Enterprise
by HansaWorld

Microsoft Dynamics GP

[Use this document when selling HansaWorld Enterprise against Microsoft Dynamics GP]

Summary

About Microsoft Dynamics GP
- formerly known as Microsoft Great Plains
- bought by Microsoft in 2001 for approx. USD 1.1bn
- positioned as standard ERP solution
- distribution, manufacturing and professional services focussed
- target market: 5 to 1,000 employees
- number of partners worldwide:
- number of customers worldwide:

Software cost:
1. Business Essentials (basic accounts, distribution, reporting and customisation): USD 2,250 per concurrent user
2. Advanced Management (advanced accounts, distribution, manufacturing etc): USD 3,750 per concurrent user
3. Additional modules as add-ons

Annual Cost: 18% for maintenance, additional cost per partner for remote support

Services costs: at approx 1,000 EUR p/day, Microsoft Dynamics GP averages a ratio of services to software cost of approximately 2.5:1. Note that cost quoted to customer is often significantly lower, and then the complexity of the implementation gradually pushes costs to this figure or above.

Section A: Hardware And Platform

1.Simplicity
HansaWorld Enterprise runs on a single server, although it is possible to set up a separate gateway for mail.

Microsoft Dynamics GP requires many servers and a level of programming and IT expertise in a different league from that required by HansaWorld Enterprise. None of this complexity offers ANY tangible customer benefit.

Hardware requirements
- server for MS SQL
- server for terminal services (for hosting, or if you don't want to install each client separately), which needs lots of memory
- server for Exchange
- server for Sharepoint
- server for Active Directory

Software requirements:
- Windows Server for Exchange
- Windows Server for Sharepoint
- Windows Server for Active Directory
- MS SQL Server

If you want better control of your hardware, given all this complexity, you also add VMWare into the mix.

If you want high availability, you need a second server for each component - and therefore you need clustering, and the Enterprise version of Microsoft licenses.

Smaller deployments might get away with MS Small Business Server, and SQL Server Express, although this does not include Sharepoint, and lacks scalability. This is not an option for multiple locations.

If you want to add Microsoft CRM, you need to add a server for Microsoft CRM, and possibly another terminal server if running multiple locations.

We estimate the cost of the above licences, hardware and implementation services to be at least 35,000 EUR in the first year.

2. Mixed Platform
HansaWorld Enterprise runs on Unix/Linux/Mac/Windows servers, Windows/Mac/Linux/Windows CE/Symbian/iPhone and browser clients. This ensures the customer's freedom of choice. Also the ability to have any mix of these platforms protects the customer's existing investment in hardware, allowing them to change at their own pace.

Microsoft Dynamics GP only runs on Windows Server, Windows Clients.

3. Choice of databases
HansaWorld Enterprise offers a proprietary database, MS SQL or Oracle, giving the customer a better choice - as these databases are much more widely used and known.

Microsoft Dynamics GP offers a single choice of database, MS SQL.

4. Security, disaster recovery
HansaWorld Enterprise's access rights are extremely simple to set up and maintain. Proprietary encryption and database technologies ensure few hacker attempts and zero success rates. Journalling allows zero data loss in disaster situations, and most recent versions support extremely rapid restoring.

Security in Microsoft Dynamics GP is extremely complex and expensive to set up, and as a result leaves a significant risk of leaving security holes. Popularity of MS SQL Server means that hackers are familiar with the likely holes, increasing the likelihood of security problems if the installation is not of the highest quality.

5. 24x7 uptime
HansaWorld Enterprise has scripted backups and journalling to allow the server to remain up for 24x7. For example international companies in multiple time zones do not need to lose processing time for backups, and yet remain on a single, integrated solution.

Microsoft Dynamics GP has no such feature.

