Enterprise Software Certification Report

Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) for SMB

Dynacom ERP v11.3

Philippe Reney, TEC Research Analyst

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TEC Technology Evaluation Centers

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TEC Product Certification Report

Dynacom ERP v11.3 certified by
　　Philippe Reney, Research Analyst, Technology Evaluation Centers

Demonstration conducted by
　　Valéry-Emmanuel Laurent, Technical Service Agent, Dynacom

Technology Evaluation Centers (TEC) is pleased to announce that Dynacom Enterprise is now **TEC Certified** for online evaluation of enterprise resource planning (ERP) for small to medium business (SMB) solutions in the ERP Evaluation Center. The ERP Evaluation Center enables you to compare and evaluate functionality based on TEC's comprehensive model of ERP software. Data used in the Evaluation Center are obtained from the vendor's responses to TEC's request for information (RFI). Certification ensures that Dynacom has demonstrated Dynacom Enterprise's support for specific real-world business processes chosen by TEC analysts; and that TEC analysts have analytically and comparatively reviewed Dynacom Enterprise's RFI data against known benchmarks.

Benefits of Evaluating a TEC Certified Product

There are many benefits to evaluating a **TEC Certified product**. To potential clients of a software vendor, TEC certification provides the following:

- **Reassurance**: You can be assured that the data TEC provides about its certified products conform to a well-defined standard of accuracy. When a vendor's product is TEC Certified, it means that a trusted, independent third party has seen the product up close.

- **Better communication with vendors**: TEC certification helps ensure that vendors understand and respond accurately to their clients' RFIs. Certification with TEC analysts provides the opportunity to clarify any issues with the RFI criteria. This ensures that the vendor is speaking the same language as its potential clients—and gives the clients an unambiguous specification of product functionality to inform their selections.

The certification seal is a valuable indicator for organizations that rely on the integrity of TEC's research services for assistance with their software selection projects. Organizations looking for a solution can be confident that they're comparing the product on an "apples to apples" basis with other, similar products.

Background and Analyst View

Dynacom ERP is the flagship product of its namesake Dynacom. The solution was developed first and foremost as an accounting system. Over time, the company has evolved its product to be more flexible and move to integrate ERP functionality. This flexibility allows the solution to be adapted to various industries, rather than being specialized on specific verticals. And as businesses have placed requests for customization, the solution has grown in functionality.

The company was founded in 1990 by Alain Nadeau and currently operates in its head office located in Laval, Quebec, Canada. While Dynacom works with a variety of value-added resellers (VARs) of its solution, it prides itself in hosting its entire team, from management to customer support, in order to promote synergy within its functional teams. The company focuses its efforts within the province of Quebec, where it has ties to a number of professional and industrial associations, but has also been offering its solution internationally.

The solution is primarily targeted at small to medium businesses (SMBs) and is offered in three different versions, namely Lite, SMB, and ERP. The Lite edition is ultimately more reserved for personal or small business purposes and light accounting, as its name suggests. The SMB version offers more functionality and scales up to nine users. The ERP edition shows a significant leap in functionality from its SMB version, and is scalable to an unlimited number of users.

The Dynacom solutions, while available on a subscription basis, are currently available only on premise. They can be purchased and downloaded from the company's Web site, with a 1 month–free trial period to give customers some familiarity with these products. The trial is in line with the company's mission of cooperation, and is offered to customers that may have a functional fit with Dynacom's solutions. The solution supports businesses in construction, project management, professional services, and fleet management.

The offering is highly customizable. Customers have three options they can draw from for adapting the solution to their needs.
1) They can place a request with Dynacom for the needed functionality set, pay for the service, and retain the features for themselves.
2) They can engage in a shared development agreement if the functionality can be of use to other businesses, lowering the associated costs.
3) They can profit from customizing their solution by themselves through the Synergy designer, granting 2 levels of access for customization. The first level is driven by wizards, which offer a guided set of tools to add fields or new screens from the list of data fields. The more comprehensive level is meant for users with programming skills in VBScript, literally allowing them to build new logic into the solution.

The solution offers capabilities in multiple areas, which are fairly aligned with its core accounting functionalities, leaving room for additional operational functionality and future expansion. And though it has built-in automation within the accounting functionality, the remainder of functionality exhibits an appreciative degree of ease of use.

Lastly, the solution comes with a full level of support. For example, customers can benefit from remote access assistance by initiating a request from within the solution. Dynacom ERP customers have access to unlimited full phone support with call back within an hour. The solution allows for remote training conducted by a shared desktop to facilitate user interactions.

Product Highlights

Dynacom ERP is a solution truly designed for SMBs. While some workarounds may be necessary, such as in manufacturing, the solution does provide the necessary set of functionalities to support the business activities of SMBs. A particular asset to Dynacom is the set of add-ons that is available for users—80 in total, with more than 75 free of charge. While these add-ons vary in scope, they are extensions to out-of-the-box functionality that are required by one vertical or another.

Additionally, the solution allows the importing of bank conciliation files (.OFX) for further number crunching and the generation of an easy-to-work-with Excel file of the accounting structure of the company. The latter is particularly useful for accountants working on multiple businesses and requiring input from their clients on certain points.

An eye catcher is the Synergy designer, which affords a remarkable level of customization for a solution of this caliber, where most vendors only offer access to add-ons. Tech savvy businesses can leverage significant life expectancy from this tool, as a more complete set of features would be too time consuming to put together.

