Life after Microsoft Dynamics GP

What's the next smart move for your company as GP approaches its end of life?

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When one
door closes...

Microsoft Dynamics Great Plains (GP) has been an invaluable tool for decades. However, as support for the software phases out over the next few years, it's time to plan for the next steps. Doing so will help prevent last-minute scrambling when its end of life hits.

To get started, ask yourself several questions:

• What are the features you'll need to run your operations optimally?
• What does the implementation process look like?
• How long will it take to train your teams to use a new solution?
• How much is it all going to cost you up front and down the road?

It can feel overwhelming—but it doesn't have to be. Implementing new technology isn't nearly as difficult and time-consuming as it used to be. That leaves more time for you to identify your needs and ensure you're selecting the right solution for your organization.

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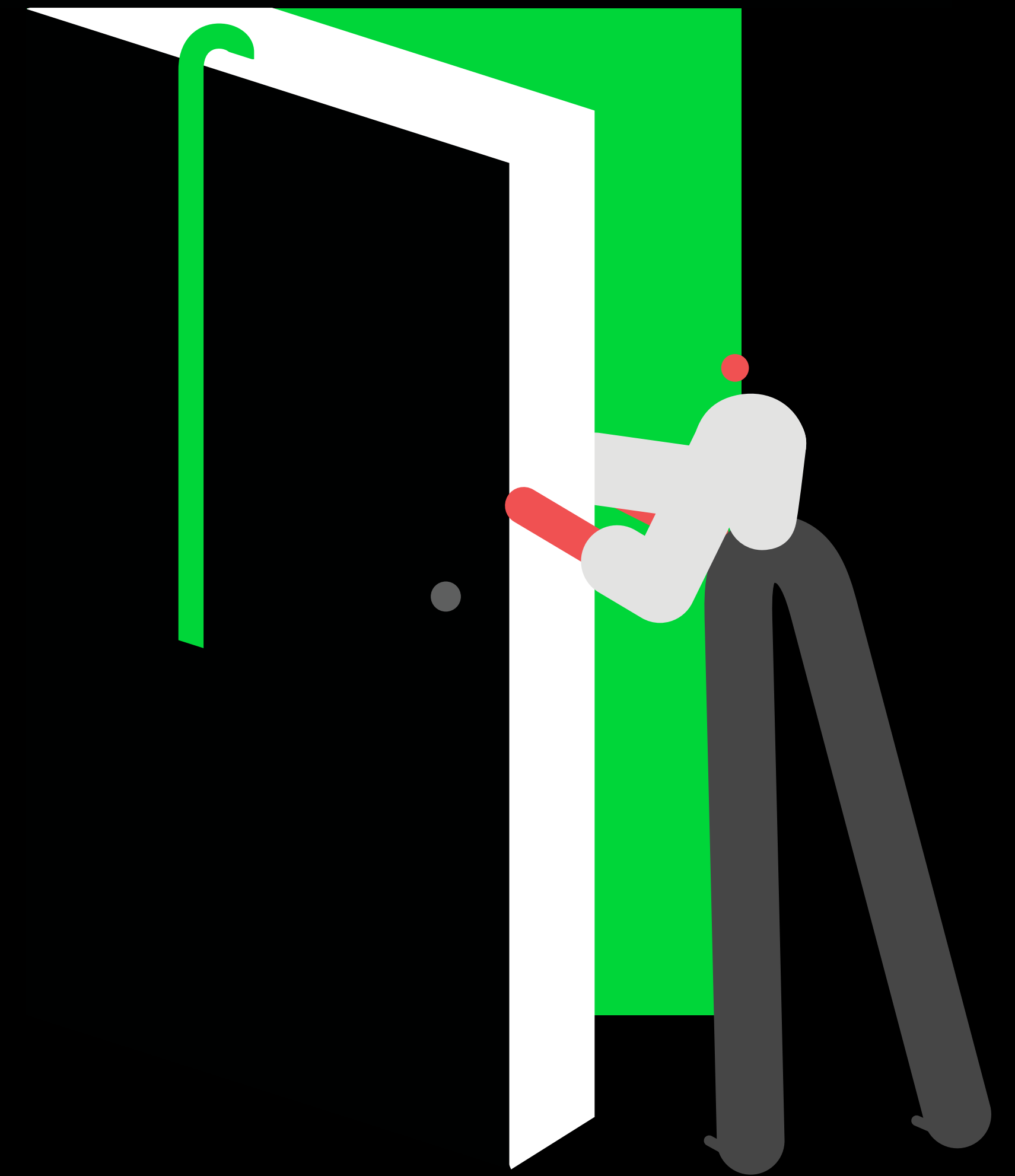
The costs of not planning ahead

It may be tempting to postpone looking for an alternative to Dynamics GP. However, the longer you delay doing at least preliminary research on the available options, the bigger the financial impact will be on your company.

