ERP NEWS MAGAZINE

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Executive Vice President of Sage X3 at Sage

NICK GOODE

"EVERY BUSINESS IS UNIQUE AND THAT THEY SHOULD PROCEED WITH A DEPLOYMENT OPTION THAT WILL PROVIDE THEM WITH THE BEST PLATFORM TO DRIVE."

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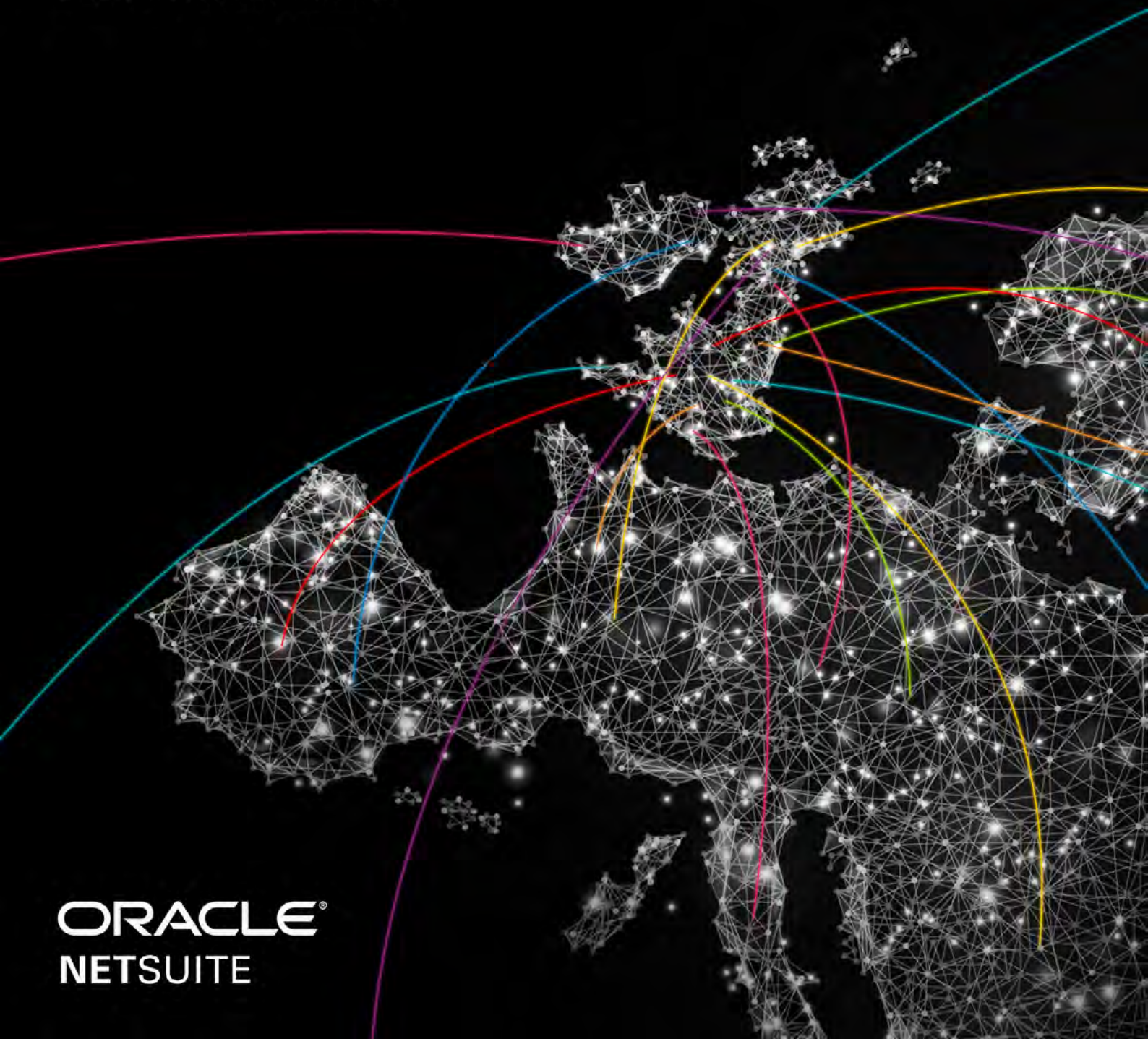

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Hello to everyone from the 4th issue of ERP News Magazine,

I would like to start by thanking you for your interest in our magazine during the 3 issues we left behind. We continue to improve every aspect of our team and content in line with your feedback. So, feel free to write to us!

Our interview with Nick Goode, Executive Vice President, Sage Business Cloud X3 definitely makes this issue special! Nick shares his insights into the ERP industry and lets us see behind the scenes of Sage's success.

We also asked the question of "how to choose the right implementation partner" to several professionals in this issue! You will be surprised by their different answers.

Mobile ERP, which offers freedom of time and space in today's business world, was another topic we focused on. As in every issue, we have compiled the latest news and articles about ERP in this issue. I hope you enjoy reading as much as we enjoyed preparing this issue.

See you next month!

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SAP TO ENHANCE CAPITAL RETURN IN 2020

In light of SAP's strong financial performance and balance sheet, the Supervisory Board of SAP SE approved the Executive Board's plan for enhanced capital return in 2020. Under this new program, the Company is authorized to repurchase shares and/or issue a special dividend with a combined volume of €1.5 billion by December 31, 2020.