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Section B: Network And Architecture

6. Hosting

HansaWorld Enterprise supports hosted servers, removing the need for expensive IT staff at customer sites to look after server implementations. Space on virtual servers can be rented from Amazon.com, with simple setup, and managed services available from HansaWorld and its dealers. Generally a single instance is required, in common with HansaWorld's single database strategy, with additional space for storage of backups. Auto-deployment of client updates and customisation files keeps the entire strategy simple. Managed services required for this option are minimal - limited broadly to keeping and checking of backups, management and assistance with testing of updates, and emergency recovery. Costs are low.

Microsoft Dynamics GP requires four separate servers if the customer himself publishes the IP, otherwise five. Setup is extremely complex, and leaves significant risk of security holes, overcomplexity of user profiles, and significant challenges for users to print locally. As a result it is also extremely complex to support, and user experience of hosting tends to be very poor. Costs are at least 50% higher than HWE, ignoring the very high costs of associated services.

7. Auto-deployed clients

HansaWorld Enterprise offers the possibility to put the latest client version on the server at the same time as updating to the server, and then control the automatic deployment of client versions when a user logs on to the HansaWorld Enterprise server with a lower version of the software. This is only practical given how efficient the HansaWorld Enterprise code is, making it small enough to deploy simply.

Microsoft Dynamics GP has a fat client architecture, requiring a complete reinstallation on local devices with each new version, and no possibility to deploy any automation in this area.

8. Wide-Area Networking

HansaWorld Enterprise uses on average less than 1k for each network instruction, resulting in out-of-the-box support for use from home and mobile. In countries with slow internet, HansaWorld Enterprise is still the only viable option for real-time log-in from remote locations.

Microsoft Dynamics GP has no possibility to run on slow-speed networks. If multi-location or mobile use is required, the customer needs to buy expensive bandwidth (leased lines), multiple servers for terminal services (4 minimum, possibly 5), expensive setup and requires ongoing IT support to keep this running.

9. Speed of installation

HansaWorld Enterprise server takes five to ten minutes to install, and each HansaWorld Enterprise client takes two minutes.

Microsoft Dynamics GP server takes about a day, and each client takes approximately half an hour. As a result, customers and dealers are wary about upgrading.

Section C: Mobile

10. Mobile Usage

HansaWorld Enterprise offers greatly improved employee productivity through the ability to log on from customer sites, sales locations, suppliers, while mobile, or from home. Our ready-to-deliver mobile technology and ERP functions can not be matched by any of our competitors. More than 3,000 ERP screens on mobile devices, more than 1,000,000 million lines of ERP code and more than 400 standard reports are ready to be used on a wide variety of mobile devices.

Microsoft Dynamics GP has no possibility to be run on mobile devices.

If Microsoft Dynamics GP partners attempt to deliver anything remotely similar, they have to write their own application on the mobile device, and use expensive and complex messaging applications to share data between the mobile device and the Microsoft Dynamics GP MS SQL Server. No Microsoft Dynamics GP partners have successfully delivered this type of application, and so the customer faces significant risks when this is offered. We believe that the partner would need input from Microsoft, and waiting time for this would be long.

11. Choice of mobile devices

HansaWorld supports a range of mobile devices as standard, including Windows CE and Mobile 5 and 6 PDAs, Nokia Smartphones (running Symbian 60 and 80), and iPhones. Given our experience in this area, and the flexibility of the HAL toolset, we can put HansaWorld Enterprise on further devices with minimal effort.

Microsoft Dynamics GP has no possibility to be run on mobile devices.

Any third-party application written for a mobile device will ONLY run on that device; as soon as that device is withdrawn from the market, the third-party application needs significant re-engineering to run on any new device, thereby significantly raising the cost of ownership and the risks of working with third-party developers.

12. SmartApps

HansaWorld offers the possibility to deploy customised applications on mobile devices in a matter of hours - including handling of rich media, and synchronisation.

Microsoft Dynamics GP has no such features.

