

MODULE 1: MICROSOFT DYNAMICS NAV 2013 AS AN ERP SYSTEM

Module Overview

To help students understand why Microsoft Dynamics NAV 2013 can be classified as an enterprise resource planning (ERP) system, this module provides an overview of ERP and Microsoft Dynamics NAV 2013.

Objectives

The objectives are:

- Explain the concept of ERP and Microsoft Dynamics NAV 2013.
- Describe the most important features of ERP and Microsoft Dynamics NAV 2013.

ERP System

Common Database

The main objective of enterprise resource planning, or ERP, is to integrate all departments and functions across a company into a single system by using a common database, and so to have only one correct set of data.

One of the challenges that companies face is access to timely and correct information. This is very important in making appropriate business decisions. Frequently, corporate information is located in several databases. For example, records about inventory levels may be found in one database, whereas customer information may be found in its own separate database. Additionally, these databases may be "island systems" (operating independently from one another and having no integration with other databases).

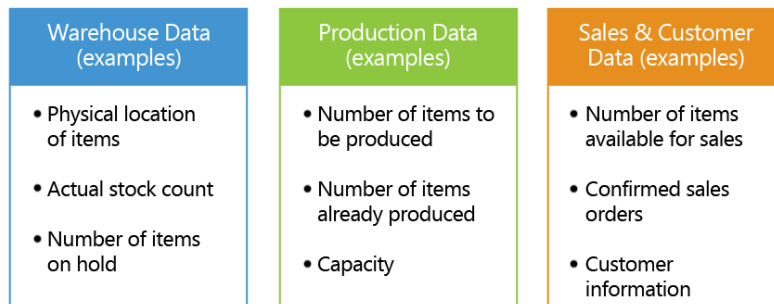


FIGURE 1.1: ISLAND SYSTEMS

As shown in the figure, Island Systems, information about warehousing, production, sales, and customer data is found in several databases across the enterprise. Because this information is not shared, extracting relevant information becomes difficult.

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For example, John, a customer who usually buys on credit, wants to triple his standard order and have it delivered within the month. Jane, the sales representative, must verify the following to make sure she can comply with the order:

- **Authorization** – Does the sales representative need her manager's approval to approve the order?
- **Credit limit** – How much can the customer order from the company based only on credit?
- **Inventory levels** – Is there enough stock to comply with the order?
- **Shipping** – Can the items be delivered on time?

If the sales representative cannot get this information in a timely manner, she may be unable to close the sale. Or, if she agrees to complete this order without performing the necessary background check, she runs the risk of not meeting the order, and more important, losing a customer.

ERP systems do not have this limitation because all information is found in one common database. For example, even though a warehouse supervisor enters information into the system by using the warehousing module, that information is visible across the enterprise.

Therefore, when a sales representative takes an order from a customer, all information that is required to fulfill that order is immediately available (for example, customer credit history, inventory levels, shipping availability).



FIGURE 1.2: AN ERP SYSTEM

Real Time

Another typical problem is that information entered in a legacy system is frequently not available in real-time. This means that records may be updated only at certain intervals during a period (hour, day, week, or month) usually done as a batch job. The advantage of an ERP system is that as soon as data is entered into the system, it becomes instantly available. The disadvantage is that incorrectly entered data will be seen also. Users must be cautious when they enter data into the system. It is very important that only correct data reside in an ERP system.

Tied to Company's Business Process

With an ERP system, companies can process activity beyond accounting. For example, ERP systems can support distribution, service, and manufacturing. Frequently, an ERP system is configured to match a company's business process. Although companies in a particular industry may share common business processes, each company may have its own certain and specific business processes. Accordingly, an ERP system is modified and configured to meet a company's requirements.

Job Roles and Authorization

Although information in an ERP system is readily available, proper authorization is required. Access to data is frequently determined by one's job role and responsibilities within the organization. For example, a sales order processor is authorized to create, view, and modify sales quotes and orders, but cannot process the sales invoices.

In some cases, authorization to access information in the system may be granted in a time-limited way. For example, a production supervisor may authorize a subordinate to create and release production orders on his behalf while he is away on vacation. This makes sure that data cannot be accessed by unauthorized personnel.

The ERP System

Microsoft Dynamics NAV 2013 is a fully integrated relational database system that lets you enter and maintain financial and other business activities in one place. This includes the following:

- General ledger
- Inventory
- Sales and receivables
- Purchases and payables
- Resources
- Manufacturing
- Jobs
- Service management
- Human resources

Therefore, it is categorized as an enterprise resource planning (ERP) system.