- Enabled by strong financial and operational performance
- €1.5 billion of share repurchases and/or special dividend
- To be completed by December 31, 2020

This enhanced capital return will be in addition to SAP's regular dividend policy of distributing at least 40% of its IFRS profit after tax. The Supervisory Board and Executive Board are confident that SAP's strategy of investment in innovation and profitable growth, together with disciplined capital return, will maximize shareholder value for the long term.

SAP Co-CEOs Jennifer Morgan and Christian Klein said: "SAP's operational excellence initiatives are driving improved financial performance, and we are pleased that SAP is in a position to share this benefit with shareholders. The enhanced capital return in 2020 underscores SAP's commitment to shareholder returns and disciplined capital allocation."

SAP CFO Luka Mucic said: "Share buybacks and special dividends, in addition to an attractive regular dividend policy, are an important element to building shareholder value and enabling our shareholders to participate in our success." The timing and instruments of capital returns will be determined by the Company based on its evaluation of market conditions, company performance and other factors. The issuance of any special dividend is subject to shareholder approval at the AGM.

SAP will provide further details on its capital allocation policy, as well as its initiatives to accelerate operational excellence and value creation, at its Special Capital Markets Day in New York on November 12, 2019.

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

MOBILE TECHNOLOGY AND THE HOTEL GUEST EXPERIENCE - 3 BENEFITS

As much as technology is changing the landscape of the hospitality industry, the goal of hotel organizations remains the same; create consistently great experiences for guests to keep them coming back. To do that, hotel organizations are creating technology platforms to support their guests' preferred ways to interact with their properties and brands. That means supporting the use of mobile devices to check in and out, but also to serve as room keys, adjust in-room controls, manage communications with hotel teams, and more.

That kind of functionality offers a more friction-free experience in a few important ways. But that functionality is just a means to an end. When hotel brands invest in a technology platform that supports the use of mobile technology, what value do they add to the guest experience? Here are three benefits that hotels can deliver to bring the guest experience to the next level.

1. A sense of continuity

The use of mobile devices permeates nearly every aspect of life. From banking, to paying for groceries, to social media, to simple communications on the go, 3.7 billion people use mobile devices to manage daily tasks as a matter of course. Mobile technology and the role it plays in people's lives impacts how they perceive any process in which they're expected to participate. If guests manage processes on their devices outside of the hotel location, they should also be able to do so during their stay, too. To appeal to this sensibility, hotel locations must establish a sense of continuity by creating environments that are friendly to mobile use.

This is all about empowering guests as they interact with the brand without any bumps in the road, whether it's making a payment, a service request, or just managing their lines of communication with the location before and during their stay. For hotels, this makes it more important than ever to develop and invest in a technology platform that supports these kinds of mobile-based interactions to serve present needs and also to help prepare for what's likely to come in the future around self-directed mobile-centric services, too.

2. A sense of visibility

It goes without saying that good communication is the key to any healthy relationship, which is how leading hotel organizations approach serving guests. Mobile devices are a vital channel to achieving that. This is because of that sense of continuity touched on earlier; keeping everyone in the loop is important to any good process, especially when it includes the guest themselves. When a hotel location easily manages communications about room availability or other important updates via SMS to guest mobile devices from wherever that guest happens to be, that goes a long way in raising the quality of their experience.

The same goes for mobile-friendly processes for staff, too. When hotels manage internal processes with mobile in mind to make next steps more visible, it's easier to get teams on the same page all at once. mobile-based functionality to areas of the business such as housekeeping connects each team member to a central hub to manage tasks that enhance the quality of service. This has a direct effect on how the guest experiences their stay.

3. A sense of control

When guests have a sense of continuity and are connected to communications that provide visibility, a third benefit emerges; greater control for the guest. This reflects a fundamental shift overall in the hospitality industry. At one time, guests had to fall in line with rigid processes that limited their control and resulted in line-ups, longer wait times, and expectations imposed on them by the hotel that sometimes ran contrary to comfort and convenience. Mobile technology has turned that around.

With a mobile-friendly PMS that provides web-based options for guests, the guest can take control of the process. With their mobile devices, guests can check in and out wherever they are, at their convenience. They can use their device as their room key and can manage their in-room controls, too. They can make payments. They can manage processes literally in the palms of their hand. This sense of control helps define the central mission of all hospitality organizations; guests are empowered to feel more at home.

How well prepared is your business?

Mobile technology and its role in people's lives all over the world has fundamentally changed the way leading hospitality organizations serve guests. How well prepared is your business in the light of changing technology and cultural forces which certainly include supporting mobile technology?

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

NETSUITE HELPS FRENCH ORGANIZATIONS UNLOCK GROWTH

ORACLE
NETSUITE

Oracle NetSuite has introduced new innovations and a new partner engagement initiative to help organizations in France unlock growth and take their business to the next level. The latest innovations within the NetSuite platform include a new SuiteSuccess industry cloud solution and new capabilities for nonprofits that are designed to help small and rapidly growing organizations in France manage all aspects of their business in a single system. The new partner initiative will help new and existing NetSuite partners in France meet growing demand for cloud ERP systems and accelerate customer success.

