Microsoft Dynamics® AX 2009

Overview of Enterprise Portal

White Paper

Microsoft Dynamics AX provides a set of Web modules that give you access to Microsoft Dynamics AX data and allow you to participate in business processes using Web-based Microsoft Dynamics AX forms. These modules and the portal system are collectively called Enterprise Portal. Enterprise Portal is built on Microsoft® Windows® SharePoint® Services or Microsoft Office® SharePoint Server. This document describes the modules, features, and business tasks users perform in Enterprise Portal.

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Microsoft Dynamics®

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Introduction

Microsoft Dynamics AX provides a set of Web modules that give you access to Microsoft Dynamics AX data and allow you to participate in business processes using Web-based Microsoft Dynamics AX forms. These modules are collectively called Enterprise Portal. Enterprise Portal is built on Microsoft Windows SharePoint Services or Microsoft Office SharePoint Server. This document describes the modules and features in Enterprise Portal, as well as the common business tasks users perform in Enterprise Portal.

Enterprise Portal security

As you read about Enterprise Portal modules and features in this document, be aware that the portal uses multiple security features to restrict information and data access. Users can only view information, data, or modules if they have been granted permission by the Microsoft Dynamics AX administrator. Users who lack appropriate permissions receive an error when they attempt to view information or data, or they are presented with an empty Web page.

Enterprise Portal modules and features

This section describes the modules and features of Enterprise Portal. You can access most of the modules and features described here from either Enterprise Portal or the Microsoft Dynamics AX client. The following features, however, are exclusive to Enterprise Portal:

- Employee Services > Manage expenses
- The Customer Self-Service Portal
- The Vendor Self-Service Portal

The modules and features described here are available after you install Enterprise Portal using the internal templates. Enterprise Portal does include public templates if your business or organization intends to setup a public-facing Web site for anonymous Web access so users can browse a product catalog or request sign up as a vendor.

The Home Page / Role Center module

Microsoft Dynamics AX administrators can configure the system to display a default Home page when you open Enterprise Portal or a role-tailored Home page called a *Role Center*. Role Centers provide an overview of information that pertains to a user's job function in the business or organization, including work lists, activities, common links, and key business intelligence information. Although Role Centers must initially be set up by a system administrator, you can modify your personal view of the page to fit your needs.

Role Center pages contain Web Parts, which are small applications that display information on the page. You can add Web Parts to Role Center pages and customize them to fit your needs.

Role Centers can contain the following types of Web Part to display business data from Microsoft Dynamics AX.

Quick links

Quick links provide access to forms, reports, list pages, and other frequently-used Web pages. You can modify these links to meet your needs.

Cues

Cues display a visual representation of your workload and give an overview of your remaining work items, such as sales leads, overdue activities, and other tasks that you need to complete. You can create and modify the Cues, which are saved filtered views of form or list page information. When you click a Cue, the associated form or list page opens with the filtered view displayed.

Work lists

Work lists display alerts, workflow work items, and activities that you can act on or need to be notified about. You can use lists to view the status of items and see when action is required. When you click a link in a work list, information about the list item is displayed.

Reports and key performance indicator (KPI) lists

Reports Web Parts display Microsoft SQL Server Reporting Services reports from the Microsoft Dynamics AX database or from online analytical processing (OLAP) cubes that are set up in SQL Server Analysis Services. You also can use these Web parts to display lists of KPIs, which are business metrics that can be summarized in terms of a comparison, goal, value, or status. For example, you might use KPIs to compare actual expenditures with budgeted amounts.

Business overviews

You can use business overview Web Parts to display measures (calculations) from the OLAP cubes, and compare those measures for various periods. You also can display KPIs that include period comparison information. For example, you might display information about this month's sales versus last month's sales.

Service Subscriptions, Agreements, and Orders

The Home page or Role Center page includes links in the left navigation menu to the Microsoft Dynamics AX Service forms where users can view or edit details about service subscriptions, agreements, and orders. Service agreements are agreements between service providers and customers that specify the amount and type of service that will be provided—for example, monthly service visits for office equipment maintenance. You can automatically create service orders based on service agreements. You can associate service tasks and objects with a service order line and group service order lines by tasks and objects. All service agreements are attached to projects, through which transactions are posted and invoiced.

