis and quality control functions.”

Integration of financials with Microsoft Solomon Positive Pay provides Aspen with additional anti-fraud protection, which is appreciated by Aspen’s insurance company.

**VISIBLE COST SAVINGS**

- **Aspen has been able to reduce its working capital needs by $4 million**, eliminating interest charges of $250,000 and reducing corporate cost by one percent for additional savings of $1.3 million. The company expects to have full payback from implementation costs within nine to 10 months.

- **Increased visibility and access to inventory** has allowed Aspen to reduce inventory by $500,000. With visibility of inventory across all locations, any location can now access inventory from any other site.
SOLUTIONS TAILORED FOR TODAY—AND FOR YEARS INTO THE FUTURE

The power and flexibility that define Microsoft Solomon begin right out of the box and evolve with your organization for long-term returns. Microsoft Solomon Customization Manager lets you adapt screen displays, data entry processes and controls, security access, and much more to your organization’s unique needs and methods of operation. Update appearance and workflows as often as needed to keep pace with your business. Even more sophisticated customization is easy with embedded Microsoft Visual Basic® for Applications. Industry-specific solutions are also available from a vast network of independent software vendors.

Extend this agility to the ways in which employees create and access your business information. Productivity rises when work can be accomplished anytime, from any location, through the nearest Web browser. Project teams can work remotely at every stage, from initial planning and budgeting to labor and expense reporting, change-order approval, and results management. Connect customers and suppliers to shared information and processes for even greater synergy and business value.

Your investment in Microsoft Solomon will continue to pay off, year after year, with dedicated support from Microsoft Certified Business Solutions partners and a global network of ISVs. From initial training and start-up to software updates, customization and productivity support, count on this expert backing to make Microsoft Solomon your winning business solution for years to come.
Achieve more – with a solution designed to work the way you do.

For more information about Microsoft Dynamics™ SL, visit: www.synergybusiness.com or call 800.481.8590