"Organizations in France are faced with increased competition, shifting customer expectations and the pressure to grow both locally and internationally," said Nicky Tozer, VP of EMEA, Oracle NetSuite. "Last year we made a commitment to helping organizations in France quickly and easily take advantage of our platform to gain the visibility, control and agility needed to address these challenges and unlock growth. These updates underline our commitment to giving our customers and partners in France a blueprint for growth."

SuiteSuccess is a pre-configured industry cloud solution that helps organizations achieve the benefits of the cloud in as little as 45 days. With the new SuiteSuccess Starter edition for France, NetSuite customers in France can get up and running with pre-configured KPIs, workflows, reminders, reports and value-driven dashboards for all key roles within a business. This helps enable organizations in France to take advantage of industry-leading practices, which combine deep domain knowledge with pre-built workflows, KPIs and dashboards to help achieve the visibility, control and agility needed to grow their business and unlock their potential.

To help nonprofits and social enterprises of all sizes take advantage of the latest cloud technologies, NetSuite is launching its Social Impact program in France. Since 2006, the NetSuite Social Impact program has helped more than 1,500 nonprofits streamline business processes and focus time and resources on their core mission. The NetSuite Social Impact program will help nonprofits in France take advantage of three key areas:

Suite Donation: Built on decades of industry expertise, Suite Donation helps enable nonprofits to achieve business value from NetSuite as soon as possible.
Suite Pro Bono: Gives nonprofits access to projects and events as well as skilled pro bono and executive coaching that is delivered by NetSuite employees, partners and customers in a variety of areas from marketing to financial management.
Suite Capacity: Helps nonprofits share best practices and learn from each other by providing online resources and educational opportunities that include guidance on leading practices that help build confidence, skills and success.
To help new and existing partners in France meet growing demand for cloud ERP systems, NetSuite has also launched its SuiteLife partner initiative in France. SuiteLife delivers a comprehensive set of resources, certified training and tools that help enable NetSuite partners to develop expertise around specific business functions, product areas and industries. With SuiteLife, NetSuite partners in France can access knowledge and expertise related to NetSuite solutions that may help customers succeed, differentiate their practices and expand their business.

Lojelis, a technology consulting company in France, recently joined the SuiteLife program.

"SuiteLife has been instrumental in getting our team up to speed quickly on all things NetSuite," said Arnaud Dugenne, managing director, Lojelis. "At Lojelis, we are rapidly expanding our business to help French organizations take advantage of NetSuite to unlock growth and benefit from our expertise across finance, the supply chain and project management."

ORACLE HONORS EXCELLENCE IN CONSTRUCTION AND ENGINEERING

ORACLE NETSUITE

Oracle has recognized those Americas customers who have been charting new paths and reimagining the building industry through technology with the 2019 Oracle Construction and Engineering Excellence Awards. Building on the Oracle Aconex Connect Awards, this new awards program has highlighted noteworthy customers that have been successfully improving project delivery across industries.

Project- and asset-intensive organizations face numerous challenges, including growing project complexity, rising competition, fragmented project supply chains, and increasing risks. Selected from a large number of entrants, this year's winners demonstrated compelling results in overcoming these challenges through their use of Oracle's Construction and Engineering solution suite, including Oracle's Primavera solutions, Oracle Aconex and Oracle Textura Payment Management.

"The Oracle Construction and Engineering Excellence Awards winners represent organizations of all sizes that have demonstrated remarkable success from the digital transformation of their businesses across the project and asset lifecycle," said Mark Webster, senior vice president and general manager, Oracle Construction and Engineering. "From significant productivity gains, to better payment outcomes across the supply chain, to unlocking project intelligence for smarter decision making, the improvements realized by these organizations underscore their leadership in driving project delivery forward, with benefits that extend to all stakeholders. We congratulate the honorees and are thrilled to recognize their accomplishments."

Select results from the 2019 Oracle Construction and Engineering Excellence Awards winners:

Austin Commercial achieved enterprise-wide standardization with Oracle Textura Payment Management, reducing pay application processing time from four to five days to just two days.

Ameren Corporation reduced the time spent evaluating project justifications by 90 percent (from 30-60 minutes, to just three to five) with Oracle's Primavera P6 Enterprise Project Portfolio Management (EPPM) and Oracle's Primavera Unifier.

BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina accomplished organizational transformation with the help of Oracle's Primavera Unifier and is now able to close internal work orders 50 percent faster than previously.

DPR Construction eliminated 360 accounting hours per week through its implementation of Oracle Textura Payment Management and a direct link to its ERP system, meaning tens of millions of dollars now reach subcontractors up to seven days faster.

Sage Homes Northwest sped up work package assignment to new projects by 66 percent utilizing Oracle Primavera Cloud.

Customers were nominated for the 2019 Oracle Construction and Engineering Excellence Awards in the following categories:

Data-driven Insights
Enterprise-wide Standardization
Innovation in Sustainability
Innovator of the Year (Individual award)
Platform Expansion
Social Impact Project of the Year
Solutions Implementation
Systems Integration

In addition, honorees were recognized for their achievements in the following segments: Energy and Resources, Industrial Manufacturing, Public Infrastructure, and Residential and Commercial.

