

YOUR INCREMENTAL GUIDE TO MAKING THE MOST OF DYNAMICS GP - WHILE PREPARING FOR WHAT'S NEXT



Microsoft Dynamics GP has been one of the leading ERP platforms for decades, powering businesses of all sizes and industries. However, like every technology, its lifespan is not infinite, and Microsoft is well into the process of sunsetting the reliable platform. End of support for GP is slated for 2029, with users on earlier versions of the platform already operating on unsupported systems.

While this leaves businesses a few years to make plans for their next steps, many companies are feeling the strain already, unsure of how to approach moving away from the platform they have used for years, sometimes even decades. At Enavate, we advise taking an incremental, multi-step approach.

THE FIRST STEP?

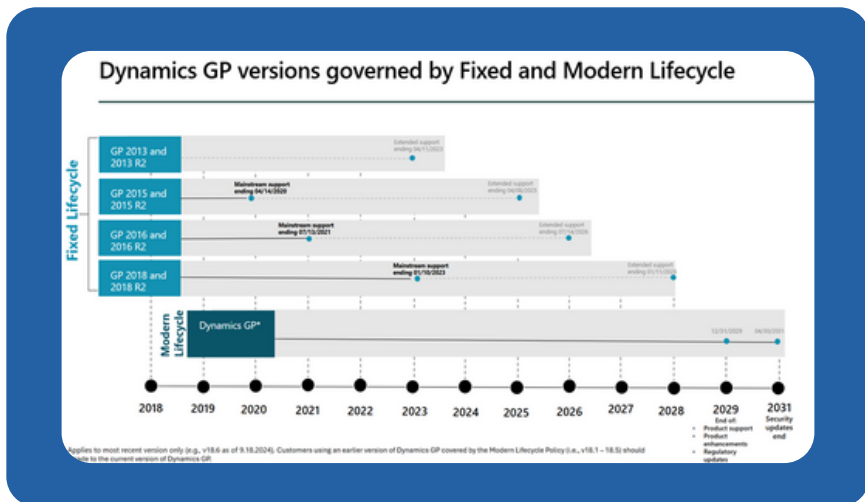
**OPTIMIZE GP FOR YOUR
CURRENT SITUATION
WHILE PLANNING FOR
THE FUTURE.**



KNOW THE TIMELINE

Optimizing GP to power your business while planning for next steps begins with understanding how much time you actually have before GP is no longer supported, as well as understanding what “no longer supported” actually means.

Businesses running on GP 2013 and GP 2015 have both already seen their support end. Users on GP 2016 have until July 14, 2026 and users on GP 2018 have until January 1, 2028, until their support ceases.



To be supported until the end of the lifecycle, businesses must be on the “Modern Lifecycle” of GP, meaning being on one of the two most recent releases, meaning 18.7 or later. The businesses on the Modern Lifecycle will receive the complete run of support, ending in 2029.

Some businesses, especially those that have never gone through an ERP platform being discontinued, may wonder what exactly “ceasing support” entails.

It does not mean that the platform will one day be completely inoperable with no warning, taking all of your data, workflows, and operations with it. GP will continue running after the 2029 date, meaning “end of support” refers to ongoing updates, which are necessary to keep the system operating safely, securely, and at peak capacity. These updates include:

- **Security:** Ongoing updates to combat emerging and evolving cyber-threats are essential for protecting businesses and will continue past the end of support until April 30, 2031. This includes virus definitions, firewall information, and updated lists of red-flagged websites and email accounts.
- **Tax and Financial Rules:** Businesses that run their financial operations through GP will need to keep in mind that end of support means the end of critical financial updates. These updates govern tax information for employees, especially contractors, and are vital for ensuring compliance with tax codes and other laws, as well as intra-company compliance and audit trails.
- **System Operability:** Finally, end of support will likely affect how GP interacts with newer versions of Windows, as it will no longer be tested for compatibility. This means that any Windows updates, even small ones, may have dramatic knock-on effects on GP, and there will be no team or system in place to address them.