The business functionality is displayed in a graphical user interface that provides the following benefits:

1. All work on the screen is performed in windows.
2. Many windows can be open at the same time.
3. One key stroke or mouse click can choose, select, and execute various functions.

With the application's general functions, you can do the following:

- Organize daily routines
- Locate information quickly
- Manage business information
- Analyze data
- Report information

Getting Help

Microsoft Dynamics NAV 2013 offers the following types of documentation:

- Online Help
- User manuals
- Training material
- Technical white papers
- CustomerSource

Online Help

You can access Online Help directly from the application by pressing F1 or by clicking the **Microsoft Dynamics NAV Help** button. Help is context-sensitive. Therefore, it mainly provides specific functionality information instead of the broad overviews provided in the other types of documentation.

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The main window of the Help system has tabs for **Contents**, **Index**, **Search**, and **Favorites**.

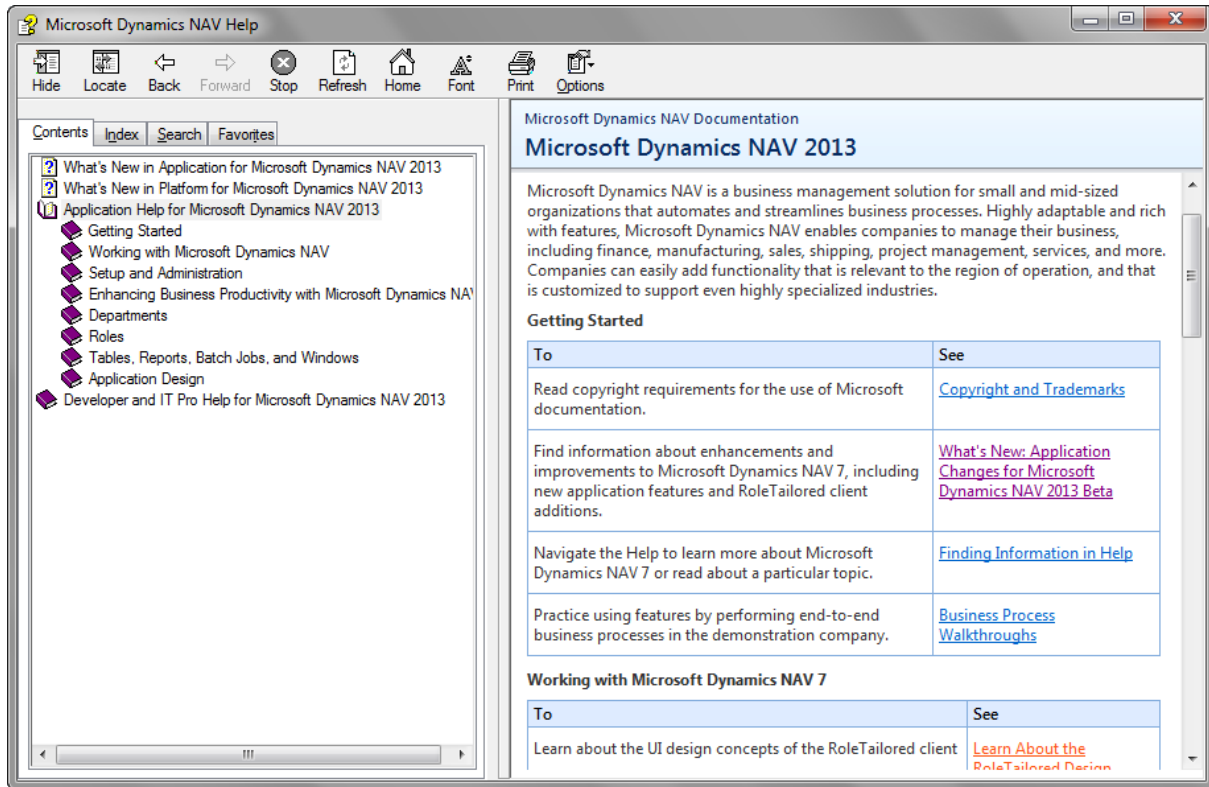


FIGURE 1.3: ONLINE HELP WINDOW

The **Contents** tab displays a table of contents for all topics and includes subfolders for every application area. Within each application area, you can find help to assist you with procedures and provide information on tables and reports.

User Manuals

User manuals are delivered as .pdf files together with the product software. They cover only technical usage such as installation and system configuration. No user manuals exist for application areas. User manuals are intended to familiarize the novice with the software in the following ways:

- Specific instructions on setup and initial usage.
- Reference for when the user is uncertain about what to do in Microsoft Dynamics NAV 2013.

