



## Microsoft Dynamics Customer Solution Case Study



### Overview

**Country or Region:** United States  
**Industry:** Retail and Hospitality—Food Service Industry

### Customer Profile

Famous for its unconventional approach to dining, Dallas-based Dick's Last Resort operates restaurants in six major U.S. cities.

### Business Situation

Facing a growing accounting workload, the restaurant chain needed some way of connecting its disparate point-of-sale, inventory, and accounting systems.

### Solution

With help from Microsoft® Gold Certified Partner SimCrest, Dick's Last Resort used Microsoft Dynamics™ NAV to automate its accounting processes, reducing errors and increasing efficiency.

### Benefits

- Streamlines accounting processes
- Adapts to unique company requirements
- Simple to administer and modify

## Legendary Restaurant Chain Automates Accounting Processes

“We have limited IT resources, so it’s important that Microsoft Dynamics NAV is easy to modify and support—it allows us to focus on managing our business.”

Christy Zirnheld, CFO, Dick's Last Resort

Dick's Last Resort (DLR) is a unique restaurant concept where food is served in stainless steel buckets, diners must wear tear-away bibs, live music pulses, and the atmosphere is boisterous. While that unruly environment has popularized DLR, the restaurant chain unfortunately faced analogous conditions in its IT environment. With unconnected point-of-sale, inventory, and accounting systems, DLR struggled with manual processes that required extra personnel and introduced inaccuracies. With help from Microsoft® Gold Certified Partner SimCrest, DLR implemented Microsoft Dynamics™ NAV to streamline its accounting processes. Microsoft Dynamics NAV automates complicated interstore transactions, integrates with the point-of-sale system, and is flexible enough to accommodate complex payroll requirements.



“Microsoft Dynamics NAV is extremely flexible, and new features can be developed to do exactly what we want.”

Christy Zirnheld, CFO, Dick's Last Resort

## Situation

Dick's Last Resort (DLR) is known for its unconventional, boisterous atmosphere. Patrons are treated to live music, generous servings of food, and a somewhat rambunctious wait staff—all of which have made DLR a must-visit destination in Boston, Chicago, Dallas, San Antonio, San Diego, and Myrtle Beach. Behind the scenes, DLR receives IT and accounting support from Schiff & Company, which manages DLR, along with other investments, on behalf of a common holding company.

“Dick's is plastic bibs, buckets, and suds, but it's also great food and lots of fun,” says Christy Zirnheld, CFO for DLR. In 2000, the restaurant was doing well, but the back office struggled with separate accounting systems and inefficient accounting processes. DLR was using the MAS 90 enterprise resource planning system from Sage Software for its accounting, but that system did not integrate with the restaurant's Aloha point-of-sale software or its FOOD-TRAK inventory system.

Because the systems were unconnected, employees had to manually re-enter data from the inventory and point-of-sale systems into the accounting system. The restaurant's accounting package also fell short in terms of handling distributed operations, such as intercompany reconciliation, which had to be done manually. As the business grew, DLR had to add accounting staff to cope with the workload. In addition, people invariably introduced errors when rekeying data, such as assigning invoices to the wrong restaurant.

“Ideally, IT should streamline and automate processes. For the hospitality industry, that means data gets touched as few times as possible and flows from the point-of-sale into the general ledger without interruption,” says Zirnheld. “Dick's had many disparate systems performing critical functions, but none communicating with each other.”

DLR needed an integrated business-management solution to streamline processes, increase productivity, simplify maintenance, and adapt to the restaurant's unique requirements. For example, because DLR has locations in different states, the company contends with varying payroll regulations regarding overtime and tip compensation. And because restaurants complete most of their sales over the weekend, DLR needed to manage accounting on a weekly basis instead of on a monthly basis, as most companies do.

## Solution

When Microsoft® Gold Certified Partner SimCrest approached DLR with Microsoft Dynamics™ NAV, Zirnheld knew she had found the right business management solution. “I had looked at an upgraded version of MAS 90 and RealWorld accounting software, yet none of those packages provided the functionality we needed in an easy-to-use environment,” says Zirnheld, whose previous experience as a software tester made her an especially discerning customer.

DLR implemented Microsoft Dynamics NAV in 2001. The initial implementation process involved moving 10 years' worth of financial data from the MAS 90 system into Microsoft Dynamics NAV using spreadsheets and imports created by SimCrest. DLR completed the data conversion in just two days, though necessary payroll modifications took longer.