Based on four main principles, here are the product highlights for Dynacom ERP:

Ease of Use

- **Layout:** The solution is very similar to Microsoft Office in layout, with menus at the top, giving users a sense of familiarity. The more functional menus are spread within a column on the left, with a window that provides a more granular view of the features of a selected module. The system provides a visual layout of the processes built-in to the solution.
- **Task performance:** The solution allows for a variety of assistance by providing a multiplicity of wizards in key areas to assist users in data entry. With appropriate permissions, the solution can be personalized on the fly, allowing the creation of new reports or contextual extended screens.
- **Integration capabilities:** The solution offers a set of application program interfaces (APIs) that facilitate Web connectivity to other solutions. In fact, its design revolves around openness of the platform, with bridging capabilities. Additionally, there is ease of connectivity owing to the structured query language (SQL) platform. The solution also integrates with Microsoft Outlook for e-mail connectivity.

Workflow Design

- **Information retrieval:** The solution takes on more traditional information display schemes, mimicking those traditionally found in ERP solutions, with a multi-tab format for a given area. However, in areas where lists are displayed, it is possible to add new data columns that contain related data.
- **Alerts and notifications:** Alerts are on functionality issues as opposed to operational events. As the system is not appreciably geared toward operational considerations, most of the status information is provided by dashboards or reports that need to be drilled-down into.
- **Security:** The system offers role management along with specific action and visibility access management in the SMB and ERP versions of the solution.
- **Reporting capabilities:** The solution allows for generating a variety of canned reports with limited reporting configuration. More custom reports can be generated, by customization from the Dynacom development team or by using the more in-depth access of the Synergy designer.

Ease of Implementation

- **Server platforms:** The server platform is Microsoft Windows Server, starting from the 2000 version and up.
- **DBMS platforms:** The solution will run on Microsoft SQL Server 2000 and up.
- **Flexibility:** By leveraging the Synergy designer, businesses have a wide range of flexibility in including additional capabilities while keeping the initial cost of the solution low. A significant number of display adjustments can be made without any specific training.

Innovation

- **New features:** Though not shown during the demo, a Fixed Asset Management add-on is available for download from the vendor's Web site free of charge.
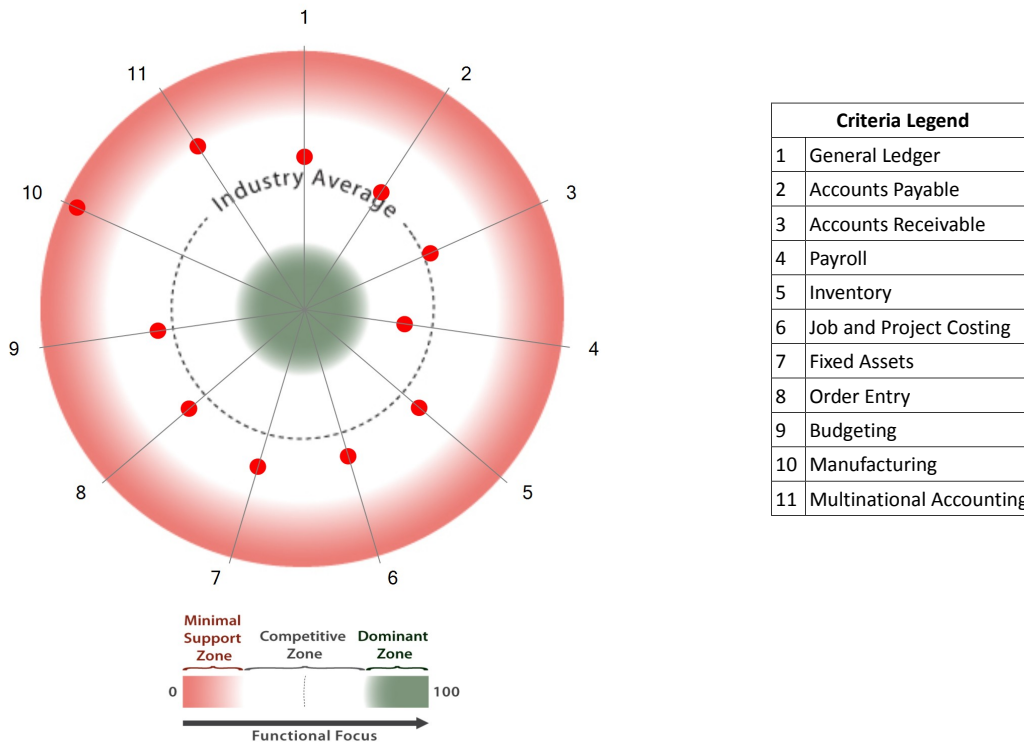
Product Analysis

The following high-level graphs identify this product's functional focus and competitive strengths. All data may be reviewed in depth, using the TEC Advisor decision support system in TEC's public Evaluation Centers.

The TEC Focus Indicator^{TM}

This **TEC Focus Indicator** shows you which types of functionality are most likely to differentiate Dynacom ERP from other products in the ERP for SMB software space. It includes three zones indicating the product's functional focus: the **Dominant Zone**, **Competitive Zone**, and **Minimal Support Zone**. TEC's model of ERP for SMB systems is designed with a comprehensive breadth; generally vendors will deliver a common base of functionality. While it's necessary to know whether a product supports a base of common functionality, it's very helpful to understand how a product really differs from the crowd.

