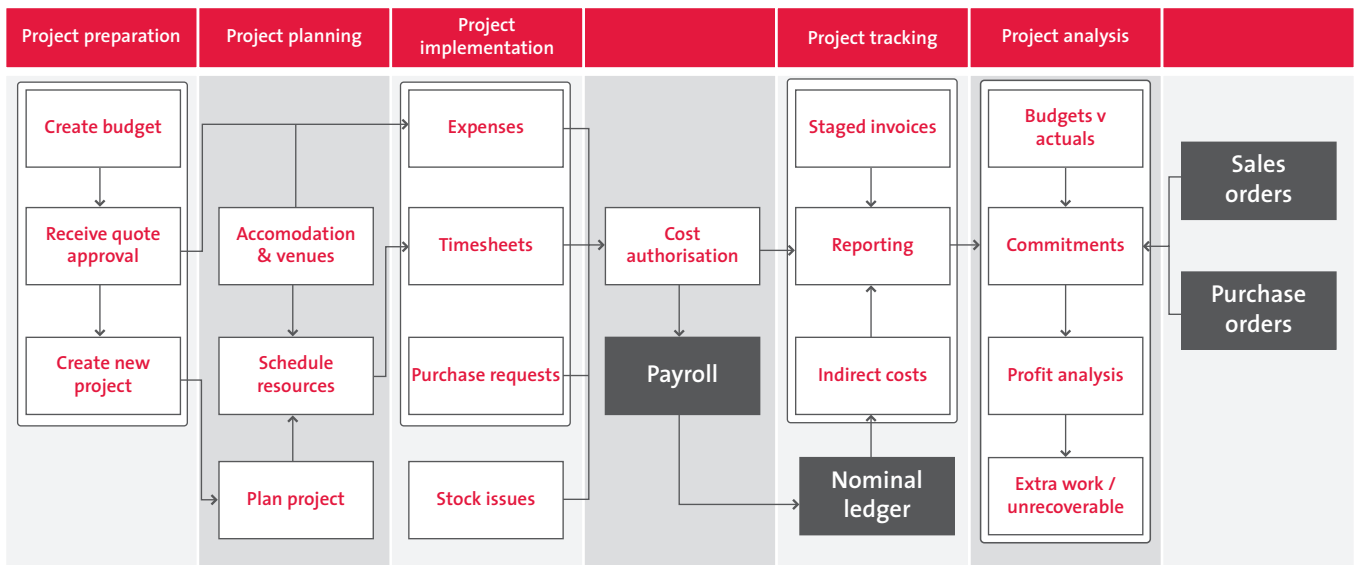


# Project management & costing

You need complete visibility of information to make professional management decisions. Dimensions' Project Costing provides everything you need from one fully integrated module. Everything from project initiation to implementation, tracking and analysis, can all be carried out from this central, easy-to-use system. Coupled with our online solution, FocalPoint, you can easily capture purchases, timesheets and expenses information for fast, accurate billing.



## Flexible project initiation

Set up as many jobs as you need from the Access Dimensions Costing module. You decide how many fields you require for storing descriptions such as names, dates, numbers and values, and which terminology you use to describe them. Flexible cost codes provide analysis and sub-analysis in as much detail as you require.

## Highly configurable

The Costing module is configurable for use by many different market sectors and industries such as consultants, engineers, publishers, architects and advertising agencies. It is particularly suitable for companies that have multiple project types to manage, where the set-up and data capture required varies on a case-by-case basis.

## Standalone or integrated

Designed as an integral component of your overall solution, the Costing module is most effective when it receives real-time updates from across your system. However, it can be operated as a standalone system, receiving updates from a very wide range of data sources such as hand-held devices or the internet.

## User-definable project status

Within Access Dimensions, projects can be allocated a status which is easily updated as the project progresses. Typical examples are 'live', 'complete' and 'closed', with interim stages such as 'suspended' and 'delayed' - but the definition, and number of statuses, are entirely up to you. Reports can draw together all of the projects designated a similar status.

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## Consolidating jobs

Multiple jobs can be consolidated and reported as part of a larger project. For example, you could report on all the projects with a specific contract number, with a common customer, or run by a specific director. Equally, you can report on an individual cost centre across multiple projects.