Use the Service agreement page to begin automatically creating service orders for a service agreement. Service orders are created on the basis of the service agreement and the lines for that agreement.

Use the Service orders page to begin manually creating service orders. This might be useful if, for example, you must create an emergency or unscheduled service visit to a customer. You can create service orders without associating them with service agreements.

Additional Home Page or Role Center features

The Home page or Role Center page also includes the following links in the left navigation menu to forms or features that help Enterprise Portal users gather information pertaining to their job functions.

Link	Description
Alert rules	Alerts are generated as part of a notification system that helps you track events in Microsoft Dynamics AX. The system generates alerts based on the alert rules that are created for you in the Microsoft Dynamics AX client. When alert rules are created, they are associated with a predefined event for a field (such as a date value being overdue or a field value changing), or with an event that occurs for records for a particular form (such as a record being created or deleted). When the selected event occurs for the specified field or for a record in the specified form, you receive an alert. You can view the alert rules that have been set up for you in Enterprise Portal, but you must use the Microsoft Dynamics AX client to create or modify alert rules.

Link	Description
Product catalog	View items in the product catalog.
Campaign items	View items that might be available for a specific event or promotion, such as sale items or other special offers.
Purchase orders	View a list of the orders that you have placed, and then use the **Order Information** page to view the details of specific orders. You also can use the **View totals** page to view a list of totals for the order, such as tax and discount amounts.
Sales orders	View information about the sales orders that have been created for customers. Sales orders are created to register the sale of goods or services to customers, and to approve, track, and process shipments. When you view sales orders, you can view the status, which indicates how far the order has progressed in the sales order cycle.
Return orders	View a list of return orders that were created for items that your organization ordered and then returned. You can use the **Order Information** page to view detailed information about a specific order.
Invoices	View a list of your customer invoices, and then use the **Show invoice** page to view the details of each invoice. You also can view copies of invoices that have been sent.
Price agreements	View information about the price and line discount price agreements that are set up for the items that you sell to this company.
Packing slip journal	View a list of packing slips that have been generated for an order.
Purchase order journal	View a list of purchase orders from this company that have been posted.
Customers	View a list of the customers that your organization does business with, and then use the **Customer page** to view detailed information about a selected customer account.
Business relations	View a list of business relations, which are the organizations and individuals (including customers, prospective customers, and vendors) with whom you interact for business purposes. You then can use the **Business Relation Details** page to view detailed information about the selected business relation.
Contacts	View a list of your primary leads, opportunities, and customer records.
Activities	View a list of all activities that are assigned to you, and then use the **Overview** page for the activity type to view more information about an activity.
View workflow history	View the history of a workflow work item. This includes information about which user created the workflow work item, the time and date when it was created, a list of actions associated with the item, and any comments that were entered during the workflow process.
Orders	View all your orders from this company, and then use the **Order Information** page to view the details of specific orders. You also can use the **Edit order** page to make changes to an order, such as modifying the delivery or line information.
All items	View information about the items for which you are the primary vendor for this company. You also can use the **Edit external description** page to modify the external description for the item, which is an alternate item number and description. You might want to do this if you use a different item numbering system and you want to recognize more easily your items in Enterprise Portal.
Invoice journal	View a list of invoices that you have issued for the orders this company has placed with you.

The Finance module

This module enables users to view or edit important financial information about customers and vendors. The most common tasks performed from this module include:

- View unpaid customer invoices
- View collection letter information
- View interest note information

This module also includes the following links in the left navigation menu to forms or features that help Enterprise Portal users gather information pertaining to their job functions.