The rankings in this Focus Indicator represent neither the quality of the product nor an absolute quantity of supported functionality. Rather, *the rankings show support relative to the quantity of functionality supported, on average, by software products in this market space.* The functional focus axes indicate the modules of a typical ERP for SMB product. Red dots that are near the center of the functional focus axes reveal where Dynacom ERP is more likely to differentiate itself through breadth of functionality. If your needs tend toward the type of functionality for which the red dots are located closer to the center of the Focus Indicator, this product will be a strong competitor for what you need.

	Criteria Legend
1	General Ledger
2	Accounts Payable
3	Accounts Receivable
4	Payroll
5	Inventory
6	Job and Project Costing
7	Fixed Assets
8	Order Entry
9	Budgeting
10	Manufacturing
11	Multinational Accounting

TEC Focus Indicator for Dynacom ERP

Competitive Zone

Dynacom ERP has all of its modules located in the **Competitive Zone** except for Manufacturing, which resides in the Minimal Support Zone. The Dynacom product is primarily an accounting software, with added functionalities for handling a variety of verticals in service-type industries.

Understanding the TEC Focus Indicator Zones

TEC defines an average solution using data about real software products available on the market. We assess the capabilities of the software and assign numeric ratings representing various levels of support in our models of enterprise software. Depending on the model, we use anywhere from a thousand to several thousand criteria to determine average scores. These models and product scores may be accessed through our publicly available Evaluation Centers.

We calculate what an average solution would look like based on the features and functions about which software vendors have provided us with recent information. We then normalize the scores of this solution as the circle labeled "**Industry Average**" bisecting the TEC Focus Indicator graph. We also define boundaries on the high and low ends of the average, which are the demarcation points for passing into Dominant or Minimal Support zones. Next, we determine the quantity of functionality supported by the product for each module in our model. We assume that all criteria are equally important. In a real-world situation, of course, you would give a greater priority to criteria that are more important for your needs. However, for the sake of the TEC Focus Indicator analysis, we want to draw conclusions about the product's focus independently of any priorities.

The Industry Average forms the benchmark from which we calculate the difference in functionality offered by the product. The difference between the product score and the Industry Average is plotted as a positive or negative distance from the Industry Average line. For example, if the product offers a greater quantity of support than average for a particular module, the red dot will be located toward the inner focus of the graph. Note that a product is not "good" or "bad" just because it has more or less functionality than other products. To understand whether it will do what you need it to do, at a price within your budget, you must evaluate the product in depth.

The Zones

The area of functional focus within the **green Dominant Zone** indicates where a product has a much greater level of support for functionality than the average solution in this market space. Dominant modules are likely to be competitive differentiators.

The area of functional focus falling within the **pale Competitive Zone** indicates where the product has a level of support for functionality that is generally on par with what you can find from other solutions on the market. The functionality provided by the vendor likely remains a core part of the product's focus. In some cases such a module may be considered a commodity within the market: many vendors offer the majority of the functionality, which makes it difficult to differentiate a product based on breadth of that functionality alone.

In other cases, a vendor may intend its product to compete on a level that satisfies most customers' requirements, with a market focus requiring that it differentiate itself through other modules or through the qualitative manner in which it provides its functionality.

The Competitive Zone is bisected by the **Industry Average circle**, which shows the quantity of functionality supported, on average, by software products in this market space.

The **red Minimal Support Zone** indicates where the product supports fewer features and functions than the average solution in the market. Modules listed in this zone are unlikely to be as important to the vendor's target clientele as the other modules. If a product has rankings in this zone, it generally offers the bare essentials and isn't focused on competing for clients that highly prioritize this functionality.

Even if a product has modules in the Minimal Support zone, it may still be entirely capable of satisfying your requirements, particularly if the average solution on the market offers more functionality than you require.

In all cases, it's likely that you will need to review the product in more depth to determine whether the functionality it provides in any zone is applicable or sufficient for your requirements.

Functionality Benchmarks

The following functionality benchmark graphs represent the quantity of support by Dynacom ERP for the functionality within each module identified in the TEC Focus Indicator, on a scale of 100 points. The closer the plotted value is to 100 (toward the outside in spider graphs; toward the top in bar charts), the more functionality Dynacom ERP supports. For the sake of comparison, you can see an average of what competitor solutions offer by referring to the dashed orange line.