## Inventory lists

Using FocalPoint, you can quickly and easily list out all the stock items needed to complete the project in question. Stock items, price list entries and one-off items can all be gathered in one easy-to-use form, which can then be sent for approval and converted into one or more purchase requests if required.

## Integration with Access Document Management (ADM)

Powerful integration with our Document Management software lets you view your documents via the web. This is particularly useful for your project managers, who can view and approve project-specific information such as contracts and invoices anywhere they have an internet connection. Search tools make information quick to retrieve and any documents saved into your solution are automatically added into the document management software for others to view.

## Resource Scheduler

View your future commitments for the days, weeks and months ahead and schedule appropriate resources based on skills, experience and capabilities. The FocalPoint Resource Scheduler gives you immediate visual access to project detail and bookings while white space and unbilled hours have nowhere to hide. With total clarity of your commitments and easy-to-use booking and scheduling tools, you can plan, prepare and juggle activity smoothly and profitably.

## Skills Matrix

This tool helps assign the correct resource to a project/task, based on skills, experience and capabilities. It can also be used to schedule training courses, where the Matrix will match available and appropriate resources to run them.

## Resource availability

Resources can cover anything from deployable staff, contractors and sub-contractors to vehicles, equipment and rooms. Each resource can be shown as available or unavailable on a daily basis alongside all explanatory detail (booked out, holiday, sick etc). Multiple charge rates can be stored per resource to increase the flexibility of who does what.

## Scheduling work

Each live project shows which resources are booked to do what, by when, so you can better plan your projects and prepare for eventualities. For example, you can see work that's planned but as yet unallocated, and work planned but awaiting customer confirmation. This visibility helps you re-juggle resources at short notice, in the event of sickness, or cancelled bookings for example, so that you can still meet customer demands while maximising chargeable activity.

## Flexible views

The Resource Scheduler within FocalPoint can be configured to show different views for each area of your business. For example, project managers might want to group bookings by project and cost code. All activity can be seen in as much detail as you require, from top-level summary views by month and week right down to days, hours and even 15-minute intervals. Each activity type (e.g. absence, holiday, training) can be differentiated by colour, giving you an instant visual picture. Information about each project or resource is presented at summary level with all detail available in just a few clicks.

## Utilisation & chargeability

Multiple charge rates can be stored per resource to increase the flexibility of who does what. For each resource, time worked, charged and 'free' is clearly visible, for the week, month and year ahead. Non-chargeable time is analysed over user-definable headings such as 'training' and 'management days' as well as the usual 'sick' and 'holidays'. You set the KPIs to be achieved and the system reports performance and anomalies. If required, we can also create reports that allow you to analyse chargeable

and non-chargeable time, giving you a clear picture of profitability by cost code and total.

## Fast & easy booking

Drag and drop tools make it quick and easy to allocate resources and schedule repeat appointments. With just a few clicks, live updates are carried out across the entire system, de-skilling a potentially large drain on management resources and enabling smooth project continuation even when key people are absent.

## Timesheets

FocalPoint offers many flexible time-recording options. Data can be fed into hand-held PDAs, entered online, into a spreadsheet or any industry-specific application and transferred seamlessly into a workflow, incurring all the necessary checks and authorisations before automatically updating the Dimension's Costing module and our SelectPay solution.

## Units of time

Time can be booked in the following formats:

- Start time to finish time (calculates hours and minutes)
- Number of hours and minutes (calculates minutes if necessary)
- Number of units of time (can refer to blocks of minutes or fractions of an hour and calculate units or minutes as necessary).

## Flexible formats

We provide comprehensive timesheet functionality, but data can be brokered in from any of your existing 'clocking' applications. Timesheets can be tuned to meet the specific needs of a project or team and multiple formats can be used concurrently. Rules are easy to define and set up to streamline the data entry and data capture process or enforce the type and/or quantity of time booked. One timesheet may be specific to a project while another is specific to an individual or team of staff.

## Site Timesheets

If an individual has responsibility for time recording of multiple resources we have a specific site timesheet feature to accommodate this.