Below is a full list of 2019 Oracle Construction and Engineering Excellence Awards winners in the Americas:

- Ameren Corporation (Ameren) – Platform Expansion in Energy and Resources, Primavera P6 Enterprise Project Portfolio Management (EPPM), Primavera Unifier
- AMP United, LLC – Enterprise-wide Standardization in Residential and Commercial, Oracle Primavera Cloud
- ATCO Ltd. (ATCO) – Enterprise-wide Standardization in Energy and Resources, Primavera P6 EPPM, Primavera Unifier
- Austin Industries (Austin Commercial) – Enterprise-wide Standardization in Public Infrastructure, Oracle Textura Payment Management
- BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina – Enterprise-wide Standardization in Residential and Commercial, Primavera Unifier
- DPR Construction – Systems Integration in Residential and Commercial, Oracle Textura Payment Management
- Facebook – Innovator of the Year, Jason Mennig of the Data Center Engineering and Construction business unit, and Company award for Solutions Implementation in Residential and Commercial, Primavera P6 EPPM
- FirstEnergy Corp. – Systems Integration in Energy and Resources, Primavera P6 EPPM, Primavera Unifier and Oracle Primavera Portfolio Management (OPPM)
- Hampton Roads Sanitation District – Systems Integration in Public Infrastructure, Primavera P6 EPPM, Primavera Unifier
- Intercorp Retail – Solutions Implementation in Residential and Commercial, Primavera Unifier
- Lendlease Corporation – Innovator of the Year for Data-driven Insights in Residential and Commercial, Michael Mull, Oracle Textura Payment Management, Textura Business Analytics and Innovator of the Year for Enterprise-wide Standardization in Residential and Commercial, Dominic Giannola, Oracle's Primavera P6 EPPM
- Matthew Harris – Innovator of the Year for Solutions Implementation in Public Infrastructure, Oracle Aconex
- Monteith Construction Corp. – Solutions Implementation in Residential and Commercial, Oracle Primavera Cloud
- Oceaneering International, Inc. – Innovator of the Year for Enterprise-wide Standardization in Energy and Resources, Dalbert Varnell Jr., Primavera P6 EPPM
- Sage Homes Northwest – Systems Integration in Residential and Commercial, Oracle Primavera Cloud
- VESTA – Enterprise-wide Standardization in Residential and Commercial, Oracle's Primavera Unifier

Read about Global 2019 Oracle Construction and Engineering Excellence Awards winners here.

About Oracle

The Oracle Cloud offers a complete suite of integrated applications for Sales, Service, Marketing, Human Resources, Finance, Supply Chain and Manufacturing, plus Highly Automated and Secure Generation 2 Infrastructure featuring the Oracle Autonomous Database. For more information about Oracle (NYSE: ORCL), please visit us at www.oracle.com

GARTNER IDENTIFIES TOP DIGITAL EXPERIENCE TRENDS FOR 2020

Gartner

Analysts Present Latest Research on Digital Trends at Gartner IT Symposium/Xpo 2019, October 28-31 on the Gold Coast, Australia

Gartner, Inc. has identified nine digital experience trends that organizations need to explore in 2020. CIOs should consider these trends in their strategic planning over the next 12 months as the span of digital touchpoints continues to increase.

Gartner's digital experience trends fall within two broad categories — how digital technology is experienced and how digital experiences will be built. The way in which engaging digital experiences are crafted is becoming increasingly formalized, which means that delivering a digital experience that ensures a measurable outcome will require both creative excellence and consistent process execution.

Speaking at Gartner IT Symposium/Xpo in Australia today, Brian Prentice, research vice president at Gartner, said digital experience is a key aspect of workforce digital dexterity — the ability and desire to use new and existing technology for better business outcomes — to close the skills gap and drive competitive advantage.

"Willingness to engage with digital technology will become a key factor in determining any IT system's ability to successfully deliver business outcomes," Mr. Prentice said. "Digital experience is no longer limited to the domain of born-digital companies or outlier enterprises in specific industries. CIOs must ensure that their organization puts as much effort into understanding how people interact with and experience digital technology as they put into tracking technology itself."

Gartner's top digital experience trends for 2020 (in no particular order) are:

1. Multiexperience

Multiexperience refers to the various permutations of modality (touch, voice and gesture), device and app with which users interact on their digital journeys. A multiexperience strategy involves creating fit-for-purpose apps based on touchpoint-specific modalities, while at the same time ensuring a consistent and unified user experience (UX) across web, mobile, wearables, conversational and immersive touchpoints.

2. Interfaceless Machines

Manufacturers across industries are abandoning on-machine controls or traditional interface models in favor of apps that run on their customers' mobile devices. Larger screens on mobile devices, high resolutions and rich device APIs allow for device control experiences far beyond what can be achieved with on-machine interfaces. This opens up whole new avenues for advances in a product's industrial design, while still allowing manufacturers to compete on new functionality made possible by added microprocessors.

3. Agent Interfaces

Agent interfaces employ artificial intelligence (AI) to predict what users intend to do from user input and other contextual cues. This information is then used to assist by either easing or automating the execution of those efforts. It shifts the attention of users from how a tool works to what they want to achieve with the tool. Agent interfaces represent a whole new paradigm of human-computer interaction and have broad implications that will greatly influence how enterprises interact with customers, offer services and

provide tools to employees. Conversational UIs (or chatbots) are good examples.

