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Jim Porter,  
Vice President, Zahner

## CASE STUDY: ZAHNER

Software implementation boosts production at acclaimed sheet metal company

### Microsoft Dynamics® GP helps Zahner establish business controls

Managing sheet metal design projects throughout the world is a complex, demanding endeavor. Not only must firms carefully control costs and stay abreast of potential changes, but they also must ensure delivery schedules are carefully coordinated with the needs of large construction projects. Zahner overcame these challenges by implementing a software solution that effectively aligned its business's manufacturing and construction elements.

### Client profile

Zahner, headquartered in Kansas City, Mo., is an internationally acclaimed engineering and fabrication company. The company, which has pioneered advances in the architectural metal industry for more than 100 years, is best known for the use of metal in the world of art and architecture.

### Inaccuracies, lack of control cripple growth opportunities

Zahner's software was unable to keep up with the ever-changing needs brought about by the company's continual growth. The accounting and business management system was essentially a series of independent spreadsheets, which were difficult to maintain and often accurate for only one or two weeks.

Among other weaknesses, the system did not permit the company to determine inventory, manufacturing status or estimated completion dates. Realizing that their ability to make well informed decisions was seriously compromised by this lack of crucial, timely data, the company's leaders determined they needed a new system, one that could integrate and control project costs, inventory and scheduling.

"In today's environment, decisions need to be made rapidly, and our lack of timely, accurate information was crippling our ability to adapt and deal with changing construction schedules," said Jim Porter, vice president.

## **Microsoft Dynamics GP provides single vision of the truth**

RSM technology consultants met with the Zahner team to identify a solution that would best meet the company's current and future needs. They agreed that a system based on Microsoft Dynamics GP would be the best option for establishing Zahner's business controls.

Dynamics GP is now used to create and change bills of materials and routings on the fly. In addition, RSM created a process that used the intersite transfer technology to keep accurate and precise records of materials moving between factories and out to the construction sites.

"By integrating everything within the Dynamics GP system, we were able to give Zahner management a single version of the truth," said Mac McHenry, a technology consulting manager at RSM. "Everyone used the same data – from administrators to senior management."

## **Zahner takes control with realtime business processes**

The system has improved the ability of both senior management and project managers to quickly and easily stay on top of projects, while allowing the company to grow without expanding its workforce.

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