Payroll

The Payroll module provides functionality for payroll processing and management. It covers submodules for employee files, human resource management, Canadian payroll processing, data input and cost distribution, payroll check writing, control reports, and financial reports.
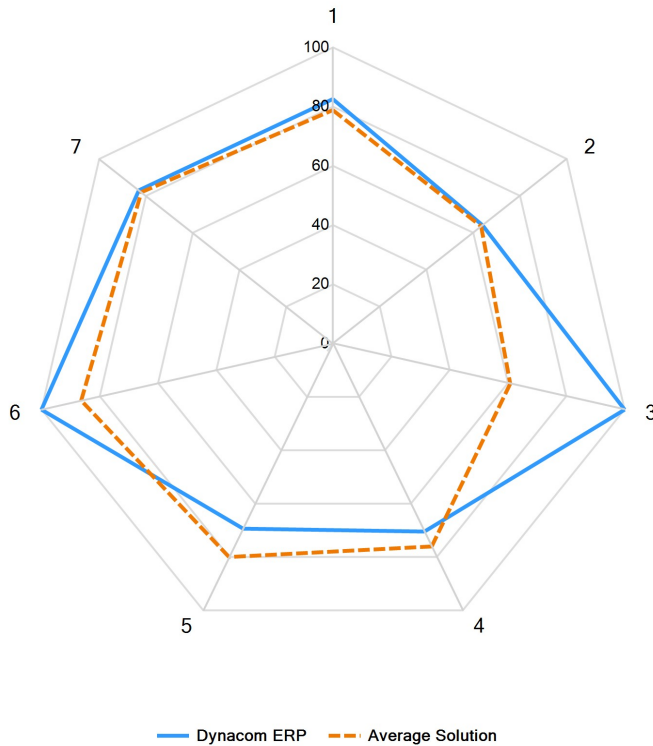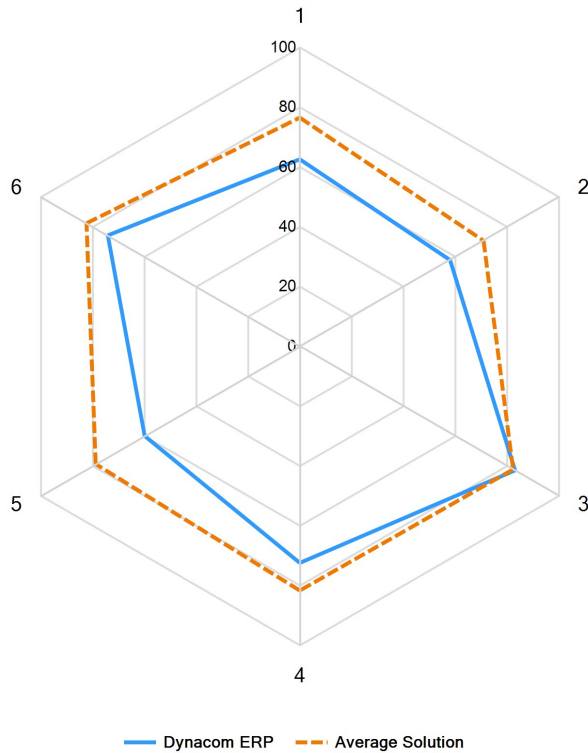

	Criteria Legend	No. of Criteria
1	Employee Files	102
2	Human Resource Management	50
3	Canadian Payroll Processing	15
4	Data Input and Cost Distribution	68
5	Payroll Check Writing	19
6	Control Reports	9
7	Financial Reports	29

Payroll is an area where the solution stands above the average ERP for SMB product in most areas except for Data Input & Cost Distribution and Payroll Check Writing, where a stronger level of customization is required, particularly for W2 and 1099. As the solution found its initial customer base in Canada, it is no surprise that it obtains top scores in Canadian Payroll Processing. The solution also rates high in the Control Reports submodule.

Inventory

The Inventory module provides functionality for managing the inventory of a company. This includes the Inventory Master File, Inventory Control/Assembly Systems, Data Input and Cost Distribution, Receiving Activities, Shipping and Withdrawal Activities, and Financial Reports submodules.
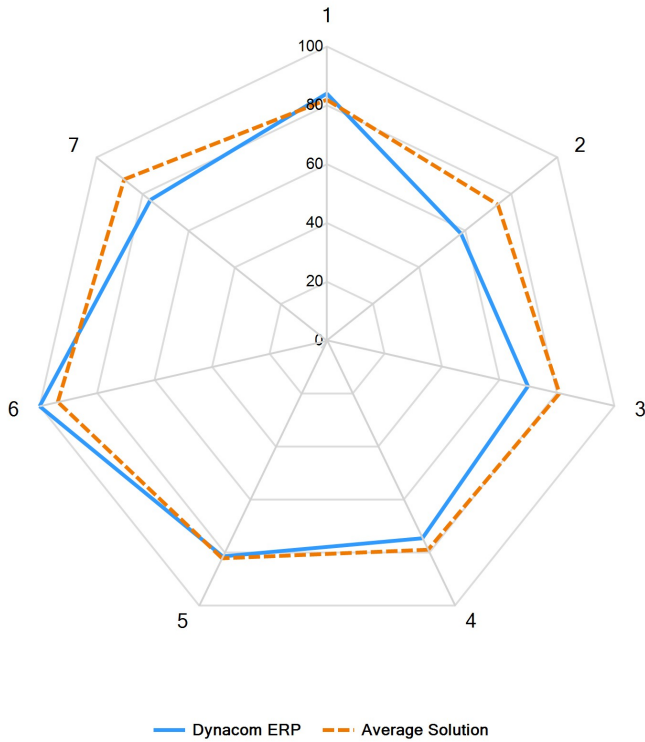

	Criteria Legend	No. of Criteria
1	Inventory Master File	138
2	Inventory Control/Assembly Systems	94
3	Data Input and Cost Distribution	39
4	Receiving Activities	77
5	Shipping and Withdrawal Activities	24
6	Financial Reports	75

While Dynacom ERP is not a solution fully designed to handle operational inventory management, it offers core support in most areas involving accounting, but lacks support in specific areas of cost management such as first-in, first-out (FIFO) and last-in, first-out (LIFO). While a significant level of customization is required for most functionalities required for inventory management, the solution can draw on the support of the configuration tool to integrate additional logic.

