ERP NEWS
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ERP IS NOW SMART & DIGITAL

Epicor's Vice President, Global Product Marketing, Manufacturing

TERRI HISKEY

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Today's technology affects not only our daily lives, but every aspect of life. Technological developments that rewrite the rules of the business world make competition impossible if not used correctly. Today, we live in a world where digital transformation is critical not only for large businesses but also for SMEs. ERP, which is the first and most important step of digital transformation, plays a major role in the present and future of companies.

The challenging conditions of today's competitive environment are like a mountain that cannot reach the summit without the right ERP software. As ERP News, we continue to explain this fact, which we have been aware of for more than 10 years, to our esteemed readers with the latest news, articles and interviews. With the rapidly changing technological trends, the potential of ERP software continues to increase. While conveying these trends to you as accurately as possible, we are pleased to present you the first issue of ERP News which we prepared to inform you about changes in the ERP market.

We would like to thank everyone who contributed to our first issue where we focused on today's trends about digital transformation. In the first issue of ERP News Magazine, you will find exclusive articles, news, success stories and interviews about Cloud ERP, Blockchain and Industry Based ERP. We hope you enjoy our first issue as much as we do!

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LC WAIKIKI LEADS THE FASHION PACK WITH INFOR

Infor, a global leader in business cloud software specialised by industry, today announced that global fashion retailer LC Waikiki has selected Infor CloudSuite PLM for Fashion, built on Infor OS and deployed via software-as-a-service (SaaS), to help enhance visibility, boost forecasting, and support rapid growth.

LC Waikiki selected Infor due to the need for agility to react and respond to market trends more effectively. The decision was based on the application's rich user experience, its ability to scale, dedicated capabilities for private brand fashion retailers, as well as the professionalism and knowledge of the team.

Because the application is deployed via Infor's SaaS, LC Waikiki can focus on growing its business and helping users drive greater speed and business value from the solution, rather than spending time supporting and maintaining it.

"The $1.3 trillion fashion industry is enormously competitive and going through significant change. To support growth and efficiency, it is crucial for fashion brands to have systems that enable them to react to the latest catwalk trends and quickly translate them into new collections and styles and to online clicks and store sales," comments Jason Berry, VP Retail & Fashion, EMEA, Infor. "LC Waikiki is capitalising on Infor's CloudSuite PLM for Fashion capabilities to enhance visibility, collaboration and drive rapid growth — to steal a march on its competitors."

"Having a dedicated end-to-end platform designed to support the specific dynamics of fashion product lifecycle management is crucial to win market share in a highly competitive industry," comments Serafettin Ozer, chief digital officer, LC Waikiki. "LC Waikiki is the market leader in 15 of the 46 countries where it operates.

The extensive capabilities and intuitive interface of Infor CloudSuite PLM for Fashion mean that we can continue our growth journey with the very best tools and absolute confidence in our performance. Product lifecycle management is a critical process for our business, and therefore our project with Infor is highly strategic."

About LC Waikiki

LC Waikiki's journey started in France in 1988, continuing after 1997 as a Turkish brand under the umbrella of LC Waikiki Mağazacılık Hizmetleri Ticaret A.S.

As being one of the leading brands of the ready-to-wear industry, LC Waikiki operates with more than 958 stores located in 46 countries, including Turkey and 43,200 employees. The company's philosophy is "Everyone deserves to dress well" enabling people to enjoy accessible fashion through quality products at affordable prices.
LC Waikiki, with its overseas investments that started in Romania in 2009, aims to be "one of Europe's three most successful apparel retailers by 2023".

About infor

Infor is a global leader in business cloud software specialized by industry. With 17,300 employees and over 68,000 customers in more than 170 countries, Infor software is designed for progress. To learn more, please visit www.infor.com

LUMENIA CONSULTING HOSTS THE THIRTEENTH SUCCESSFUL ERP HEADTOHEAD™ EVENT, THE SECOND IN THE NETHERLANDS

The 13th ERP HEADtoHEAD™ event was held on the 18/19 June at the Van der Valk Hotel in Utrecht, Netherlands. It was Lumenia's second event in the Netherlands, who now run three events annually in three different countries.
The event took place over two days and was facilitated by leading independent ERP consultants, Lumenia Consulting. It kicked off with an exciting head to head battle when eight vendors had five minutes each to introduce themselves and convince attendees as to why they should attend their ERP product demonstrations. There were some great presentations and the delegates then chose the demo sessions that they wanted to attend, which were divided into Supply Chain, Finance, Production, Procurement, Sales and Projects.

Attendees also had the chance to listen to two engaging vendor-independent presentations from Lumenia Consulting: 'Are you ERP Ready?' and 'Characteristics of Successful ERP Projects', as well as listen to a panel discussion of experts sharing their experiences of implementing ERP and avoiding ERP implementation mistakes. The ERP vendors were also available in the exhibition room to discuss their solutions in more depth and answer questions.

The event closed with the announcement of the winner of the "ERP HEADtoHEAD™ Best Vendor Demonstration – The Netherlands 2019". NetSuite OneWorld demonstrated by Fast Four was the 2019 winner with an overall delegate satisfaction rating of 87%. Aspera Solutions and IFS were respectively second and third.

Sean Jackson, Managing Director, Lumenia commented, "We have received very positive feedback both from vendors and attendees on the ERP HEADtoHEAD™ events. All the event delegates are in the market for an ERP solution which encourages great interaction and discussion at the event and we are currently planning the next series of events."

The fourteenth ERP HEADtoHEAD™ event will take place in Dublin on 9th/10th October 2019, followed by the UK event in March 2020 and a return to the Netherlands in June 2020.

For further information and to pre-register check out the event website www.erpheadtohead.com

lumenia

ANTICIMEX POWERS IoT WITH IFS APPLICATIONS™

Anticimex is a leading specialist in preventive pest control and related services, with operations in 17 countries and around 5,500 employees. It has shown growth every year since its inception in 1934 as a Swedish bed bug control company. Driven by strong organic growth and over 80 acquisitions, it has increased its revenue by more than 60 percent over the past three years.

The market for pest control is growing fast. Trends such as increased travel, urbanization and increased waste production are driving this growth. However, the service industry today faces strict regulatory controls over the types of chemicals it can use. These developments provide opportunities for those pest control companies that have the capacity and scale required to develop and offer digital and scalable preventive systems.

The Groving Pains of Pest Control

Anticimex has a varied offering for home owners and businesses. It carries out pest control covering a broad range of creatures—mostly rodents and insects, though in the far east the firm regularly deals with exotic dangerous animals such as cobras. It carries out housing inspections when people buy or sell property which includes fire prevention, dehumidification, energy inspections, title transfer and insurance against latent defects. It also offers hygiene and washroom services; however, these are run separately from the pest control business using different vehicles and technicians, and not necessarily delivered at the same sites.

Out of 5,500 employees, 3,000-3,500 are technicians working in the field at customer sites. Anticimex technicians use handheld mobile solutions enabling them to stay out in the field rather than having to go back to the office to file reports. With such a broad reaching offering and a highly-distributed network of technicians and customers, Anticimex needs a highly robust and scalable ERP solution.

In Sweden, which represents Anticimex's most sophisticated business operation, IFS has delivered a fully integrated ERP solution for more than 10 years with Anticimex taking advantage of the full scope of services and modules on offer. The firm's Finnish operation uses

IFS Field Service Management™ and IFS Financials™. A large challenge for Anticimex, says Group COO Ebba Bonde, has resulted from the company's relatively recent rapid expansion and its fragmented IT landscape. "We've expanded extensively over the last five years and we haven't slowed down," says Bonde. "to support our rapid expansion we have chosen IFS Applications as one of our preferred solutions."

While Anticimex faces universal challenges associated with ensuring excellence in customer service across a rapidly growing business, it is also faces challenges unique to the pest control industry. First, a rising need to be more environmentally sensitive in terms of the pesticides it uses—this is both a regulatory and customer demand. Second, pests over time are becoming a lot more resilient to traditional pesticides.

IoT And IFS Deliver Smarter Services

To address the challenges posed by pesticides and help control rodent activity, Anticimex has developed and manufactures Anticimex SMART high-tech digital traps, sensors and cameras. The traps are humane, environmentally friendly, and effective. In addition to this, they are also fully connected. This means that technicians are no longer required to visit traps in the field to check whether they have been triggered. The data is fully integrated into IFS Applications across Finland, letting technicians know which traps to visit in addition to providing the optimal route. Cutting out unnecessary travel has also helped reduce Anticimex's environmental footprint.

Not only has the Anticimex SMART IFS Applications-enabled Internet of Things (IoT) solution, the IFS IoT Business Connector, created a tremendous amount of efficiency for the business, it has also enabled Anticimex to analyze data in a completely new way. Supplying power to IoT devices, particularly in remote locations, is a common challenge. Connectivity between devices enables them to automatically let technicians know when power is running low and when batteries need to be recharged. By analyzing the patterns of when and how often certain traps run out of power, Anticimex is able to discern which batteries should be taken out of commission altogether rather than recharged. This saves Anticimex money and helps improve customer service since traps last longer between charges. "Rather than technicians scrambling around trying to figure out which trap they need to address, they now know exactly which trap to address and when they need to go out to which customer," says Jussi Ylinen, CEO, Anticimex Finland. "All this makes the technicians agile, but also us as a company and we can address our customers' issues a lot quicker. Working with IFS in the IoT project they were responsive, they were very cognizant of what we wanted and they listened to us a lot so they could adapt quickly to our needs."

What's Next?

In addition to moving its systems into the cloud over the coming years, Anticimex is currently upgrading IFS Applications in Sweden. "We did a scan of the whole marketplace and couldn't find another solution that would provide us with routebased services that fit as well as IFS Applications. We are aiming to carry out a lot of automated routing, which includes workforce scheduling. IFS provides a very robust solution with IFS Planning & Scheduling Optimization™," says Bonde.

JUSSI YLINEN

"By integrating IFS Applications with our IoT platform we can analyze our data, integrate the data into our ecosystem and visualize what we're doing with that data by combining it with other sources. We have a completely different dialog with our customers, we can analyze our own field technician services and approach the marketplace in a completely different way. It's furthering our sales, it's going to improve our field efficiency and it's going to make us grow as a company."

About IFS

Founded in 1934 Anticimex started out as a bed bug control business. It soon diversified to offer a wide range of pest control. Today Anticimex operates in 17 countries around the world providing not only pest control but also food safety, building environment services, fire protection and insurance.

SAP AND KARLIE KLOSS:

PARTNERING TO MAXIMIZE THE POWER OF EXPERIENCE TO INSPIRE YOUNG WOMEN IN STEAM

SAP SE and Karlie Kloss announced a partnership to help drive meaningful experiences by encouraging and enabling more young women to pursue their passion within science, technology, engineering, arts and math (STEAM) subjects.

SAP's corporate purpose is to help the world run better and improve people's lives, which includes a strong commitment to gender equality, digital inclusion and Learning for Life initiatives. Karlie and her coding organization, Kode With Klossy, create learning experiences and opportunities for young women that increase their confidence and inspire them to pursue their passion in a technology-driven world. By joining forces, SAP and Karlie will amplify their collective impact to encourage and support more young women interested in STEAM.

"It's an honor to welcome Karlie to the SAP family as our newest brand partner," said Alicia Tillman, global chief marketing officer, SAP. "Our partnership with Karlie will help SAP continue to strengthen its commitment to building digital skills and moving women forward — two core, purpose-focused initiatives for our company. Karlie is someone who not only embodies what it means to be purpose-driven, but she's able to leverage her passion for advancing gender diversity to create once-in-a-lifetime experiences for young women, drawing them in by always staying true to her authentic self."

The partnership will shine a spotlight on the amazing work that young women who have pursued their passion within STEAM have accomplished. SAP and Karlie plan to develop content that shares inspirational stories and draws on their mutual belief that empowering young women with access to STEAM-specific education is a critical step to success. Additionally, SAP plans to host two unique Kode With Klossy minicamps to further expand the reach of the program.

"As technology continues to drive innovation and transform the way we live and work, it's critical for women to pursue opportunities in STEAM-related fields and have a voice in shaping our future," said Karlie Kloss.

"It's such an honor to partner with a company like SAP that is not only at the forefront of technology, but also shares Kode With Klossy's mission to empower women, bridge the skills gap, and create experiences and opportunities in our world's most powerful, influential industries. Through our work with SAP, we're excited to continue growing and fostering the Kode With Klossy community and supporting the next generation of women leaders and innovators."

The Power of Experience

Beyond Kode With Klossy, Karlie connects with viewers all over the world and shares her authentic experiences across fashion, STEAM, cooking, beauty and travel through content on her social channels and YouTube channel, Klossy. Karlie uses this forum to tell stories, share aspects of her life and career, create meaningful connections with her fans and inspire young women around the world to pursue their passions.

KARLIE KLOSS

"As technology continues to drive innovation and transform the way we live and work, it's critical for women to pursue opportunities in STEAM-related fields and have a voice in shaping our future."

Empowering More Young Women Through Coding

SAP encourages diversity of thought in the technology industry — a rich mix of gender perspectives helps SAP innovate and drive better experiences for all of its customers. The partnership will help the company further its commitment to diversity and inclusion, with various initiatives to help expand awareness for Kode With Klossy and its reach — inviting more girls into the program and arming them with coding skills. This relationship will complement SAP's already extensive programs supporting coding and STEAM as part of its corporate social responsibility initiatives.

About Kode With Klossy

Kode With Klossy creates learning experiences and opportunities for young women that increase their confidence and inspire them to pursue their passions in a technology driven world. Founded in 2015 by supermodel and entrepreneur Karlie Kloss, Kode With Klossy works to increase opportunities for young women in STEAM. This summer Kode With Klossy will be hosting 35 free camps for nearly 1000 young women aged 13-18 in cities across the country. During the two-week camps, scholars explore concepts in front-end and back-end software engineering and learn the fundamentals of programming languages including JavaScript, HTML,CSS and mobile app development using Swift. Kode With Klossy is also focused on developing computer science instructors by investing in programs that allow educators to take the skills learned through Kode With Klossy into their classrooms and communities. In addition, Kode With Klossy supports other mission-aligned organizations through grant programs, as well as creates inspiring tech-focused digital content for its community throughout the year. For more information, visit www.kodewithklossy.com

About SAP

As the Experience Company powered by the Intelligent Enterprise, SAP is the market leader in enterprise application software, helping companies of all sizes and in all industries run at their best: 77% of the world's transaction revenue touches an SAP system. Our machine learning, Internet of Things (IoT), and advanced analytics technologies help turn customers' businesses into intelligent enterprises. SAP helps give people and organizations deep business insight and fosters collaboration that helps them stay ahead of their competition. We simplify technology for companies so they can consume our software the way they want — without disruption. Our end-to-end suite of applications and services enables more than 437,000 business and public customers to operate profitably, adapt continuously, and make a difference. With a global network of customers, partners, employees, and thought leaders, SAP helps the world run better and improve people's lives. For more information, visit www.sap.com.

ERP IS NOW SMART & DIGITAL

EPICOR®

Two major trends that will revolutionize this century and redefine all business, economic and production models; digitalization and intelligent automation also led to an identity change in ERP systems. Today, corporate business solutions have to be smart and compatible with the digital world.

An ERP System is both the brain and the heart of the company. With the digital transformation, ERP systems have undergone a serious identity change and became the indispensable business partner in strategic management of companies, determining the vision of the future, and increasing their competitiveness and profitability. In the past, ERP was aiming to enable companies to do their job better, and today it also undertook the mission of preparing the organization better for the digitalizing world and the digitalizing customer.

Terri Hiskey, Vice President, Global Product Marketing, Manufacturing, Epicor talks about new game-changing innovative technologies, how ERP drives Digital Transformation in companies and the future of ERP.

Could you give us some information about Epicor and the global structure of the company?

Epicor promotes business growth by providing flexible, industry-specific software—designed around the precise needs of our customers—that dramatically improves performance and profitability while managing complexity.

Epicor is headquartered in Austin, Texas and we have nearly 4,000 employees in 150 countries with major development centers in India and Monterrey, Mexico. Epicor has an extensive global presence with sales offices in 30 different countries along with 12 global support centers.

Where do you see your company in global competition? What are your business strategies for 2020?

Epicor is the leader in servicing product-centric, mid-sized manufacturing companies. In fact, that is one of the areas that Gartner has published Epicor as one of the leaders in that space next to Oracle and SAP. Specific to servicing mid-sized growing manufactures, that's Epicor's sweet spot. We have customers that fall into that category based all around the world.

For our business strategies for 2020, we will continue to execute on our strategy of servicing mid-sized manufacturers. We are also starting to see more up-market opportunity, so we are starting to service those as well. We'll continue to execute on our strategy of being very focused around specific sub-industries like fabricated metals and industrial machinery, which are the manufacturing industries that are currently adopting Industry 4.0 technologies.

Epicor is going to continue to execute on a strategy that has worked for us, while starting to expand a bit more into the mid-market. We'll continue to service the same industries we've been serving but perhaps going a bit more up-market.

TERRI HISKEY
For our business strategies for 2020, we will continue to execute on our strategy of servicing mid-sized manufacturers.

TERRI HISKEY

What's unique about Epicor ERP solution is that we offer the same solution in the cloud and on-premises so if customers are not ready to move to the cloud yet, despite what industry predictors are saying, they can stay on-premises and move to the cloud at their own pace.

Epicor's solution is industry-specific in the way it is build.

Epicor is known to provide flexible, industry-specific software designed to fit the precise needs of the customers. Could you please give us some more information about the industry specific solutions that Epicor offers? How flexible can Epicor be?

