

What Happens to Your GP Data in the Cloud?

Reporting and Analytics that Take You Up Close



Not Quite Utopia

I graduated in accounting and management information systems. During a very tedious manual consolidation at General Mills, I said to my accounting intern self, “Computers can do this!”

Technology has come far since those days, yet gaps remain in the automation utopia we would like to inhabit. Cloud computing is an answer that is taking us in the right direction. It offers shared computer processing resources and data to computers and other devices on demand-- helping to fill holes in the utopian landscape.

Progress, being relentless, means more and more Dynamics GP ERP systems are migrating to the cloud, which allows you to do business anywhere. That can also bring new challenges, particularly when it comes to accessing the data if your business isn't up and running on mobile devices.



More Distant Data?

If GP is hosted somewhere, we could assume that we don't see our data as clearly as we once did. The data is there, but less reachable with all of the usual tools. Moving GP to the cloud is like sending a kid to college. It creates an unfamiliar, more distant relationship with the data.

We all use Excel to deftly process the endless stream of urgent information requests from management. It's universal and powerful enough to satisfy most arcane reporting demands. Selfishly, we want our favorite tools, like Excel, to adapt to the cloud effortlessly and gently nudge us forward through the haze.

But, like sending a kid to college, it's not that easy. You love Excel! You want to be in Excel, but your data resides in the cloud. So, exactly how do you access that data from behind a firewall on a different domain in cyberspace where it lives?

Direct Link to Excel

Fortunately, some export options remain. I heard recently that within ERP systems and reporting tools 'Export to Excel' is the third most used button, right behind 'Save' and 'Exit.' If that's true, then wouldn't it be great to just start in Excel in the first place?



What if you could access your GP data in the cloud anytime and anywhere, directly from Excel? What if you could get that data directly into Excel to do reporting and analytics while having the full power of Excel at your fingertips? I would covet a tool that enabled that capability.

Such a tool might have multi-company consolidations and flexible reporting options for GP right out of the box, such as pre-defined reports and the ability to build custom financial statements in minutes.

Effortlessly, it would schedule reports and email them automatically, and do it all from the new Colorado office, or from home. Instead of taking you further from your data in the cloud, it propels you right up there with it.

Do More with Less Stress

This illustration of reporting and analytics utopia for GP ERP data in the cloud isn't a fable. In fact, in the wake of Microsoft's announcement to sunset Management Reporter¹, Microsoft partnered with Jet Reports to release [Jet Express for Excel](#) in large part because of its cloud enabled ability, product roadmap and Excel integration.

Like many fast growing companies, a window and door manufacturer, an [eMazzanti Technologies](#) customer; faced accounting and reporting challenges. As the business expanded, the company experienced growing pains. As more systems moved to the cloud, there was more and more demand for reports – producing them took a lot of time and resources. Exploring options, they were able to turn to the Jet Reports Excel integrated functionality for a resolution.

By using [Jet Reports](#), fewer steps and faster access to data cut the time to handle information requests dramatically. As expected, the responsiveness of the accounting department helped to improve customer service and do more with less, including less stress. Visibility and access speed was greatly improved. In the end, users were brought closer to their accounting and customer data.



With such a tool, all of us would be better off-- like being able to see our college students any time we want, but we don't have to feed them or make their beds. The same can be said for GP ERP solutions, with no server to maintain or other arduous tasks, where else could you focus your time in your business?

¹In May, Microsoft announced the end of investment for additional feature development in Management Reporter