



StarProjects



by Star | System | Solutions

THE MODERN PROJECT ENVIRONMENT

CRITICAL MASS

The performance expectations of project managers and their teams continues to rise to new heights. Internally, profit driven decisions by an organization's executives flow through the layers, ending with management at all levels having to find another new way to pry a further 5%, with no extra resources, and sometimes less. Externally, global competitiveness in the project and professional services markets, have resulted in clients demanding more value in less time, with a greater discount. We have reached critical mass.

The administrative burden in the project environment is intense. To manage the project comprehensively, it is critical that project managers be able to minimize paperwork, data-entry and manual analysis, while simultaneously maximizing the insights and controls that the project data can reveal. Striking the perfect balance between intelligent process automation and data precision is now the fundamental success variable, but it is frustratingly difficult to attain.

STRIKING THE BALANCE

StarProjects is the tool that market leading project-focused and professional services organizations count on to achieve the optimal automation/accuracy balance. Even in the most frantic reporting or invoicing periods, StarProjects can be relied on to let the project's managers and teams focus on the task at hand, and not be distracted by reviews, approvals, paperwork delays or billing errors.

As a resource planner, StarProjects' intelligent integration with applications such as Microsoft Project further automates typically repetitive allocation and planning processes. StarProjects is an incredibly powerful tool for synthesizing disparate data, and producing insightful views to the true project performance.

Resourceful project managers and teams have leveraged the benefits of StarProjects to create a distinct and tangible competitive advantage. Rival organizations that adopt labour intensive, error prone systems must either incorporate non-billable hours into their estimations, or cut margins even further.

BOEING REALTY CORPORATION LLC

Boeing Realty Corporation is responsible for all aspects of real estate strategies, worldwide for The Boeing Company. The company's current projects have a market value when fully built-out of \$1.5 billion. www.boeing.com

"StarProjects is an incredibly powerful tool that I think would be a great time saver to any company"
Kelly J. Haskell - Controller





CROSS INDUSTRY APPLICATION

The flexible design of StarProjects has facilitated its adoption by a diverse array of businesses. The solution is currently in use by private, public and government organizations operating in the Mining, Engineering, Construction, Realty, Professional Services/Consulting, Transport, R&D, Communications, IT Development and Marketing industries.

KEY FUNCTIONALITY AND FEATURES

CUSTOMISABLE PROJECT STRUCTURES

StarProjects' flexible configuration allows project accountants and financial controllers to fully specify and adapt the project hierarchy. Typically, the structure used is client/project/phase/activity/task, however the non-applicable levels can be removed or added as the organization or individual project requires. StarProjects' data structure also makes project accounting data migration risk free, as multiple levels can be added with user definable labels or codes.

AUTOMATE APPROVALS WITH TOTAL CONFIDENCE

The approval of employee timesheets and expenses is an undeniably critical aspect of the project, however for large projects this process can be incredibly time and labour intensive. StarProjects allows project managers to define approval rules that can automatically be approved or require management sign-off. The rules can be defined by a range of flexible parameters, such as client, dollar value, task type or employee.

The authorization screens are formatted in a logical spreadsheet style and can be auto-sorted by field to allow fast bulk sign-offs when appropriate.

PROFESSIONAL INVOICING

Within any project or professional services organization a smooth invoicing process is critical to its cashflow and livelihood. Invoicing using StarProjects creates noticeable timesavings for finance departments and ensures that the process is done on time and without errors.

StarProjects offers the ability to invoice in any conceivable format, which is fast becoming a fundamental capability to meet the requirements of diverse contracts or projects. The system can generate invoices based on time & materials, fixed price, progress billing, predefined schedules and/or milestones.

Similarly, the invoicing cycles will vary from contract to contract, client to client. StarProjects' invoicing cycles are totally user defined, with the detail level also optional. Cycles can be defined in

methods such as client group, client type, project stage or a combination.

The presentation of the invoices is totally professional, and can be designed and formatted as the organization's requirements dictate along with company logos and other graphic elements.

UNLIMITED BUDGETS

Limitless development and revision of budgets in StarProjects is a key area particularly for project managers controlling long-term projects with a large number of phases and resources. Budget revision and review and security control is completed in a concise table format that shows clear breakdowns of variances between actual and budgeted revenues and expenses.

Budgets can be created in many ways, making their input and maintenance a quick and easy task. Use Microsoft Project, Excel, or the built in copy, repeat, and auto rate functionality to ensure budgets are always accurate and up to date.