Link	Description
Customers	View a list of the customers your organization does business with, and then use the **Customer** page to view detailed information about a selected customer account.
Customer invoice journal	View a list of posted invoices for a customer.
Unpaid customer invoices	View a list of customer invoices that have not yet been paid
Interest journal	If a customer does not pay an invoice amount even after receiving a collection letter, your organization might want to charge interest on the late payment. In addition, you can charge a fee for each calculation of the interest amount, and add this fee to the interest amount. View a list of interest notes, and then use the **Show interest note** page to view the details and transactions for a specific interest note. You also can view copies of interest notes that have been sent.
Collection letter journal	If a customer has an overdue balance, your organization might generate and send a collection letter to the customer to help collect on the account. View a list of collection letters that have been generated, and then use the **Show collection letter** page to view the details and transaction lines for a specific collection letter entry.
Vendors	View a list of the vendors that your organization does business with, and then use the **Vendor information** page to view detailed information about the selected vendor account
Vendor Invoice journal	View a list of invoices that you have issued for the orders this vendor has placed with you.

Depending on permissions, users can also view the following reports in this module:

- Profitability analysis
- Actual vs. budget
- Bank account balance
- Cash inflow vs. cash outflow
- Top customers by YTD sales
- Customer turnover
- Customer turnover by period
- Customer phone list
- Top vendors by YTD purchases

The Sales module

This module enables users to view or edit sales information. The most common tasks performed from this module by internal users include:

- Create, edit, and view sales orders, including totals and related invoices
- Create, edit, and view sales quotations
- Create and view return orders
- View and edit purchase orders and related invoices
- Create credit notes
- Add documents to sales order, sales quotation, return orders, and purchase orders
- Perform price queries
- Create, edit, and view sales and purchase prices, including trade agreements that show line discounts, multiline discounts, and total discounts

The most common tasks performed from this module by external users include:

- Create and view sales orders from product catalog and the sales basket, including totals
- View invoice journals
- Create return orders based on an invoice

Additionally, this module includes a multitude of reports ranging from customer relations management reports about leads and trends to sales reports based on a time period or a region.

The Sales module also includes the following links in the left navigation menu to forms or features that help Enterprise Portal users gather information pertaining to their job function.

Link	Description
Activities	View a list of all activities that are assigned to you, and then use the **Overview** page for the activity type to view more information about an activity.
Contacts	View a list of your primary leads, opportunities, and customer records.
Customers	View a list of the customers that your organization does business with, and then use the **Customer** page to view detailed information about a selected customer account.
Business relations	View a list of business relations, which are the organizations and individuals, including customers, prospective customers, and vendors, with whom you interact for business purposes. You then can use the **Business Relation Details** page to view detailed information about the selected business relation.
Leads	View a list of lead records and more information about a specific lead record, such as address and contact information.
Opportunities	View a list of opportunity records, and the **Opportunity** page to view detailed information about a specific opportunity record.
Sales quotations	View a list of sales quotations that have been created, and then use the **Sales quotation** page to view the details of a specific quotation.
Sales orders	View information about the sales orders that have been created for customers. Sales orders are created to register the sale of goods or services to customers, and to approve, track, and process shipments. When you view a sales order, you can view the status, which indicates how far the order has progressed in the sales order cycle.
Service orders	See "Service Subscriptions, Agreements, and Orders" on page 4 of this document.

Link	Description
Items	View information about the items that are set up for your company.
Returned items	View information about return orders, which you create when customers return items that they have purchased.
Return orders	View a list of return orders that were created for items that your organization ordered and then returned. You can use the **Order Information** page to view detailed information about a specific order.
Invoices	View a list of your customer invoices, and then use the **Show invoice** page to view the details of each invoice. You also can view copies of invoices that have been sent.
Product catalog	View items in the product catalog.
Campaign items	View items that might be available for a specific event or promotion, such as sale items or other special offers.
Service subscriptions	See "Service Subscriptions, Agreements, and Orders" on page 4 of this document.
Service agreements	See "Service Subscriptions, Agreements, and Orders" on page 4 of this document.
Purchase orders	View a list of the orders that you have placed, and then use the **Order Information** page to view the details of specific orders. You also can use the **View totals** page to view a list of totals for the order, such as tax and discount amounts.

The Purchase module

This module enables users to view or edit vendor details, purchase orders, price agreements, and vendor-related information. The most common tasks performed from this module by internal users include:

- Managing vendor accounts
- Managing vendor price information
- Managing items
- Managing purchase information
- Working with purchase requisitions

The most common tasks performed from this module by external users include:

- View or edit your vendor account information
- View or edit your vendor orders
- View your vendor order journals
- View your vendor invoices
- View your vendor packing slips
- View or edit your item information
- Create or edit your vendor price agreements
- View your vendor price agreements

This module also includes the following links in the left navigation menu to forms or features that help Enterprise Portal users gather information pertaining to their job functions.