Accounts Payable

Accounts Payable management covers functionality including vendor master file management, purchasing controls, data input, payables analysis, check writing, and control and financial reporting.
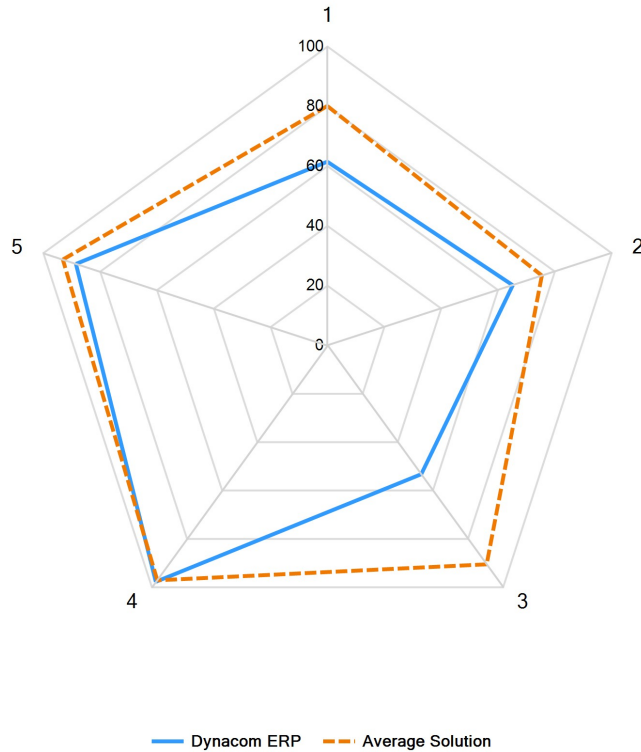

	Criteria Legend	No. of Criteria
1	Vendor Master File	96
2	Purchasing Controls	232
3	Data Input	65
4	Payables Analysis	67
5	Check Writing	25
6	Control Reports	7
7	Financial Reports	74

Dynacom ERP matches up to the average solution in rating for Vendor Master File, Check writing, and Control Reports by offering stronger out-of-the-box support, whereas the market offers more partner support. The solution again focuses more on the basic functionality for operational considerations and musters more of its core support for accounting considerations. Each area can be further enhanced by the configuration wizard.

General Ledger

The General Ledger module covers the functionality required for managing an organization's chart of accounts, transaction processing, and month- and year-end closing, as well as reports and financial statements.
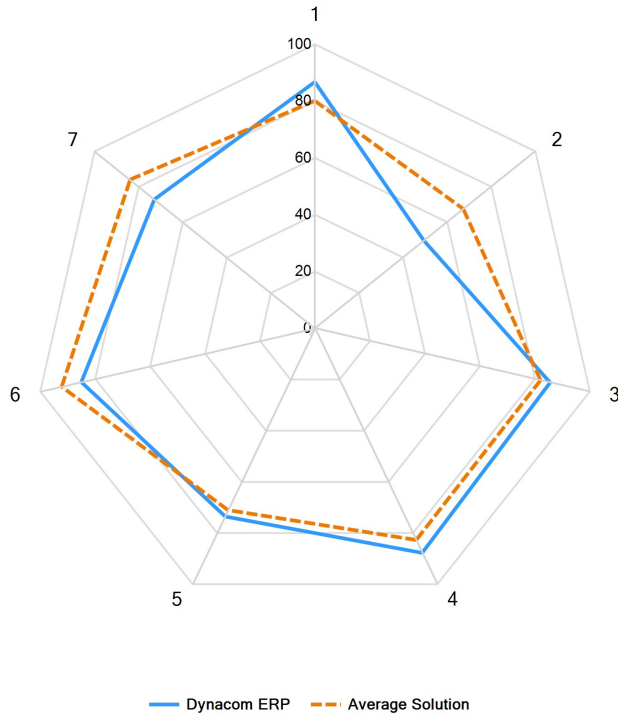

	Criteria Legend	No. of Criteria
1	Chart of Accounts	64
2	Transaction Processing	56
3	Month- and Year-end Closing	15
4	Control Reports	14
5	Financial Statements	72

General Ledger is a module that is fairly well covered by the market, and Dynacom ERP draws even in rating for Control Reports but falls slightly short in Financial Statements owing to optional capabilities for Cash Flow Analysis requiring customization. Month- and Year-end Closing is the weakest of the submodules primarily due to lack of support for more advanced features such as automatically clearing transactions or posting to general ledger from a summary view. The solution primarily focuses in core accounting functionality.

Accounts Receivable

The Accounts Receivable module addresses the processes associated with maintaining customer data (contact information, financial, etc.) and customer interactions. This includes the following submodules: Customer Master File, Customer Relationship Management, Invoicing, Cash Receipts, Debt Collection, Control Reports, and Financial Reports.
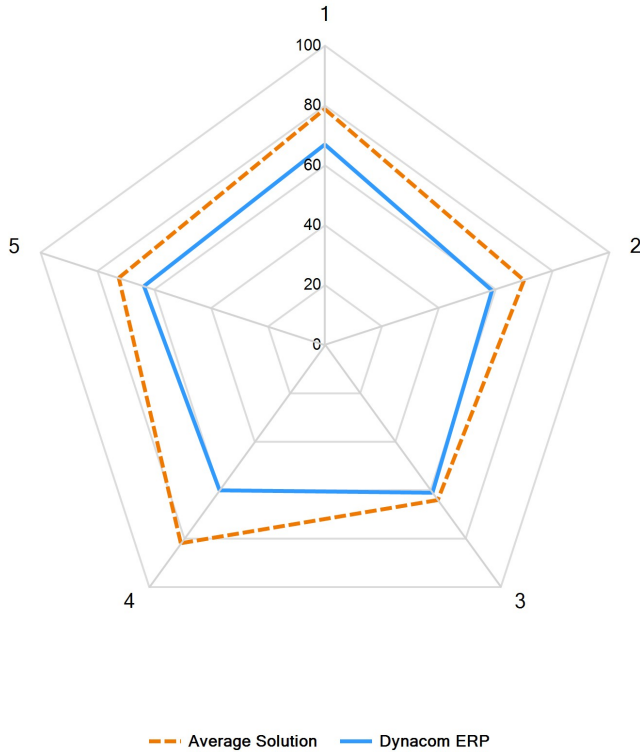