SOLUTION FOR THE GLOBAL ENTITY

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

The success of project-oriented organisations that operate on a worldwide scale is directly linked to the solutions used to overcome geographical barriers. Organisations that can quickly deploy resources, utilise communication channels or capitalise on innovation are duly rewarded. Naturally, StarProjects embraces the borderless economy.

WEB-ENABLED

An array of features available in the StarProjects and TimeRecorder desktop applications can also be achieved via the Internet. Via a standard Internet Explorer browser, project managers can access the latest data directly from the central database server and complete routine administrative tasks such as approvals or reviews, observing the same rules and settings defined on the desktop application. The risk of data integrity issues caused by time lags is removed by the use of Active Server Pages that refresh the central database automatically in real-time.

The timesavings available to project managers with the use of TimeRecorder over the web are plentiful. Itinerant employees and project teams can submit their time and expenses directly to the central database, alleviating past issues such as punctuality and double entry from spreadsheets. Employees who spend extended periods away from the office, still have access to the full complement of analysis tools and reports available in the desktop application.

MULTI-CURRENCY

StarProjects' multi-currency capabilities are flexible and simple to administer, making it an ideal solution for organisations that operate globally. Every facet of the project accounting process can be executed in a chosen currency. Any currency can be selected for project invoicing and reporting. Multiple companies can be contained within one project ledger and each has its own home currency with consolidation across companies being available in a uniform operational currency.

The administration and management of the StarProjects exchange rates requires a minimal allocation of resources to maintain. The process can be automated to varying degrees in order to suit the needs and required accuracy levels of the organisation.

SNOWDEN GROUP

Snowden Mining Industry Consultants operate in Australia, Canada and South Africa and provide services that include geological and resource modelling, mine planning, optimisation, scoping and feasibility studies, geotechnical and rock engineering, preparation of independent expert reports, valuations, due diligence reviews, training, and technology solutions. www.snowdengroup.com

"Snowden has been able to improve debtor collection and reduce write-offs of fees by using StarProjects. The impact has been a cash benefit of at least \$500,000 per annum, 6% of turnover."
Rachel Cottier, Financial Controller, Snowden Group.

WEB ENABLED FOR MANAGERS ON THE MOVE

Offsite project managers and teams avoid putting their projects' timing or profitability at risk using StarProjects' extensive web functionality. Virtually all of the Project Management functions at hand using the desktop versions of StarProjects and TimeRecorder are accessible using a standard web browser that links directly to the StarProjects database.

UNIVERSAL SYSTEM INTEGRATION

BACKOFFICE

To maximise the impact and value that StarProjects has, a tight integration structure has been designed to allow reciprocal transaction flow from the existing financials, distribution and CRM systems. The integration architecture is created using existing fields, stored procedures and dynamic links. This design approach ensures that the neither program is ever affected by upgrades to either StarProjects or the existing financials/CRM system.

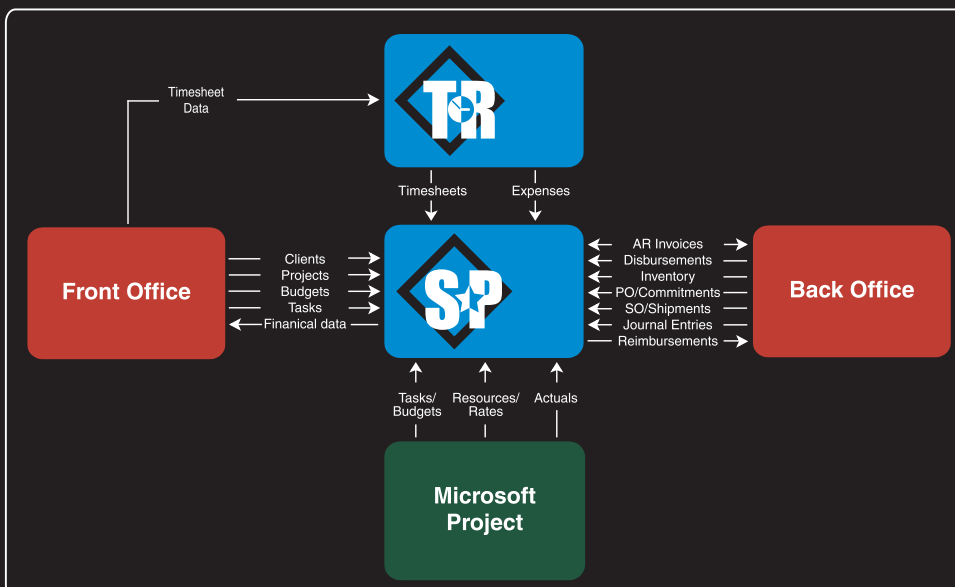
StarProjects has many time saving interactions with existing back office systems, such as:

- ◆ Recognition of invoices generated in StarProjects in Accounts receivable and generation of disbursement journal entries and reimbursement vouchers in Accounts Payable for approved expenses
- ◆ Posting of General Ledger journal entries using either the WIP and Percentage Complete Workbench or Timesheet Posting Routines and can also be coded to a Project
- ◆ Detailed reporting includes commitments and purchase orders.