13. Synchronised application code

HansaWorld's SmartApps engine offers the possibility to deploy customisations when the user selects to synchronise their mobile device with the server - which can be done even when the user is at a remote location, provided there is a phone signal. If the customer is likely to make changes to fields required, or other interactions on the local device, during the implementation, this is a major time-saver.

Microsoft Dynamics GP has no possibility to be run on mobile devices.

If you make changes to third-party applications written for mobile devices, this requires the user to return the device to a central location, where the original application will be de-installed and the new version installed.

Section D: Integrated Crm

14. Truly-integrated CRM
HansaWorld offers CRM tools within the same application as the financial and all other data. These tools are available to all areas of the software, not just customers, and so our customers automatically get Supplier Relationship Management, and management of all activities with all people. CRM tools like mailshotting can be applied as standard to all data - for example, it takes less than a minute to prepare an email campaign to all customers who have bought a specific product in a given time range (for product upgrades/cross-selling opportunities/product recalls). These tools are fully integrated with HansaWorld Enterprise's analysis capabilities - for example allowing emailshots to be easily targeted just to end users, or dealers, or to customers in specific industries or of given size criteria.

Microsoft Dynamics GP has no CRM as standard.

Microsoft has created an interface between Microsoft CRM and Microsoft Dynamics GP. There are a selection of possibilities delivered without programming, but most of the valuable interactions between financial data and the CRM tools have to be programmed.

15. Group Calendar
In HansaWorld Enterprise Multi Person/Group calendar allows real time viewing of all calendars and updating or adding activities to multiple person calendars. Technicians, management or staff that are not office bound can access the calendar anywhere real time without going through synchronisation routines and possible double bookings.

Microsoft Dynamics GP has no such feature.

Using MS Outlook for this purpose has significant drawbacks:
• cost of buying and installing MS Exchange and MS Outlook
• IT staff required to maintain the infrastructure
• insufficient interaction between calendar and financial data, for example it is not possible as standard to create invoicing in Microsoft Dynamics GP from Outlook calendar entries.

16. Resource Planning
HansaWorld Enterprise's Resource Planning enables graphical scheduling of tasks by:
• people and teams of people (professional services)
• people filtered by project (professional services)
• machine (production, for finite capacity planning)
• asset (facilities management, maintenance)
• rental assets
• rooms (hotels, training companies)

Microsoft Dynamics GP has no such feature.

17. Integrated email
HansaWorld Enterprise offers an email server and client, which as a result means that mail and other records are automatically integrated. You can drag and drop records onto internal mails, files onto any mails, and see the email history from a customer dashboard.

Microsoft Dynamics GP is heavily reliant on MS Outlook, and so cannot support drag and drop.

18. Conferences
HansaWorld Enterprise's Conferences feature allows complete knowledge management, particularly in conjunction with the paperclip feature. Any data you want to share around the company can be stored into Conferences, and then readily found by users (using multi-Conference Search features) and used (including drag and drop to email and other records).

Microsoft Dynamics GP has no such feature.

Using Sharepoint for this involves expensive setup, and IT staff to maintain the infrastructure.

19. Interactive Telephony
HansaWorld Enterprise allows outbound calls from any device that supports calling - computers with microphone and speaker support, Smartphones and iPhones. The Business Phone feature allows calling from any customer or supplier facing record. Also Intelligent Routing allows the user to set up rules to instruct how calls should be routed, based on data in the ERP system. For example, sales can be routed to the allocated salesperson except for those customers with invoices overdue for more than 60 days, who might be routed to the accounts department.

Microsoft Dynamics GP has no such feature.

20. Alerts / Alarms
HansaWorld Enterprise offers built-in Alarms so you can choose what to be reminded of, and by what method - pop-up window, text message or email. Also it has full "workflow" in the form of customisable Business Alerts, whereby the system can trigger alerts such as pop-up windows, text messages or emails on the occurrence of specified events.