There are already concerns around keeping old Dynamics GP instances running today. They're costly to maintain and can leave your organization vulnerable to security breaches. At the same time, moving to the cloud and adopting a modern finance solution can deliver cost efficiencies, automation that streamlines processes, and more.

Here are just a few of the inefficiencies that may be costing you now:

- Having to regularly purchase add-ons
- Having multiple sources of truth that cause a delay in the decision making process
- Difficulties adapting to new business requirements as your company grows
- Still relying on spreadsheets to support your reports

- Manually entering data
- A bigger risk of human error
- Having to regularly purchase add-ons

Making financially sound decisions is crucial to the sustainability of any entity, and the issues listed above can hurt day-to-day operations and the long-term success of your organization.

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Signs that it's time for a financial software upgrade

Why change now, when you still have a few years left of Dynamics GP? To answer that question, consider whether any of the following apply to you:

You're still using on-premises software
Cloud-based technologies remove the burdensome maintenance requirements of keeping servers on site. You have better uptime, accessibility to data regardless of location, and industry experts who can ensure your backup and disaster recovery.

Your business is growing
Most businesses are planning to scale at some point. To do that, you'll need the convenience of multi-entity management that allows you to manage separate financials across locations and segments. Failing to include this feature will result in a continued waste of resources.

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You're expanding internationally

Many platforms are limited in languages, locations, and currencies. If you're expanding, look for software that makes it possible to broaden your services without having to constantly switch from product to product. Make sure it's GDPR compliant and supports localized tax regulations.

Your teams are doing duplicative work across applications

Automated workflows save you time, increase productivity, reduce human error, and ensure data accuracy. No need to use spreadsheets or enter information manually. Eliminate manual data entry and close books faster, so that you can focus on running your organization more efficiently.

You store financial data across multiple platforms

Centralizing your financial information lets you see and analyze full pictures quickly and accurately. This helps you streamline financial processes and reduce productivity costs.

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What's your next best step?

While there isn't a one-size-fits all answer for everyone, there are certain common denominators you should consider when narrowing down your options. Specifically, pay attention to:

1. Software as a Service

Software as a Service (SaaS) means that instead of purchasing software and installing it on your computers or servers, you simply log into your account and have access to everything you need. No need to install anything, or to have in-house tech support to assist you implementing or troubleshooting it.

2. Total cost of ownership

The cost of software is a lot more than simply its sticker price. You want to take into account the pricing of tiered services so that you'll be aware of pricing as your business scales. You want to look at the available tools and whether you'll need to purchase applications from third-party vendors. You'll want to know whether customer support and maintenance are included.

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3.   Length of implementation process

The length of implementing new software depends on several factors: your specific goals, the tools you need, and the expertise of the VAR partners (to name a few). Generally, this could take three months or more. So make sure you're aware of a specific solution's timeline and how this will impact your operations.

4.   User-friendliness

While every software comes with a learning curve, you want to consider only those that have an intuitive interface and don't require advanced coding knowledge to work your way around it. You can gauge this by reading customer reviews and requesting demos.

5.   Whether you need bells and whistles

Some accounting software solutions come with a myriad of tools that are excellent for larger enterprises, such as warehouse management or supply chain planning. If all you need are financial and accounting management, narrow down your choices to solutions that focus exclusively on those. It'll end up being more cost effective and significantly easier to use for your teams.

6.   Maintenance needs

Be aware of how often maintenance needs to be provided, as well as what the process entails. At the risk of sounding like a scratched record, SaaS products significantly simplify this issue by running updates automatically and taking care of maintenance from their end—without you having to do anything.

7.   Service Level Agreement (SLA) terms

Specifically ask for the guaranteed uptime. You'll also want to know how the provider intends to provide solutions for customers in the event that there's an unplanned downtime. Typically, this could include a reduced price in subscription costs, or removing penalties for getting out of the agreement.