Multiple resources with associated cost and revenue rates can be pre-populated to the timesheet while retaining flexibility for anomalies. Site Timesheets are specifically designed for agencies, umbrella organisations and associated payroll services companies. This variant enables you to assign internal or external staff to specific contracts with specific pay rates, billing rates, frequencies and durations.

### **Workflow, authorisation & alerts**

We can configure authorisation procedures for timesheets and expense claims to suit your business and the various sizes of project that you manage. For example, you may decide that small projects need one level of authorisation while others need to be routed through various managers and departments.

Optional alerts sent via email or embedded within Outlook Today ensure that your staff know exactly when an authorisation is required. The alert takes you directly to the specific timesheet or expense for a quick and effective decision to be made.

### **SelectPay integration**

Timesheets can be uploaded to the payroll to calculate, or add to, staff payslip information. Any NI costs associated with timesheets can be pulled through from the payroll and fed back into the project via the Costing module. Payroll calculates PAYE deductions; prints payslips and provide a wealth of statistical information.

## **Expenses**

### **Configurable expense types**

Within FocalPoint, you can classify and control what formats of expenses are allowed by any individual, for example, VAT liability, project information, rates and quantities. Specialist expense types such as car mileage records with variable reimbursement rates can also be configured.

### **Flexible authorisation**

You can set up levels of authorisation to suit the needs of your company. For example, smaller organisations may choose to bypass this option while other businesses may demand that expenses are routed through several departments and functions.

Using the alert functionality, your approvers can be informed in real-time via email when authorisations are required. A one-button click from the email takes you straight to the specific expense voucher for a quick and effective decision to be made.

### **Real-time updates**

Ultimately, the expense information is required to reimburse the individual but also to update the financial ledgers accurately. The flexibility to define the posting rules for these transactions, by employee, department and expense type, means that every expense incurred by the business is analysed correctly and posted automatically.

### **Credit cards**

To save re-keying large volumes of expenses data, credit card statements can be imported electronically into FocalPoint and turned into a credit card voucher. This form is then allocated to the appropriate owner who simply needs to classify each entry in terms of expense type and project information if applicable. Expenses and credit card forms can be entered in either home or foreign currency values with associated exchange rates to cover international use.

### **Access Mobile**

With our mobile platform, staff all around your business can capture expenses information on the move. Simply enter your claim into the simple user interface, attach a picture of the receipt and submit. All the relevant information is then seamlessly transferred into an approval workflow for fast, accurate reimbursement by your finance team.

Integration with Accounting for Carbon Emissions (ACE) extends the functionality already built into the nominal ledger by automatically calculating the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions associated with your travel expenses.

## **Budgetary controls & milestones**

Budgets can be set for costs and revenues at cost code and project level for flexibility and passed through stakeholder signoff prior to going live.

To facilitate logical planning and control, milestones can be set at any stage while weekly and monthly budgetary analysis enables you to take early remedial action on over-spending and under-billing.

### **Setting budgets**

Cost budgets can be entered as a series of transactions or as round sum values at cost centre level. They can be revised and amended (up or down) at any time. The system keeps track of the original budget, all revisions and the current latest version. Sales budgets are entered in the same manner as transactions - by round sum amounts or by detail - which enables you to keep track and account for under-billing.

### **Weekly & monthly profiling**

Both sales and purchase budgets can be profiled weekly and monthly, making it easier to monitor and compare project to date numbers. Projects can span financial years and follow a budget cycle that is specific to the project rather than fiscal or calendar years.

### **Allocating milestones**

This facility facilitates logical project planning and enables your project managers to keep on top of deliverables. You can create unlimited milestones and statuses within the system for total flexibility and allocate target dates or values at both cost centre and project level. Milestones can be allocated to individual staff with automatic alerts to ensure people know when and what action is required.

### **Project reporting**

A complete range of flexible reports, drill down and alerts warn when any budget at any level is likely to be breached and provide full comparisons of actual and committed sales and purchase transactions to whichever budget (original or current) you wish to examine.

### **Flexible sign-off**

You can set your own rules for authorisation and sign off for budgets and transactions posted against budgets. Further rules can dictate the circumstances under which alerts are raised for under or over performance.