Microsoft Dynamics GP does not offer any workflow as standard. If you apply external tools to achieve this, such as Sharepoint, this is expensive and time-consuming to create, expensive to maintain and less functional.

Section E: Integrated Verticals

21. Integrated Verticals
HansaWorld Enterprise has standard modules for:
• Point of Sales
• Expenses
• Hotel
• Restaurant
• Resort

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- Rental
- Course Booking
- Loans/Credit Management
- Customs
- Jewellery
- Cheque Management (for South America)

Microsoft Dynamics GP has no such modules. It does have a module for Job Costing, but invoices do not end up in the central debtors ledger.

22. Varieties
HansaWorld Enterprise has full handling of varieties, that allows size/colour/unit and other variations to be handled without the requirement to create separate items. This offers much stronger handling of clothing retail and distribution.

Microsoft Dynamics GP has no such feature.

Section F: International And Multi-Company Implementations

23. Local language screens and localisations
HansaWorld Enterprise is translated into 30 languages, and extensively localised and actively used in around 100 countries.

Microsoft Dynamics GP is translated into very few languages, and localised mainly for English-speaking countries. For those countries where Microsoft Dynamics GP is supposedly localised, you should determine the quality of the localisation as the toolset makes localisation difficult.

24. Multi-language documents
Single language versions of HansaWorld Enterprise can produce output documents such as invoices in customer/supplier languages with minimal setup by the user, thereafter automated to produce the correct language on printing the document. Language tables ensure that data is displayed in the appropriate language for the form.

In Microsoft Dynamics GP all output documents require programming, and so multi-language stationery can be set up, but this is not standard and so expensive to achieve. Since partners tend to have skills only for one country, creating programmed forms in multiple languages is very difficult to achieve.

There are no language tables for key fields, and so data appears in local language whatever the language of the form.

25. Multi-language screens and data
In HansaWorld Enterprise, mixed language versions are available, whereby international managers using screens and reports in one language can review local language data entered by staff using different language screens. All of this is managed from a single application and single datafile.

For Microsoft Dynamics GP, different executable files are required for each language, making it difficult to set up a truly multi-language implementation (quite aside from the fact that some languages cannot be mixed at all). There are no language tables where the user can set how data in one language will show up in reports in another.

26. Multi-currency
In HansaWorld Enterprise, transactions can be entered in any currency. Receipts and payments can be processed in currencies other than the invoiced currency, and HansaWorld Enterprise handles the exchange gains/losses automatically. Batch routines exist to post unrealised gains and losses at month end.

You cannot mix currencies in Microsoft Dynamics GP transactions.

27. Dual Base currency
In HansaWorld Enterprise, Transactions can be entered in any currency, and are then stored in up to three currencies (currency of transaction, home currency, and group reporting currency), therefore supporting consolidation using actual transaction rates.

For Microsoft Dynamics GP, reporting in two currencies is achieved through a reporting algorithm, meaning that transactions are stored only in transaction currencies and local currency, and month-end reports can be built from transaction details by reading against the exchange rate table (therefore not allowing transaction rates, and making reporting slow in this area).

28. Automatic upload of exchange rates
In some countries, HansaWorld offers a monthly service (deployed as Software as a Service) whereby exchange rates can be picked up automatically from central banks - removing data entry in this area, and the possibility of mistakes which require expensive resources to fix.

Microsoft Dynamics GP has no such feature.

29. Shared registers
In a multi-company HansaWorld Enterprise installation, each register is held separately in each company, so for example a five company installation would have five separate Contact registers. HansaWorld Enterprise offers the possibility to share the Contact register either across all companies, or just a selection of those five - and as a result a Contact whose details need to be in all five companies will appear there with a single entry.

Microsoft Dynamics GP has no such feature.

30. International implementations
HansaWorld is sufficiently small, with personal contact with all resellers, that it is possible to have a single project manager for any international implementation, and genuine interaction between all members of the team.