Link	Description
Purchase orders	View a list of the orders that you have placed, and then use the **Order Information** page to view the details of specific orders. You also can use the **View totals** page to view a list of totals for the order, such as tax and discount amounts.
Purchase requisitions	View only the purchase requisitions that were created by you, that are assigned to you, that were created by another user on your behalf, or that were created by or for users who report to you. On the **Purchase requisitions** page, you can select which purchase requisitions to display in the list.
Vendors	View a list of the vendors that your organization does business with, and then use the **Vendor information** page to view detailed information about the selected vendor account
Orders	View all your orders from this company, and then use the **Order Information** page to view the details of specific orders. You also can use the **Edit order** page to make changes to an order, such as modifying the delivery or line information.
All items	View information about the items for which you are the primary vendor for this company. You also can use the **Edit external description** page to modify the external description for the item, which is an alternate item number and description. You might want to do this if you use an alternative item numbering system and you want to more easily recognize your items in Enterprise Portal.
Invoice journal	View a list of invoices that you have issued for the orders this company has placed with you.
Price agreements	View information about the price and line discount price agreements that are set up for the items that you sell to this company.
Packing slip journal	View a list of packing slips that have been generated for an order.
Purchase order journal	View a list of purchase orders from this company that have been posted.

Depending on permissions, users can also view the following reports in this module:

- Top item by quantity
- Top item by sales
- Top item by time
- Delivery date exceeded
- Supply performance
- Supply capacity - Vendor

The Shop Floor Control module

This module enables users to enter details on an electronic timecard. The most common tasks performed from this module include:

- Enter the hours spent on various tasks
- Enter absences
- Enter breaks

You can enter your timecard on a time-period basis, such as weekly or monthly. When you are done filling out your timecard, you must transfer it. The timecard will be transferred to the **Calculate form** in the Microsoft Dynamics AX client. Your supervisor, or another leader in your organization, will use this form to calculate your work time, pay time, overtime, flex time, absence time, and so on.

The Employee Services module

This module enables users to view or edit personal information. The most common tasks performed from this module include:

- Editing or updating personal information such as absences, course-work that applies to your job function, and performance goals
- Entering and editing expenses
- Requesting cash advances
- Approving expense reports (managers)
- Approving cash advances (managers)

This module also includes the following expense and travel-related features:

Per Diems

Define employee per diem amounts, based on multiple criteria, including per diem allowance based on the country in which an employee is traveling, when the traveling occurs, and more. Reduce per diem allowances by percentage for breakfast, lunch, and dinner as well as set minimum hours for per diems.

Mileage

Manage reimbursement for mileage expenses incurred when using a personal car.

Hotel Wizard

Allocate hotel charges to multiple expense categories to meet regulatory and accounting needs.

Expense Policies

Define company travel and entertainment policies and apply these policies during expense entry, including the ability to flag expenses that are out of policy at the time of entry and approval.

Credit Card and Travel Account Transaction Import

Import credit card and travel-account transactions charged to corporate cards. These details are then available to employees to add to expense reports at the time of entry.

This module also includes the following links in the Left Navigation to forms or features that help Enterprise Portal users gather information pertaining to their job functions.

Phone book	Loan	Performance Management Goals
My employees	Résumé	Questionnaire
My cases	Educations	Answer a questionnaire
Absence	Skills	Answer a planned questionnaire
Absence registration	Professional experiences	My answers
Absence request	Positions of trust	My evaluations
Absence approval	Courses	My planned answer sessions
Absence request approval	Certificates	My planned evaluations
Personal information	Project experiences	Activity sites
Personal information	Organization	Manage expenses
Alternative addresses	Jobs	Request cash advances
Discussions	Department list	Approve expense reports
Benefits	Organizations	Approve cash advances
My courses	Recruitment projects	Request new vendors
Courses Family and personal contacts	Job ads	Manage approval authority
	Unsolicited application	Manage disputes