FRONT OFFICE/CRM

The dynamic integration architecture of StarProjects also allows for full integration to a Front Office or CRM system. The value of this integration is first noticeable at installation as StarProjects automatically creates Client records based on the existing organisations in the incumbent CRM. Over time, the Front Office integration streamlines CRM activities by:

- ◆ Converting calls taken by Help Desk or Sales teams into tasks in StarProjects which can then be allocated to project teams or individuals
- ◆ Converting leads/opportunities entered in CRM to projects in StarProjects to track the sales process cost. Alternatively, projects can be created when the lead/opportunity is converted to a sale
- ◆ User-definable creation of projects to reflect new service agreements or quotes
- ◆ Automatically updating initial and revised budgets to reflect entry of quotes in CRM
- ◆ Creating timesheet lines upon the occurrence of events logged against a call.
- ◆ Applicable transactions generated in StarProjects are recorded against CRM client or prospect records.



TIME AND EXPENSE RECORDING

TIMESHEETS: A CONSTANT SOURCE OF FRUSTRATION

Like any data analysis tool, the value of StarProjects to the organisation is directly correlated to the quality of the raw data that is collected. Historically, keeping an accurate log of time spent on projects has been the bane of both project manager and the project team. Employees caught up in the frantic pace of tasks and activities are often left to guess at the end of the day, or worse still the end of the week, how much time and what they completed on each project. The client disputes of invoiced amounts can potentially sour relationships and cause the project to take a hit on the bottom line. Making the invoicing period an even greater nightmare for administrative staff is the predictably late submission of time sheets by the project teams, particularly when on site.

TIMEREORDER

Time and expense log management cannot be made any simpler for project teams than TimeRecorder, the standard StarProjects submission application. The system's objects and labels are fully customisable to reflect the exact project structure and terminology that is familiar to the project team. The spreadsheet interface dramatically minimises data entry with numerous timesaving shortcuts and 'smart-fills', while also displaying a summary of the key statistics for hours worked and chargeable percentage. The reporting options are numerous and can prove a very useful resource for employee reviews and KPI reporting.

Employees also use TimeRecorder to submit and manage their incurred expenses, overtime, leave entitlements and travel diaries. TimeRecorder has many built in graphical analysis tools and reports for these items that can be generated directly from the employee's desktop, creating a significant timesaving for Human Resources and Payroll departments.

SUBMIT FROM ANYWHERE

An exhausting challenge for every project manager is motivating the project team to adhere to time and expense submission deadlines. Too often, invoicing cycles are disrupted due to incomplete or missing time sheets leaving the project vulnerable to billing disputes and loss of revenue.

In almost every case, the cause of the delay is due to the employee being on client or project site, and unable to submit. This issue is resolved in TimeRecorder through the synchronisation function, which allows employees to record their time and expenses while offline and then synchronising to update both the local and server databases. The synchronisation can be done through direct connection via LAN/WAN or through an auto emailed attachment of the data file.

CIMTEK

CIMTEK offers quality testing solutions to organisations operating in abroad spectrum of industries and is a recognised world leader in automotive electronics test. CIMTEK has six offices in North America and Europe and is typically involved in approximately 100 client projects at any given time having completed over 6,500 installations to date. www.cimtek.com

"Our ability to compare budget versus actual and determine if we're making money at any given time on a project is a huge benefit for us. The accuracy and granularity of our data has improved dramatically".

Jonathan Dodworth, Business Processes and Information Technology Manager, CIMTEK. www.cimtek.com

PROVEN FUNCTIONALITY AND STABILITY

Star Projects is now in its sixth version release and has over 5000 installations to its credit. A broad reseller network has been established, with support organisations across North America, Europe, South America and the Asia Pacific region. Pre-existing integration packages are also available for many popular enterprise suites facilitating a risk averse implementation and stable on-going operation.

MICROSOFT OFFICE® INTEGRATION

ENHANCE THE VALUE OF MS PROJECT®

StarProjects and Microsoft Project® are mutually enhanced when used in conjunction, facilitating an immediately noticeable streamlining of the typical project manager's workflow. At the most basic level, data entry times are reduced by up to 50% as any project changes or transactions recorded in either application are reflected in the other.