Industry expertise is at our core. Our solution is centered around fit, ease and growth. Epicor's solution is industry-specific in the way it is built. Customers experience ease because of the built-in flexibility and extensibility that simplifies managing their business. Epicor grows with customers as it accelerates business growth, and it transforms customers' business with its next-generation ERP system.

A competitive advantage for Epicor is that our software is flexible and provides the solutions to best fit customers' business needs. Now our customers have embedded technologies like Epicor IoT and the opportunity to leverage artificial intelligence (AI), really giving mid-sized manufactures access to new game-changing, innovative technologies that they might not have the opportunity to have access to with other solutions.

Everybody is asking the same question nowadays: Should we move to the Cloud or Stay on Premise? What do you think?

If you look at what market experts are saying, there's a belief in the market that everyone will be on the cloud, it's just a question of how quickly organizations are going to migrate. I think the argument is that people aren't migrating to the cloud as quickly as experts thought, but there's still some validity in that it may not be in the next 5 years or 10 years, but eventually most of businesses will end up leveraging the cloud as part of their business processes.

What's unique about Epicor ERP solution is that we offer the same solution in the cloud and on-premises so if customers are not ready to move to the cloud yet, despite what industry predictors are saying, they can stay on-premises and move to the cloud at their own pace. Customers can be confident that it's not going to require an upgrade, and it's not a completely different solution. Epicor offers the same solution whether you're on cloud or on-premises. I believe that's where the market is going. If organizations have reservations about it, they can stay on-premises and still get the same functionality. When they're ready to move to the cloud, it won't be as painful with Epicor because the code lines are all the same, unlike other solutions in the market.

Epicor is seeing a lot of companies adopt a hybrid-approach where they have their core ERP system on-premises and they may add an analytics layer in the cloud or they may add for example, Epicor Commerce Connect (ECC) in the cloud. We're seeing a lot of companies moving to the cloud by keeping their core ERP on-premises while starting to attach other add-on solutions that are cloud based with a goal of moving their whole system to the cloud in a few years.

What are your predictions about the future of ERP? What will change in 5 years?

We're going to see more cloud-based technologies and simplified ERP. For example, 15-20 years ago when companies would implement ERP, they used to have to send folks to a week of training to learn about ERP. But that's not how people prefer to learn now. I think we're going to see the user experience become much more simple and easier to use with

embedded education and embedded learning workflows so that employees can get onto systems more quickly.

For instance, if you want to build a workflow, you can click a link to a one-minute video that shows you how to build a workflow, ultimately making it easier to use. We'll be able to access it from any device, anytime, anywhere. I also think we're going to start to see a move away from feature functions. Instead, we'll start to see workflows built in. If you want to quote-to-cash or procure-to-pay, you want to manage certain workflows, then vendors will have to offer pre-built applications instead of giving customers an ERP solution with these features that they have to build in themselves. This approach will be more self-service and user-friendly with pre-built templates and workflows so it's easier for people to use.

In the next five years, we're going to see a lot more cloud implementations, subscriptions, embedded technologies like AI and links to IoT so people can monitor machines. In addition, we're probably going to see augmented reality where you can visualize the shop floor through your ERP system.

How can ERP drive Digital Transformation for growing businesses?

ERP is the heart of a company; that's where all company's finances run through. Digital transformation is about doing more with less – it's about automating processes and leveraging new technologies to be able to get more efficiency out of your processes. It's about getting more from your bottom line while adding more to your top line. ERP, at its core, drives digital transformation because you want your business to grow, you want more profitability, more productivity.

ERP can drive digital transformation by linking your ERP to these new technologies that are being used for digital transformation. An example of this is an automated workflow like optical character recognition (OCR) technology. Intelligent OCR can read your emails when they're coming through to see if someone has emailed you a sales order; it will then fill out the form automatically. This will help the productivity of workers because they won't have to scan something physically or re-type something from an email into the system.

Another example involves AI. If you have something linked through IoT sensors that can sense machines aren't performing as well as they should, AI can now alert you that something is wrong while also giving you options on how to manage that issue by prompting you to schedule maintenance or asking if you'd like to turn the machine off. You're doing more with less and increasing your productivity. All this information flows in and out of your ERP system. ERP, at its core, is there to give you more visibility across your entire business around how things are functioning, what the profitability is to produce an item, how much labor it involves, what the schedule is like, etc. All those key processes run through ERP. Digital transformation is there to optimize and make those processes even better, so you can experience growth, profitability and greater efficiency.

How do you support your customers during the digital transformation process? Is there a specific strategy that you have?

Epicor has a lot of customers that hear the term digital transformation and they get stuck on their journey. Companies need to have a fundamental understanding of what it is they want to transform; they need to be specific around what is it they want to be more productive with or automate. Do they want to automate their sales order processes or automate an inventory process? It's important to identify what the processes are before you try to apply technology to fix them. Without having that upfront, you will not be successful because there are so many different areas that you can go into.

We see a lot of customers trying to 'boil the ocean' and apply this technology across many different areas, but the ones we see have the most success do it step by step, or in phases. For example, they will concentrate on automating all their invoices coming out first; then the next step is to empower their salespeople by automating the sales order process and fulfillment/inventory.

You have to approach it with a very thoughtful and focused approached in phases. It's important to celebrate the successes along the way which will help you gain momentum across the organization to help spread the word around digital transformation and make it something exciting to other employees so once you reach their department, you won't receive as much resistance because they've already seen success in other areas. That's how Epicor encourages customers when starting to adopt digital transformation. It's now affordable and accessible for mid-sized manufacturers, but we encourage them to think about their approach upfront.

How do you think IoT and Industry 4.0 impact ERP Technology?

ERP is there to manage the finances and give you visibility around where costs are being sunk into your product – from expenses tied with product design to supply chain, purchasing, and even manufacturing process costs.

Things like IoT can help you understand the machine performance better. I had a customer give me an analogy about this. He said, "you invest a lot in your employees, you give them reviews, and you set expectations for them about what you'd like them to work on and how you'd like them to perform. If you think about IoT, it does the same thing for machines."

Some of these machines are millions of dollars, and huge investments for companies. Why wouldn't you want something that monitors the performance to make sure you're getting the output you need from that machine? IoT gives you visibility into that now. You can set thresholds that indicate how much output a machine can do per day. A sensor can tell you if the machine isn't hitting that threshold anymore, which is an early warning sign that something is wrong,

use case of asset management and demonstrates why IoT is important for asset management. You can measure all sorts of different thresholds, from temperature to vibration to output.

AI is another Industry 4.0 technology that we are starting to see impact on organizations that use ERP. You can apply AI to many different areas. If it's linked up to IoT, an AI-based agent can alert you about machine performance and provide you with choices for the next best action.

You can also use AI in the sales order process. When a salesperson is inputting an order, instead of having to open a laptop to fill out a sales order form, the salesperson could speak directly to Epicor Virtual Agent (EVA) and tell her to input a specific order for a certain customer, all hands free. EVA, with AI in the background, will do workflows like check to see if the customer is on a credit hold or she can check to see if there's inventory tracked for the order that they are trying to fulfill. The use cases are incredible. The experience is like that of Amazon whereby they suggest buying something based off a previous purchase you've made. That's where AI is going for B2B environments.

How do you think Blockchain Technology will be incorporated in ERP in the near future?

The initial use cases I'm seeing for blockchain are really in the supply chain and helping manage the tracking, and the receipt of goods in and out of the suppliers throughout the supply chain. I haven't seen too many uses cases for blockchain just yet.

Epicor customers are still trying to figure out how to use that technology but the most practical use cases I've seen have involved getting goods and items through the supply chain faster by using blockchain versus having to wait for a certification or a payment of goods from one vendor to another. The paperwork required to get goods and services from one supplier to another can be accelerated with the use of blockchain.

I'm also starting to see things pop up around payments, especially for good and services that are crossing country lines and having to deal with tariffs. Blockchain can help facilitate processes that usually take a long time.

Give us 5 reasons why the decision makers should choose Epicor among all the other ERP Solutions?

- Epicor's flexible open architecture is available in the cloud or on-premises, allowing customers to move at the pace they want to move.
- Epicor is utilizing Industry 4.0 technologies, such as AI and IoT, embedded into ERP solution
- Epicor ERP is focused on solving problems specific to manufacturers.
- Epicor has loyal and passionate employees with deep expertise that are focused on making the customer experience great.
- Epicor can grow and scale as customers businesses grow.

EPICOR

About Epicor Software Corporation

Epicor Software Corporation drives business growth. We provide flexible, industry-specific software designed to fit the precise needs of our manufacturing, distribution, retail, and service industry customers. More than 45 years of experience with our customers' unique business processes and operational requirements are built into every solution-in the cloud or on premises. With this deep understanding of your industry, Epicor solutions dramatically improve performance and profitability while easing complexity so you can focus on growth. For more information, connect with Epicor or visit www.epicor.com

About Terri Hiskey

Terri Hiskey is the Vice President of Global Product Marketing, Manufacturing at Epicor. Hiskey is an accomplished marketing professional with broad experience working in companies that range from small start-ups to global public companies. She has deep experience across a variety of marketing disciplines and a range of vertical industries. Her experience includes managing applications that address Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), Supply Chain Management (SCM), Product Lifecycle Management (PLM), Product Master Data Management (MDM), Discrete and Process Manufacturing and Maintenance.

GOCARDLESS BANKS ON NETSUITE TO SUPPORT INTERNATIONAL EXPANSION

NetSuite Helps Innovative UK Fintech Company Enhance Financial Operations and Reshape Global Payments Industry

ORACLE NETSUITE

GoCardless, a global direct debit network headquartered in the UK, has selected Oracle NetSuite to support its mission to take the pain out of getting paid for businesses with recurring revenue. With NetSuite, the fintech company, which grew by 60 percent in the last year, has been able to automate financial management and help reduce the complexities of operating across multiple markets, currencies and tax laws as it rapidly expands its international operations.

Founded in 2012, GoCardless has created a global bank debit network to rival credit and debit cards, as well as a platform designed to take invoice, subscription, membership and instalment payments. As demand for its services grows, with $10 billion in transactions a year and 40,000 customers around the world, GoCardless needed a single, scalable business platform that could provide the visibility and control required to optimise its financial reporting. After a careful evaluation, GoCardless selected NetSuite to manage and automate core business processes.

About GoCardless

GoCardless is a global leader in recurring payments. GoCardless' global payments network and technology platform take the pain out of getting paid for businesses with recurring revenue. More than 40,000 businesses worldwide, from multinational corporations to SMBs, transact through GoCardless each month, and the business processes $10bn of payments each year. GoCardless now has five offices: UK, France, Australia, Germany and USA.

About Oracle NetSuite

For more than 20 years, Oracle NetSuite has helped organizations grow, scale and adapt to change. NetSuite provides a suite of cloud-based applications, which includes financials / Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), HR, professional services automation and omnichannel commerce, used by more than 18,000 customers in 203 countries and dependent territories.

About Oracle

The Oracle Cloud offers complete SaaS application suites for ERP, HCM and CX, plus best-in-class database Platform as a Service (PaaS) and Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS) from data centers throughout the Americas, Europe and Asia.

WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF ERP?

*by **Robert Sinfield**, VP, Sage Business Cloud Enterprise Management*

We are all more than familiar with the benefits that the cloud brings to our lives outside of work – we no longer have 100's of CD's filling our bookshelves, we use on demand streaming services to listen to music, which means we can be a fickle with our music tastes without worrying about where we will store all the ill thought out music choices we have made.

Same applies to banking, right? We used to have to make an appointment with the bank manager to request a loan. Now we can just log into our online banking service and apply from the comfort of our arms chair – the banks have enough intel stored on us for a decision to be made instantly, without us having to dig out payslips from 1984.

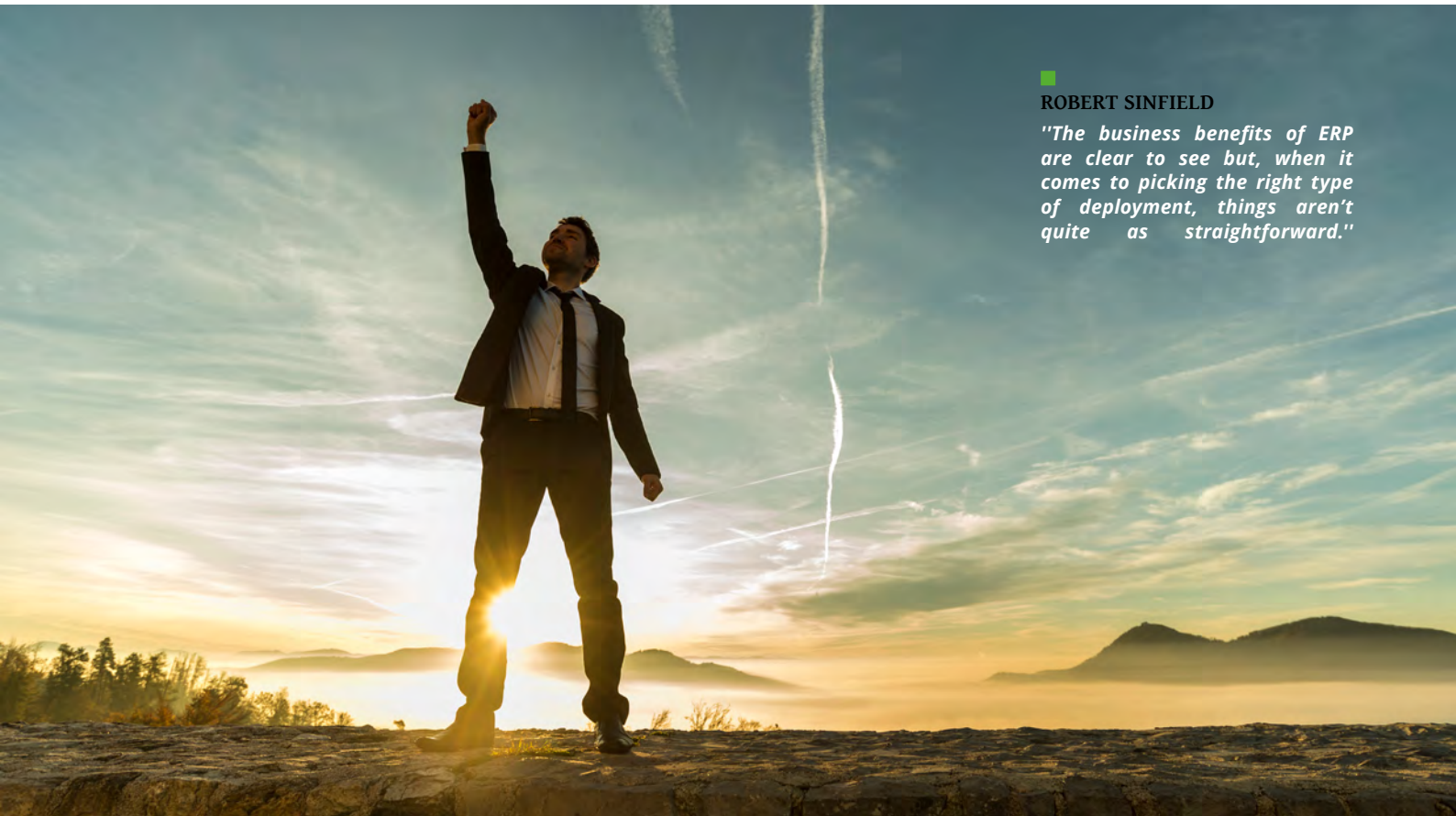
However, product-centric businesses appear slower to catch up – but as the workforce begin to demand the same technology in their work lives as they enjoy in their private lives. We are seeing the tide turn and businesses, gradually, are seeing the benefits of storing data in the cloud. These benefits can include cost savings across hardware and deployment, an upgrade free world, the availability of AI, and also the emerging idea of collective insights – where we can begin to predict customer trends using big data analysis.

As businesses have continued to become more and more software-driven, Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software has quickly emerged as one of the key pillars of any modern digital strategy.

Although it has traditionally served the manufacturing sector, its influence is now being felt much wider across the organizations. Indeed, businesses in virtually all industries are deploying ERP software to connect disparate business processes and solve a myriad of challenges. These include everything from streamlining operations to managing complex business processes and using data to augment human decision-making.

The business benefits of ERP are clear to see but, when it comes to picking the right type of deployment, things aren't quite as straightforward. From hosted and on-premise to public cloud and private cloud, there are a whole host of options for organisations to consider amidst a changing market landscape.

It's also important to remember that not all business needs are the same. Just because cloud is the right option for one business, it doesn't mean it will be for another, so understanding which deployment option best suits them is vital to ensuring a smooth implementation.



ROBERT SINFIELD

"The business benefits of ERP are clear to see but, when it comes to picking the right type of deployment, things aren't quite as straightforward."

" Keeping your head in the cloud, but your feet on the ground"

***Rob Sinfield**, VP of Sage Business Cloud Enterprise Management*

sage

Deployment dilemmas

On-premise deployments have traditionally been the norm in the ERP space. Not only do on-premise ERP provide businesses with full control and autonomy over their data, it also offers greater scope for customisations and enables in-house IT teams to respond to issues immediately. But times have changed. They are now perceived as being expensive and complex compared to cloud-based deployments, which are generally quicker, cheaper and less resource-intensive.

On-premise deployments generally require a large capital investment for the perpetual licences and the infrastructure, the cost of which will vary depending on the size of the organisation or the number of concurrent users. There are then recurring fees for support, training and updates, along with the potential need to hire additional personnel to run and manage the system.