These updates, as well as any and all general troubleshooting, will be what ceases at the end of the support window. This means that operating a business would still be possible on GP after that date, however, it would be increasingly difficult.



Enavate Recommendation: Ensure your GP is updated to the modern lifecycle while you decide your future plans, which will extend your window of support.

DATA REVIEW

WHY IT MATTERS

As plans are being made for the future of your business, another crucial, incremental step you should take is assessing your data to determine if it is in the best shape for a future upgrade or migration.

Many businesses have been on GP for years, some even decades. This means that unless you are diligent about clearing out old records, your systems are clogged with:

- Vendors no longer in use
- Items that are no longer sold or stocked
- Customers that are inactive
- Historical transaction data that no longer serves reporting or compliance needs

Enavate Recommendation: Do a thorough analysis of your data, removing any items that are no longer necessary for the day-to-day operation of your business.

WHY REMOVE DATA?

Removing this old data will have several positive effects on your workflows:

- Faster system performance, especially when searching records
- Reduced database size, improving backups and system stability
- Easier, faster future migrations
- Lower migration costs (especially for databases over 80 GB in Business Central)

TIPS FOR EFFECTIVELY ELIMINATING EXCESS DATA

Businesses have multiple ways to approach scaling down their existing datasets:

Built-in GP data removal tools

- No additional cost
- Module-by-module execution
- Limited filtering consistency

Third-party mass data removal

- Additional cost
- Significant time savings
- Consistent filtering across modules

Enavate Recommendation: While going through this process, set up safeguards in case something goes wrong:

- Create a test company before removing data
- Set security to read-only
- Preserve historical records for recovery if needed

It is not merely vendor, inventory, and transaction data that should be assessed for paring down.



Report histories for Management Reporter should be inspected as well. Many of the reports within Management Reporter are likely to have many copies present within the report library. This can lead to database bloat in the Management Reporter database and is another simple area to address for the interim. These excess reports can be removed easily from the report library in Report Viewer.

SmartList favorites should be given the same review, for similar reasons. Over the years, different employees add things to the favorites, and they pile up quickly.

Using this time in the planning process to address database size is not exclusively for businesses immediately transitioning away from GP. Those planning to stay on GP until the end of support are encouraged to do so as well, as the oncoming years will continue to increase database size, making the process harder later on.



IDENTIFYING SYSTEM STRENGTHS AND PAIN POINTS

After dealing with any bloat in your data, businesses should identify and plan to deal with any challenges in your current GP setup. This will increase the quality of your business processes while transitioning away from GP, as well as help identify what will be required in your businesses' next platform.

Most pain points you might encounter tend to be performance based, usually because of GP's age, including:

- Slow system performance
- Aging platform-related bugs
- Crashes or instability with newer Windows versions
- Stuck or corrupted transactions

To help companies address these issues, [Microsoft maintains a regularly updated white paper with information about potential issues, as well as their fixes.](#)

Enavate Recommendation: Use this time to identify any steps that can be taken to improve performance within Dynamics GP, including reviewing the Performance White Paper and identifying any stuck/invalid transactions in the system that may need to be reviewed or removed. This work will assist in future upgrades and migrations- as cleaner data tends to lean towards cleaner upgrades and migrations.



EXTENDING CAPABILITIES

Once these pain points are identified, process improvements can be implemented, either from within your existing platform, or through additional tools or integrations.

Enavate AI for Dynamics GP is one way to extend your GP capabilities while gaining tremendous value. Enavate AI is a smart assistant that helps you interact with GP using natural language. Instead of running reports or writing SQL queries, you can simply ask questions like “What’s the AR balance for our customer?” or “Show me invoices due next week” and get instant, accurate answers—right inside GP.

Solutions such as **eConnect** or **Integration Manager** can be deployed to help expand the range of capabilities for companies on GP.

