

ANSWERS TO FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

ABOUT THE MICROSOFT DYNAMICS™ NAV CONCEPT FOR MULTI-SITE AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

[What is the Microsoft Dynamics NAV concept for Multi-site and International Organizations?](#)

The concept refers to how a parent or holding company that uses one business software system, can integrate with the systems used by its individual sites – for example its subsidiaries or divisions or branches. Together, the parent company and its sites form a whole that can progress forward as one unit.

In the world of business management software, the IT system of the parent company must work together with the systems of its sites in order for the organization to reach its destination, or business goals.

[How can the concept help larger companies with many sites?](#)

An organization's sites tend to have very different needs than the parent company, and therefore need a different system. First, they usually do not need the same level of complexity in their system as the parent company, and may not even have the resources necessary to acquire and maintain a system that was designed for a larger company. Second, if they are located in different countries, they will need a business system that reflects their local legal requirements as well as the business practices dictated by their location. Finally, they may have specialized functions that they perform because of the nature of their industry, their way of doing business, or the way that they do business together with their parent company.

[How does Microsoft Dynamics NAV meet the varied needs of sites?](#)

Microsoft Dynamics NAV was designed for small-to-mid-sized businesses. It is straightforward to adapt the standard functionality to meet the specific requirements of sites. It has multi-language capabilities. And, there are more than 40 localized country versions around the world. An extensive network of qualified partners helps local sites with their IT needs.

[How can local sites adapt Microsoft Dynamics NAV to meet specific business needs?](#)

Minor adaptations like changing forms are easy to carry out in Microsoft Dynamics NAV. You can remove columns, and add and modify fields without having to manipulate code. Industry templates make it easier and faster for Microsoft partners to adapt the solution for divisions with similar functions, and you can find vertical-industry solutions for more specific business needs from the extensive network of Microsoft partners.

[When would I use industry templates, and when would it be a good idea to look for a vertical solution from a Microsoft partner?](#)

If you have a number of sites, for example divisional sales offices with similar functions, you might want to apply one industry-specific template to all your sites. If, however, you need a solution for, say, the shoe manufacturing industry, then you might want to implement an industry-specific solution based on the Microsoft Dynamics NAV platform. The extensive catalog of industry-specific solutions and the industry templates can help reduce service costs and make it faster and more efficient to implement the solutions at your sites.

[How do I make sure that the modifications that I make to the IT systems of sites aren't lost when I upgrade to a newer version?](#)

There is an upgrade methodology and an upgrade tool, which help give you a smooth transition to new versions of your solution, without losing any specific modifications made for your business. The methodology and tool provide a framework to help you make sure you can continue to work with the solution with which you are already familiar, while still benefiting from new releases.

[How can I consolidate the financial data of parent company and sites more efficiently?](#)

In Microsoft Dynamics NAV, you can consolidate financial statements for a series of business units from a single database, other Microsoft Dynamics NAV databases, or other programs. You can transfer from different accounting structures to your own. You can also ensure that financial statements in different currencies are consolidated trouble-free using the exchanged rate functionality.

Microsoft Dynamics NAV can also help you consolidate with Extensible Business Reporting Language (XBRL), an XML-based specification. XBRL uses accepted financial reporting standards and practices to export financial reports across all software and technologies, including the Internet. With XBRL, you enter information only once, and the same information can then easily be produced as a printed financial statement, an HTML document for a website, a raw XML file, or in a specialized reporting format.

[Will Microsoft Dynamics NAV help me meet increasingly demanding international standards, such as Sarbanes-Oxley and IAS 2005 \(International Accounting Standard\)?](#)

A key to compliance with Sarbanes-Oxley is the presence of an extensive audit trail. The idea is to provide the ability to trace source documents through the accounting systems to the final financial statements, and back to the original source documents. Microsoft Dynamics NAV offers an extensive audit trail, including extensive drill-down and drill around capabilities.

[Will I be able to get monthly reports, and answers to ad-hoc questions about my sites' businesses when they are running a different system from my parent company?](#)

With the business analytics available in Microsoft Dynamics NAV, employees at your sites can create OLAP cubes based on the data in their system. Business Analytics is integrated into your existing Microsoft Dynamics NAV system, giving you the full benefit of access to your stored data. A Data Transformation Services (DTS) package pulls data from Microsoft Dynamics NAV into SQL tables. From here, other DTS packages transform and structure these tables into multidimensional cubes processed in Microsoft® SQL Server® Analysis Services.

[Will employees at sites also be able to get analytical insight into their own business operations?](#)

Employees at your sites will not need extensive IT support, but rather, can quickly generate reports based on the relevant parameters. Because of the Analysis Services cubes, controllers at the parent company can then access the reports in Microsoft SharePoint, Microsoft Excel, or another program that they use in their daily work. The result is better visibility into your entire organization with faster and more efficient reporting tools.