The Human Resources module

This module enables Human Resources employees to view or edit employee details. The most common tasks performed from this module include:

- Update and view employee information (employee or manager)
- View scorecard information
- View information about an objective
- View information about a measurement
- View scheduled questionnaires and planned answer sessions
- View results and statistics for completed questionnaires
- View strategic plan information

Depending on permissions, users can also view the following reports in this module:

- Birthdays
- Anniversaries
- Resume
- Skill gap - goals
- Skill gap - job
- Expiring certificates
- Overdue loans
- Absence alarm list
- Approver absence alarm list

The Project module

This module enables employees to view or edit project details. The most common tasks performed from this module include:

- View projects
- View project categories
- View project contracts
- Enter or edit hours on project time sheets
- View project transactions
- View invoice proposals for projects
- View invoices for projects

This module also includes the following links in the left navigation menu to forms or features that help Enterprise Portal users gather information pertaining to their job functions.

Link	Description
Categories	View a list of project categories, including the transaction type, category group, and whether an employee identification is required for project transactions that are assigned to the category. Project categories are types of costs that are defined for a company, and they are attached to category groups of the same transaction type.
Customers	View a list of the customers your organization does business with, and then use the **Customer** page to view detailed information about a selected customer account.
Invoices	Invoices for projects are created to charge customers for various project-related activities and costs. Only the two external project types, time-and-material projects and fixed-price projects, can be invoiced. There are two methods of invoicing, and the project type determines which is used. Time-and-material projects use an invoice proposal to create invoices based on the transactions posted for the project. Fixed-price projects use predefined payment amounts that can be based on specified project milestones. These types of projects are always attached to a project contract: • Fixed-price projects – The invoice amount is based on invoice payment plans. Invoicing is performed through on-account setup, also referred to as a payment plan. Fixed-price projects can be invoiced per project or per contract. • Time-and-material projects – The invoice amount is based on transaction lines that are entered for projects. Transactions can be invoiced per project or per contract. You can use the **Invoices** pages to view information about the invoices that were posted for various projects. You also can use the **Invoice lines** page to view information about the invoice lines that are created for a project.
Invoice proposals	An invoice proposal is a preliminary invoice that is created automatically when you create an invoice for a project. Invoice proposals are created for invoices, credit notes, and on-account invoices. If a set of transactions will be invoiced on more than one invoice, separate invoice proposals must be created. For example, hour transactions might be included on one invoice, and item transactions on another. You can use the Invoice proposals and **Project information** pages to view information about the invoice proposals that were created for various invoice types. You can view the invoice type and the project contracts they are attached to, and the status of the invoice proposal. You also can use the **Proposal lines** page to view information about the invoice proposal lines that are created for a project.
Project contracts	Use the **Project contracts** and **Project contract information** pages to view information about project contracts. A project contract contains the invoice information for a project, such as the account information, addresses, and terms of payment. You can attach projects to a contract, which determines the invoice and payment conditions for any subprojects of the project. You then can use project contracts to post the invoices for several

Link	Description
	projects at one time, and to use the same invoicing processes for each subproject in a project structure.
Items	View information about the item records that have been created for your company. These items are used throughout Microsoft Dynamics AX, including purchasing, sales, and projects. You can use the **On-hand** pages to view which items are on hand.
Projects	View information about the projects that are created for your company. Projects involve various stages that make up a particular project cycle.

Depending on permissions, users can also view the following reports in this module:

- Hour statement
- Hour journal

The Compliance module

This module enables employees to manage the internal controls, business process content, and reporting for your organization's compliance program. The most common tasks performed from this module include:

- Configure the Internal Controls site
- Compliance document templates
- Internal controls example
- Manage internal controls
- Edit document templates
- Manage compliance documents

This module also includes the following links in the left navigation menu to forms or features that help Enterprise Portal users gather information pertaining to their job function.

Internal and external compliance requirements

Although internal compliance requirements may not seem as pressing as external requirements, they often provide greater opportunity for improved business performance. For example, your organization may require that when a customer returns a product, the reason for the return must be recorded. This additional data requirement adds a step for the receiving department, but knowing why items are being returned can help you make adjustments that might reduce the number of returns in the future.