Additional modules such as **Fixed Assets**, **Project Accounting**, or **Inventory Management** can add functionality to GP that may be lacking, eliminating the need for outside integrations that could be causing incompatibilities.

The majority of major GP modules will migrate to BC, so businesses do not need to worry about losing functionality or disrupting workflows when they eventually transition over, making the decision to add modules a low-risk, high-reward choice.

Quality of life improvements like this will ease the pressure on decision-makers and workers alike as you plan what life post-GP will look like.



ADDING AND EXTENDING REPORTING CAPABILITIES

Additional reporting functionality is another way to increase the capabilities of your GP system.

Built-in GP Reports

This could be as simple as commissioning new reports to be built within existing modules, or by integrating additional solutions, such as SQL Server Reporting Services reports or refreshable Excel reports. Many GP modules have built-in reports in both of those solutions that are available “out of the box” immediately after setup, at no additional cost on top of the module.

Excel-based Reporting and Refreshable Reports

Many of these built-in reports also offer the ability to export data to Excel, expanding versatility for users who are more accustomed to that application for breaking down data. Common requests to send reports, such as the Historical Aged Trial Balance for either Payables or Receivables, to Excel are commonly handled by deploying the SQL Server Reporting Services reports that can be deployed directly from GP.

SQL Server Reporting Services

If you have a Standard or Enterprise SQL Server License, you are able to set up SQL Server Reporting Services at no additional cost, unlocking an entirely new suite of reports to power decision making. Several of these reports are available solely in the SQL Server Reporting Services, SSRS, not within GP proper. These reports can be set up to automatically run to the format of your choice and even email copies of the reports to your users on a set schedule, automating a process that is not normally automated from within GP.



POWER BI INTEGRATION FOR GP AND BC

Power BI is an advanced Business Intelligence tool that also offers in-depth visualization and reporting functionalities.

Businesses planning on switching to BC are encouraged to explore this integration while still on GP, as it will assist users in their transition, and is a product that works with both GP and BC.

Enavate Recommendation: You should examine any integrations or modules that you no longer use regularly, both to save on costs associated with ISVs (independent service vendors) and as another way to minimize the size of your database. Maintaining an up-to-date list of ISVs is considered a best practice, especially for product documentation and troubleshooting. Also reviewing current reports and evaluating if additional reports or reporting products could be utilized may assist with reviewing data from GP in the short-term and allow you to know what reports to prioritize during a future migration to BC.



PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE BEGINS TODAY

There is no ambiguity for businesses running on Dynamics GP: in the next few years they will no longer have the security and financial updates needed to effectively run a business. While you plan for your long-term solution, you should take incremental steps to prepare for the eventual transition, as well as improve your quality of life in the meantime.

- **Stay up to date** on the modern lifecycle of GP to ensure you have the maximum support time.
- **Understand the timeline** of when GP support will cease, and what, exactly, that means for your business.
- **Review your data** to see what is needed for business operations, and what is dead weight. Eliminating excess data will save on costs, as well as speed up the eventual migration process.
- **Identify pain points** in your current system and address them, either within GP or in your plan for your next steps.
- **Maximize GP functionality** by adding in reporting functions, new modules, or outside integrations to ensure your business is operating at peak capacity while plans are being made.

Businesses that follow these steps while preparing for your next steps will be in prime position for an effective, efficient migration to whatever ERP platform you choose in the future.



INCREMENTAL STEPS TO TAKE WHEN IT'S TIME TO MOVE AWAY FROM DYNAMICS GP

When that next step is moving away from GP – especially to Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central – there are additional steps you can take now to make the process simpler, smoother, and far less stressful in the long run.

The key takeaway? You don't have to do everything at once—but you do need to start.



STEP 1: ASSESS WHERE YOU ARE TODAY

Before you can plan where you're going, you need a clear picture of your current GP environment.