Microsoft Dynamics GP offers no such possibility; there will be multiple resellers involved, all competitive, with no central control. Likely there will be no local support in one or more of the countries involved.

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Section G: Analysis And Reporting

31. Analysis
HansaWorld Enterprise offers up to 15 levels of analysis on financial transactions (Objects), and 30 levels on static data (customer and item classifications).

Microsoft Dynamics GP has one level of analysis.

32. Integrated Business Intelligence
HansaWorld Enterprise offers Business Intelligence from within the application, launched directly from KPIs. Pre-existing BI templates ensure that deployment is immediate.

Microsoft Dynamics GP has no inline possibility, no standard partnerships with BI providers, and no pre-existing templates for BI. As a result there are hundreds of hours required to produce BI. Also the lower level of analysis within the product makes the end result of BI dramatically less effective than HWE.

33. Real-time reporting
All of HansaWorld Enterprise's reporting is available real-time, right through to consolidated reports and business intelligence. Parallel reporting ensures this doesn't impact scalability.

Microsoft Dynamics GP has no real-time business intelligence.

Section H: Customisation

34. Customisation
HansaWorld Enterprise's HAL language is simpler, and consequently cheaper to deploy and upgrade.

Microsoft Dynamics GP has reasonably strong tools for customisation. However, these are complex to deploy, and upgrading as a result takes time and requires careful management.

35. Availability of source code
All of HansaWorld Enterprise's application logic is in HAL (Hansa Application Language), the customisation engine. HansaWorld Enterprise makes available all HAL Source Code to anyone who has successfully taken training on HAL - making it simple to tweak existing code, and to create new functionality that looks similar to any existing code.

Microsoft does not offer Microsoft Dynamics GP source code to anyone, even its accredited partners.

Section I: Internet Services

36. Internet Services
HansaWorld Enterprise has the technology to offer third-party services on a Software as a Service model, with subscription pricing, no software installed at customer site, no upgrade issues, and the ability to switch the service on and off at a moment's notice.

In different countries, these include:
- credit checking, providing a full credit report on the prospect/customer
- eInvoicing
- postcode/address validation
- eBanking
- SMS handling
- credit card processing
- exchange rate pickup from central banks
- mapping
- interaction with shipping companies (e.g. Fedex)

Microsoft Dynamics GP has no internet services. All third-party services have to be connected using expensive interfacing written specifically for each customer and deployed separately at each site. Upgrades will be consequently much more complex and expensive.

Section J: E-Commerce

37. Webshop and web engine
HansaWorld Enterprise offers a fully-configurable, style-sheet driven webshop that allows users to manage content, without technical skills in areas such as HTML. It is delivered as part of a complete web engine that is part of the ERP system, not a separate application requiring interfacing - and so users can interact with any web pages. For example, suppliers can be emailed URLs with each Purchase Order, that take them back to the Purchase Order record to allow the supplier to enter the expected delivery date. This gives the possibility of offering direct access to external partners from a web portal to place orders, track the status of the order, follow up on serial check stock levels for Items, subassemblies and components.

Microsoft Dynamics GP has no webshop or web engine.

Section K: Other Features

38. Pictures on Items
HansaWorld Enterprise allows pictures to be displayed directly on Item records, and provides Coverflow as a means of selecting Items by picture.

Microsoft Dynamics GP has no such feature.

39. Pictures on Forms
HansaWorld Enterprise allows pictures stored against Items to be printed on Forms such as Quotations, Orders and Invoices.

Microsoft Dynamics GP has no such feature.

Section L: Vendor Offerings

40. e-Learning

HansaWorld Enterprise offers context-sensitive web movies to explain how to use functionality - not just searchable online manuals.

Microsoft Dynamics GP has no such feature.

41. AppStore

[Not yet implemented] HansaWorld offers a store with dealer and in-house customised code offerings, supported by eLearning to show the functionality, customer feedback in the form of ratings, and options for purchase of source code as well as just the functionality.