DLR upgraded to Microsoft Dynamics NAV 4.0 early in 2006. DLR uses Microsoft Dynamics NAV to automate the recording of intercompany transactions into the general ledger. To enter data such as daily sales reports and payroll information into the system, restaurant managers simply upload flat files from the restaurants' Aloha point-of-sale system to Microsoft Dynamics NAV.

“Our productivity increased by at least twenty percent since implementing Microsoft Dynamics NAV. We’ve eliminated process steps because data automatically flows from one system to another.”

Christy Zirnheld, CFO, Dick’s Last Resort

“Microsoft Dynamics NAV provided the requisite flexibility—the ability to accept a variety of file types, for example—while SimCrest provided the expertise to customize the software to fit our needs. Many other software packages offered support and training, but required you to contract with third-party vendors to extend the solution beyond normal requirements,” says Zirnheld.

Schiff & Company maintains the solution for DLR and contacts SimCrest when Microsoft Dynamics NAV needs to be substantially modified, such as when creating a new report or when adding a new company to the roster of clients.

“When we take on management of a new company, SimCrest helps us to develop data imports and make other modifications to accommodate different front-line processes and reduce manual data entry,” explains Zirnheld.

The solution has proven so capable and flexible that Schiff & Company has extended its use to other companies in its management portfolio, including an oil and gas concern, an alehouse, a coffee shop, and an investment capital firm. Schiff & Company works with SimCrest to modify Microsoft Dynamics NAV to meet each company’s specific needs. For example, Kerens Oil & Gas uses Microsoft Dynamics NAV to track production, taxes, and expenses at each well in separate postings. For The Ginger Man, another Schiff & Company account, Microsoft Dynamics NAV provided a capable inventory system that helps track the alehouse’s stock of hundreds of international beers.

### Benefits

DLR relies on Microsoft Dynamics NAV to automate important accounting processes, thereby minimizing management overhead. And because the solution is so easy to implement, modify, and maintain, Schiff &

Company uses Microsoft Dynamics NAV for a range of other companies in its management portfolio.

“We have limited IT resources, so it’s important that Microsoft Dynamics NAV is easy to modify and support—it allows us to focus on managing our business,” says Zirnheld.

### Streamlines Accounting Processes

Microsoft Dynamics NAV integrates with other business systems, such as the point-of-sale system, streamlining accounting processes. The increased efficiency means less management overhead costs, no more data-entry errors, and improved insight into business performance.

“Our productivity increased by at least twenty percent since implementing Microsoft Dynamics NAV. We’ve eliminated process steps because data automatically flows from one system to another, either through imports or direct integration,” says Zirnheld.

### Adapts to Unique Company Requirements

Microsoft Dynamics NAV not only meets the unique needs of DLR, such as intercompany transactions and complicated payroll requirements, but also the needs of other companies that Schiff & Company manages. “Microsoft Dynamics NAV is extremely flexible, and new features can be developed to do exactly what we want,” says Zirnheld.

“Microsoft Dynamics NAV allows us to change the business logic when necessary; access to source code allows us to modify anything,” says Carsten Howitz, President of SimCrest. Like many other Microsoft Dynamics partners, SimCrest offers deep expertise and extensive experience in developing solutions based on Microsoft Dynamics NAV.

## For More Information

For more information about Microsoft products and services, call the Microsoft Sales Information Center at (800) 426-9400. In Canada, call the Microsoft Canada Information Centre at (877) 568-2495. Customers who are deaf or hard-of-hearing can reach Microsoft text telephone (TTY/TDD) services at (800) 892-5234 in the United States or (905) 568-9641 in Canada. Outside the 50 United States and Canada, please contact your local Microsoft subsidiary. To access information using the World Wide Web, go to: [www.microsoft.com](http://www.microsoft.com)

For more information about Dick's Last Resort products and services, call (214) 572-8000 or visit the Web site at: [www.dickslastresort.com](http://www.dickslastresort.com)

For more information about SimCrest products and services, call (214) 644-4000 or visit the Web site at: [www.simcrest.com](http://www.simcrest.com)

## Simple to Administer and Modify

Because Microsoft Dynamics NAV is so flexible, and third-party add-ons are not required, the software is easy to upgrade and modify. "Our main concern at Dick's Last Resort is having a simple system to administer. Microsoft Dynamics NAV is simple to support because we only have to modify and upgrade one software package," says Zirnheld. "SimCrest provides a single, competent source of accountability, and we can expect SimCrest to turn changes around in days—faster if needed."

## 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 NAV 4.0

### Partners

- SimCrest