A great place to start is the **Migration Assessment Tool**, a free resource that evaluates your GP setup and highlights potential migration challenges. It reviews things like:

- Data structure and account types
- Workflows and configurations
- Integrations and customizations
- Overall readiness for Business Central

The tool doesn't capture business-specific data or provide tailored recommendations, but it does flag common pain points that could slow down a migration. If you have SQL access, you can also run SQL scripts to:

- **Identify data** or configuration issues
- **Review database size** and pinpoint areas to clean up

Addressing these issues early can save significant time and effort later.



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STEP 2: RETHINK YOUR REPORTING STRATEGY

If you're using Management Reporter, you're not alone—but it's important to know that it does NOT carry forward into Business Central.

Rather than waiting until your migration is underway, consider transitioning to a new reporting solution now. Doing this early:

- **Reduces risk** of reporting delays during migration
- Allows teams to **learn reporting separately** from the new ERP
- **Eliminates** time pressure and **rushed decisions**

[There are several options for Business Central reporting.](#)

For many BC users, Power BI is an attractive option because it's:

- Natively **integrated** with BC
- **Always live** and accessible from anywhere
- Capable of deep, **drill-down reporting**

No matter which reporting tool you choose, making the change ahead of your ERP migration helps ensure continuity and confidence.



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STEP 3: MOVE PAYROLL OUT OF GP —SOONER RATHER THAN LATER

Payroll is one area you can't afford to put off.

While GP includes native payroll today, tax and payroll updates will stop in 2029, making payroll in GP increasingly risky and eventually unusable.

It's also important to note:

- **Business Central** does not include native payroll
- **A third-party** payroll solution will be required

Because payroll directly impacts compliance and employee trust, selecting and implementing a new solution should be a top priority—not something left until after your ERP migration.

[Start evaluating your options with a free, 2-minute payroll assessment](#)

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STEP 4: REVIEW AND CLEAN UP YOUR ACCOUNT STRUCTURE

Your chart of accounts plays a major role in how smooth (or painful) a GP-to-BC migration will be. GP and Business Central handle account structures very differently:

- **GP** relies on account strings, trees, and lists
- **BC** uses a natural account plus dimensions

This means that most GP-to-BC migrations require some level of account restructuring. Underused or outdated accounts often need to be combined and in some cases, a full redesign makes sense.

Before migrating, it's also critical to:

- **Verify account posting types** and categories in GP
- **Fix incorrect setups** that could cause errors in BC

Since account categories are used more heavily in Business Central, any mistakes in GP will carry forward unless addressed.

To make changes safely, many organizations use add-on tools such as:

- CRG Changer
- Professional Services Tools Library
- Account Modifier and Combiner

While these tools add cost, they often pay for themselves by avoiding delays, errors, and post-migration disruptions.



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THE BOTTOM LINE: START NOW, MOVE SMARTER

As Dynamics GP approaches the end of support, the clock is ticking—but that doesn't mean you need to rush into a full migration tomorrow.

By taking small, intentional steps now, you can:

- Reduce risk
- Improve your current GP environment
- Set yourself up for a smoother transition to Business Central

For organizations planning to move to Dynamics 365 Business Central, these incremental actions can make the difference between a stressful migration and a confident, well-planned transition with minimal downtime



GET GUIDANCE ALONG THE WAY

Get a clear picture of where you are today and a roadmap to how your Dynamics GP technology can help your organization get where you want to go next. With our complimentary ERP Roadmap Consultation, you'll get:

Discovery Session: We'll start with an in-depth conversation to understand your current Dynamics ERP usage and how it supports your business goals.

GP Health Check: We will help you run our comprehensive Health Check Tool to assess the health and performance of your current system and identify areas for optimization.

Customized Roadmap for the Future: Based on the HealthCheck, you'll receive a detailed report with findings, actionable insights and a customized roadmap.

Follow-Up Meeting: Our Dynamics experts will present the findings and discuss future options for your business.

[Get Started on Your Dynamics GP Roadmap Today!](#)