As such, cloud deployments are coming to the fore, with a new report predicting that the cloud-based ERP market will grow from $14.7 billion in 2017 to $40.5 billion by 2025. As well as the reduced up-front costs, this shift is being driven by factors such as the high level of performance that cloud platforms offer (e.g. high availability, low latency) and the fact that the business itself isn't responsible for managing or maintaining the platform.

Public cloud environments provide businesses with the agility they need to remain competitive in today's fast-moving business landscape, while generally being cheaper than private cloud platforms and enabling businesses to capitalise on their vendor's innovation roadmap.

On the other hand, private cloud can provide an added layer of security, as an organisation's data will be completely isolated from anyone else's. They can also offer greater capacity for personalisation, as businesses have more influence over upgrades and modifications.

Finally, we have hosted deployments, which in many ways provide a middle ground between on-premise and cloud. By hosting their platform in a third-party datacentre, businesses can maintain ownership and control of the database, but still hand the responsibility of managing the hardware over to the data centre provider.

Putting specific business needs front and centre in the decision-making process is key here, a one size fits all solution simply isn't available. So, ahead of choosing the right supplier, it's imperative to put identifying the right deployment option for your business at the top of the 'to-do' list.

Meeting business needs

So, how can businesses pick the right deployment option to suit them? By focusing on a few fundamental factors. For example, one key driver is the eternal debate between CapEx and OpEx.

Generally, businesses that opt for a hosted or on-premise deployment will have a perpetual licence with a one-off cost, rather than a subscription-based licence more commonly found in cloud environments. They will also manage software updates in house, at a time that suits their operations. However, some businesses will want to take a different approach depending on where they are in their lifecycle.

For a business that is growing fast, a subscription licence in the cloud could be more appropriate because it will enable them to easily add services, scale

up their infrastructure and continually be on the latest version of the software due to automatic updates.

Choice is the operative word here. Ultimately, it's important to remember that every business is unique. Rather than simply following the crowd, businesses should take the time to work out their key requirements and choose a deployment option that will provide them with the best platform for future growth.

About Sage

Sage (FTSE: SGE) is the global market leader for technology that helps businesses of all sizes manage everything from money to people – whether they're a start-up, scale-up or enterprise. We do this through Sage Business Cloud - the one and only business management solution that customers will ever need, comprising Accounting, Financials, Sage Intacct, Enterprise Management, People & Payroll and Payments & Banking.

Our mission is to free business builders from the burden of admin, so they can spend more time doing what they love – and we do that every day for three million customers across 23 countries, through our 13000 colleagues and a network of accountants and partners. We are committed to doing business the right way, and giving back to our communities through Sage Foundation.

Robert Sinfield is a market and product strategist with a focus on identifying how, where and when to deliver intuitive, disruptive solutions that meet the ever changing technological and legislative landscape today and tomorrow. He is the Vice President of Product for Sage Business Cloud Enterprise Management. Prior to joining Sage, Robert worked for other software vendors in a variety of roles in Product Management and Product Marketing. He brings with him more than 20 years of experience in the Enterprise space and has worked in a variety of industries ranging from manufacturing to financial services implementing enterprise software solutions in more than 50 countries.

ROB SINFIELD

"For a business that is growing fast, a subscription licence in the cloud could be more appropriate because it will enable them to easily add services, scaleup their infrastructure and continually be on the latest version of the software due to automatic updates."

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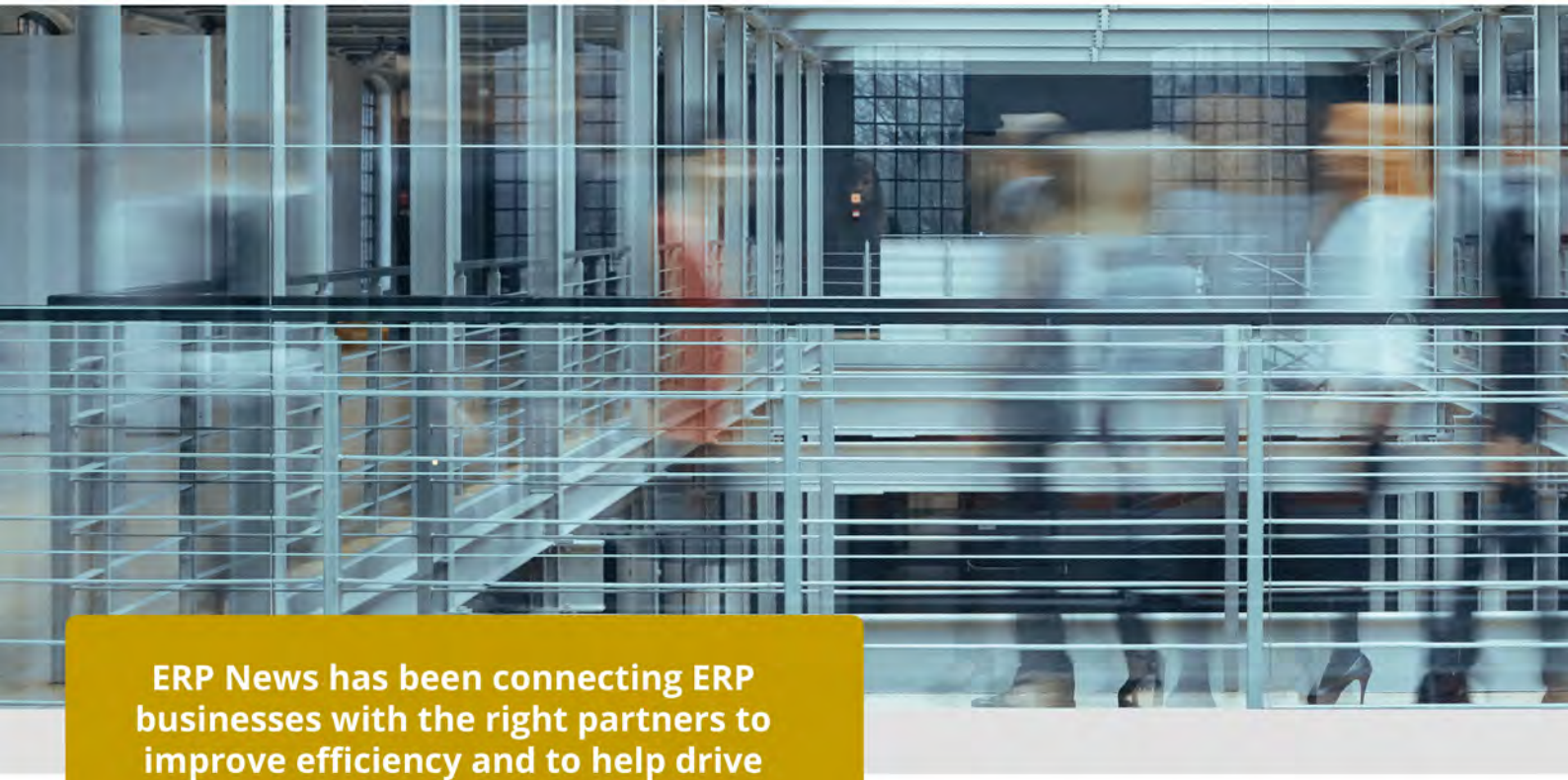

ERP News has been connecting ERP businesses with the right partners to improve efficiency and to help drive profitability for the last 10 years.

ERP News content is available to readers on desktop, tablet and mobile devices.

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Why Work With Us

Most effective media for global market

THE OPINION LEADER

We have been in the heart of the ERP industry for the last decade. Our readers trust us and prefer us to learn the latest news in an unbiased way.

DIFFERENCE

We listen to numerous success stories around the world and share them with our readers. ERP News is the correct address for all companies that wish to create their own success stories.

KNOW BEST

The team is composed of engineers, consultants and marketing professionals with a deep technical knowledge and years of experience.

ERP News is a leading global news portal that provides the latest news from all around the world about ERP software solutions serving ERP professionals and IT decision makers. ERP News is an innovative global media company whose mission is to enlighten IT decision makers about the evolving world of ERP.

BRAND ENGAGEMENT

We provide comprehensive content to respond to the ERP industry needs of our readers. This way, we connect ERP providers and customers at the right time and in the right platform.

E-TAILER MODERNIZES & THRIVES WITH HELP FROM ACUMATICA CLOUD ERP

COMPANY

Premier 1 Supplies, LLC

WASHINGTON, IOWA

Industry: Retail & E-Commerce Agriculture and Farming Supplier

OVERVIEW

"Offers an Open Platform"

ACUMATICA'S B2B SYSTEM

When credit card companies notified Premier 1 Supplies that it had to upgrade its payment software to remain compliant, CEO Ben Rothe looked extensively for a B2C ERP that could replace the family business' aging ERP system. Unable to find B2C software with every function Premier 1 needed, Rothe implemented Acumatica's B2B system, which offers an open platform allowing him to easily extract data, streamline workflows, and connect to outside applications and the company website.

SOLUTION

Solution

- Advanced Financial Management
- Order Management
- Inventory Control

Key Results

- Access to the open API framework of Acumatica
- Gained access to company data throughout the organization
- Displayed real-time customer information, increasing sales opportunities
- Cut time to receive reports by three days
- Developed B2C customizations and workflows in house, avoiding the expense of outside development & customization

BEN ROTH

"Our success is ultimately tied to Acumatica's success, and they are building a strong and healthy product, They have a vibrant customer and development community and a product that's growing, not stagnant. We can really craft Acumatica to do what we need it to do."

"I am very comfortable with the concept of having my product in the cloud, and an open API layer and the cloud's features and benefits didn't need a lot of explaining. I knew what they could do and mean for our business."

- Ben Rothe, General Manager & CEO

SITUATION

Premier 1 Supplies has been providing electric fencing and electric netting, sheep and goat supplies, clippers and shearers, ear tags, poultry products and expert advice to livestock farmers throughout the United States for more than 40 years via traditional mail order catalog and their website. Founded in 1977-- when Stan Potratz returned to Iowa and the family farm after a 10-year stretch away working in the UK as a farm manager --- upon learning that much of the equipment he had been using wasn't available in the U.S., Potratz began importing the equipment he needed for the family farm's operations.

Legacy Software not PCI Compliant

When Rothe joined the company in 2015, the 55-employee company was still using the legacy ERP which he noted as "a stuck-in-time legacy system" that wasn't being supported. Rothe began his search for a new ERP when Premier 1's payment card processor informed them they needed newer software to remain PCI compliant. The company's software was so old, "no one knew how to upgrade us," Rothe says.

"We talked to some firms that could keep the old ERP system alive but at the cost they estimated, it felt almost like starting over. We decided to look at what was out there." Frustrated with the lack of support and limited features and recognizing that some software firms weren't investing for the future, Rothe skipped legacy ERP providers. Instead, he researched cloud-based SaaS software firms, a category with which he was familiar from his background as a software developer running an e-commerce firm for two decades.

Premier 1 Team Searched for Cloud ERP

To help secure a new ERP, Rothe assembled a software evaluation team of five, carefully choosing employees from different departments. He wanted an easy-to-upgrade, modern solution from a provider poised for growth. "I wanted a company that was going to last and was growing so we wouldn't be in the same boat five to 10 years down the road."

"We hunted far and wide for B2C solutions, but only found pieces of the whole of what we needed," Rothe says. "We're a high volume B2C company and were finding that a lot of companies like us resort to heavy customization since it can prove to be difficult to find everything needed. I did feel like we were in this mid-sized wasteland where there's not a B2C ERP out there." Rothe's research led him to e-commerce players Oracle NetSuite and Acumatica, and he briefly considered a custom-made solution.

SOLUTION

Rothe chose Acumatica because "when taken as a whole, Acumatica has many functions that make B2C easier," he says. "We were closer aligned with Acumatica and felt its open APIs would allow me to make customizations myself"

Implementation: We Didn't Miss a Beat

Premier 1 worked with a past winner of Acumatica's Cloud Adoption Partner of the Year, Crestwood Associates, on the implementation. "There was a lot of trepidation by the staff when we launched," Rothe said. "Many wondered whether we were going to go through three months of hell again just to get a new solution in place. Within a few weeks of go live, there was a big sigh of relief. Roll out went very well. We didn't miss a beat; we cut over and processed just as many orders. It was a big success."

BENEFITS

Data-based Insights Improve Operations

Acumatica provided Premier 1 with data-based insights not available with the legacy ERP, dramatically improving operations. "Being able to access data and have the various departments working together in one system is a real benefit," Rothe says. "If the warehouse has low inventory for an item, it is immediately exposed to purchasing to place the order for more. We now have real-time visibility to pertinent data." Rothe has cut technology expense costs by eliminating some of the servers and technology needed on-premises. Rothe now executes sophisticated marketing efforts he could only dream of before.

Increased Functionality

Rothe and his team are no longer frustrated by on premise, limited functionality, legacy software. Acumatica's open platform has allowed Premier 1 to save money by avoiding costly customizations. Today, they can code new reports and workflows internally.

E-commerce Features Improve Customer Experience

Although historically a mail-order catalog company, 65 percent of Premier's business is now conducted via their website with sales through Amazon and other third-party marketplaces accounting for another 10 percent with the remaining order volume coming over the phone. Premier 1's IT team connected the company's website with Acumatica which allows for the connection to inventory data so if an item runs out of stock, the website is notified immediately. This improves the online shoppers experience since customers have up-to-date information to inform their purchase. The inventory website connection also saves the company the extra cost of shipping out of stock items separately, increasing order margins.

Streamlined Customer Service

Rothe and his team streamlined information and workflows in Acumatica that make the customer service team more efficient, which also impacts customer satisfaction. "We still take 30 percent of orders on the phone, and we need to interact with customers quickly," Rothe says.

Third-Party Integrations Extend Functionality

Premier 1 Supplies is working with a few of Acumatica's third-party software partners and looking at others. The company has implemented Avalara AvaTax software to collect the appropriate state tax. Rothe has plans in the works to develop a way to offer gift certificates and create a customer loyalty program. "We would like to get customers to come back and shop with us regularly."

Strong Platform for Growth

Premier 1 Supplies is now positioned for rapid growth with a modern, connected solution that allows Rothe to easily implement the B2C functionality the business requires.

5 FEATURES MILLENNIALS EXPECT FROM AN ERP SYSTEM

by **Katie Slimov**

What are the first words that come to your mind to describe the Millennial generation? Technology enthusiast? Selfish? Effective? And many more words are among the definitions of this generation. Researches emphasize that the Millennial generation is the largest generation in the workforce. If you have an organization that wants to change its old system and have plans to move to the cloud, it may be helpful to choose your ERP software by taking clues from the Millennial demographics.

The Impact of the Millennial Generation on Technology

When we talk about the Millennial generation, the first thing that comes to mind is the technology addiction. Shopping, entertainment or paying bills, communicating, getting news... In short, the expectations of this generation, which accomplishes all their daily living habits through technology, are quite different. Today, in order to meet these expectations, companies that make sales through the internet must first understand the millennial generation and their expectations correctly.For example, many businesses now adopt BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) programs and allow employees to use their personal devices for related activities.

Although the same investigations mentioned that there are vulnerabilities about BYOD such as security and overtime compensation. This program is certainly a very accurate example of Millennial expectations. Similarly, when you build your ERP strategy, if you consider the Millennium generation, your project will be more likely to be successful.

1- Cloud and Mobility Technology

Cloud solutions provide organizations with lower pre-cost, less IT support, the elimination of updates and upgrades, and overall lower cost. However, for Millennials, the biggest advantage of Cloud ERP is that it is mobile. So, regardless of location, an ERP application that they can access at any time takes priority over for Millennials.

2- User-Friendly UI

Growing with innovative technology, the Millennials generation expects an easy and intuitive interface, such as smartphone applications, video games, educational links and shopping sites. Therefore, the user interface (UI) of a Cloud ERP solution has become a very important factor. An efficient, easy-to-navigate and configurable interface is essential to ensure a positive user experience.

3- Easy learning

As personal technology has influenced the Millennial generation and Cloud ERP, it has become a necessity to move the training days to mobile. You should also pay attention to this feature in order to prevent your Millennial workforce from showing resistance during ERP implementation process.

4- Strong analytics

Millennial employees are very impatient to scan spreadsheets or reports. Instead, they want easy access to customizable control panels and reports that provide big data in real time. This feature is one of the sine qua non in your ERP, which reveals the skills of fast and accurate decision making and problem solving.

5- Instant communication

With the Millennial generation, it is possible to say that meetings and conferences that are not online are a bit old school. As the collaboration and productivity increase with the new communication models, you must ensure that the ERP application you choose meets this new model.

https://www.linkedin.com/in/katieslimov

WHY INTELLIGENT CLOUD ERP DELIVERS INCREASED VALUE?

*by **Paul Kruger** , Director of Sales and Marketing, DXC Oxygen with DXC Technology.*

Agility is the name of the game for businesses looking to respond to threats and opportunities in their markets. Intelligent cloud ERP provides the core technology that enables organizations to build the agile foundations they need to enter new markets and become disruptors in their industries.

Intelligent cloud ERP is different from legacy ERP software in its ability to embed automation into an organization's day-to-day processes. It comes equipped with technologies, such as predictive analytics, conversational user experience design and artificial intelligence, that enable it to learn, memorize and execute the task on behalf of the user — a big step forward from simply alerting the user that something must be done.

This intelligence provides the digital platform on which organizations can better leverage data for more powerful insights, integrate end-to-end processes and incorporate external sources of information into their day-to-day decision-making.