What to look for in your next software?
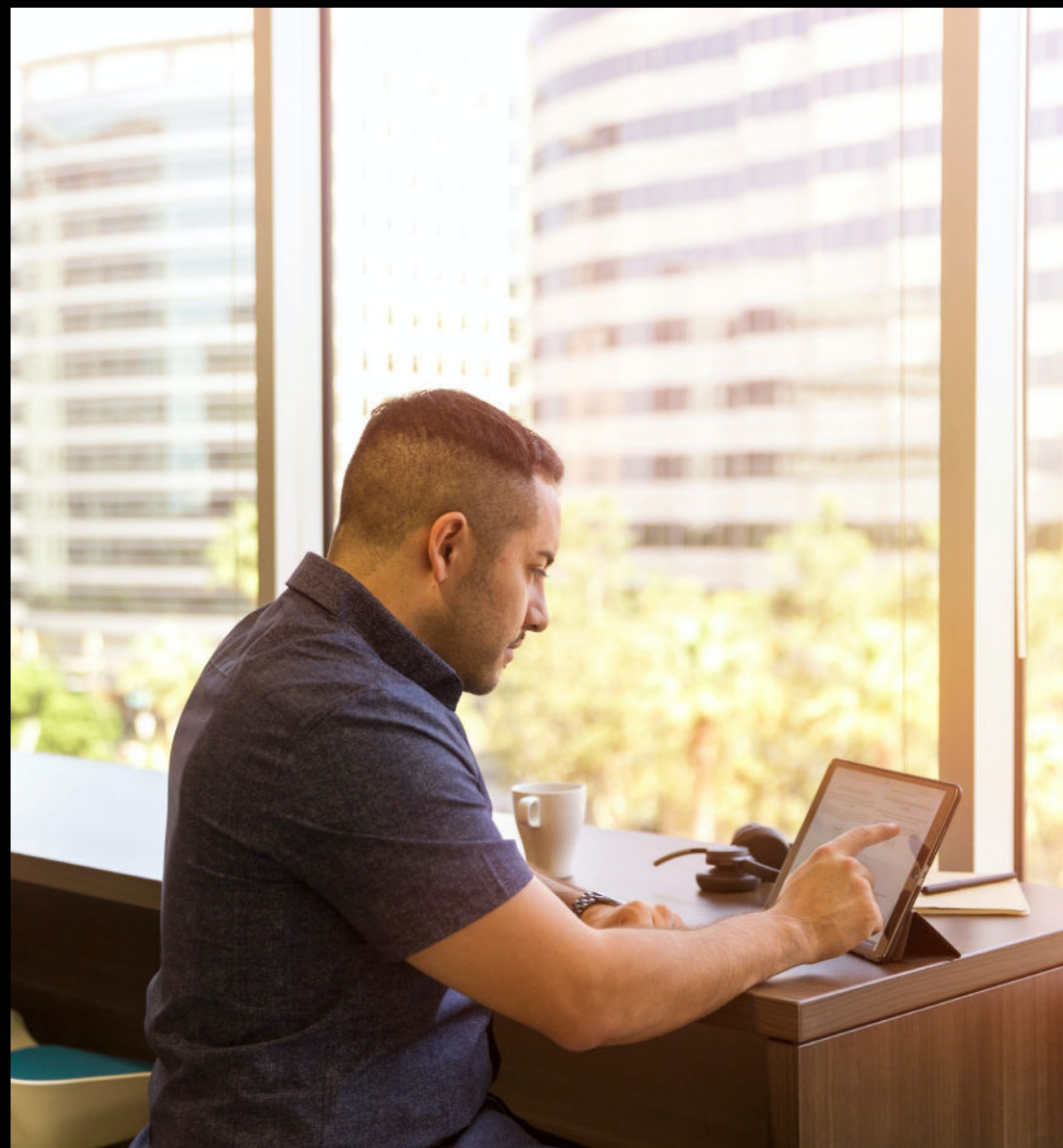
In addition to the factors mentioned above, effective financial and accounting management technologies offer the following benefits:

Visibility

- **Real-time data**: users get secure access anytime, anywhere, to data and processes.

- **Flexible reporting:** cloud-based finance delivers timely and accurate reports.

- **Role-based dashboards:** relevant, real-time visibility into the state of business.

Productivity

- **Accounting automation:** simplifies accounting processes, such as receivables and payables.

- **Extensive integration:** this is crucial to easily assemble an interoperable system.

- **User-defined workflows:** automate, control, and streamline processes.

Scalability

- **Scalable architecture grows:** add new entities as your organization grows.

- **Multi-ledger system:** control for high-volume, high-transaction entities.

- **Internal controls:** robust financial controls ensure compliance and auditability.

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Taking the
next step

As you consider life after Dynamics GP, it can feel overwhelming. But it's a reality you'll inevitably have to face. That's why it's critical to ensure you understand your organization's needs and have time to explore your options for a new solution, so you're able to facilitate a smooth, painless transition process for your operations.

The best cloud-based financial management platforms offer the tools you need to work strategically, understand your organization's financial health, and plan for the future. That's why so many organizations have already made the move from Microsoft Dynamics GP to Sage Intacct.

Sage Intacct delivers everything you need to simplify accounting, and is purpose-built for finance—meaning you get deep finance capabilities while automating and streamlining your processes. Less work for you, and better results for your business.

Want to learn more about why Sage Intacct might be the smart move for you? Reach out to your software partner to discuss your options today.

BOOK A CONSULTATION

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