	Criteria Legend	No. of Criteria
1	Customer Master File	84
2	Customer Relationship Management	93
3	Invoicing	69
4	Cash Receipts	39
5	Debt Collection	45
6	Control Reports	8
7	Financial Reports	55

Accounts Receivable is one of the strongest modules of the solution. It scores higher than the industry average in regard to Customer Master File, Invoicing, Cash Receipts, and Debt Collection. This stems primarily from greater effort in accommodating a large number of verticals for small businesses. The solution doesn't fare as well in Customer Relation Management, where most of its functionality is supported through customization, with the core functions offered out of the box.

Job and Project Costing

The Job and Project Costing module provides functionality for job management and cost tracking for jobs. This module includes the Job Initiation, Data Input and Cost Distribution, Job Control, Cost Analysis and Reports, and Job Invoicing submodules.
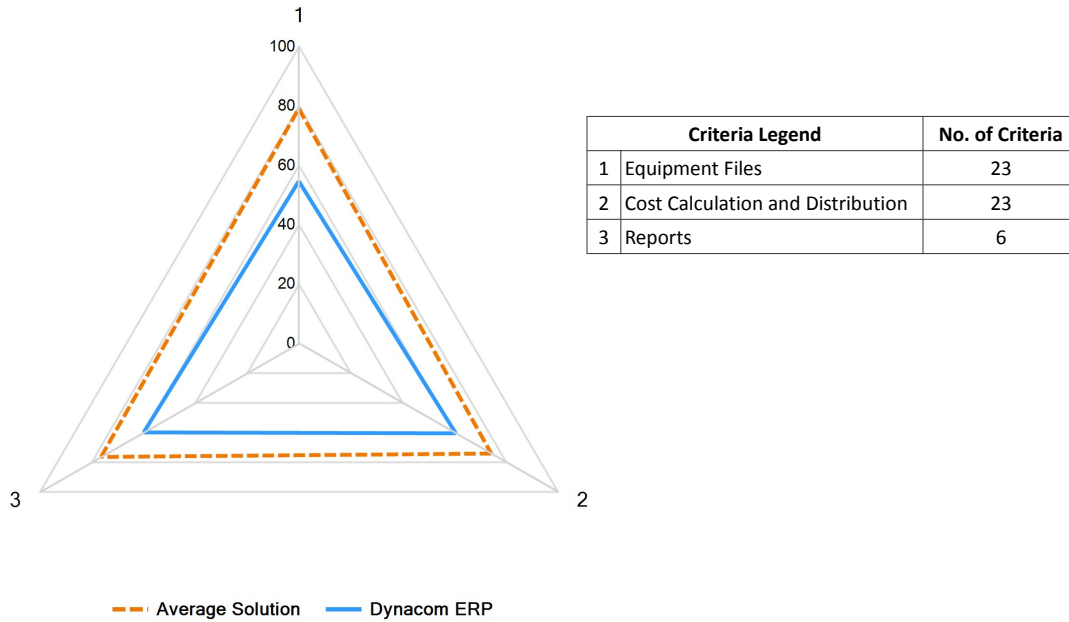

	Criteria Legend	No. of Criteria
1	Job Initiation	85
2	Data Input and Cost Distribution	66
3	Job Control	33
4	Cost Analysis and Reports	43
5	Job Invoicing	71

Legend: - - - Average Solution —— Dynacom ERP

As Dynacom ERP doesn't have a strong focus on manufacturing and aligns itself more on light assembly, it comes with limited functionality out of the box in this area, focusing more on the project costing aspects of the business. The majority of support for jobs is provided through customization.

Fixed Assets

The Fixed Assets module provides functionality for managing equipment, machinery, and other types of assets. This includes the Equipment Files, Cost Calculation and Distribution, and Reports submodules.

Criteria Legend		No. of Criteria
1	Equipment Files	23
2	Cost Calculation and Distribution	23
3	Reports	6

Average Solution —— Dynacom ERP

At the time of the certification demo, Fixed Assets was supported only through customization. However, shortly thereafter an add-on was published, which we couldn't review in time, but which seemed to support basic entries, depreciation methods, and relational fields such as attaching projects.