Too often organizations wait patiently for improved functionality as they miss valuable opportunities for creating business value. In an environment of relentless competition and empowered customers, time cannot be wasted.

This is about creating value for customers by adapting to their expectations quickly. With cloud technology comes new innovation at the same rate that customers' expectations are increasing. With the ability to scale processes and deliver superior user experiences, businesses can follow through on their most ambitious competitive strategies.

Intelligent cloud ERP offers exponentially faster deployment cycles. Businesses can gain the most up-to-date capabilities and applications as they are developed, rather than waiting months or years after their competitors have deployed them. Where businesses would previously have to pick and choose between technologies they could realistically access, they can now begin rolling out real use cases for:

PAUL KRUGER

This is about creating value for customers by adapting to their expectations quickly. With cloud technology comes new innovation at the same rate that customers' expectations are increasing.

- AI and machine learning
- Voice-enabled digital assistants
- In-memory analytics
- End-to-end data integration
- Real-time analysis dashboards

Software-as-a-service consumption of ERP means businesses get the regular updates they need to stay competitive. It is also the most affordable and sustainable way to access these capabilities, as it enables IT teams to focus on driving the business forward instead of wasting countless hours on software implementation.

Intelligent cloud ERP puts any business in the fast lane by being faster to:

- Deploy: Implement the new system and bring core processes on board in weeks, instead of months or years.
- Upgrade: Regular upgrades through the cloud enable faster deployment of new capabilities than on-premise solutions can offer.
- Adopt: User experience is simplified through an interface that takes lessons from leading consumer-friendly applications, as well as mobile capabilities for remote workforces.

With customized, on-premise ERP deployments, organizations commonly wait years between upgrades. Moreover, these upgrades are often held back by complex integrations with other legacy software.

Conversely, intelligent cloud ERP pushes out new capabilities multiple times a year, to enable organizations to consistently outpace the competition. In particular, AI and machine learning applications allow companies to use software that learns from business users and eventually predicts the information they require. This makes ERP a living system that business users direct to intuitively enhance every process.

https://blogs.dxc.technology/2019/05/03/why-intelligent-cloud-erp-delivers-increased-value/

DXC.technology

About DXC Technology

As the world's leading independent, end-to-end IT services company, DXC Technology (NYSE: DXC) leads digital transformations for clients by modernizing and integrating their mainstream IT, and by deploying digital solutions at scale to produce better business outcomes. The company's technology independence, global talent, and extensive partner network enable 6,000 private and public-sector clients in 70 countries to thrive on change. DXC is a recognized leader in corporate responsibility. For more information, visit dxc.technology and explore THRIVE, DXC's digital destination for changemakers and innovators.

Paul Kruger is the director of sales and marketing, DXC Oxygen with DXC Technology. He specializes in digital transformation, SAP solutions, enterprise solutions and customer experience. He has three decades of experience as a consultant, strategist and senior executive and 20 years' experience working within the SAP environment.

WE ARE ASSISTING THE COMPANIES IN DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION PROCESSES

IAS Global Quality Systems Manager Çiğdem Dönmez, who evaluates the investments and digital transformation processes of the companies in the field of information technologies, explained IAS's support and products to companies during this process. Dönmez said, "As IAS, we have been developing our caniasERP corporate resource planning software with our own software development product TROIA, our canias IQ business intelligence product in caniasERP and our database named IASDB. With our consultancy support and project management services we provide along with our products, we shape the road maps of our customers together with their IT investments and share our knowledge and experiences with them."

To what extent are companies aware of the applications they need when it comes to IT investment? How do you evaluate the tendency to invest in this topic?

Nowadays, companies are aware of the needs of Information Technologies and they know that it is inevitable to invest in this subject. We observe that the digital transformation is in corporate life with ultimate speed. As a result of the benefits and new opportunities created by the success of the digital transformation projects, companies' hesitations about IT investments are decreasing. IT investments to the right products in a correctly planned digital transformation process create tangible benefits when implemented with successful project management. Thus, the success chart of companies is rising. Companies that see the fast return on investments and gains are also motivated by new investments.

What are the priorities and preferred topics in corporate business practices? What kind of development do you expect to advance in the short and medium term?

Companies prioritize corporate business practices in the process of compliance with legal regulations. For this reason, we see that investments in e-Invoice, e-Export, e-Ledger, e-Archive, e-dispatches are given more importance. In the short term, it is difficult to integrate all these solutions and manage them effectively as they try to find a separate solution to every need. In the medium and long term, this choice is growing towards the use of integrated business intelligence products with integrated ERP software and ERP solutions, where all other requirements such as minimizing costs, increasing process efficiency and optimizing business processes can be solved in an efficient way. With this awareness and an accurate choice of ERP, companies manage all their corporate processes with an integrated solution, both optimizing them and fulfilling the requirements of legal compliance without the need for additional solutions.

In the title of corporate business practices, what kind of support do you conduct in terms of consulting, support and solution development subjects?

As IAS, we develop our caniasERP enterprise resource planning software with our own software development product TROIA, our canias IQ business intelligence product in caniasERP and our database named IASDB. Thanks to the customizable and scalable, flexible, fully integrated solutions offered by IAS, companies can manage their operational processes in the most efficient way without any platform, with a single solution. At the same time, they can find solutions to all e-Transformation requirements required by the legislation and in the future. The advanced reporting and monitoring screens in caniasERP optimize many managerial decision-making systems with a number of ready-made graphics and charts so they can easily access the reports they need. With our own intelligence and business intelligence products, we are able to perform advanced analytical monitoring, management panels and abstract and detail analysis at every level in a short time and dynamically. With our consultancy support and project management services we provide, our customers' IT investments shape the road maps together, share our knowledge and experience with them and achieve things together.

About Canias ERP

IAS is founded in Karlsruhe, Germany in 1989 by a handful of talented and dedicated people. Since the early days of IAS, the dream was to be the game-changer in the ERP industry by providing best-in-class solutions. IAS developed its own unique software development platform, TROIA in 1997 and released caniasERP 6.01 in the year 2000 as one of the first few ERP solutions available online with full functionality. TROIA, open-source and platform-independent integrated development environment, and its exceptional flexibility feature are the core strengths of caniasERP, as evidenced by various third-party studies. Over the years, the brand "caniasERP" has played an important role in helping companies gain Operational Excellence in Industries such as Automotive, Aviation & Defense, Printing, Packaging, Textile & Garment, and Machinery & Industrial Automation.

IAS, a global ERP company, catering to over 1000 companies with more than 30.000 concurrent users across diverse industries in more than 30 countries, its core competency has always been in being quality conscious and providing innovative solutions that can be delivered quickly and cost-effectively in a complex environment.

With over 250 professionals and consultants and excellence R&D centers and subsidiaries in Germany, India, Turkey, UAE, and Korea along with business partners in across the world, IAS is one of the highest-rated ERP vendors with its solution, caniasERP, available on-premise, on-the-cloud and also mobile devices. IAS, over the years, has received many prestigious awards and acknowledgments in various countries, such as ERP Excellence by GPS Germany in 2017 and Best of 2018 in ERP Solutions category by Initiative Mittelstand in Germany.

IAS is also ISO/IEC 27001 Information Security Management and as well as ISO/IEC 15504 Software Process Improvement and Capability Determination (SPICE) certified company.

IAS, today more than ever, is committed to providing superior quality on its solutions and services to leverage efficiencies in companies to reach operational excellence and expand its operations into further global markets.

ÇİĞDEM DÖNMEZ

"With our products, consultancy and project management services, we are shaping the road maps of our customers in the process of digital transformation together and we become their companions."

Çiğdem Dönmez graduated from Industrial Engineering in Gazi University in 1995. She has worked as a manager of planning, information systems projects, strategic planning and management systems in various sectors and business areas. She started to work at IAS as Technical Solutions Coordinator in 2016. Then she became responsible from installation, certifying and sustaining of the management systems in 2017. She got certified as PMP in 2018. As of 2019, she was assigned to manage Global Quality Systems. Since then, she has been working as Global Quality Systems Manager at IAS.

GROWING PAINS?

WHY A 2 -TIER SOLUTION COULD BE THE ANSWER

by **Lucy Thorpe,** *Head of Social Media & Content Creation, InCloud Solutions*

Whatever size you are, digital transformation is now widely seen as a matter of survival. A recent study by Oxford Economics suggests that a majority of companies are planning to make the technological changes necessary to remain competitive into the future. However actual progress towards comprehensive digital transformation remains slow.

Where complex companies are growing fast and acquiring new subsidiaries at pace there is even more delay as leaders try to work out how best to incorporate the smaller companies into the technology landscape.

Organisations with large embedded ERP systems assume that adding their acquisitions into their existing system is the most efficient way to maintain a cohesive network. But at In Cloud Solutions we often hear the other side of the story when subsidiaries become frustrated because they have been told they must wait in line before they can be moved onto the parent company's ERP.

Why wait?

But it doesn't have to be this way. Parent companies can opt for a system that allows them to maintain control over their subsidiaries while also giving the smaller companies freedom to be agile and responsive – the very qualities that made them so attractive in the first place. Nurturing these dynamics, while leveraging the strength of the parent company, can be a key competitive advantage for larger organizations.

To maximize this, the parent company must provide subsidiaries with the tools they need to succeed while effectively managing the subsidiaries as a cohesive network. So now you start to see why waiting for full ERP is not the only answer – a 2-Tier approach is a really good alternative.

What is the 2-Tier Approach?

To give the smaller companies the best chance of success, parent companies need to keep things simple with access to straightforward financial, governance, and compliance processes which can be replicated across the subsidiary network. These can then be made to dovetail with its own processes while maintaining a constant flow of information to, from, and among the subsidiaries. This can be done be introducing a lighter cloud based ERP to the subsidiaries, which integrates directly with the parent company's system. It can be done quickly and immediately without any need for delays.

Because IT resources may be limited it helps if the light software used to synchronize with the parent company is cost effective and simple to implement and use. At this point you will see why cloud is a no brainer as it is a much cheaper and more flexible delivery system for IT across the whole network of companies and doesn't involve hardware.

Benefits of the 2-Tier Approach

Companies wanting to leverage a 2-Tier solution can use their current robust enterprise level solution and link it to a cluster of companies on "ERP lite" simply and quickly. They can do this by turning to any number of big name providers who can nominate a solution that readily integrate with the processes and best practices of the parent company. We suggest using a combination of S/4 Hana and Business ByDesign from SAP but there are others.

of the parent company. We suggest using a combination of S/4 Hana and Business ByDesign from SAP but there are others.

As long as the solutio can do the following;

- Support cross - organizational processes to simplify and unify corporate and subsidiary operations
- Facilitate governance and streamline reporting of consolidated financial and operational results.
- Use built-in best practices to help subsidiaries manage customer relationships, human resources, projects, procurement, and their supply chains.
- Configure predefined workflows to match your unique business processes
- Work within the regulation of the countries you specify

Integrate corporate resources

Integrating corporate-approved processes with those of subsidiaries is a key benefit of the 2-Tier ERP approach. It can simplify the collection of subsidiary financial information, facilitate the sharing of corporate services to subsidiaries, and reduce duplication of data models. It can also help a parent company deliver products and services to subsidiary markets more effectively.

Future Ready

When it comes to the digital future, such solutions have the advantage of positioning everyone to take advantage of digital trends. For example, you will now have a backbone for hyper-connectivity across all companies and depending on your choice you will also likely have access to In-memory technology for real-time processing and advanced analytics. Other leading edge trends include state-of-the-art cybersecurity and cloud-based delivery for ease of use, management and support.

Add in the time saved by cutting duplication of efforts and responsibilities between subsidiaries and the parent company and you can see how a 2-Tier ERP approach can really build your competitive advantage. Why keep your subsidiaries waiting for all the advantages of an integrated ERP system? Contact your provider for a full run-down of options available or get in touch with a member of a global network like United Vars if you have several entities overseas.

LUCY THORPE

"Companies wanting to leverage a 2-Tier solution can use their current robust enterprise level solution and link it to a cluster of companies on "ERP lite" simply and quickly. "

About the research quoted;
Oxford Economics was commissioned by the SAP Center for Business Insight to conduct and analyze a survey of over 3,100 executives around the world about the opportunities and challenges facing companies as they attempt digital transformation. Fieldwork took place in 2017.

About InCloud Solutions

INCLOUD SOLUTIONS

InCloud Solutions are a SAP Platinum Partner offering ERP software solutions, training and consultancy to SMEs and SMBs all around the United Kingdom. In Cloud Solutions Ltd is a proud member of the United VARS. In Cloud Solutions are experts in the ERP solution SAP's Business ByDesign, one of the best cloud-based ERP solutions in the world. The company already has over 35 ByDesign Customers in the UK and Europe, with operations across the US, Australia, Africa, Japan and China.

Lucy Thorpe is in-house writer and content creator for cloud solutions consultancy InCloud Solutions based in Reading & London in the UK - they are members of the worldwide United Vars network of SAP consultancies who work with customers to deliver 2-Tier systems across the globe.

PROBLEM SOLVING EXCELLENCE IS CRITICAL AT GO-LIVE!

Dave Beldyk, President and Founder of DABCO Consulting LLC, a strategic partner of Competitive Capabilities International (CCi) describes what sort of changes can and should be implemented before a manufacturing ERP implementation.

What manufacturing inventory process should you implement before your ERP project?

Often when people think of inventory management, they immediately gravitate to thoughts like 'how to properly calculate safety stock levels' or 'how to improve demand forecast accuracy', and the like, but that's not actually where most should put their efforts. What is critical to ERP success, from an inventory perspective, is much more fundamental than that. It's all about ensuring that the inventory in the system – whatever it is, and how ever it came to be – is an accurate representation of the physical reality. In the manufacturing world, we have all had it drummed into our heads how important it is to have accurate inventory in an ERP system. But even if one could wave a magic wand and make the inventory perfectly accurate right before go-live – something many companies mistakenly believe they can accomplish by conducting a pre-implementation plant physical – the reality is that inventory accuracy will degrade very quickly unless certain critical disciplines are in place.

What should the organizations implement before engaging an ERP Solution Provider?

Simply put, organizations should implement a set of robust processes to ensure the inventory is healthy and accurate. At a minimum, this should include processes to:

- Measure and report Inventory Record Accuracy (IRA)
- Perform cycle counts at a frequency commensurate with importance/value of the material
- Measure and report inventory age and usability
- Identify and eliminate obsolete and over-age inventory
- Identify and eliminate sources of inventory errors through root cause analyses and corrective actions

Why should organizations implement these changes early?

There are a lot of reasons for this, but I'll boil it down to what I consider the top 4.

1 It takes longer than you think

Many organizations underestimate how long it takes to implement truly robust inventory processes because, until you actually try to do it, you do not realize just how many aspects of the operation are touched by this. Some of the key steps which often get glossed over include:

- Performing a thorough ABC analysis of materials
- Training a dedicated team to perform cycle counting across multiple areas
- Learning how to conduct cycle counts in a manner which minimizes disruptions to operations (This may involve Planning/Scheduling, Manufacturing, Warehousing and Logistics)
- Learning how to technically deal with overage/obsolete inventory (e.g. Can it be blended or otherwise reworked?)
- Establishing protocols and authorization limits for managing any potential discounted sales or write-offs of inventory
- Training and developing the organization in root cause

2 You need time to adjust to learnings along the way

Whether you are implementing these processes for the first time, or simply refining what you already have in place, there is a good chance that you will learn things along the way that will cause you to want to make changes. For example, you may find that the current warehouse layout is not very conducive to performing cycle counts safely and efficiently. So, a little rearranging of the warehouse might be in order. Or perhaps you discover that using a standard tare weight and heel estimate for railcar deliveries is not nearly as accurate as you thought it was. Hence, you may decide to implement a new process for weighing railcars both before and after unloading. There are thousands of examples like this, but the point is, organizations who put in the upfront effort to understand their inventory deficiencies can often make great improvements through physical and procedural changes. And every improvement done before go-live is one less thing to worry about after go-live!