For application areas such as Finance and Inventory, the training manuals can be used as reference guides.

Training Material

An extensive offering of training materials - for application and technology - is available for partners and customers on dedicated download centers or through instructor-led training sessions organized by Microsoft Solutions Learning Centers. Training offerings include the following:

- Training manuals
- E-Learning
- Certification exams

Technical White Papers

Technical white papers are intended mainly for expert audiences among Microsoft partner staff and serve to explain selected product subjects of particular importance or complexity.



Note: For Microsoft Dynamics NAV 2013, the technical white papers are available through the Help system.

CustomerSource

CustomerSource is a Microsoft website where Microsoft Dynamics customers can find lots of information. This includes the following:

- Online training
- Self-support resources
- Access to a Microsoft Dynamics user community

CustomerSource also provides access to software downloads and updates.

Things to Notice

Before you begin to use the program, take special note of the following elements:

- Microsoft Windows
- Granules
- User interface (UI) access
- Objects
- Database behavior

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Microsoft Windows

Microsoft Dynamics NAV 2013 works within Microsoft Windows, or Microsoft® SQL Server®. All Windows functionality and characteristics are present in Microsoft Dynamics NAV 2013.

Granules

Application areas are the submenus found on the navigation pane, such as Financial Management or Manufacturing. The individual application areas consist of even smaller units called granules. A granule is a group of features packed together, making it easier to configure a license.

UI Access

UI objects for displaying information are granule-specific and granule-dependent. Therefore, users have different access to the UI, and this defines their interaction with the system when they input and use information.

Objects

The application areas are constructed of small independent units called objects. This structure makes it possible to change a specific object without affecting the other objects.

Database Behavior

Because Microsoft Dynamics NAV 2013 is a database system, be aware that entered data is written (committed) directly to the database. Therefore, no Save action is required. Any entered and unposted data can be edited or deleted from the database. Posted data cannot be deleted as they are considered binding financial transactions.

Lab: Open Microsoft Dynamics NAV 2013

Scenario

Susan started working as an order processor at CRONUS International Ltd. recently. She asks her colleague Alicia about the different ways to open Microsoft Dynamics NAV 2013.

Alicia explains that you can open the application in different ways. This includes the following:

- Use the **Start** button to select the program.
- Create a desktop shortcut.
- Pin the program to the taskbar.

Susan tries these different ways to open Microsoft Dynamics NAV 2013.

Exercise 1: Open Microsoft Dynamics NAV 2013

Task 1: Open Microsoft Dynamics NAV 2013 by using the Start Button

High Level Steps

1. Open Microsoft Dynamics NAV 2013 Using the **Start** button.

Detailed Steps

1. Open Microsoft Dynamics NAV 2013 Using the **Start** button.
 - a. In Microsoft Windows, click **Start**.
 - b. On the **Start** menu, click **All Programs**.
 - c. Locate and then click **Microsoft Dynamics 2013**.

Task 2: Create a Desktop Shortcut to Open Microsoft Dynamics NAV 2013

High Level Steps

1. Create a desktop shortcut to open Microsoft Dynamics NAV 2013.

Detailed Steps

1. Create a desktop shortcut to open Microsoft Dynamics NAV 2013.
 - a. In Microsoft Windows, click **Start**.
 - b. In the **Start** menu, click **All Programs**.
 - c. Locate and right-click **Microsoft Dynamics 2013**.
 - d. In the shortcut menu, click **Send to**.
 - e. In the submenu, click **Desktop (create shortcut)**.
 - f. Move to your desktop.
 - g. Locate and double-click the Microsoft Dynamics NAV 2013 shortcut.

Task 3: Pin Microsoft Dynamics NAV 2013 to the taskbar

High Level Steps

1. Pin Microsoft Dynamics NAV 2013 to the Taskbar.

Detailed Steps

1. Pin Microsoft Dynamics NAV 2013 to the Taskbar.
 - a. In Microsoft Windows, click **Start**.
 - b. In the **Start** menu, click **All Programs**.
 - c. Locate and right-click **Microsoft Dynamics 2013**.
 - d. In the shortcut menu, click **Pin to Taskbar**.
 - e. Locate and then click the pinned taskbar button for Microsoft Dynamics NAV 2013 shortcut.

Module Review

Module Review and Takeaways

A general understanding of ERP is important for any user who works with the system. Microsoft Dynamics NAV 2013 is a fully integrated ERP system that uses a common database. It contains a Help function that includes many forms of documentation.