



## Microsoft Dynamics Customer Solution Case Study



### Overview

**Country or Region:** United States

**Industry:** Entertainment

### Customer Profile

Founded more than 60 years ago, The Rodgers & Hammerstein Organization (R&H) represents a wide variety of entertainment copyrights through its theatrical, concert, and music publishing divisions.

### Business Situation

R&H used Microsoft Dynamics® AX to gain a complete picture of its business but wanted to give employees throughout the company fast, easy access to information they need to serve customers.

### Solution

The company upgraded to Microsoft Dynamics AX 2009, and now, employees at every level in the company have role-based business intelligence and workflow tracking available at their desktops.

### Benefits

- Better decision making at all levels
- Improved customer service
- Painless deployment without customization

## Show Business Company Targets Key Data for Both Starring, Supporting Roles

“Now, almost any employee can do desktop database mining without even realizing they’re doing it. They log on and the Microsoft Dynamics RoleTailored user interface is right on their desktop.”

John Elmer, VP of Finance and IT, The Rodgers & Hammerstein Organization

The Rodgers & Hammerstein Organization (R&H) manages and administers musical and theatrical licensing rights for the heirs of Richard Rodgers, Oscar Hammerstein II, and many other talented writers. The company implemented Microsoft Dynamics® AX in 2006 to gain complete control and visibility over its licensing and business operations. More recently, the company wanted to give employees quick and easy access to the information they need to perform their jobs more efficiently. R&H enrolled in the Microsoft® Technology Adoption Program and became one of the first companies in the world to implement Microsoft Dynamics AX 2009. Now, employees throughout the organization have almost instant access to company information tailored to their specific roles. Employees spend less time tracking tasks and more time efficiently serving customers.



Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II, circa 1950.

## Situation

The Rodgers & Hammerstein Organization (R&H) was founded by two of the most celebrated musical talents of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. In the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, their musicals continue to set box-office records from Broadway to London and beyond, with DVD's, Blu-Rays and music downloads all part of the effort to keep alive the sound of their music.

This is thanks, in part, to the careful stewardship of the intellectual property management company founded by the two creators.

The composer Richard Rodgers and the lyricist Oscar Hammerstein II collaborated on such works as *South Pacific*, *Oklahoma!*, *The King and I*, and *The Sound of Music*. The business they established controls and administers the copyrights of the two founders, in addition to other musical and entertainment giants such as Irving Berlin, Lorenz Hart, and Andrew Lloyd Webber.



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To integrate the complex business of issuing theatrical licenses, tracking royalties, and renting scripts and orchestral materials, R&H turned to Cole Systems and Microsoft Dynamics® AX 3.0 in 2006. The software gave R&H a more complete view of its business, but the company wanted to enhance its system by giving deep insights into its business operations to more employees, more quickly.

Employees could access data on company operations, but it would usually involve exporting data from Microsoft Dynamics AX into Microsoft Office Excel® spreadsheets, using PivotTable® reports and other advanced analysis features. Often, the data was published in paper reports that could run to hundreds of pages.

The company wanted to target information to employees based on their role in the organization and their specific business needs. In addition, R&H wanted a better way to manage workflow and business processes among employees and departments within the organization.

R&H already made extensive use of Microsoft technology in its IT operations, with Windows Server® 2008, the 2007 Microsoft® Office system, Microsoft Office SharePoint® Server 2008, and Microsoft SQL Server® 2005. The company knew a Microsoft solution would benefit from its previous investment in Microsoft technology and lower its total cost of ownership.

While the company was considering its options, John Elmer, VP of Finance and IT, learned about Microsoft Dynamics AX 2009 and the Microsoft Technology Adoption Program. The program would give R&H access to the newest product releases and much stronger relationships with key Microsoft resources. After evaluating the opportunity and the potential rewards, Elmer decided to become an early adopter of Microsoft Dynamics AX 2009.

## Solution

R&H began implementing Microsoft Dynamics AX 2009 in January 2008. With the help of Cole Systems, it became the first company in the United States—and one of the first in the world—to go live with the software.