3 You may need time to work through pockets of obsolate inventory

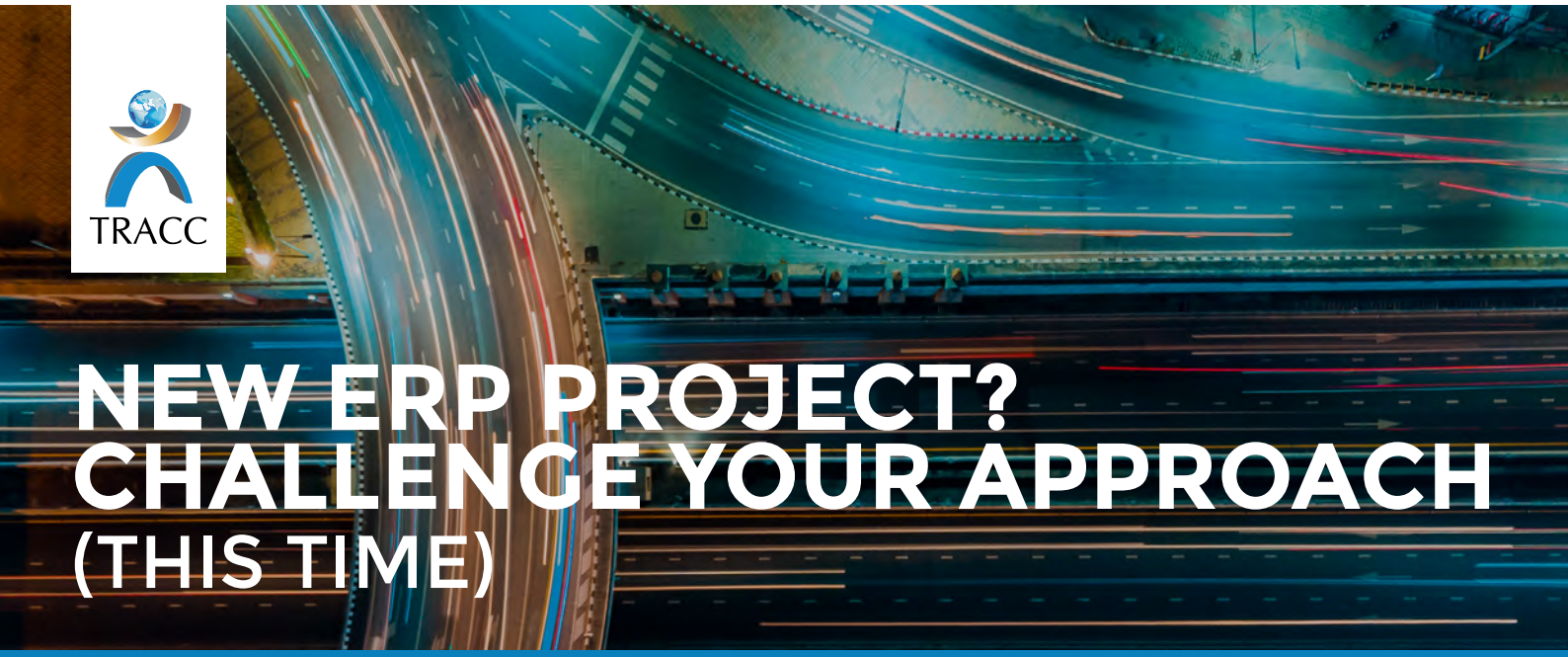
Occasionally, in implementing these inventory best practices, an organization will discover hidden piles of obsolete inventory. If that obsolete inventory is not discovered until just before go-live, the options for effectively dealing with that inventory are very limited. As a result, you may actually have to migrate known obsolete inventory into an otherwise pristine system. Conversely, if that obsolete inventory is discovered early on, then the organization has time to:

1) disposition the inventory in a fiscally and environmentally responsible manner, and;
2) eliminate the source of the problem inventory.

4 You will want to be excellent problem solvers by go-live

No matter how much you prepare and practice for go-live, there is a high likelihood that you will encounter some unanticipated issue leading to inventory errors. If those errors, and their source, are found and fixed quickly, they rarely cause major issues. On the other hand, if those errors go undetected for weeks or, in some cases even months, they can cause huge disruptions in an ERP system. That's why it is so important for an organization to be absolutely on top of its problem-solving game at go-live. Although an organization can be trained quickly in root cause analysis, it takes significant time and effort to become excellent at it. And problem-solving excellence is critical at go-live!

In summary, organizations who put in the time and effort upfront to implement robust inventory processes well before their ERP implementation put themselves in a great position to achieve a highly successful go-live. Every migration to a new system is an opportunity for an organization to put past sins behind them, wipe the slate clean, and make a fresh start. Take advantage of that opportunity by starting early!



Optimize your manufacturing ERP investment by preparing your business process foundation **BEFORE** spending a dime on a solution integrator

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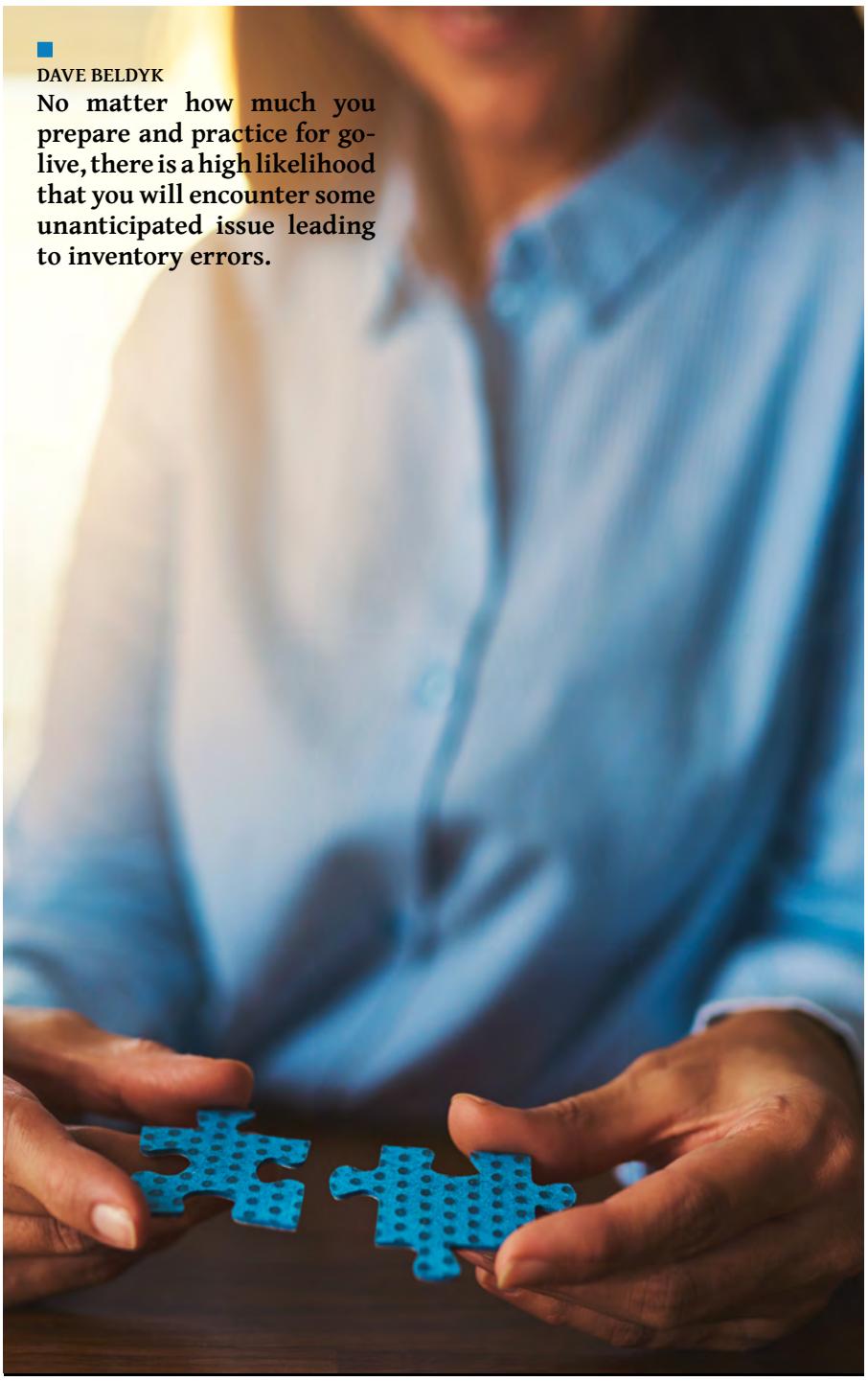

DAVE BELDYK

No matter how much you prepare and practice for go-live, there is a high likelihood that you will encounter some unanticipated issue leading to inventory errors.

Dave Beldyk is the President and Founder of DABCO Consulting, LLC. He has 30 years of Chemical Industry experience with DuPont, 15 of which were spent in an ERP environment. Dave has played an active role in several large-scale projects, the most rewarding of which was leading a highly successful, US$80 million global ERP implementation. Throughout his time in the ERP space, he has gained a deep appreciation and understanding of the critical role business processes play in the overall success of any ERP operation. In 2016, Dave and his company partnered with Competitive Capabilities International (CCi) to develop a product to help manufacturers prepare for, and get the most out of, their ERP implementations. Blending his real-life ERP experience with CCI's integrative improvement methodology and tools, the two partners created ERP Optimisation TRACC — a truly unique and innovative product aimed at instilling the kinds of behaviours and mindsets to help manufacturers excel in their ERP environment.

About Competitive Capabilities International (CCi)

Established in 1987, CCi is a privately held, global company that enables organizations to deliver sustainable results across the supply chain through a continuous improvement solution called TRACC. With its core experience residing in manufacturing and supply chain best practices, CCi's goal is to "unlock greatness" in organizational capability through proven experience in World Class Manufacturing (WCM), Total Productive Maintenance (TPM), Six Sigma, Lean and Supply Chain Optimization.

How to win hearts & minds during your business transformation?

*by **Poul Kjær**, CEO of Pipol*

Getting your people on board can be the hardest part

It's no longer a secret that the toughest barrier to achieving fundamental transformational change is resistance, pure and simple. Research shows that efforts to change the performance of an organisation fail about 70% of the time. And that's largely because of the natural human instinct to resist change.

At Pipol, we are acutely aware of this. For the past two decades, no matter where in the world we were working on implementations, resistance has occured. Often because organizations tend to overlook the human factor. In recent years, however, we have seen an improvement as more and more project leaders understand the power of resistance, here are therefore some of our tactics that we've seen work successfully.

Get inside the mindset of the organisation

Successful transformation leaders make it their business to understand the attitudes of people throughout the organisation and how they need to evolve to enable the sort of broad-scale, fundamental change that's necessary. They also identify which daily behaviours will need to change to usher in a successful transformation.

Build your story and preach it like gospel

Perhaps your story is a simplified version of your business case. Maybe it's something that focuses more on how employees will directly benefit. Whatever you decide, make sure your story communicates the value of the change and creates a vision for what a successful transformation looks like – and make sure it resonates with each and every individual you are relying on to carry out the change.

Get the right leadership involved from the beginning

Change only happens if it comes from the top. Make sure to have the right executive ambassadors involved in the project who can model the right behaviours on a daily basis and continuously reinforce the vision of the project and its benefits for everyone in the organisation.

Create rewards and recognition

Your organisation has a system of rewards and recognition that people are used to working towards. Perhaps they receive a bonus for achieving KPIs that will soon be obsolete. The earlier you change this system, the easier the process will be. Create rewards and recognitions that reinforce processes and policies that support the transformation. Everybody makes a choice, every day, about how much effort they will give to the project. This will incentivize them.

Old habits die hard, there's no doubt about it. Successful leaders make it their mission to win the hearts and minds of everyone in the organisation through thoughtful, clear, consistent communication and relevant, enticing recognition. By involving your people in the right way, even the most resistant can be open and embracing. They may even become the ambassadors of change your project needs to achieve the dramatic spike in performance you're aiming for.

About Pipol

Pipol is a global provider of Microsoft Dynamics solutions and services. We provide a single point of contact for every stage of your business transformation – from identifying the problem – to strategy – to execution. We have the functional competencies and have a global presence that enables us to support you wherever you're located.

With a 35-year long, successful career in international business management and development, he is Pipol's unpretentious, yet always influential, company leader and mentor. The idea of this company started during Poul's five years as a business development manager at Navision Software. There, he recognized a need for an easier way to implement ERP solutions across multiple countries and cultures. As founder and CEO, Poul has spent the last few decades carving out the smoothest path to ERP success. Today Poul focuses most of his time and energy on leading, engaging, and inspiring people. Whether by coaching or by example, Poul always serves as an advocate for the idea of value via committed partnership.

EMPOWERING GROWTH: GUY LECLERCQ

Celebrating DEVEHO Consulting Group's 10th anniversary, CEO Guy Leclercq says they reinforce their strategy to stay as one of the best-in-class solutions for mid-sized companies.

For 10 years, DEVEHO Consulting Group has been supporting midsized companies in their growth with mostly an international scope. They have been proving their biggest difference with dual activity: they deploy the enterprise management solution, Sage X3, and in the meantime they are the editor of addons, like localizations, in order to offer the best solution possible adapted to local requirements and needs of their customers. They now have 8 offices in France, Spain, Netherlands, Romania, Slovakia, Czech Republic and Switzerland. Headquarter is in France and dedicated teams in each subsidiary are keeping close relationships with customers with a high cultural and local business comprehension.

Leclercq says their objective is to offer an alternative solution to SME's and subsidiaries of major groups with an easy to implement and a complete adapted solution in terms of cultural approach and local requirements as on regulatory compliance which evolve very fast in some countries as for example in Romania. The challenge is to keep their localizations up to date while offering the best enhancements in Sage X3.

Commenting on their company strategies for 2020, Leclercq, says "For the coming years, we will keep growing to be able to meet the needs of our customers about the legislations evolution and the new uses of digitalization such as Cloud Systems and IoT... We reinforce our strategy to stay as one of the best-in-class solutions for mid-sized companies. And our development strategy doesn't prevent us

GUY LECLERCQ

"We reinforce our strategy to stay as one of the best-in-class solutions for mid-sized companies. And our development strategy doesn't prevent us to open an additional subsidiary in a new region in the future. Let's follow."

to open an additional subsidiary in a new region in the future. Let's follow."

Sage X3 is selected by more than 6, 000 companies because the solution is adapted to their needs, easy to use and is flexible to evolve while company growth. "Within DEVEHO Consulting Group, they bring this complete competitive solution in terms of concrete business needs for CEO, CFO, CIO... and complete this with local requirements they help to fill in," he explains. "In some regions as Romania, Netherlands, Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary, we are the ambassadors of Sage with our development of localization of the solution."

Sage X3 : Scalable and Modular

DEVEHO Consulting Group supports more than 80 SME's enterprises and subsidiaries of major groups. With their expertise on dedicated markets and the scalable and modular Sage X3 solution, they serve customers from various industries such as Wholesale, Discrete Manufacturing, Process Manufacturing and Professional Services. For very specific needs, they train their consultants on specifics industries like Automotive, Pharmaceutical, Plastics, Electronics, etc.

Leclercq mentioned they are also supporting their customers during their digital transformation journey. "We follow constantly the enrichment of our offers to be able to meet our customers' needs among digitalization and automatization. Our teams benefit of training sessions to be up to date on hosting, Electronic Document Management and additional topics we think relevant in our business," adding that "Recently, we supported one of our customers with a Purchase Automatization integration (PAI), a great change to help on being more efficient with invoices digitalization."

GUY LECLERCQ

''The future of ERP is based on new uses and new technology opportunities like IoT, AI, Big Data, and Blockchain... but also collaborative approach.''

Flexibility and Agility will always be crucial

Flexibility and agility are now at the heart of ERP solutions and this does not seem to change in near future. Leclercq says "The future of ERP is based on new uses and new technology opportunities like IoT, AI, Big Data, and Blockchain... but also collaborative approach." He also mentions that in 5 years, user experience will be one of the best-in-class evolution thanks to Artificial Intelligence (AI). The customers will have much less repetitive tasks,
a complete personalized interface and will have access to new indicators.

Agility and data access will always remain essential and Leclercq claims that "ERP in Cloud has fast implementation, no complex infrastructure, and all devices access anywhere, anytime..."

"New factories in Industry 4.0 are data driven." he says. "Manufacturing predictions have to gather all the information from various sources," adding "That's one of the reasons why IoT, IA and blockchain... are pretty much linked to industry 4.0." In this case, API integration is important, and DEVEHO Consulting Group works also on dedicated partnerships as with DIMO Maint which offers a very competitive solution on maintenance management.

When asked why the decision makers should choose to work with DEVEHO Consulting, Leclercq says "We propose a great alternative for mid-sized company which are looking an expert and agile solution to support their growth today and tomorrow." And he lists the main reasons as:

- Our full expertise on Sage solution as we are 100% dedicated to the ERP leader, Sage X3 – Sage Business Cloud Enterprise Management.
- We have a long partnership with Sage.
- Our strong experience on local implementation and we have localization in some regions, others are on demand.
- We are proud to have more than 80 customers who trust us: BOIRON, YVES ROCHER, SBM…
- DEVEHO follows a continued growth since 2009.

About DEVEHO, Consulting Group

Using best practices in ERP project implementation, DEVEHO Consulting Group is a leading worldwide player on multi-country implementations of Sage Business Cloud Enterprise Management (Sage X3) including expertises on all business processes in purchasing, manufacturing, inventory, sales, CRM, international financial management, Business Intelligence and EDI. With a unique approach of « glocalisation », the group manage both worldwide and local implementations within 8 regional offices in France, The Netherlands, Romania, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Spain and Switzerland. In 2019, DEVEHO Consulting Group support more than 80 customers in manufacturing, services and distribution with a team of 60 peoples. This year, the company celebrates its 10 years of activity.

More information: www.deveho.com

Guy Leclercq, 49 years, is the founder and CEO of the DEVEHO Consulting Group created in 2009. In 1989, just 19 years old, Guy Leclercq decided to go to the USA to start his professional career as a controller at the French Bank of Foreign Trade of New York Branch, before moving to the London Stock exchange. Those experiences allowed him to improve his English but also to develop his international fiber. On his return, he began studying accounting and get a business master degree at Novancia Business School and an Accountancy master in Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers in Paris. Then, he worked as Senior ERP Consultant in Sage ecosystem. It is with almost 10 years of expertise that he decided to set up DEVEHO Consulting Group in 2009 to support companies in their international growth. Since 2017, he shares his expertise on ERP best pratctices for student in French school (IUT – Université Lyon 1, in France).

A SNAPSHOT OF ERP MARKET CHANGE, ACCORDING TO THE EXPERTS

*by **Ted Rohm** , Senior ERP Analyst*

Your impartial software advisor

One of the few constants of the universe is change, and enterprise resource planning (ERP) software isn't an exception to this rule.