4. Facial Recognition Payment

This is a digital experience trend emerging in China, which will disrupt the widespread use of QR code payments and further diminish the use of bank cards and cash. Facial recognition payment is already happening outside China, particularly through Apple's Face ID with Apple Pay, with the trust existing between the user and the ecosystem provider (such as a bank). In China, however, consumers are required to give up privacy for an added level of convenience, with the trust primarily between the organization taking payment and the ecosystem provider. Facial recognition payment offers CIOs a whole new perspective on enhancing digital CX and driving business growth.

5. Inclusive Design

Inclusive design is the principle that the best way to serve the needs of the broad community is to consider the special needs of all possible communities. Originating as an approach to design for people with disabilities, inclusive design will expand to accommodate cultural sensitivities and behavior patterns. Designers need to consider features and capabilities that accommodate all segments that are potential customers or users of their products.

6. Insourced Digital Design Services

Digital design is the process organizations use to create the best digital experience for their customers, employees and other stakeholders. It has been undergoing a shift from being a service delivered almost entirely by external agencies to a capability provided by internal digital design teams. This trend is most pronounced in industries facing a rapid rate of digitalization. As digital touchpoints increase, insourcing digital design reduces costs and supplier complexity while increasing operational efficiency and digital experience innovation.

7. UX Research Renaissance

UX research and associated testing methodologies uncover human insights that are essential for successful design, development and innovation initiatives. Increasingly, the value of understanding users, what they do and why they do it is seen as a differentiator for organizations. UX research identifies both the features and the designs that products or experiences should have to drive usage, customer satisfaction, loyalty and ROI.

8. Design to Code

A new generation of digital design tools is emerging that allows designers to generate presentation layer code directly from screen designs and interactive prototypes. Design to code enables the dynamic and ongoing creation of templates, modules and components — both as design patterns and reusable code.

9. Design Ops

The need to define and implement design systems in the business has led to the creation of the design ops process and the emergence of tools to implement governance over the design process. Design professionals can create and deploy design standards, such as layouts, color palettes, typefaces, controls, components and other elements, and control them across multiple business units, applications, endpoints and other design variables.

"Compelling digital experiences are ultimately functions of digital design," Mr. Prentice said. "This process contextualizes both existing and emerging technologies in ways that are relevant and meaningful for people. A whole new set of digital technology to support both the individual tasks of designers and the efficiency of the overall design process is emerging. This combination of process formalization and technology will allow digital design to scale significantly."

Gartner clients can learn more in the report "The Leading Trends in Digital Experience — 2020."

About Gartner IT Symposium/Xpo

Gartner IT Symposium/Xpo is the world's most important gathering of CIOs and senior IT executives, uniting a global community of CIOs with the tools and strategies to help them lead the next generation of IT and achieve business outcomes. More than 20,000 CIOs, senior business and IT executives worldwide will gather for the insights they need to ensure that their IT initiatives are key contributors to, and drivers of, their organization's success. Follow news and updates from the events on Twitter using #GartnerSYM.

Upcoming dates and locations for Gartner IT Symposium/Xpo include:

November 3-7: Barcelona

November 11-14: Goa

November 12-14: Tokyo

March 2-4, 2020: Dubai

May 11-14, 2020: Toronto

Nick Goode,
Executive Vice President of Sage X3 at Sage

FOR SUCCESSFUL BUSINESSES IMPROVEMENT IS CONTINUOUS.

ERP Software Selection is a tough road to walk through and in this interview with Nick Goode, Executive Vice President of Sage Business Cloud X3, we talk about how the shift to cloud ERP affected today's IT executives' ERP buying decisions and we look behind the scenes of success of Sage in ERP industry. He explains why ERP software needs to be able to leverage business intelligence to work effectively. Here, he also answers all your questions about Sage Business Cloud X3 and its benefits and he talks about the importance of choosing the right ERP implementation partner.

*An interview with **Nick Goode**,*
Executive Vice President of Sage X3 at Sage

Could you tell us about your career and your role at Sage?

As Executive Vice President, Sage Business Cloud X3, I focus on researching market needs, identifying product solutions and establishing how to deliver intuitive, disruptive solutions that meet the evolving technological and legislative landscape of today and tomorrow.

"Going global" as a corporation doesn't need to be terrifying, so long as you have a strategy for how to manage the changes that come with it. I focus on global expansion and the complexities that it can bring to corporate structure and function.

Prior to joining Sage, I worked for other software companies in a variety of roles related to product management and marketing. With more than 20 years of experience in the enterprise space, I've worked within multiple industries ranging from manufacturing to financial services, and have worked with enterprise software customers in more than 50 countries.

Sage has been one of the prominent vendors in the ERP software market for many years. What is the secret to this success?

Though there are many factors that contribute to Sage's overall success, one of the primary factors is the way in which it was founded. Like many of our customers, Sage began as a startup. Founder David Goldman wanted to automate the print estimating and basic accounting process in his own business, and realized that other companies could benefit from the software he developed. Rinse and repeat on a global scale.