“We’re unlocking hidden value in our employees. Without any major changes staring them in the face, workflow just makes them more efficient.”

John Elmer, VP of Finance and IT, The Rodgers & Hammerstein Organization

“Show business is what we do, and when we do things, we like them to be a huge success so that everybody’s happy. We knew that Microsoft would strongly stand behind us if we were willing to team up with them in the Technology Adoption Program to showcase the features and power of Microsoft Dynamics AX 2009,” Elmer says. “For us, it was a great opportunity, considering the potential benefits.”

R&H has an unusual business with some unique processes, such as licensing intellectual property rights and renting and shipping sheet music and other components for theatrical productions. Two key features—Role Center and workflow—drove the decision to adopt Microsoft Dynamics AX 2009.

#### **Role Centers for Business Intelligence**

A 2007 study by the consulting group, Keystone Strategy, found that companies have been able to profitably grow their revenues following a strategy of spreading business intelligence and analysis capabilities widely throughout a company. The Role Center feature of Microsoft Dynamics AX 2009 made it easy for R&H to give employees access to information, tasks, and business processes that were preconfigured for their specific role within the organization.

“The Role Center is a tremendous feature because it gives desktop business intelligence tools to all users, tailored to each of the user groups,” Elmer explains. “We used mostly out-of-the-box Role Centers, with some modifications, to give people a more personalized experience.

“One important group of people, our executives, can see information about company operations or finances on a dashboard on their desktop with just a single click. Operational people can see comparative analyses of our shows, earnings

this month versus earnings last month, and year-to-date versus last-year-to-date. Our finance people can see cash account balances and accounts receivable,” adds Elmer.

Microsoft Dynamics AX 2009 works with Microsoft SQL Server Analysis Services to automatically create the data cubes that drive the role-centered dashboards. To take full advantage of Microsoft Dynamics AX 2009, R&H also implemented Microsoft Windows Server 2008 and Microsoft SQL Server 2008.

#### **Workflow for Better Processes**

Workflow is another important feature for R&H, which previously managed its workflow primarily through e-mail and spreadsheets. This meant that key data was often stored offline and was more difficult to use to track the history or audit the process of issuing a license or creating a rental contract.

For example, with the workflow features of Microsoft Dynamics AX 2009, a request for a theatrical license becomes an action item sent automatically to the right person. If that person doesn’t respond in time for any reason, the request is either sent on to another person or escalated to a supervisor.

Most of the gains R&H achieved from the features of its new system, such as workflow and Role Centers, resulted from using components of Microsoft Dynamics AX 2009 out of the box with only limited customization. See Figure 1.

#### **Benefits**

The move to Microsoft Dynamics AX 2009 gave R&H the ability to unlock financial and business-operations data and tailor it to employees’ specific needs. R&H employees no longer depend on e-mail to assign tasks or request information from each other, which

Figure 1. Enterprise Portal Role Center

frees up time to follow up on the status of work items.

**Better Decision Making at All Levels**

“Role Centers were a huge advantage for us,” Elmer says. “They opened up Microsoft Dynamics AX for a lot of users. People at every level in our company benefit from Role Centers. Now, almost any employee can do desktop database mining without even realizing they’re doing it. They log on and the Microsoft Dynamics RoleTailored user interface is right on their desktop. And, the data is fresh. The data cubes don’t have to be rebuilt or reanalyzed; the data is just there, and it’s always current.”

“It’s important for us to be able to enhance our business and go after new markets to better capitalize on our existing customer base. That information was available before, but it wasn’t easy to get to,” Elmer says. “Microsoft Dynamics AX 2009 is just a

fantastic front end to the enormous wealth of data we’ve always had but never fully leveraged.”