Over the past decades, enterprises of all sizes have profited from the implementation of ERP, which integrates technology that serves mission-critical business processes. The benefits of folding various processes, systems, and databases into a streamlined ERP include improved operational efficiency and data visibility, especially for companies with previously siloed information sources.

Evolutions in the ERP market will create new opportunities for collaboration between vendors and enterprises, including exciting new capabilities and novel methods of software implementation and integration. Expert opinions reveal a snapshot of upcoming changes in the landscape, including trends, disruptions and a long-term view of the future of ERP.

ERP Trends 2019:

How New Technology Will Impact ERP Software?

New technologies are being applied to and integrated with ERP systems and continue to extend the value proposition of ERP systems. Technologies including software in the cloud, mobile devices, consumer software applications, and social media have all shifted the way ERP software is sold and accessed. The latest set of technologies that will enable further business process improvements will include artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning (ML), the internet of things (IoT), and easy to use business intelligence (BI) tools.

Those familiar with the industry won't be surprised that AI and ML top the list of technology trends which will have the greatest impact on ERP software. More than three out of four respondents of Technology Evaluation Centers' ERP Experts Survey agreed that AI and ML will exert the most compelling influence.

According to survey respondents, the democratization of BI was close behind AI and ML as a leading source of technological innovation. End users without a lot of experience in reporting and data analysis will enjoy access to powerful BI modules at a diminished learning curve. This unlocks the capacity for the average end user of ERP software to leverage the information they've gathered within their ERP installation.

More than half of all respondents to the survey pointed to IoT (and the Industrial Internet of Things—or IIoT) as one of the most impactful technologies within the sphere of ERP in 2019. This assertion is supported by numerous analyses concerning the volume of available IoT devices over the next few years. According to Ericsson forecasts, approximately 18 billion IoT devices will exist in 2022, part of a total of 29 billion network-connected devices.

These top three technological sources of change in ERP are interrelated. The IoT creates information at the edge of networks, including sensors which report data from manufacturing machines and consumer products. BI modules within ERP collect and analyze data from IoT devices, while AI and ML functionality helps to sift through massive volumes of data, contextualizing information into actionable insights.

AI and ML will serve a crucial role in the understanding of data. International Data Corporation estimates that by 2025, 41.6 billion IoT devices will produce a staggering 79.5 zettabytes of data—79.5 trillion gigabytes! AI is uniquely situated to deal with this volume of information, which is far beyond human cognitive power.

Recent gains in ML, an important aspect of AI, will help organizations discover trends and insights. For example, researchers in the field of materials science have successfully implemented machine learning to quickly test the properties of new materials. In the case of ERP usage, ML can organize unstructured data collected from integrated sources to extract useable information.

Imagine a human capital management (HCM) integration which scans applicant resumes and cover letters in differing formats, discovers desired skills from these diverse sources, and structures the output to present a list of the most appropriately skilled candidates without the need for intensive human guidance.

Perhaps the most interesting result of the expert survey is the recent fall of blockchain hype. Despite the fact that blockchain technology will almost certainly prove useful in the realm of supply chain and ledger-based data handling within ERP, the fall of cryptocurrency clearly diminished the reputation of the blockchain. It emerged as a distant fourth in our survey results, compared to the impact of AI , ML, BI, and IoT in ERP.

Which Trend Will Most Disrupt the ERP Market?

Despite the perceived impact of AI and ML in the near future, this type of technology isn't considered a disruptive power—yet. The move away from on-premise installations of ERP towards Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) implementations is believed to be the most disruptive current force in the industry.

Digital transformation (DX) and Industry 4.0 were considered the second most disruptive force in our survey of ERP industry experts. Digital transformation is the application of any number of digital technologies to solve problems and is an underlying theme driving change in the software industry, including ERP software. The fourth industrial revolution already leverages the IoT and IIoT for production and efficiency gains, with the promise of "smart factories" and "lights-out manufacturing" as the next wave within the industry.

As per the survey, the "growing importance of ERP and its integration to other enterprise application platforms (e.g., customer relationship management [CRM], supply chain management [SCM], product lifecycle management [PLM], etc.) for customer centricity" is considered just as disruptive as DX and Industry 4.0.

The Future of ERP

ERP systems are an essential part of virtually every large organization. What started in the 1980s as systems meant to integrate manufacturing with financial operations have grown and matured to support virtually every industry—right down to specialized vertical niches within industries. During the intervening decades, ERP applications moved from mainframe-based solutions, to client-server, and now to cloud-delivered software, a topic covered in the TEC 2019 Cloud ERP for Small Business Buyer's Guide.

The recent survey revealed a major set of technological forces impacting ERP include social, mobile, analytics, and cloud, or SMAC. These forces have had and will continue to have a huge impact on ERP systems. However, as with many things in the tech industry, we now take for granted that we will have the systems available to us on 24/7/365 on a choice of mobile device from anywhere in the world.

A number of vendors did not see this change coming fast enough, and the move to the cloud has seen a number of vendors drop by the wayside while others have grown to become leaders in the SaaS ERP market. Companies such as Salesforce and NetSuite were pioneers in delivering SaaS software, and now much of the rest of the industry is still trying to catch up. Other changes have included mobile, more consumer user experiences, and expanded access to the information needed for people to make decisions via easy to use BI tools.

The next set of changes will build on these technologies and will lead to further advances in the ERP landscape. The IoT (and IIoT) will see smart, connected devices become part of almost every aspect of our daily lives. The data generated from these devices will be massive. The only way to process all this data will be to have intelligent algorithms from AI and ML to make sense of it all. AI and ML will also aid people in everyday tasks so that they don't have to, for example, make a decision on every purchase that comes through for a box of polymer material needed for the robotically operated 3D printer. Smarter and smarter algorithms and more data will be the biggest stories in the ERP software space in the coming years.

The ERP vendors who have been able to make the leap into these new technologies will be the ones who can now build upon these foundations and drive radical transformations. Many of the ERP and other enterprise software vendors are building sophisticated platforms that run the software. Under the control of a visionary software vendor, these platforms can be extended to include things like IoT and AI capabilities. These vendors will be the ones who thrive in the future. This means that, more than ever, organizations need to choose their ERP solution vendor wisely or risk being left behind in the digital economy.

About Technology Evaluation Centers (TEC)

Technology Evaluation Centers (TEC) is a global consulting and advisory firm, helping organizations select the best enterprise software solution for their needs. TEC reduces the time, cost, and risk associated with enterprise software selection with its advanced decision-making process and support application, software selection experts, and extensive resources. Over 3.5 million subscribers leverage TEC's industry-leading research and detailed information on more than 1,000 leading software solutions across all major application areas.

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Ted Rohm covers the areas of enterprise resource planning (ERP), commerce, customer relationship management (CRM), enterprise asset management (EAM), configure price quote (CPQ), supply chain management (SCM), and IT service management (ITSM), with a particular expertise in manufacturing. He has over 20 years of experience in large-scale selection, design, development, and implementation projects, primarily in the biotech/pharma industry.

GLOBAL SHOP SOLUTIONS CASE STUDY: COX MACHINE

The wind-open expanses of the windswept prairies surrounding Wichita, Kansas lend themselves to big dreams. In 1954, an experienced machinist named Ernest "Bud" Cox decided the time had come to open his own business. Starting out of a 16 x 20 foot building he constructed with scrap wood on his own property, he opened for business with a grand total of four tools: a mill, a lathe, a shaper and a drill press. His dream? To build a thriving machine shop to serve the ever-increasing manufacturing needs of America's heartland.

Fifty-seven years later, that dream has more than become a reality. It's turned into a world-class contract machine shop serving the general aviation and commercial aircraft industries with a variety of precision-crafted parts and assemblies. From Cox's original one-room building, the firm has grown into two separate facilities that employ more than 160 skilled technicians and support staff. All machining activities are performed at the 80,000 square-foot climate-controlled facility in Wichita, while sheet-metal fabrication takes place at a 24,000 square foot facility located in nearby Harper.

From these two locations, Cox Machine provides customers like Spirit Aerosystems, Cessna, Hawker Beechcraft, and Gulfstream with a variety of aluminum structural component parts, such as brackets, fittings and ribs. The company offers a broad mix of machining, sheet-metal fabrication, and assembly services. A Global Shop Solutions customer since 1997, Cox Machine is AS9100 certified, and has earned a well-deserved reputation within the aerospace industry for quality parts delivered on time.

Going Paperless with Global Shop Solutions

With numerous aerospace machine shops dotting the Wichita landscape, Cox Machine's primary competitive challenge is not producing a superior part, as quality is a given in the aerospace industry. Rather, it's finding ways to deliver superior overall value to their customers.

To stand out from its many competitors, Cox Machine focuses on offering short lead times in combination with highly competitive pricing on precision-crafted parts and assemblies. The company also strives to create long-term agreements with customers that allow them to offer lower costs and improve ongoing efficiencies by investing more time and effort in the design, tooling and upfront costs of every part they make.

Implementing this two-pronged strategy requires a lean manufacturing environment, and Global Shop Solutions has played a major role in helping to lean the company's operations. In particular, Global Shop Solutions' Graphical User Interface (GUI) and Document Control™ systems have made a huge difference by enabling the company to go totally paperless on the shop floor.

The decision to go paperless came about when Cox Machine reduced its run quantity from six month's worth of inventory to one. This meant that the company was now creating six times as many jobs, which resulted in six times as much paper. Something had to give.

"Prior to going paperless, we printed all the drawings, specs, parts lists, and anything else needed for a job and send them around the shop floor in a plastic packet," explains Jason Cox, chief technical officer for Cox Machine.

"When we increased the number of jobs we ran six-fold, it became ridiculous to try to recreate all that paper for every job, so we decided to eliminate all paper.

"Now, document distribution and control is done electronically, with everything linked to Global Shop Solutions through the part number. Instead of sending all that paper around, operators use the GUI screen at their workstations to pull up the list of documents they need for every job. All of which is linked through the Document Control™ manager in Global Shop Solutions."

In addition to job specs, drawings and other technical documents, Cox Machine also uses Document Control™ to link operators to an internal web-based database that displays router histories and customer part histories. It also links to "first article" inspection sheets and setup sheets for the machines, which provides a tooling list for the job and identifies which fixture to use and where to put it on the machine. Operators now have all the information they need at their fingertips without having to leave their workstations.

Paperless Cuts Lead Time

Global Shop Solutions' GUI and Document Control™ functions have also spurred significant reductions in lead times, further contributing to Cox Machine's lean environment.

Every machining cell is designated as a work center in Global Shop Solutions, and has its own GUI touch screen. When operators clock in for the day, they receive the dispatch list for that work center, which shows when the previous operation was completed, as well as which jobs the operator needs to run and in what order. The operator then clocks into the job, looks at the work instructions, job specs, drawings, setup sheets, and anything that goes along with the job.

As a result, Cox Machine has reduced its standard lead time for a regular machined part from 16 weeks to an average of four. They can even turn some parts in less than a week when the opportunity arises to set up a work cell with stock material already available in inventory.

"We started out with only three GUI stations," recalls Cox, "but we learned early on that the only way you can truly go paperless is for everyone to have their own station. So we now have more than 60 touch screens—one for each operator—so they can pull up the routers and drawings and access everything they need without leaving their workstations.

"Having so many GUI stations also helps us do other things like track direct and indirect labor more accurately. Our operators even do their own inspection at their workstations. The best part is that we've been able to use GUI and Document Control™ right out of the box, without much modification. We use them the way they were designed to be used and they work great!"

Flexible Scheduling to Meet Customer Demand

As chief technical officer, Cox oversees IT and all the technical aspects of production. He typically starts his day by browsing two of Global Shop Solutions' most popular screens.

"The first screen I pull up every morning is Supply and Demand," says Cox, "because I can access any information I need from that one screen. Whether it's a part, a job, or anything else I'm working on, I can get a quick overview and then drill down as deep as I want to go."

His second screen? APS (Advanced Production Scheduling), for a quick look at where each job currently stands and what capacity issues might be forthcoming in the weeks ahead.

"The graphical scheduling of machines in APS makes it easy to see where we stand with capacity," adds Cox. "And the module allows for partially finite and partially infinite scheduling, which allows us to look out in the future to identify any potential problems. Looking out the first two weeks, we load up the system only for what the capacity of a machine will allow, so that our dispatch lists are accurate. But once we get a couple of weeks out, we have the ability to open it up so we can see if we have a capacity issue four, six, or even eight weeks from now.

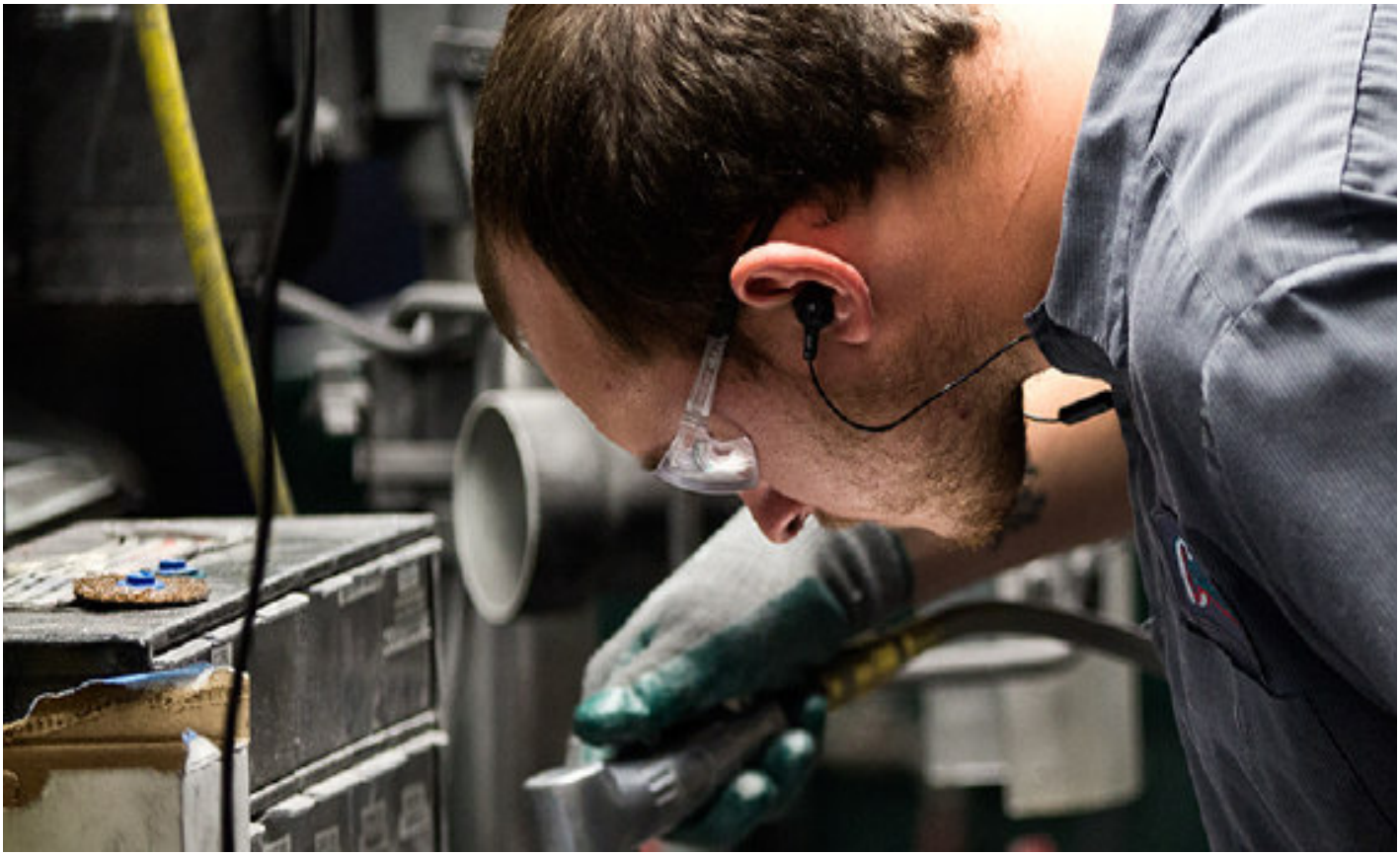
"Also, we don't have the luxury of choosing our delivery dates; our customers choose them for us. When we get conflicting delivery dates on large jobs, the system allows us to easily adjust capacity by adding shifts or moving people and work centers around. APS gives us a high degree of flexibility to accommodate what our customers ask."

First Article Inspection

Cox also appreciates the high level of customization available through the powerful Global Application Builder (GAB).

For example, when Cox Machine makes a new part, their customers demand a very high level of documentation, called "first article." This documentation consists of a complete package of all the information on the part, including every dimension, tolerances, and all specs and certifications. Once the customer agrees the part has been fabricated correctly, Cox Machine can ship future lots with much less documentation. But putting the first article documentation together in a timely manner can present a real challenge.

In the past, Cox Machine would build the part and then assign an inspector to go back and produce the documentation—a process that often took several days and frequently resulted in late delivery. At Cox's request, Global Shop Solutions wrote a GAB routine that automatically alerts operators when a part requires first article documentation. The operator then calls an inspector to assist with the creation of the documentation while the part is being made, so that the documentation gets completed at the same time as the job. This has greatly speeded up the process while eliminating the errors that can creep in when documenting something that has already occurred.



What Cox really likes about Global Shop Solutions is how well all the modules integrate with each other, making it easy to extract data from the system and display it in a manner that suits Cox Machine's environment.

Cox recently created a customized dashboard by writing an interface with Global Shop Solutions that allows him to display data on large TV screens stationed throughout the plant. For example, the customer service department has a dashboard TV with a split screen. The left side displays a customer's inventory at their site and shows how many parts they have below their minimum inventory level. The right side lists every job that is either past delivery date or close to being there.