Where do you see your company in the global competition? How was 2019 and what are your business plans for 2020?

As a company, we focus on efficiency, profitability, and a continued commitment to constant process improvement. Sage has continued to enrich its product suite and provide customers with aggregated, streamlined and formalized processes – which serve our customers and their growing businesses well. Sage will never stop exploring, refining and keeping technology at the forefront as a possible solution to any problem. For successful businesses, improvement is continuous.

Do you think the shift to cloud ERP is changing the way ERP buying decisions are made?

Absolutely – today's IT executives have more choices than ever before when selecting an ERP solution. The needs

and pain points that arise from deep industry vertical complexities can often overwhelm an executive trying to decide which features and functions are the most important for their business. As a result, mistakes are often made when choosing, deploying or implementing an ERP system.

There are critical factors that should be considered before proceeding with ERP deployment. For example, on-premises deployment requires dedicated IT staff, up-to-date servers and hardware in-house; whereas cloud solutions are better used by a remote workforce and require strong internet connectivity for cloud-deployment.

Buying a cloud-based ERP solution needs to be a collaborative decision between a business' C-Suite and its IT department. The cloud requires a high level of integration in order for it to fit appropriately into an enterprise's existing infrastructure.

What can you say about the future of Cloud ERP?

As a society, we're all more than familiar with the benefits that the cloud brings to our lives outside of work; for instance, on-demand streaming services. However, product-centric businesses appear to be slower to move to the cloud world. But, as the workforce begins to demand the same technology, we are seeing the tide turn.

Companies were relatively quick to move CRM or talent management to the cloud. However, migrating ERP is less straightforward. Concerns around privacy and compliance exist, as well as the challenge of stripping what can be enormous levels of complexity and customization out of legacy systems before making the switch. Many businesses are seeing the benefits of storing data in the cloud. These benefits include cost savings across hardware and deployment, an upgrade-free world, the availability of AI, and the emerging idea of collective insights, where we can begin to predict customer trends using big data analysis.

Sage Business Cloud X3 is a next-generation business management solution for enterprises. What are the 5 reasons companies should choose Sage Business Cloud X3 as an ERP System?

Sage Business Cloud is changing how businesses compete and grow by delivering faster, simpler and flexible financial, supply chain and production management – at a fraction of the cost and complexity of typical enterprise ERP systems:

- Faster – Sage X3 accelerates your entire business from procurement to production, warehousing, sales, customer service, and financial management – and delivers faster insight into costs and performance at every step, on a global scale.

> **IN ORDER FOR ERP SOFTWARE TO WORK EFFECTIVELY, IT NEEDS TO BE ABLE TO LEVERAGE BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE – WITHOUT THIS, THE INFLUX OF DATA ISN'T ABLE TO MANIFEST ITSELF INTO USEFUL INFORMATION AND ACTIONABLE NEXT STEPS.**

- Simpler – Sage X3 adapts to users' unique roles, preferences, and workflow, delivering secure cloud and mobile access to the data they need while simplifying the management of company software infrastructure with one cohesive suite of applications.
- Tailored – Sage X3 offers flexible configuration options and applications to support industry-specific processes and can be operated in the Cloud –managed by Sage – or in a company data center, providing total control over IT strategy.
- Adaptable – Sage X3 supports specific industries and multiple legislative regulations and languages.
- Customizable – Sage X3 can support industry-specific processes, enabling teams to work smarter and more efficiently with a modular and flexible system that will grow.

As most enterprises come to learn quickly, simply having an ERP solution installed is not much use. What are the reasons why business intelligence plays an important role in ERP?

Just about every business has adopted an ERP system to keep data within one common software platform. ERP systems have a diverse range of powerful yet flexible business applications. For example, ERP software can be used to create and maintain a cohesive, multi-functional database, allowing multiple divisions, such as management and sales, to collaborate with real-time synchronization – rather than wasting valuable time manually processing and creating reports. By streamlining workflow, managing information, and delivering actionable insights into trends and performance, ERP systems simultaneously increase productivity, mitigate the risk of errors, and ultimately, drive greater profitability.

In order for ERP software to work effectively, it needs to be able to leverage business intelligence – without this, the influx of data isn't able to manifest itself into useful information and actionable next steps. When implemented correctly, ERP software can lower costs while improving regulatory compliance, making ERP a fundamental tool for all types of businesses.

In today's dynamic and fast-paced environment, mobile business scenarios are especially common. What are the benefits of Mobile ERP applications?

A mobile ERP system has many advantages, including the ability to do business anytime, anywhere. Just like an ERP, mobile ERP is a group of integrated applications that companies can use to store and manage data at every stage

of the business. In a sense, mobile ERP is a solution to the problem of completing tasks away from the office and making it possible to work on the road through ERP applications.

The mobile capabilities are popular amongst field sales and services industries, where they need instantaneous access to work center applications as well as enterprise and business intelligence. Through mobile ERP, there's an inherent elimination of downtime and a huge increase in productivity as workers can access tools, materials, and information from their mobile devices. Having the ability to deliver real-time information while on the go gives organizations a competitive advantage by allowing them to capture more accurate data from the field without the need to re-enter the data "in the office."

Choosing the right ERP software is important, but deploying it the right way depends on choosing the right ERP implementation partner. How should companies address the question of how to deploy an ERP solution?