Order Entry

The Order Entry module provides functionality for sales order management and tracking. This includes the Order Entry (Set Up), Order Receipt, Order Tracking, Shipping, Invoicing, and Reports submodules.
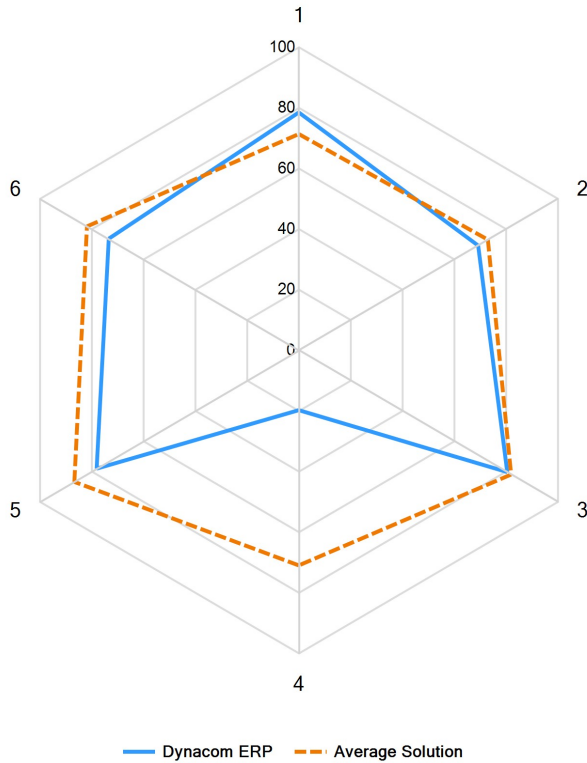

Criteria Legend		No. of Criteria
1	Order Entry (Set Up)	51
2	Order Receipt	235
3	Order Tracking	27
4	Shipping	32
5	Invoicing	11
6	Reports	59

Order Entry is a module where Dynacom ERP offers a level of support somewhat akin the market average except in Order Entry set up, where stronger out-of-the-box support is offered despite requiring customization for warranty management. The solution also achieves a significantly lower score in Shipping, where the majority of the functionality will be made available in a future release.

Budgeting

The Budgeting module provides functionality for creation, revision, and management of budgets. This includes the Budgeting (General), Review Process, and Construction of New Budget submodules.

Criteria Legend		No. of Criteria
1	Budgeting (General)	12
2	Review Process	4
3	Construction of New Budget	14

Dynacom ERP — Average Solution
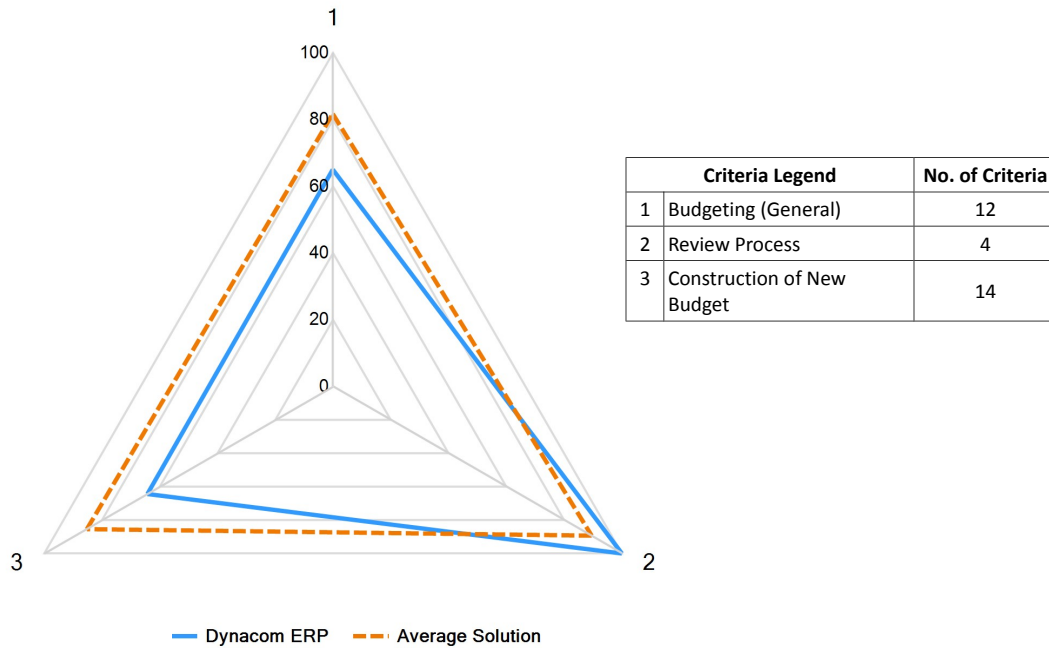
Dynacom ERP supports core aspects of budgeting, where most of the functionality is available. However, a few more advanced capabilities are not available, such as multi-year budgeting and budgeting through the Payroll module.