"We have a 99+% on-time delivery rate," notes Cox. "This dashboard TV screen shows the .5% or so where we're late as a way of helping people focus on what needs to get done. We have different dashboard screens like this located throughout the company, so the information is there for everyone to see without having to look it up in the system. All the data still lives in Global Shop Solutions. We just pull it out and display it on these big TV screens."

Finally, Cox gives Global Shop Solutions high marks for its solid technical support.

"From an IT perspective, I've found that support makes the difference between a good system and a great one," says Cox. "

"And one of the things I like about Global Shop Solutions is that we're able to get help when we need it. When we have a problem, we usually get a response either by phone or the web-based support system in a couple of hours. If that doesn't address our needs, we can elevate it fairly quickly to get the problem taken care of."

"With a lot of software companies, support is like the black hole you don't want to fall into. At Global Shop Solutions, you don't worry about that because you know that everyone really cares."

10 MUST DO'S

FOR SMALL TO MEDIUM-SIZED MANUFACTURERS

QUOTE QUICKLY AND ACCURATELY

The more jobs you can quote and the more accurate those quotes become, the more jobs you win.

HAVE ONE ERP INTEGRATED SYSTEM

As one Global Shop Solutions customer put it, "You don't order one cable, internet, and phone from three different companies when you can find one trusted partner that can do it all – and do it better.

AUTOMATE PURCHASING

Save time by managing all purchasing activities from one screen.

REDUCE SPREADSHEETS AND PAPER

The more paper and spreadsheets on the shop floor, the more hunting, pecking and lost time.

AUTOMATE SCHEDULING AND ON-TIME DELIVERY

Manufacturing companies that turn the corner on efficiency mostly say the same thing, "We used to spend too much time on scheduling."

MAINTAIN ACCURATE INVENTORY

The most efficient manufacturers protect cash flow by knowing inventory.

CUT CYCLE TIME

Some companies have been able to cut cycle time by up to 50% by automating processes and leveraging flex schedules with their manufacturing software.

DELIGHT CUSTOMERS

Repeat orders happen when customers are serviced truthfully quickly and accurately.

LOWER LABOR COSTS

Use wireless technology to track raw materials, inventory, tools and finished products from anywhere in your production plant using a handheld wireless device.

CONSTANTLY MEASURE YOUR BUSINESS HEALTH

With the right ERP system in place, these "MUST DO'S " become a way of life for your organization, resulting in leaner operations, improved efficiencies and better margins and profits.

Global Shop
SOLUTIONS
ERP SOFTWARE

Download the full whitepaper at:
www.globalshopsolutions.com/10-must-dos-for-small-to-medium-sized-manufacturers

ANDRES RICHTER REVEALS THE SECRETS OF SUCCESSFUL ERP IMPLEMENTATION

With an accomplished three decades in the IT arena, Priority Software CEO Andres Richter says ERP should be easier – easier to use, to implement, and to maintain and enhance.

Priority Software provides flexible, end-to-end business management solutions for organizations of all sizes and industries. The company enables 75,000 companies in 40 countries to manage and grow their business, and is recognized by top industry analysts, including Gartner, IDC, TEC and others, for its product innovation. Priority improves business efficiency and the customer experience, providing real time access to business data and insights in the cloud, on premise, and on-the-go and is translated and localized in ~20 countries and languages. With offices in the US, UK, Belgium, and Israel, the company is supported by a global network of 60+ business partners who market, sell and implement Priority around the world.

Says Richter, "2018 was the most successful year to date for Priority, yielding 20% YoY growth for the last 4 consecutive years. This well exceeded our own targets, while the company grew nearly 3x in revenues during this period." He predicts that 2019 will be another exciting year for the company, beyond a period of exponential growth, as they strive to surpass their successes of 2018.

Priority continues to expand its global presence with significant acquisitions, including Belgium-based Optimize Group, February 2019, US-based Acclivity Software, 2018, and the purchase of US ERP consulting and services firm, Performa Apps in 2016.

Openness, Flexibility and Scalability – Building Blocks

Priority brings a viable alternative to the weighty and often cumbersome ERP systems offered by traditional global vendors. "We continue to see an increasing demand for lower cost, lower risk solutions, and for solutions that are built to support system openness, interoperability and flexibility," explains Richter. "In the global ERP landscape, Priority ranks among some

interoperability and flexibility," explains Richter. "In the global ERP landscape, Priority ranks among some of the world's leading ERP solutions vendors, and we remain competitive in the market, a direct result of our unique offering."

When asked about Priority's direction, Richter says their strategy for 2020 and beyond will focus on core ERP functionality and features, and as they foresee, its lower barrier of entry in the future. "We will further our cloud ERP innovation, deliver a more mature product and eco-system, continue to support globalization, and focus on growing companies who are looking to replace their legacy systems with postmodern ERP," he added. "In 2020 and beyond, we will continue to further our mission that ERP should be easier – easier to use, to implement, and to maintain and enhance."

Richter explains about Priority's industry-specific solutions, adding, "Priority is a scalable, flexible and easy to use ERP solution designed for companies of varying sizes, customized to meet the needs of our core markets - manufacturing, professional services, healthcare, construction, automotive, agriculture and others, with strong references in many sectors," he continues. "We offer several dedicated modules. For example, for manufacturers, we provide a full solution that includes MRP & purchase planning, ECO management & revision control, lot & serial number tracking, quality control & assurance, and costing."

Further, Richter says they provide logistics companies with fully integrated supply chain management to optimize networks, and manage transportation and warehousing operations. "This solution includes fleet management, WMS (Warehouse Management System), mobile devices, and sales analysis."

Run, Set Up or Expand?

While acknowledging that traditional ERP has failed to keep up with two key emerging technology trends: the rapid innovation that's occurring across all industries, and the amount and changing nature of data that businesses and industries require, Richter says, "Because of this, ERP is evolving into what we call ERP as a Platform, and will continue to do so over the next five or more years."

"Cloud-based ERP as a Platform provides the ability to run, set up, or expand a business with virtually no hardware expenses, delivering maximum growth and efficiency. By increasing adoption of cloud ERP, businesses will be able to cherry pick the services they require and download them from the cloud, as opposed to installing an entire package filled with services that are irrelevant for their needs."

"At Priority, we are strong supporters of ERP as a Platform – and we're confident that it is the future of ERP," explains Richter. "This is because Priority ERP thrives on innovation, delivering the tools and functionality to meet organizations' changing needs. It's the ERP as a Platform services that provide the necessary tools to achieve system openness and flexibility, such as Business Process Management (BPM), mobile application generator, user-level personalization, business rules generator, REST APIs, and a lot more.

ERP and Digital Transformation

Richter explains how Priority supports its customers during the digital transformation process. "We believe that ease of implementation is crucial for businesses looking to adopt or change their ERP system. Priority brings considerably shorter implementation time, with easy data transfer and little or no system downtime. This means easy, hassle-free digital transformation."

"Typically, we work with local partners who customize, implement and support our solutions around the globe. Today's customer demands change rapidly, a result of scalability, new functionality and integration to new applications," he continues. "Therefore, it's no longer enough to have a good and rich out-of-the-box product, it must also include tools to enhance and develop the product over time."

"As a result, we focus on giving our partners a rich suite of enablers that allow them to deliver added value to customers, differentiate themselves and win more deals." Examples of such tools include Priority's Mobile App Generator – the ability to develop bespoke apps for customers using an App generator wizard, and REST APIs – to enable the integration of Priority ERP to external system/s for a variety of uses via an industry standard API.

Richter comments on Priority's customer support, adding, "We value our customers, putting our customers – first, and deliver professional implementation services, data migration services and training at the customers' site. What's more, we offer a full set of Help tools (tool tips, FAQs, SOPs, wizards and video tutorials) to get customers up and running faster and minimize system downtime."

Digitization: No longer just for large

In the new era of IoT and Industry 4.0, manufacturing companies in particular, must have a strong and reliable ERP system to support their digital transformation. To remain competitive and in parallel, productive and efficient, today's manufacturers must steer away from the older, more traditional and complex ERP systems that were, in fact, developed long before the digital age.

A modern ERP system can essentially 'power' IoT and Industry 4.0. The market is now demanding accelerated workflows and business processes, seamlessly integrating the supply chain and meeting customer demands to reduce time to market, resources, waste and costs. An ERP system, backed by IoT/Industry 4.0 tools and functionality, can broaden its customer reach and get manufacturers to embrace digital technologies.

Richter says, "At Priority, we're confident that IoT and Industry 4.0, the "smart factory" powered by digital tools, machine learning, VR, AR, and the like, will help redefine ERP in the organization – and with it, the interaction and integration between manufacturing, customers, and suppliers." "More and more manufacturers of all sizes are transitioning over to modern ERP systems to boost productivity, efficiency and data integration. Digitization is no longer just for large enterprises," he adds.

Richter is also confident that blockchain technology can enhance existing ERP systems and that, indeed, they will be integrated into the 'core' of many ERP systems in the near future. He says, "Beyond the spheres of finance and banking, blockchain is perhaps most prominently used to augment supply chain processes and continues to have an ever-increasing presence in enterprise. By providing an increased level of transparency, security and auditability, blockchain has the potential to resolve some of the most daunting data challenges facing businesses today, and as a result, can be, and already is deployed to enhance existing ERP systems and data architectures."

ANDRES RICHTER

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He thinks that in order to maximize the utility of data, it's critical that businesses can trust that their data is up-to-date and not subject to tampering. He adds, "Retaining full visibility using a blockchain-enabled ERP system, is one way to ensure business data can be trusted. What's more, with the introduction of GDPR, staying on top of who has access to data has become a chief concern for businesses. When data is stored across numerous disparate spreadsheets and shared between many people and entities, this becomes exceedingly difficult."

"Blockchain-enabled ERP represents one way of navigating the regulation gauntlet. By restricting access to specific data to a handful of relevant individuals and dictating how data is shared, blockchain automatically ensures its users stay on the right side of regulation," explains Richter. "In our opinion, in the context of ERP, blockchain is an additive technology. It won't replace the need for internal ERP, but it can work alongside existing systems to strengthen the integrity of data processes. Though it may take years to resolve disputes surrounding standards, legislation and interoperability, as blockchain reaches maturity, ERP systems will be the natural place to deploy the technology."

ANDRES RICHTER

"Cloud-based ERP as a Platform provides the ability to run, set up, or expand a business with virtually no hardware expenses, delivering maximum growth and efficiency. By increasing adoption of cloud ERP, businesses will be able to cherry pick the services they require and download them from the cloud, as opposed to installing an entire package filled with services that are irrelevant for their needs."

priority™

About Priority

Priority Software provides flexible, end-to-end business management solutions for organizations of all sizes in a wide range of industries. Recognized by top industry analysts and professionals for its product innovation, Priority improves business efficiency and the customer experience, providing real time access to business data and insights in the cloud, on-premise, and on-the-go. With offices in the US, UK, Belgium and Israel and a global network of business partners, Priority enables 75,000 companies in 40 countries to manage and grow their business.

For more information, visit www.priority-software.com

HOW TO IMPROVE SCHEDULING IN CUSTOM MANUFACTURING SHOPS WITH DRUM-BUFFER-ROPE SCHEDULING

*by **Jesse Linklater**, is the Director of Marketing for Genius ERP*

Genius SOLUTIONS

Scheduling is one of the most difficult tasks that custom manufacturing shops face. Production and shop floor schedules need to be detailed, and in custom shops, require a high-level of coordination. "Traditionally, scheduling in a custom manufacturing environment is very complicated, as it involves so many departments, components, and long lead-time items," says Dominic Vezina, General Manager of Genius Solutions, a manufacturing-specific ERP provider.

But, getting scheduling right is one of the biggest things a custom shop can do to get more jobs completed and out the door on time. Many custom manufacturers rely on ERPs to help them create efficient and effective schedules. ERPs will connect your entire shop, giving you greater insight and visibility into your production line, as well as let you use real-time data to create more accurate and efficient schedules.

With an ERP you can align your entire organization and better manage the priorities that drive your business forward. Armed with the data an ERP provides, you will be able to schedule work centers, personnel, and required parts and tools based on your Bill of Materials (BOM), as well as according to actual workload and capacity.

But, for some custom shops that's not enough, and scheduling is still too complicated and shops aren't running as efficiently as they can, or need, to be. That's where DBR, or Drum-Buffer-Rope, scheduling can help. DBR scheduling helps custom manufacturers by identifying the resource in a shop that is slowing things down, and then creates a schedule around that resource, making your entire shop run smoother and perform better.

What is DBR scheduling?

Drum-Buffer-Rope (DBR) is a scheduling tool that is derived from the Theory of Constraints (ToC). The underlying principle of DBR scheduling is that within any manufacturing shop there is a Drum—one, or a limited

number of, scarce resources—which controls the overall output of the shop. The performance of the system's constraint—the Drum—will determine the performance of the system as a whole.

The first step in creating a DBR schedule is to identify the Drum. The Drum is typically the most heavily loaded resource or work center in your shop. Once the Drum is identified, an ERP equipped with a DBR scheduling tool will automatically prepare a detailed schedule, accounting for the Drum, and each job and task on a project will be prioritized and scheduled. A DBR schedule squeezes the highest possible level of performance from the Drum, and, therefore, is the most effective and efficient schedule for the shop as a whole.

To ensure that you won't get behind on your schedule and that your production won't be disrupted, a Buffer is put in place to guard against delays and problems. The Buffer is a period of time that is designed to protect the Drum resource from problems that occur upstream from the Drum operation. What this means is that the Drum will never be starved for work, and that jobs will pass through to the Drum at the correct pace.

And finally, Ropes, or mechanisms that allow jobs to flow seamlessly through the shop, are identified to ensure smooth production. While the Drum sets the master schedule, and the Buffer provides protection, the Rope communicates and controls the actions necessary to support the production system.

How can DBR scheduling help custom manufacturing shops?

Traditional scheduling algorithms can't always deal with the complexity of custom manufacturing shops and they will significantly inflate production lead times to compensate for bottlenecks. But with an ERP equipped with DBR scheduling, because the schedule is created around the most heavily loaded resource in your shop, all of this excess time is eliminated from your schedule and products flow through the production system as quickly and efficiently as possible.

DBR helps prevent costly delays and deliver more products on time, as it gives you an accurate, prioritized schedule to follow, and you are able to schedule your shop to its actual maximum capacity. Instead of building a schedule based off of guesswork, your schedule is developed around, and built to support, the resource in your shop that slows you down. As well, in a DBR schedule, the constraint receives top priority in terms of repairs, maintenance, and setups so you won't have unexpected equipment downtime, and any delays that do pop up will be absorbed by the buffer time you have built into your schedule.

DBR allows you to be confident that your plant is running at its maximum throughput level and that you have an efficient prioritized schedule.
"An ERP with a DBR scheduling tool simplifies the process by identi fying a plant's most limited resource, and then automatically generates a schedule around this resource. By doing so, it creates a heartbeat for a shop, so-to-speak," Explains Vezina of Genius Solutions. "This produces a more efficient and effective scheduling system, which lets a manufacturer meet their ultimate goal: to deliver more jobs on time and increase their throughput."

No matter the type of manufacturing shop you are, find an ERP with the right tools and features for you. Custom manufacturing is complicated and the right ERP, equipped with the right tools for your shop, will help you improve your manufacturing.

About Genius Solutions

Genius Solutions delivers a complete enterprise resource planning (ERP) solution, including software, implementation services, and field expertise for small to mid-sized custom manufacturers across the US and Canada. Genius ERP is built for SME manufacturers handling make-to-order, engineer-to-order, custom-to-order, and assemble-to-order manufacturing. Gain complete oversight of your shop, including accurate estimating, product engineering, inventory control, production planning, and accounts management. Simplify complex manufacturing with Genius ERP.

Jesse is the Director of Marketing for Genius ERP, a full suite software specifically built for custom manufacturers. Jesse has over 15 years experience leading marketing and communications teams for startups and traditional businesses.

Separating the Value from the Hype:

THREE TECH TRENDS BUZZING IN THE SUPPLY CHAIN MARKET

by **John Hogan**, *SVP of Engineering*

tracelink
Life Sciences Cloud

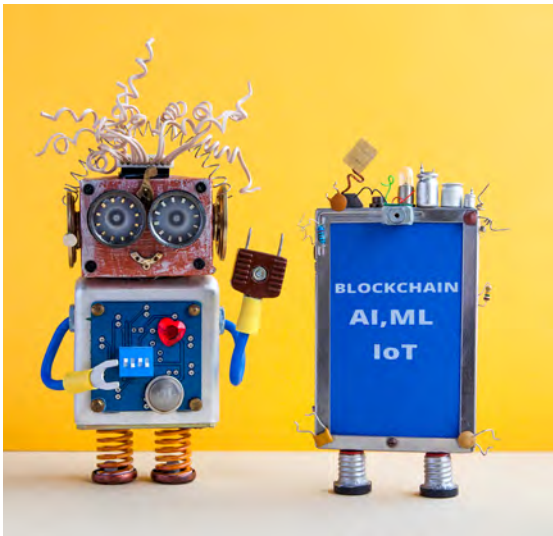
Companies around the world are looking to digitally transform supply chain capabilities to holistically improve business performance, becoming more customer-centric, partnership-oriented and industry-minded. With that transformation comes the need for technology to scale in parallel. Legacy enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems are rich with data, and the ability to feed this data into entirely new systems, for example, a digital network platform, will enable applications for next generation technologies that support this transformation.

