



Microsoft Dynamics NAV Success Story

BMR strengthens its operations with an ERP solution that has all the functionality of a tier one system.

“With everything integrated, our financial team can analyse margins in an almost real-time basis, looking at profitability by product family, category or brand – even a particular sales campaign allows us to get it. It gives us unlimited access in reporting. We now have an ERP solution that has all the functionality of a tier one system. In terms of cost per head, it’s been very cost-effective for us”. Tom Neill, Group IS/IT Director, BMR

About BMR:

Galway-based Bio-Medical Research (BMR) Ltd. is a privately-owned company with more than 30 years’ experience in the research, design, manufacture and marketing of medical-grade products for muscle strengthening and pain relief. BMR has two divisions: Slendertone, which has a range of consumer health and fitness products, and Neurotech which provides a range of neuromuscular stimulators for pain management and rehabilitation.

Some years ago, BMR changed its business model and began outsourcing its manufacturing. Around the same time, the company’s existing ERP system was coming to the end of its life and it no longer had the kinds of features BMR would need into the future. “From a business model point of view, everything changed completely but the business system stayed as was and it didn’t support the way the business was moving,” relates Tom Neill, BMR’s Group IS/IT Director.

The problem was exacerbated because the company had been using a number of diverse systems over time and had no single, consistent view of business information. “The driver for changing was to bring all of our data back together into one integrated system,” adds Neill. What’s more, BMR’s Neurotech business involves renting equipment products, then taking them back and refurbishing them. “It’s a pretty unique business model; it’s not just sell and ship,” he explains. After an evaluation and shortlisting period during which several vendors’ products were considered, BMR chose Microsoft Dynamics NAV to be supplied by the business and IT solutions company ProStrategy.



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The Solution:

BMR uses Microsoft Dynamics NAV for financials, distribution management, inventory, demand planning and purchase management. NAV has also been integrated with third-party logistics providers in the UK and US, eBay, Amazon, Paypal, two EDI providers (Freeway and B2B Gateway), as well as Realex for online payment processing. NAV also supports BMR's customer service functions. Around 100 people use the system throughout the company, of which 80 are internal and the remainder based in the call centre or at the outsourcing partner. This is a combination of 'heavy users' in finance and operations, to staff people using it intermittently for raising purchase orders and filing expense claims. The initial implementation at the Galway site has been completed and the US office has now begun using NAV.

When initially contacted about taking on the project, the ProStrategy team came back to BMR very quickly with an implementation plan. "They listened, and they understood the business. They were open and honest and had a good approach," says Neill. The project involved quite a bit of configuration to NAV because BMR outsources several functions and the system also needed to have interfaces from the Slendertone and Neurotech websites to channels like eBay or to BMR's warehouse. A critical element to the project's success was the time spent at the beginning in 'solution design sessions' which involved discussing in detail what would be required. Two months were given over to this part of the process and the final design was signed off by the business. "I come from a very process-oriented background and ProStrategy's documentation and processes were in line with that. It also meant that the rest of the project wasn't held back with large amounts of change requests," says Neill.

BMR's business is international in nature – Slendertone exports to 26 countries – and the integrated system provided by NAV makes it easy to manage. The system's Terminal Services feature lets BMR staff access NAV wherever they are in the world, through an internet connection. BMR's US office has 15 people and their NAV instance sits in Galway. "From an operational and IT perspective it makes it easier when everything is sitting in one place," says Neill.



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BMR has also implemented a business intelligence solution from ProStrategy and the process of extracting the data from NAV for further analysis is very straightforward, he adds. “For the first time we have a unified view of our entire business across the US and Asia. At an operational level it has pulled it all together. The data is much more reliable now, and it’s in real time. One thing I really liked about NAV was how straightforward it is to configure the interfaces and how easy it is to manage and monitor. It’s easy to spot if there is inconsistency in the data.”

The Project Benefits:

Improved business decision making

The information available in Dynamics NAV gives BMR clear insight into its business, allowing it to make more informed strategic decisions. “We can look at cost/profitability analysis and we have a much better view of what customers are worth doing business with. It might sound basic, but we couldn’t do that before,” says Neill. “With everything integrated, our financial team can analyse margins in an almost real-time basis, looking at profitability by product family, category or brand – even a particular sales campaign.”

Faster response times

The main benefit from an operations point of view is the scalability that NAV has given BMR and the speed with which the system can process orders. “With the old way, we had to send a file from the website to the warehouse through another manual process. That took three days from placing the order to getting money into our account. Now with the integration of NAV, it’s in the system instantaneously and then in the warehouse within a couple of seconds and the product can be shipped within a few hours,” says Neill.

Enhanced sales capability

Online sales through eBay, Amazon and US partners account for up to 30 per cent of Slendertone’s



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business. NAV has the capacity to allow BMR to cope with spikes in demand. “We did a one-off promotion and it led to 4,000 orders over a weekend. Before, we wouldn’t have been able to take it because we wouldn’t have had the resources. As the business grows we have the platform to allow us to take on more,” says Neill.

Ease of use

The familiar Microsoft interface in Dynamics NAV brings several advantages, according to Neill. “From a user perspective, I thought the look and feel was quite intuitive. We also liked the functionality and integration with Office. It meant training would be much more straightforward.”

Summary:

BMR’s finance team now has all of the information it needs to close accounts at month end or at year end faster than before, and Neill says he is “really pleased” the system was delivered on time and on budget. “I think ProStrategy were key to the project being a success. We put in a lot of resource effort into the solution design, but it was worth it in the end,” he says. “We now have an ERP solution that has all the functionality of a tier one system. In terms of cost per head, it’s been very cost-effective for us. NAV is the right tool for a company of our size and it has allowed us to implement a lot of efficiencies in the business,” adds Neill.

About ProStrategy:

ProStrategy is a Gold Certified Microsoft Partner and recognized as the leading partner in Ireland for Microsoft Dynamics and Analytics solutions. Since 1985, ProStrategy have been helping businesses to streamline their operations and gain deeper insights into their business processes. To do this, we bring over 30 years’ experience of the industry and world-class software to the table. ProStrategy’s success to date has been built on an impressive track record of high quality service delivered to a diverse customer base.



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We have replaced, upgraded and implemented Microsoft Dynamics NAV across a broad range of industries for some of Ireland's leading brands as well as establishing ourselves on the international scene in recent years. All of this is backed by a team of over 40 highly skilled consultants who have an average of 10 years' experience ensuring a successful return on your technology investment.