Microsoft Dynamics GP has no such feature.

General Points

1. Ease of use

HansaWorld Enterprise was written originally for very small companies, and then code has gradually been added to fulfill the more complex requirements of larger companies. Ease of use stems from:
- rigorous application of consistent design standards
- refusal to add features into standard that would overcomplicate
- clean interface driven particularly from programming on the Mac platform and adherence's to Apple's Aqua guidelines
- continuing support for smaller, simpler users in the same code base as the larger systems
- tools such as drag and drop (of records and files) and gesture support on Macs
- complete commitment to simple tools to promote efficiencies, such as error correction with full audit trail on the face of journals (with option for clean audit trails or with corrections)
- simple technology to support drilldown to source records, on from there to any related data in any direction
- very strong searching throughout the software.

Although Great Plains also started by selling to smaller companies, the design of Microsoft Dynamics GP is based on adding features whether or not these are of generic interest. This results in an increasingly unwieldy product, with too many steps for basic processes, and difficult navigation to find occasionally-used features. Microsoft's objectives as owners are primarily related to continuing sales of its other applications from SQL Server through to Sharepoint, removing all pretence of retaining the simplicity required by smaller companies that retains ease of use throughout the offering.

Microsoft Dynamics GP has no drag and drop, and no simple error correction (aside from reversing the offending entry and re-entering it, leaving no option for clean management reports). There is no drilldown.

2. Future Safety

HansaWorld is independently owned, and investing around 35% of turnover in product development. It has retained a significant lead on its competitors in releasing new technologies, and the strategy of not relying on third parties is a key component in continuing to deliver in this area. The Group Managing Director, Karl Bohlin, remains the visionary behind the product, and drives the adherence to strict architectural and design guidelines that ensure HansaWorld continues to outperform.

The original team behind the Great Plains product that is now Microsoft Dynamics GP no longer works on it. There are no senior developers or designers left from that team, leaving a mature product with what many describe as a lack of direction. Microsoft Dynamics GP is more exposed on this point than even the other two mainstream Microsoft products, as the underlying architecture is poorly designed: invoices are reliant on 15 files, for example changing a customer address has the effect of leaving historic invoices with new addresses (illegal in many European countries). There is significant speculation that Microsoft Dynamics GP will eventually be replaced by Dynamics AX, and that all the development effort in the Dynamics range is concentrated on AX. Microsoft Dynamics GP dealers complain fiercely that Microsoft is no longer making any serious development efforts for their product.

http://www.albaspectrum.com/PressReleases/MS-DYN-Coex.htm

3. Satisfied Customers

HansaWorld has a satisfied customer base of over 71,000 customers worldwide. Most of our customers stay with our software for more than 5 years. Our company intention is to build long profitable relationships with our customers. We do not actively market and advertise and have managed to get most of our 71,000 customers worldwide through word of mouth as a result of satisfied reference customers. In 2008 HansaWorld Enterprise got the highest marks in the Software Satisfaction Awards, voted for exclusively by ERP software users:
http://www.accountingweb.co.uk/cgi-bin/item.cgi?id=195979
In 2009, HWE topped independent research by Advince on software usability.
http://www.advince.se/pdf/Presentation_18_mars_2009_vagvalaffarssystem.pdf

Satisfaction with Microsoft Dynamics GP is below average, with implementations generally failing through overcomplication, insufficient skills in the reseller, or inadequate resource budgeting after a price war between Microsoft Dynamics GP dealers instigated by the customer.

4. Tomorrow's Technology

HansaWorld is absolutely determined to maintain its lead in supplying leading-edge technologies that deliver true customer benefit. Recent examples include Telephony, VOIP, Internet Services and Mobile Devices.

Microsoft Dynamics GP has fallen further behind HWE since Microsoft took over ownership. This is the result of the loss of the product designers, and the slow speed of development that is a result of design by committee and large company ownership.

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