Businesses in virtually every industry are deploying ERP software to connect disparate business processes and solve a myriad of challenges. This includes everything from streamlining operations to managing complex business processes and using data to augment human decision-making. The business process improvement 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-premises to public cloud and private cloud, there are many options for organizations to consider amidst a changing market landscape.

It's also important to remember that not all business needs are the same. So, understanding which deployment option is best by focusing on a few fundamental factors is key to ensuring a smooth implementation process.

Typically, businesses that opt for a hosted or on-premises deployment will have a perpetual license with a one-off cost, rather than a subscription-based license 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 life cycle. For a business that is growing fast, a subscription license 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.

It's important to remember that every business is unique and that they should proceed with a deployment option that will provide them with the best platform to drive.

About SAGE

Sage is the global market leader for technology that helps small and medium businesses perform at their best. Sage is trusted by millions of customers worldwide to deliver the best cloud technology and support, with our partners, to manage finances, operations, and people. We believe in doing everything we can to help people be the best they can be, so the combined efforts of 13,000 Sage colleagues working with businesses and communities make a real difference to the world.

"EVERY BUSINESS IS UNIQUE AND THAT THEY SHOULD PROCEED WITH A DEPLOYMENT OPTION THAT WILL PROVIDE THEM WITH THE BEST PLATFORM TO DRIVE."

*An interview with **Nick Goode**,*
Executive Vice President of Sage X3 at Sage

sage

IS YOUR ORGANISATION READY FOR THE CLOUD? YOUR GUIDE FOR CROSSING THE CHASM

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*Article by **Robin Irvine**,*
Managing Director of Avaap Europe

Meat, poultry, and seafood processors face constant pressure to innovate and grow. As a result, many CIOs are investing time, resources, and capital in an effort to transform and keep up with demand. Whether it is new systems or processes, it means change, and not every organisation is ready for it.

Food and beverage manufacturers face unique challenges and need specialized technologies to meet the industry needs. Organisations that have been on the same ERP system for seven years or longer are potentially missing out on advanced capabilities and functionality, putting themselves at a competitive disadvantage. In addition to no longer operating at top efficiency, legacy software is known to face numerous problems such as increased data compliance and security risk and reduced software supportability, against the backdrop of increased risk of failure.

Additionally, many legacy systems are no longer supported by the vendors, meaning organisations operating the software, may experience increased maintenance costs to extend support or have no support in place at all. Older environments tend to have a high number of modifications as well, making the thought of a migration torturous and risky.

Compliance Complications

Compliance risk and exposure to penalties are a key concern for today's food processors. There are a number of regulations through the FDA in the U.S. and within the European Union, as well as individual countries, that govern food production, distribution, and consumption. The largest challenges with operating legacy software are the ever-changing compliance and regulatory mandates, including local and global standards. Non-compliance can result in reputation-damaging scenarios including health risks, recalls, fines, penalties, and supply chain interruption. Manufacturers also need to make sure products have the right labeling, coding, and markings so consumers have access to all relevant product information when purchasing food and beverage items.

EU organisations and organisations that process personal data of European residents have the added compliance layer of GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation). This regulation lays down strict rules for how customer data is used and stored. According to the regulation, personal customer data can only be stored and processed when the individual consents, for no longer than is necessary, and must be removed upon request.

The growing list of regulations and expectations of compliance can no longer efficiently be tracked on spreadsheets and external databases, as information is more likely to be error-prone and out of date. Modern ERP systems offer greater traceability capabilities and deliver real-time access

and automation, in a single location, for accurate tracking to facilitate meeting food and safety requirements.

Not So Fresh

Food and beverage manufacturers on legacy systems may suffer in additional ways from inefficient costing solutions to lack of transparency along the supply chain. In addition to failing to meet current needs, legacy systems likely do not have the flexibility to be able to match with future growth, whether that occurs organically or following M&A activity.

Organizations operating legacy systems are essentially frozen in time with no clear path forward. Food and beverage organizations operating in Europe need to ensure they are compliant with product requirements at all times. Achieving compliance requiring having software to manage large volumes of data and deliver real-time visibility across the business. Whether focused on the future or to facilitate compliance with industry-driven compliance programs and federal regulations, it is critical to review existing systems, capabilities of next-generation ERP platforms, and the deployment options available.

Exploring Options

Food and beverage manufacturers operating on outdated solutions have options when it comes to moving to a new ERP. Cloud migration can seem intimidating for manufacturing organizations running on legacy environments which are often multifaceted, with heavy modifications, and multiple bolt-on solutions. Some food processors may be looking for a tiered movement, migrating to the latest on-premise version and placed back on mainstream support, enabling IT strategy development and providing an appropriate level of security. Organizations with simpler setups or more recent environments may be more prepared for the move now.

Is Your Organisation Ready for the Cloud?

If the answer to cloud transformation readiness is yes, there are several things to ease crossing the chasm. Successful transition to the cloud begins with discovery and understanding of current processes, procedures, and opportunities. Take time to conduct analysis and look at what can be improved with a streamlined or automated approach. Go beyond just automating and look at how you can eliminate waste, redundancies, and inefficiencies. Simplicity is key.