As these applications take shape, what do business leaders need to know about the latest technology advancements' true potential to disrupt business processes as it relates to ERP? Here are three technology trends that executives and IT decision-makers overseeing supply chain transformation should be keeping an eye on – along with some helpful tips for evaluating worthwhile investments and understanding best use cases.

Blockchain

Blockchain was thrust into the spotlight as the underpinning technology behind cryptocurrency. Since then, it has been positioned as a general-purpose solution for many problems it is not necessarily suited for. Specifically, its features are best suited for applications that have a need for complete visibility into transactional data for all participants, immutability, and non-repudiation. In a nutshell, it is perfect for parties that don't know or trust each other. Given its specific benefits and costs, it is best to carefully consider blockchain's most applicable use cases for your company's specific given business objectives before making an investment in a blockchain solution.

There are a handful of use cases in pharmaceutical supply chain that may be good candidates for blockchain technology. For example, the FDA is working with partners on a blockchain solution to support the track and trace of drugs through the supply chain as part of regulatory efforts to improve drug safety. This is a novel use case for blockchain given the highly sensitive transactional data that is shared about medications making their way up and down the pharma supply chain, which helps to ensure there is a carefully tracked and encrypted record affirming every medication battle's integrity and pedigree.



Data Analytics with Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML)

The supply chain management market is on pace to exceed $19 billion by 2021, according to Gartner. This is driven by the huge amounts of data collected as more connections across all segments of the supply chain are established. Within the pharma supply chain, for example, TraceLink processes hundreds of millions of serialization events on its ecosystem of more than 275,000 members from across the supply chain.That's an incredible amount of data.

Artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) will enable businesses to detect patterns they didn't even know existed. AI in the supply chain is still in its early stages, but when trained, AI can help businesses mine data lakes to answer questions, solve problems and chart the course for future success. With AI's ability to optimize data analytics, businesses will soon be able to achieve full end-to-end visibility into each product's journey through the supply chain.

AI can also help forecast future consumer needs of critical products so businesses can set production plans accordingly. This will be of critical importance when the next hurricane hits, for example, to help ensure a region is fully prepared with enough supplies and medications to get by in times of need.

Internet of Things (IoT)

According to a report from Forrester, total spending on IoT technology is expected to increase to $435 billion by 2023. This increase in spending is largely driven by the track-and-trace sector, serialization in the pharma supply chain and the ongoing digitalization of the supply chain industry.

IoT provides data from sensors that are connected to the Internet at different critical moments. IoT data is not always necessary – particularly when devices are gathering information from disparate sources and are not connected through a centralized digital network in a way that renders the data useful for improving product integrity or business operations.

With that said, when it comes to high-value medications for example, particularly with more personalized medications that are being uniquely developed for specific patients, IoT sensors tracking the temperature and condition of these medications as they are stored and transported can be incredibly important. Delivery timing and quality assurance of these custom medications is absolutely critical. In short, the stakes are higher, both from a financial standpoint and a patient safety standpoint.

In closing, new advances in technology and digital solutions are rapidly transforming the supply chain. There is enormous value in breaking down data silos and being able to connect and exchange disparate pieces of information on one network platform. This is already starting to take shape and in the coming years, all levels of the supply chain; from manufacturers and wholesale distributors, to end users and everyone in between will be able to leverage these advanced technologies to increase efficiency, transparency and safety across the board.

About Tracelink

TraceLink is the world's largest integrated digital supply network, providing real-time information sharing for better patient outcomes. To learn more about TraceLink, visit www.tracelink.com or follow the company on LinkedIn and Twitter.

JOHN HOGAN

"New advances in technology and digital solutions are rapidly transforming the supply chain. There is enormous value in breaking down data silos and being able to connect and exchange disparate pieces of information on one network platform."

Senior Vice President of Engineering John Hogan leads product design, development, and testing of TraceLink products and solutions, ensuring the seamless processing and tracking of high-volume, highly distributed events, and facilitating shared customer value up and down the supply chain. He joined TraceLink in January 2018 from Boston-based cybersecurity startup Barkly, where he served as VP of Engineering and was responsible for product development and DevOps building out the company's unique approach to endpoint protection. At TraceLink, he is instrumental in helping grow and manage a rapidly expanding team that is building products that benefit customers worldwide.

WHY YOU SHOULDN'T WAIT TO PREPARE YOUR ERP FOR BLOCKCHAIN?

*by **Andy Bell,** CTO at Edenhouse Solutions*

Blockchain has become a hot topic over the past few years, with much of the initial interest centred around how it is powering cryptocurrencies such as Bitcoin. However, many businesses are aware that its potential extends far beyond this realm, and it can offer advantages within the traditional enterprise environment.

Blockchain's promise is essentially a world without middlemen – it provides an open but secure network on which to view and verify key information. The distributed nature of the information being shared helps to build and maintain trust between business partners.

It is important to remember though that, like with any exciting and emerging technology, blockchain is only one piece of the larger digital jigsaw. To harness its potential, it will need to integrate with an organisation's core systems, and this can have a transformative effect on the way people work – impacting business processes and decision making across the board.

Industry Impact

Organisations need to assess for themselves how best they can take advantage of this technology to serve their employees and customers better. The initial interest around blockchain stemmed from its use in supporting the growth of digital currency markets. It offers such a level of trust that people are confident enough to trade internationally using Bitcoin, for instance, without this currency being supported by any national bank.

The ability to provide inherent trust in a transaction isn't just useful in the banking sector, however. As a desire for full oversight of an organisation's end-to-end operations grows stronger, this emerging technology can be harnessed to provide customers and employees with greater transparency across the supply chain of any industry.

The scope of industries who stand to benefit from what blockchain offers is vast. In manufacturing, for example, this could manifest itself in the form of a

label on clothing which could tell customers whether a garment had been sourced from ethical and eco-friendly suppliers. In the aerospace industry, validated traceability of components and quality assessments and certifications can be assured. While in food production or the pharmaceutical industry, customers could have faith in the provenance of products they consume, and in the sustainability of the extended supply chain.

Enterprise Advantages

With an ability to prepare a standardised, trustworthy form of record keeping, blockchain's distributed ledger will increase efficiency within the enterprise.

For example, moving a product through the supply chain today typically involves multiple partners and processes, including shipping, invoicing and maintaining their own inventory records. By its nature, this can lead to a disparate experience – each organisation might be operating on different systems or applications. By integrating blockchain, however, there would be a greater understanding of the data and what that information means for each individual business function.

This, in turn, will encourage organisations to do business with partners and suppliers that can provide evidential proof of provenance and a trustworthy record of its journey to market. Being able to source and share data in a secure, trackable and trusted manner will create closer collaboration between buyers and suppliers.

While instant access to accurate and trustworthy data has always seemed a distant goal for supply chains, the emergence of blockchain technology is making the realisation of that dream ever more credible.

How we can implement it?

As with any technology in its infancy, adoption will likely be fragmented with a wide array of processes and protocols springing up before typically converging as usage grows and common standards emerge.

Major technology players are working together through projects such as Hyperledger, however. This will result in the creation of a set of industry standards and a host of enterprise-ready solutions suitable for different industries. If organisations are going to take full advantage of this technology, they will need to ensure potential users across all business functions can access this information in real-time.

This is only possible by integrating blockchain with an organisation's core systems and ensuring everyone knows how to access the data and maximise the potential of the information. This may seem obvious but how future technology will integrate with an organisation's ERP is a consideration that is often over-looked as people focus on solving the problems of today.

Considering the potential of how emerging tech like blockchain will connect with your digital core will ensure you are ready when the time is right to deploy blockchain - and that your organisation doesn't miss out on those key benefits it provides.

ANDY BELL

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About Edenhouse Solutions

Edenhouse Solutions help forward-thinking businesses reimagine their business processes, by harnessing the power of SAP innovation to drive transformation and change management success. A leading strategic partner to small, medium and large businesses across multiple industries, Edenhouse inspire business leaders to create a growth mindset to leverage their SAP investment, and Cloud strategies to achieve competitive edge. Headquartered in Birmingham UK, with offices in Farnborough and Manchester, the company employs highly talented SAP consultants and solution architects who are passionate about driving our Customer for Life ethos and helping create an Intelligent Enterprise to drive success.
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Andy Bell started his career in engineering, and now has over 20 years' SAP experience across a wide range of roles. At Edenhouse, Andy's role is to keep abreast of all the latest developments across the SAP portfolio and the wider technology market and uses that to develop and maintain Edenhouse' products and services accordingly.

BRINGING TASTY TECHNOLOGY TO THE TABLE:
ERP Specialized for the Food and Beverage Industry

*by **Robin Irvine,** Avaap's Managing Director, Europe*

Major trends and paradigm-shifting innovation are impacting the food and beverage industry. From the rise of functional foods and plant-based proteins to more earth friendly packaging and sustainability practices amid changing regulatory demands, there is a lot for modern manufacturers to keep up with to remain competitive. On top of changing consumer trends and evolving regulations, manufacturers also need to increase efficiencies across multiple facilities, lower inventory costs, and bring new products to market faster if they want to succeed.

The factory of the future optimizes people, processes, and technology. Due to fast-paced changes, Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems that seemed so capable only a few years ago can barely keep up. Food and beverage organizations interested in modernizing are faced with the decision of whether to select generic or industry-specialized software and whether to deploy on premise or in the cloud.

Specialized technology for the food and beverage industry helps manufacturing organizations with everything from raw material and resource management to formula control and product labelling, allowing for compliance with industry regulations as well as efficiencies to increase production and introduction of new lines of product to market. End-to-end visibility of business processes can help lean product development, deliver greater control across geographies and currencies, and improve operations to grow the business and profitability. When ERP is tailored specifically for food process manufacturers, it can ensure the business meets the stringent requirements of national and local safety standards along with the ability to identify and trace every single ingredient consumed in the manufacturing process, from receipt through processing, packaging, shipping, and consumption from the customer.

Traceability. It's what's on the menu

Manufacturers looking to select and implement a new ERP system have a critical decision to make from the start: to go with a generic ERP solution that provides one-size-fits-all functionality or an industry-specific ERP solution that provides the functionality that meets needs of food manufacturers for traceability, packaging, and end-to-end supply chain visibility. An industry-specific ERP system will offer additional functionality specific to meet the operational needs of food process manufacturers that generic ERP systems don't offer.

For example, when it comes to food safety, a solution that includes best practices in traceability is critical. Ability to trace the production and path of products from raw material through to the retail level helps process manufacturers get end-to-end visibility and in front of

issues when faced with a recall. Traditional solutions, especially those not designed for the food and beverage industry, do not have inherent traceability functionality. Software that offers extensive trackback information or built-in alerts when a product is past its freshness date can protect the process manufacturers from penalties and consumers from food that might not be safe.

Some manufacturers have bolted on solutions to drive greater traceability, but with evolving regulations, previously used add-on software may not support compliance. The industry is working to put standardized traceability initiatives in place to help maximize the effectiveness of current track and trace procedures, and while currently voluntary, food and beverage manufacturers need to look at traceability functionality when considering a system for the future and for process manufacturers in Europe, the ability to facilitate complex compliance requirements even at the local level.

Feasting on innovation

The definition of success in process manufacturing is the ability to bring consumers new ingredients, new flavors, and new product lines. Getting new products to market quickly is necessary to keep pace with consumer and major retailer demands. A vertically focused solution for beverage, meat and poultry, dairy, bakery, frozen, and processed food manufacturers can help speed innovation and bringing new products to market while ensuring product development adheres to evolving compliance and regulatory demands.

When evaluating software, process manufacturers should look at what the solution offers for recipe control. Can it handle a lot of technical and descriptive information like formula, quantity, costing and historical information and deliver a single unified view across the supply chain? Is it able to handle varying units of measurements as well as version control and formulas to ensure product and process consistency? The right application will address the unique and specialized needs of process manufacturers, including recipe management, lot traceability, shelf life management, quality control and regulatory compliance.

Clean Labels, Compliance and Safe Foods

The food and beverage industry are a heavily regulated industry. Many of the regulations share similar requirements, but no two are the same and the penalty for non-compliance can be severe. Paying attention to processes and procedures, sequencing and scheduling, and how resources are trained can create an effective compliance program.

As mentioned above, software that can track ingredients, drilling down into the recipe with visibility across the entire product lifecycle, is critical for process manufacturers. An ERP with built-in traceability functionality can help manufacturers quickly identify the source of a contaminant or quality problem in minutes for immediate response.

Industry-specialized ERP also helps with batch management and proper sequencing of clean-out processes so allergens aren't introduced into the production cycle. For example, if a product made in a factory that also processes peanuts is labelled as allergen-free and the clean-out wasn't performed properly, potential exists for peanut residue to be entered into the product. Being able to document the time between clean-out and production and show that equipment is well-maintained and operated by the staff can save manufacturers from penalties or reputation damage.

With so much attention on food safety and an increasing number of certifications an organization can achieve to demonstrate it operates at the highest standard, an industry-specific ERP solution can also track skills and certifications to ensure the correct staff is assigned to a project. Automating the verification process on project staffing allows to devote more time to innovation and product development.

Food and beverage manufacturers have so much on their plates, from shortening time to market, to maintaining high compliance standards and lowering the likeliness of recalls. An ERP system built specifically with food and beverage manufacturers goals and challenges in

mind and deployed in the cloud allows users to focus on strategic work that advances the business, without IT teams needing to worry about patch application, bulky add-ons and integration issues. Today's systems are also designed with flexibility top-of-mind, so as organizations grow and expand, they are ready to meet the industry-specific needs of food process manufacturers today and in the future.

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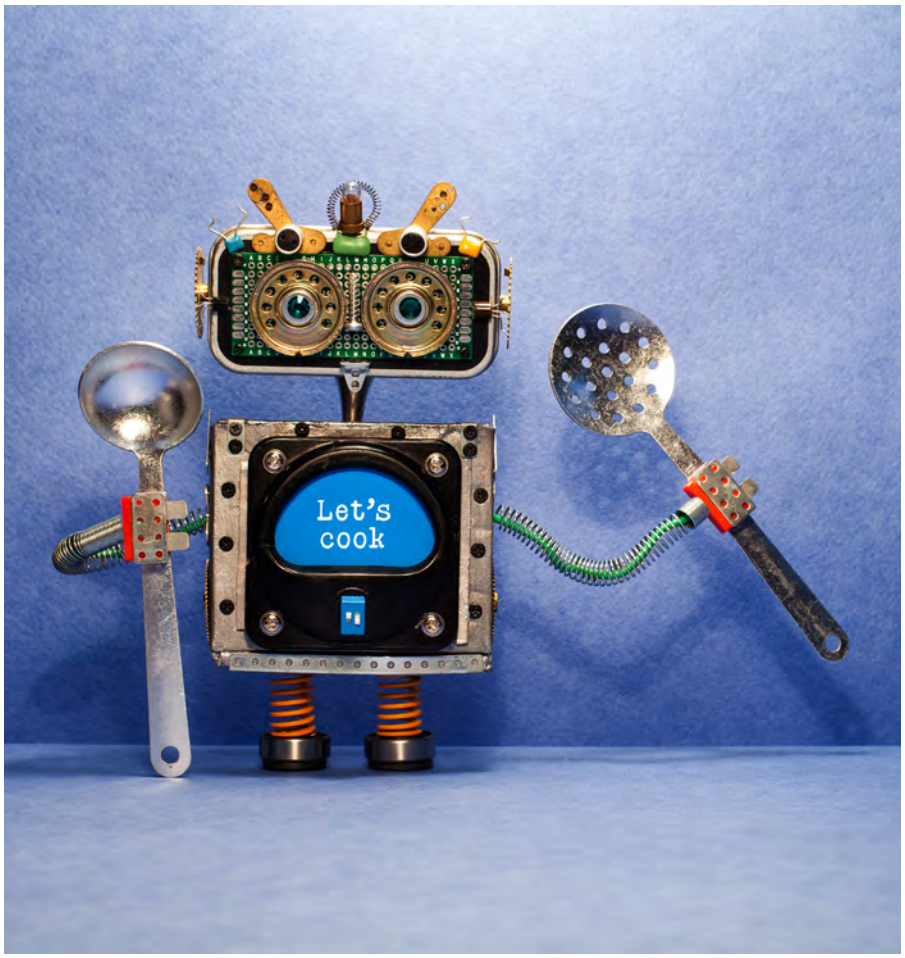

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Avaap is an industry-focused advisory services and IT management consulting firm. Headquartered in Edison, N.J. with global offices and customers around the world, Avaap has deep expertise in healthcare, retail, fashion, manufacturing and distribution, and other industries. Avaap has earned numerous industry accolades, including being named on Computerworld's list of 100 Best Places to Work in IT since 2014; recipient of Infor's Alliance Partner of the Year award since 2014 as well as winner of several other Infor partner awards; five year honoree on the Inc. 500, KLAS Category Leaders for Revenue Cycle Optimization, recipient of NJBIZ 50 Fastest Growing Companies since 2015, and multi-year recipient of Becker's Healthcare and Modern Healthcare's Top Places to Work awards. Avaap's culture is powered by passionate people who are relentless in driving customer satisfaction.

Robin Irvine is Avaap's Managing Director in Europe where he is responsible for the sales strategy and delivery execution. A 25-year industry veteran and chairman of the M3 User Association for UK, Ireland, and Benelux, Robin brings deep IT and Infor M3 experience, with emphasis on the food and beverage and consumer goods manufacturing industry. He also brings experience in the used oil recycling, bio digestion, and pet food industries.

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