External compliance requirements are often either government- or industry-driven.

- Government regulations—Government compliance regulations span the entire range of business operation activities from tax collection and reporting, to the verification of manufacturing quality and material tracing capabilities, to corporate governance.
- Industry organizations—Prominent industry organizations can use their influence to try to protect certain interests, such as human safety and health or financial security. The industry-specific compliance requirements that apply to your organization depend on the work that your organization does.

A complete understanding of the sources of compliance requirements for your organization can help you plan ahead, and to adopt and retire requirements as those requirements and your organization evolve.

Types of compliance requirement

Compliance requirements can affect the design standards, quality standards, processes, and reporting aspects of an organization. Compliance requirements fall into the following categories.

- Standard operating procedures—Standard operating procedures can help ensure that efficient, consistent actions are carried out. They can be used as tools to train new people to perform a particular function or task.
- Documented transactions—Many compliance requirements focus on recording exactly what transaction happened, when it happened, and who performed it. In many cases, the transaction should be captured as close as possible to the source of the transaction activity, in terms of both time and location.
- Data integrity—If you document transactions electronically to meet compliance requirements, there must be assurances that the data is available, secure, and tamper-proof. To protect data integrity, there should be systems and procedures in place (such as backup processors and disk systems) to ensure that data is available at all times.
- Audit trails—In addition to other compliance requirements, there must be a trail of exactly what happened to the data, when it changed, and who or what made the change. This trail of changes is often referred to as an audit trail.
- Segregation of duties or responsibilities—In a chain of related processes, it is sometimes desirable to separate the authority of people so they can manage only subsets of an activity. For example, if an individual enters an expense report, a different individual must approve it. In this way, two or more people are required to complete the entire process.
- Detection mechanisms—It is important to identify, in a timely manner, activities or transactions that fail compliance requirements. A detection mechanism might be automated, such as system logic that detects when a piece of data falls outside a certain range, or it might be manual, as in the case of an audit trail record that an auditor must review.

Compliance charts

You can view the statistical status of your organization's internal controls, based on the documents on the Compliance site, by using the **Control Effectiveness** and **Document Status** charts that are displayed on the site home page. The control document template that is provided with the Compliance site contains a property called Control Effectiveness. When a control is tested, the owner of the control can set this property for the control.

Chart	Description
Control Effectiveness	Displays the total number of control documents and their control effectiveness values. The following rating statuses are available: • Not effective – The control has been tested and is considered ineffective. • Effective – The control has been tested and is considered effective. • Not rated – The control has not been tested.
Document Status	View the progress of all compliance document types or one specific document type. Progress is measured based on whether compliance workflow assignments have been marked as complete. The following progress statuses are available: • Not started – No compliance workflow assignments are marked as complete. • In progress – At least one (but not all) of the compliance workflow assignments is marked as complete. • Completed – All compliance workflow assignments are marked as complete. Document types containing no workflow steps are also marked as complete.

Depending on permissions, users can also view the following reports in this module:

- User Permissions
- Object Permissions
- Database Log Setup
- Alert Setup
- Alert Tracking
- Audit Trail
- Workflow Tracking
- Workflow Instance By Status

For more information

Enterprise Portal and Role Centers are installed using Microsoft Dynamics AX Setup. For more information about installing Enterprise Portal, see "Install Enterprise Portal and Role Centers" in the Microsoft Dynamics AX Installation guide.

For information about configuring and administering Enterprise Portal, see the Enterprise Portal Administration guide (in the Microsoft Dynamics AX client, click **Help > Enterprise Portal Administration**).

For information about configuring and administering Role Centers, see “Setting up and maintaining Role Centers” in the System and Application Setup Help (in the Microsoft Dynamics AX client, click **Help > System and Application Setup**).

Microsoft Dynamics is a line of integrated, adaptable business management solutions that enables you and your people to make business decisions with greater confidence. Microsoft Dynamics works like and with familiar Microsoft software, automating and streamlining financial, customer relationship and supply chain processes in a way that helps you drive business success.

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