Beyond data entry benefits, the integration allows the project manager to allocate resources to projects or tasks, without needing to return to the MS Project Plan (.mpp) file to update the second system. Similarly, when this process is executed in the .mpp file, StarProjects acknowledges the changes and updates the records accordingly.

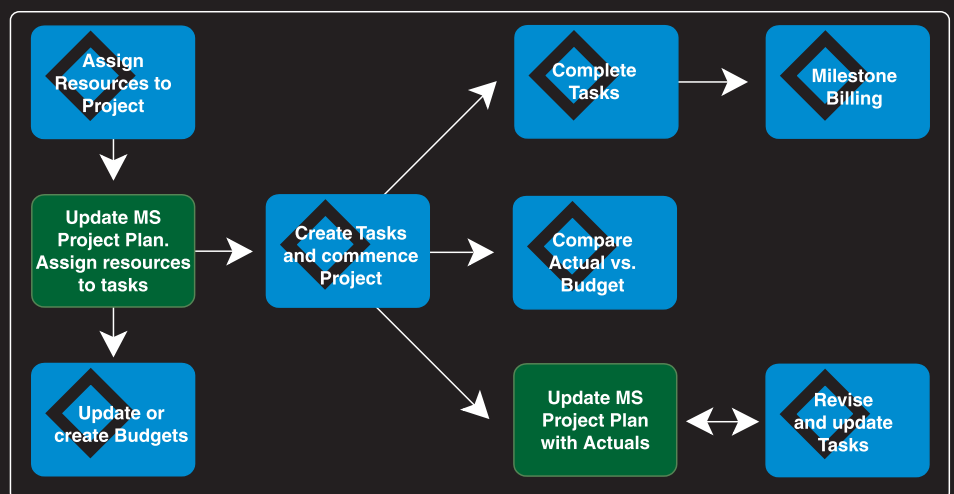
Efficiency gains are also available for the project teams, as the integration clearly shows which team/employee is responsible for each task. This eliminates the need to search for project plans, and also avoids the risk of employees working from old project plans. The project team can also manage and assess their progress on each task in relation to the project budget.

TIMESAVING FUNCTIONS FOR MS EXCEL® AND MS WORD®

As the project environment becomes more ruthless, executive management are demanding more and more management reporting to ensure the company's projects are running to plan and budget. Creating these reports can be quite time consuming, and for most project managers, any timesavings possible are a boon to their productivity. To aid in the production process, StarProjects has a copy and paste

function that transfers any tabular data from enquiry screens directly to Microsoft Word® or Excel® for professional presentation and results.

Manipulating and analysing budgets is also made easier using the same transfer function of tabular data from StarProjects to Microsoft Excel® in delimited format. Once the analysis is completed, the data can be transferred back to StarProjects, or into Word for Management Reporting.



FEATURES AND SPECIFICATIONS

GENERAL

- Hierarchical project configuration - client/project/phase/activity/task
- Hierarchical billing rates by resource, level, activity, client, project and/or phase
- Advanced user security utilising Microsoft SQL Server® technology
- Multi-currency capability in all transactions
- Timesheet, expense, journal & invoice review and approval (2 tiered)
- On screen enquiries with drilldown to original transactions

PROJECT MANAGEMENT & TRACKING

- Activity, resource or project based budgeting
- Task assignment and resource planning functionality
- Time, materials and overhead cost and revenue allocation
- Online time and expense approvals with auto-review capabilities
- Unlimited number of project budgets
- Intercompany, branch and department reporting and tracking
- Project activity drilldown and online inquiry
- Project mark-up percentages established per project/vendor/resource/expense
- Multiple companies supported in consolidated project cost ledger for ease of project tracking and comparison, allowing inter-companies to share resources and projects

INVOICING AND BILLING

- Invoicing by time & materials, fixed price, progress billing, predefined schedules and/or milestones with user defined invoice cycles
- Normal or Progress Invoices by scheduled dates, milestones or invoice cycles
- Multiple invoice formats including user defined Crystal Reports ®

WEB FUNCTIONALITY

- Web access to all StarProjects functionality including approvals, reporting and documentation
- Internet access to TimeRecorder for project team timesheet and expense submission

TIMEREORDER

- Standard timesheet and expense submission application
- Offline entry and auto synchronisation to central server capability
- Accounts Payable link creates expense reports and reimbursement vouchers for employee incurred expenses
- Employee leave accrual register, which can be interfaced to HR/Payroll

MICROSOFT OFFICE®

- Update project plans and budgets from StarProjects to Microsoft Project or the reverse
- Quick-links streamline interaction between StarProjects and Microsoft Project®, Excel® and Word®

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