Manufacturing

The Manufacturing module provides functionality for product and production management. This includes the Product Costing, Master Production Scheduling (MPS), Material Requirements Planning (MRP), Capacity Requirements Planning (CRP), Shop Floor Control, and Quality Control submodules.
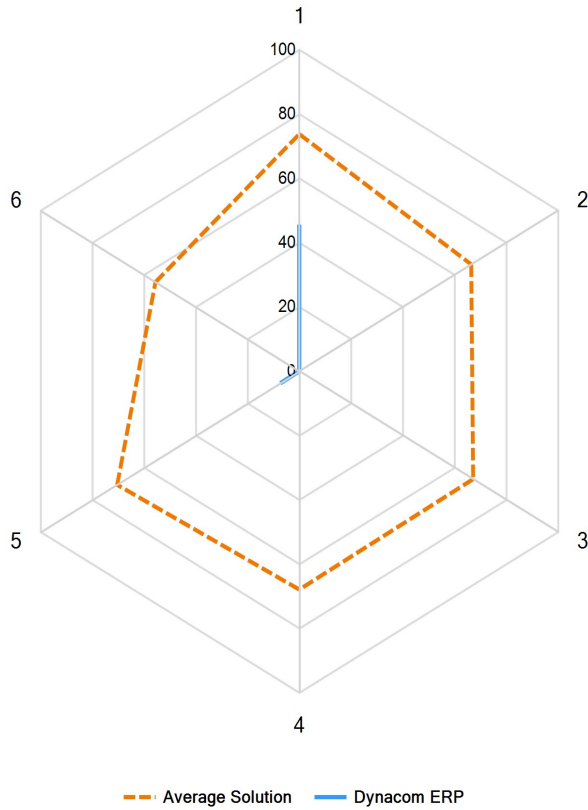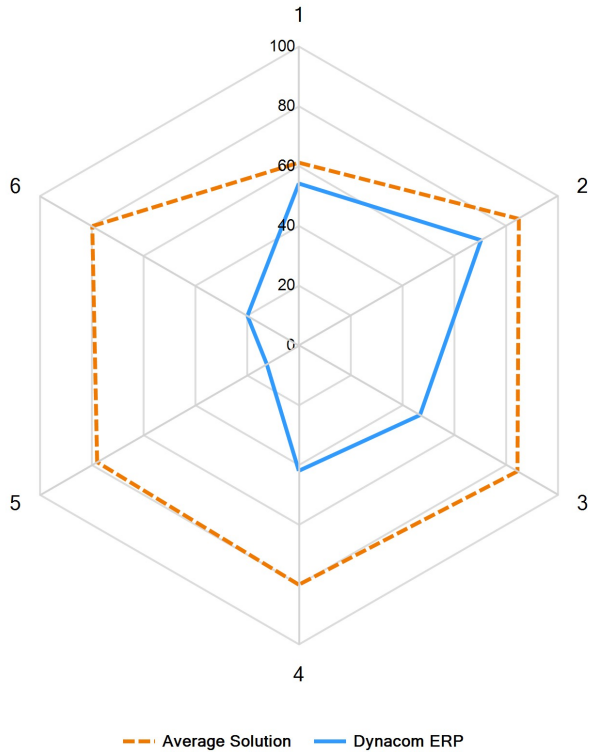

	Criteria Legend	No. of Criteria
1	Product Costing	27
2	Master Production Scheduling (MPS)	25
3	Material Requirements Planning (MRP)	54
4	Capacity Requirements Planning (CRP)	36
5	Shop Floor Control	40
6	Quality Control	10

- - - Average Solution ——— Dynacom ERP

As Dynacom ERP does not focus on manufacturing, it primarily offers basic assembly work order management with support for basic costing structure. The solution is more geared toward the service industry from an overall design perspective.

Multinational Accounting

The Multinational Accounting module provides functionality for financial management for multinational companies. This includes the Installation and Support, Basic Information, Currency Rate Tables, Transaction Entry, Gain/Loss Reporting, and Financial/Management Reporting submodules.

Criteria Legend		No. of Criteria
1	Installation and Support	45
2	Basic Information	15
3	Currency Rate Tables	8
4	Transaction Entry	10
5	Gain/Loss Reporting	9
6	Financial/Management Reporting	11

- - - Average Solution ——— Dynacom ERP

The market average offers better support on all aspects of multinational accounting than Dynacom ERP. The solution handles multiple currencies, but at a basic level, with purchase orders and sales orders capable of accommodating different currencies but having to use the same one thorough the transaction.

Analyst Summary

Dynacom ERP offers core functionality for most of its target customers—SMBs. While the solution is not a perfect fit for all verticals, organizations can gain more functionality through customization, particularly if they have the time and the resources to invest in it for their needs. The solution certainly provides a helping hand in the way it operates by means of wizards and flexible user interfaces.

The Dynacom team members that demonstrated the capabilities of the solution and conducted the briefing were knowledgeable and honest, and exhibited a high level of professionalism. Their curiosity in terms of looking to improve their offering was noteworthy, considering that the company has been in operation for 20 years.

However, I believe a stronger focus on some key verticals, such as distribution and manufacturing, could benefit the offering, adding more depth and making it conducive to greater growth. And by adding the current open platform to the mix, there would be significant potential to be gained. I look forward to further developments from Dynacom.

In the meantime, businesses can benefit from the various free add-ons to bridge some of their functionality needs.

Compare ERP for SMB Solutions Now!

Use TEC Advisor to compare Dynacom ERP with other ERP for SMB solutions, according to your organization's needs and characteristics. It's free, fast, online, and easy—and you'll see the results immediately.

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TEC's decision support system (DSS) and analyst data assist with the evaluation, comparison, and selection of enterprise solutions and services. TEC's offerings include in-depth research, detailed product information, and software selection services for any industry or company size.

Technology Evaluation Centers Inc.
740 St. Maurice, 4th Floor
Montreal, Quebec
Canada, H3C 1L5

Phone: +1 514-954-3665
Toll-free: 1-800-496-1303
Fax: +1 514-954-9739
E-mail: asktheexperts@technologyevaluation.com
Web site: www.technologyevaluation.com

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