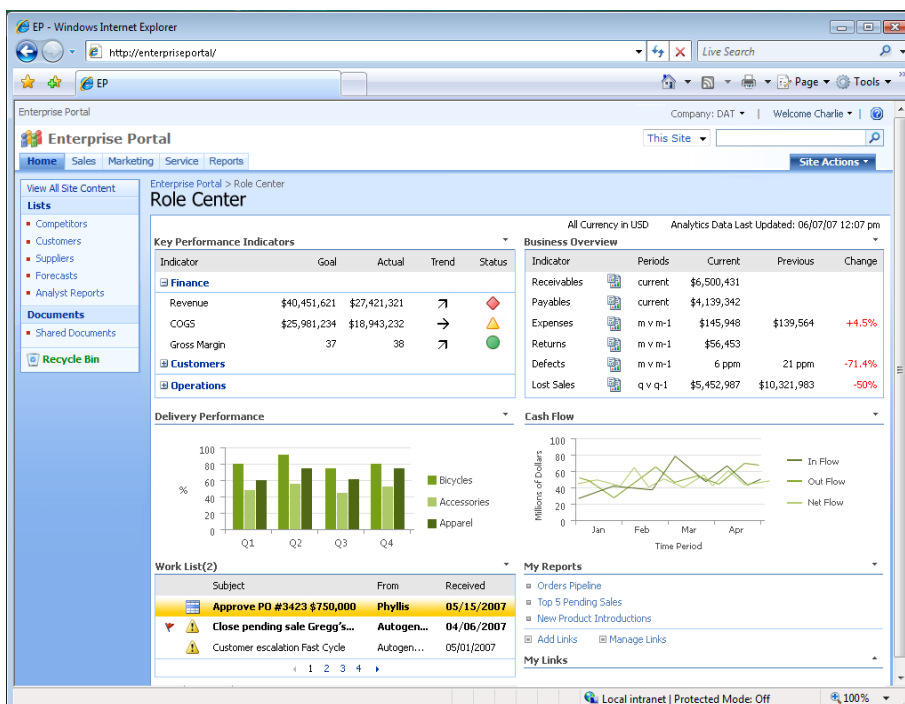
**Improved Customer Service**

Workflow helped R&H improve productivity and customer service. “Workflow really streamlines all our processes,” Elmer says. “With Workflow, everything just moves faster, and it enables us to serve our customers much more efficiently. Issues get passed along.

“We’ve enjoyed a huge efficiency gain. We’re unlocking hidden value in our employees. Without any major changes staring them in the face, Workflow just makes them more efficient,” he concludes.

**Painless Deployment Without Customization**

Despite the unique aspects of its business, R&H was able to create the Role Centers and



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To learn more about The Rodgers & Hammerstein Organization, please visit [www.rnh.com](http://www.rnh.com).

For more information about Cole Systems Associates Inc. products and services, call (212) 965-6400 or visit the Web site at: [www.colesys.com](http://www.colesys.com)

Workflow tools they needed with only a minimum amount of customized coding. "Our goal was to get as much value as we could from out-of-the-box components," Elmer says. "We did spend a little bit of time working to make some modifications, but for the most part, we just pieced together components that were already there."

To ensure an easy transition to the new system, Elmer kept the earlier version operational at first. "The transition to the new system was quite easy for everyone," he says. "After awhile, I shut the previous version down and no one missed it all."

## Microsoft Dynamics

Microsoft Dynamics is a line of integrated, adaptable business management solutions that enables you and your people to make business decisions with greater confidence. Microsoft Dynamics works like familiar Microsoft software such as Microsoft Office, which means less of a learning curve for your people, so they can get up and running quickly and focus on what's most important. And because it is from Microsoft, it easily works with the systems that your company already has implemented. By automating and streamlining financial, customer relationship, and supply chain processes, Microsoft Dynamics brings together people, processes, and technologies, increasing the productivity and effectiveness of your business, and helping you drive business success.

For more information about Microsoft Dynamics, go to: [www.microsoft.com/dynamics](http://www.microsoft.com/dynamics)

## Software and Services

- Microsoft Dynamics
  - Microsoft Dynamics AX 2009
- Microsoft Office
  - 2007 Microsoft Office system
- Microsoft Server Product Portfolio
  - Microsoft SQL Server 2005
  - Windows Server 2008