Flexible workflow tools enable you to fit an approval process to your exact needs. For example, you could specify responsibilities for origination, endorsement, editing and final sign-off.

## Simple cost & WIP analysis

All standard methods for WIP calculation are catered for. In-built workflow ensures that every transaction, from purchase orders, invoices and journals to online timesheets and credit card expenses, is reflected in the most complete and recent view of your actual and committed costs.

## Compulsory Costing

Tighten your grip on projects and budgets even further. The Compulsory Costing feature allows you to apply costing controls across the entire system, in which case every selected transaction type (including sales and purchase orders, stock movements and VAT journals) must be updated to a specific project or projects. Alternatively, you can limit this feature to specific analysis codes. In either case, allocation is carried out on a line-by-line basis.

## Actual & committed costs

Purchase orders, if allocated to projects as they are entered, will immediately update the relevant project with a committed cost. The value of the order is included in the comparison to budget. As purchase invoices are matched to the order committed, values are reduced and the corresponding actual values are increased.

## Stock/project allocation

Stock can be allocated to individual projects. These bookings reduce the free stock available elsewhere in the system and can be included on sales invoices to the customer.

## Authorisation workflow

Set up as many levels of authorisation necessary to suit the needs of your company. Smaller organisations may choose to bypass this option while others may need approvals to be routed through several departments and functions. Alerts delivered via email advise your approvers when authorisations are required and guide them through the approval process.

## WIP & update to Nominal Ledger

Work in Progress values are continuously re-calculated within each project and the Nominal Ledger. Every cost and income transaction updates the entire system as it is posted. Cost transactions that cannot be invoiced are removed from work in progress, to be analysed as extra or unrecoverable costs.

## Sales & Billing

Highly flexible billing means you're always in tune with the needs of your customer and the needs of your business. Invoices can be raised online, based on cost plus and contract price, with costs shown as line detail or a schedule based on the estimate or a round sum amount.

Uplifts can be applied on a fixed or variable percentage with phased or staged invoicing enabling applications for payment and retentions to be handled with ease. In every case, reports and alerts advise when billing is due or overdue so you're always in control.

## Reminders to invoice

Invoices can be generated for any reason you stipulate, from specific dates and completion of stages to receipt of timesheets and accumulated costs vs. budget comparisons. In any event, you set the rules to trigger an alert and who it goes to. This workflow can be extended to include multi-departmental or managerial authorisation on invoices raised and their subsequent approval before going out. Credit notes are requested, created and approved in the same way.

## Flexible invoicing rules & retentions

You have complete control over the final invoiced value and the amount of information displayed.

Time and material projects are billed as an amalgamation of costs incurred on the project with or without a fixed or variable uplift. Fixed price and staged payment billing is supported with date-based triggers that prompt the raising of invoices. On submission of applications for payment, the system will automatically create invoices populated with these accepted values.

In each case, you have the opportunity to flag which cost transactions are relevant to the sales invoices raised and if necessary, write off costs that cannot be recovered through invoicing. With the flags on, values are shifted from WIP and automatically update the total value of costs that have been billed.

The customer invoice can display or hide the transactions being charged, as preferred. Displayed cost transactions can be sorted (and subtotaled) for example, by date, type and cost centre. Invoices can include multiple projects for the same customer if required.

## Revenue recognition

The entire income recognition cycle is automated, based on the rules that you apply. The software caters for the following methods: percentage complete, cost to complete, hours to complete & specific values, enabling your project managers to supply the inputs needed to accurately represent your financial position. Nothing slows down your ability to invoice and collect cash but you only take recognition of the revenue when it is correct to do so.

## Configurable formats

Invoice and credit note layouts can follow any number of pre-configured templates or be designed to meet the needs of groups and individual customers if required.

The format you choose can include full transaction detail of costs being re-charged, a series of sub-headings for different elements of the project or a round sum amount to match an agreed total. Centralised and distributed invoicing functions are both catered for.

## Further information

For further information on the Access software portfolio, please telephone us on **01206 322575**, email **info@theaccessgroup.com** or, alternatively, visit our website at **www.theaccessgroup.com**