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**Solution Overview**

**Organization Profile**

With roughly 120 employees at its headquarters in Bethany, Missouri, and independent sales representatives located around the United States, Gumdrop Books provides books and services for school libraries.

**Software and Services**
Microsoft Dynamics NAV 2009
Microsoft Dynamics CRM 4.0
Microsoft Excel

**Vertical Industries**
Nondurable Goods Merchant Wholesalers

**Country/Region**
United States

## Gumdrop Books

### Bookseller Opens New Horizons with Flexible, Easy-to-Use ERP Solution

Posted: 8/13/2010



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| ***Gumdrop Books sells books and services to public and school libraries around the world and offers data services and library management software through a sister company, Mitinet. The company wanted to replace its heavily customized Epicor ERP software because that solution had become difficult to maintain and modify. After examining solutions from Epicor, Microsoft, and SAP, Gumdrop Books chose Microsoft Dynamics NAV 2009 for its superior flexibility and intuitive Microsoft Dynamics RoleTailored interface. The company worked with Microsoft Gold Certified Partner Tribridge to implement order entry, fulfillment, inventory, warehouse management, shipping, and accounting at Gumdrop Books headquarters and distribution facility in Bethany, Missouri. Now, Gumdrop Books more easily addresses new business needs and empowers employees to accomplish tasks faster and make more informed decisions.***

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| * | When we were searching for a solution, we did so with the intent that it would meet our needs now and well into the future. Microsoft Dynamics NAV is that solution for us. | * |
|  | Bart Fitzgerald, CTO, Gumdrop Books |  |

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Business Needs Gumdrop Books sells books and services to public libraries, school libraries, and classrooms, providing access to more than 300 publishers with 3 million books in stock that cover prekindergarten to university titles. The company meets the needs of individual libraries with customized catalog barcodes, spine labels, and processing so that orders are ready for libraries’ shelves upon arrival. A sister company, [Mitinet](http://mitinet.com/), sells data services and web-based subscription software for library management.Both companies were using software from Epicor to manage accounting and operational processes, but they struggled to adapt those systems to changing business needs. “Our business was changing, but our systems were unable to,” recalls Bart Fitzgerald, CTO of Gumdrop Books and Mitinet. “We had made so many customizations to our implementations that we could not upgrade or add new functionality without breaking the solution.” Gumdrop Books wanted to start from a “clean base” with an enterprise resource management (ERP) solution that would enable the company to stay current and add new lines of business and new features like EDI and improved web integration. “We eventually took a hard look at several ERP vendors, including Epicor, Microsoft, and SAP,” says Ricky Vogel, CIO of Gumdrop Books and Mitinet. “We had an extensive list of requirements, especially in regard to transaction volumes and the sizes of transactions. We have an average order size of around 700 lines, with some orders hitting 4,000 lines; those types of large orders proved problematic for our old system.”Solution Gumdrop Books eventually chose [Microsoft Dynamics NAV 2009](http://www.microsoft.com/dynamics/en/us/products/nav-overview.aspx) based on that solution’s flexibility, future product direction, and the customer commitment that Microsoft and Microsoft Gold Certified Partner Tribridge demonstrated. “Microsoft and Tribridge were very responsive in terms of providing us with the demonstrations, benchmarks, and proof-of-concepts that we asked for,” says Fitzgerald. “They made it very easy to choose them over the competition and gave us confidence that we had chosen the right technology partners.”Gumdrop Books worked with Tribridge to implement Microsoft Dynamics NAV and [Microsoft Dynamics CRM](http://crm.dynamics.com/) for Mitinet. “Mitinet customer service and sales teams work entirely through phone and email to interact with customers,” says Vogel. “They use Microsoft Dynamics CRM to record these interactions, conduct marketing campaigns, and track the effectiveness of those campaigns and other sales activities.”After learning the basic functionality of Microsoft Dynamics NAV through the Mitinet project, Gumdrop Books began work on implementing that solution for its bookselling operation, which is broader in scope and more complex. Replacing the old Epicor software, Gumdrop Books set up Microsoft Dynamics NAV to handle order entry, fulfillment, inventory, warehouse management, shipping, and accounting. The company enhanced its implementation with the E-Ship solution from Lanham Associates, which enables integration with FedEx, UPS, and the U.S. Postal Service and the ChargeLogic payment-processing solution.

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| A warehouse overview provides visual cues and quick access to details. |
| A warehouse overview provides visual cues and quick access to details. |

Gumdrop Books took advantage of the Microsoft Dynamics [RoleTailored](http://download.microsoft.com/download/9/3/3/933042ed-61f4-4c24-8f22-cb6deaab9404/Microsoft_Dynamics_RoleTailored_Business_Productivity_whitepaper.doc) interface and Role Centers in Microsoft Dynamics NAV to increase productivity and efficiency at the company. “We signed up for the Technology Adoption Program at Microsoft to work with the prerelease version of Microsoft Dynamics NAV largely because of the RoleTailored experience,” says Fitzgerald. “Everyone uses the RoleTailored interface at Gumdrop Books. Not only is it more intuitive than classic interfaces, but it empowers people by displaying the information they need to get their jobs done instead of requiring people to navigate down to find that information.” Order processing is an example of how Gumdrop Books uses Role Centers to speed operations. The company adjusted the Role Centers for different employees involved in a process so that they can see the progress of orders in queue and what specific actions they are personally responsible for to continue moving orders.Benefits By replacing its old, heavily customized ERP solution with Microsoft Dynamics NAV 2009, Gumdrop Books gains the flexibility it needs to adapt to changing demands and new market opportunities. In addition, the company can empower employees to accomplish tasks faster and make better-informed decisions. Increased Productivity and Shallow Learning Curve Gumdrop Books employees are more productive with the RoleTailored interface in Microsoft Dynamics NAV because they have the information and functionality they need to accomplish tasks on a single screen. “Employees have visual cues to help them see exactly what they need to do next to move business forward,” says Vogel. The familiar interface in Microsoft Dynamics NAV also helped lessen the impact of switching ERP software. “People intuitively understand how to use the new solution because it looks and feels like other Microsoft products,” explains Vogel. Familiar Tools to Uncover Business Insights Gumdrop Books employees use Microsoft Dynamics NAV to uncover important insights and make more informed decisions. “Employees create lists to help them keep track of important activities and easily see when something requires intervention,” says Fitzgerald. “And, because we’re heavy users of Excel at Gumdrop Books, employees can also export data into Microsoft Excel and use that program to manipulate the data.”Strong Foundation for the Future With Microsoft Dynamics NAV, Gumdrop Books has found an ERP solution to serve the company’s immediate and future needs. “When we were searching for a solution, we did so with the intent that it would meet our needs now and well into the future,” recalls Fitzgerald. “Microsoft Dynamics NAV is that solution for us. It is very capable and continues to improve at a rapid rate. And, it is flexible, so we can support new business activities in the future as those needs arise.” |