[How can sharing master data, such as vendor and price lists, help my business?](#)

When data is maintained separately in different systems using different formats, it makes it inconsistent. If, however, the parent company shares master data across the entire organization, it brings with it a number of benefits. Time spent sending and re-entering data manually is reduced. Shared vendor data increases opportunities for quantity discounts. And up-to-date and consistent customer data at every point of contact helps increase customer satisfaction.

[How can Microsoft Dynamics NAV help parent companies and their sites share master data?](#)

Microsoft tools for electronic exchange of data allow the entire organization to share master data. One such tool is XMLports, which are used to create XML documents. These documents can easily be sent to and read by another application. For example, an XMLport can be created containing your product catalog and price list. This data can then be exchanged between a parent company using one system and sites using Microsoft Dynamics NAV. Rather than imposing burdensome requirements on subsidiaries, which may have limited IT resources, both parties can rely on a straightforward and efficient means of exchanging data.

If the data you need to exchange with your sites is greater or more complex, then you can use an electronic data-exchange solution based on Microsoft BizTalk Server (Microsoft Business Solutions–Navision Commerce Gateway) in

combination with the XMLports. Predefined document exchange functionality together with the XMLports allows the application to handle XML documents faster.

Are there any scenarios where my company might want to, not only share, but also exchange data between the parent company and its sites?

Yes, there are a number of reasons why an organization might decide to share the responsibility for certain services with their sites. The organization's customers might deal with multiple sites but wish to receive one invoice from the parent company. Or, the organization may wish to divide tasks based on local competencies, such as production or distribution capabilities at the site level. An organization might also want to centralize the payroll or procurement process at the parent company for greater efficiency or to receive bulk discounts.

What tools does Microsoft Dynamics NAV have for exchanging data between the parent company and its sites?

Depending on your organization's needs, electronic exchange of data based on Microsoft BizTalk Server or functionality for intercompany postings might be the right solution for you. You could use Microsoft Dynamics NAV's BizTalk Server solution (Commerce Gateway) to map between the parent company's and its sites' different systems taking into account any difference in currencies. Whether a purchase order was made via the parent company or locally at one of the sites, the experience would be the same for the user.

If, however, the parent company and sites work on a closed network (such as a virtual private network), are controlled by the same legal entity, and do not need to map the data that originates in the sites' systems, then you could use the Intercompany Postings functionality in Microsoft Dynamics NAV. Intercompany Postings can help you create all the necessary documents (including sales and purchase documents and general ledger entries) for the entire workflow, for more than one company at a time.

The integration between the parent company and the sites for sharing services can help you achieve a more efficient workflow that reduces costs. What's more, sites may be more willing to adopt shared processes because you do not impose the corporate system on them. They will have the same user experience they are accustomed to in their Microsoft Dynamics NAV system.

Can the sites interact among themselves as well as with the parent company?

Yes, Microsoft Dynamics NAV can be set up to treat interdivisional transactions as normal sales and purchase transactions between sites to support an integrated supply chain. Just as with the interactions between the parent company and its sites, the sites can interact among themselves using a BizTalk Server solution to exchange data electronically, or Intercompany Postings, depending on their needs.

If two sites need to carry out transactions among themselves, you simply set up a customer account for each of the relevant partners. Microsoft Dynamics NAV then treats them as they would any external customer and vendor. The transactions occur within Microsoft Dynamics NAV, and time is saved throughout your organization because you eliminate multiple data entry as well as the sending, receiving, and printing of paper documents at the various sites.

Can Microsoft Dynamics NAV help parent companies respond more proactively to critical business events at sites?

Yes, it is possible to set up alerts in Microsoft Business Notification that will automatically generate e-mail messages to inform you of critical business conditions at your subsidiaries, divisions, or supply chain partners. For example, you could get an email warning you that a site that you rely on to deliver raw goods has had an unexpected delay. You can use the out-of-the-box templates included with Microsoft Business Notification, and you can set up your own alerts based on the way you like to run your business.

How can I learn more about the concept for Multi-site and International Organizations with Microsoft Dynamics NAV?

To talk to someone about how Microsoft Dynamics NAV can help your organization, contact your local Microsoft country office: www.microsoft.com/BusinessSolutions/worldwide.aspx.

For detailed technical information, you can find an installation guide and a technical white paper at www.microsoft.com/dynamics/nav/mio. On the Microsoft Dynamics NAV product page, www.microsoft.com/dynamics/nav, you can read case stories, and find the following fact sheets, which help make the Multi-site and International Organizations concept possible:

- Business Analytics
- Business Notifications
- Commerce Gateway
- Industry Specific Solutions Tools
- Intercompany Postings
- Microsoft Dynamics NAV Developer Toolkit (which includes the upgrade tool)
- XBRL
- XML Document Exchange (XMLports)
- Financial Management Business White Paper

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