> **"SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION TO THE CLOUD BEGINS WITH DISCOVERY AND UNDERSTANDING OF CURRENT PROCESSES, PROCEDURES, AND OPPORTUNITIES. TAKE TIME TO CONDUCT ANALYSIS AND LOOK AT WHAT CAN BE IMPROVED WITH A STREAMLINED OR AUTOMATED APPROACH.**

As part of the discovery process, research the different cloud vendors, learn what their systems do, and the roadmap for the future. Many of the top manufacturing software vendors make products that can support several industries, but keep in mind

the unique needs of food and beverage manufacturers and ensure the system you select can support labeling, ingredient and batch management, fixed and catchweight functionality, lot traceability, food safety, and other unique business requirements. Once the right solution has been selected, organisations can commence working with a system integrator to determine budget and project scope, and begin deployment. The solution, deployment option, and data readiness will all play a factor in the project timeline.

Moving to the cloud is more than a technology change, it's a culture shift requiring a deliberate approach to organizational change management to help people navigate new systems and ways of doing things. Early understanding of the impacts of change can guide better decisions and outcomes. It also ensures the organization devotes the right amount of resources to change.

The Future is Cloud

Digital transformation has risen to the top of the CIO agenda with many in the industry moving off-premise and into the cloud. A minority of organizations have made the full transition, but there is no arguing that cloud is the way of the future, especially as on-premise options decrease and begin to decommission. C-suite leaders are already seeing a competitive advantage and tangible impact digital transformation brings. As food manufacturers look to evolve their business and deliver exceptional customer experiences, coasting along on an old system is not the recipe for success. Now is the time to get your organization cloud-ready, whether your move is immediate or somewhere down the road, can lower risk, increase performance and ensure competitive excellence.

About Avaap

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. To learn more, visit www.avaap.com

Robin Irvine is managing director of Avaap 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.

HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT IMPLEMENTATION PARTNER

When choosing an implementation partner, look for organisations with experience in your industry, with the application and underlying technology. Culture fit is extremely important as is aligning with a firm that is customer- and success-focused to help advance the business goals.

Robin Irvine,
Managing Director, Avaap Europe

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AWARD WINNING INDEPENDENT SOFTWARE VENDORS JOIN FORCES TO BETTER SERVE ORACLE E-BUSINESS SUITE USERS

Enginatics
simple ERP reporting

More4Apps and Enginatics, leading independent software vendors, have formed a marketing partnership that will support EBS users with best-in-class products.

Two leading independent software vendors, More4Apps and Enginatics, have agreed to cross-promote their products in a marketing partnership that will give Oracle's E-Business Suite (EBS) users a comprehensive range of tools for super-fast reporting and streamlined data entry.

More4Apps has for almost twenty years been creating automation and integration solutions for users of EBS via an easy-to-use Excel interface. Their products enable those users to easily upload and download data, improving business process efficiency and data accuracy.

Enginatics was formed in 2010 and has grown to become a leading global technology company. Their Blitz Report software is the fastest reporting solution in the world for EBS users. The company specializes in reporting and performance tuning for EBS. More4Apps and Enginatics won Gold and Silver respectively in the Independent Software Vendor (ISV) category at the recent UKOUG Partner of the Year Awards in London. Enginatics was also recently listed in the highly-regarded CIO Applications magazine Top Ten Oracle Solution Providers for 2019.

Stu Keast, Senior Account Executive at More4Apps, commented; "We are thrilled to announce our new partnership with a company that is all about extremely fast downloads directly from EBS into Excel. Enginatics has developed tools that help users get the very best out of EBS without the need for expensive consultants. We are very excited to be working alongside the Enginatics team to make fast work of big jobs for Oracle EBS users."

In August this year Enginatics announced the availability of enhanced Performance Tuning for EBS. At the same time, the company introduced an in-depth performance audit service.

Andy Haack, managing director of Enginatics added: "We are delighted to be working with More4Apps, who are widely recognised for their technology and support. Many businesses can now benefit from using our products to get faster access to important data and optimize their development processes."

For further information please visit www.enginatics.com

HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT IMPLEMENTATION PARTNER

In our experience smaller companies tend to have a higher percentage of experienced staff, providing quality and agility. In short, they try harder because they must continually prove themselves. In the end, it's all about the experience of the individuals on the team, not the size or name of the company.

Andy Haack,
Managing Director of Enginatics

Enginatics
simple ERP reporting

ERP SOLUTIONS FOR THE MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT MANUFACTURING SECTOR

Genius SOLUTIONS

*Article by **Jesse Linklater**,*
Director of Marketing for Genius ERP

Tons of inventory, machines, and processes: this is what makes machinery and equipment manufacturing a challenge. Workflow management of multi-level assemblies can become a tangle of inter-dependencies for machinery manufacturers, but with an ERP inventory tracking, shop floor scheduling, and other MRP functions can easily be managed and adjusted for greater throughput. Machinery and equipment manufacturers can also gain an understanding of the actual costs of each build while becoming a reliable industrial machinery manufacturer for their customers by using key features and functionalities available in an ERP.

Enhancing collaboration across the manufacturing process

The need for collaboration in manufacturing processes is key for machinery and equipment manufacturers. Complex BOMs, fabricating parts and sub-assemblies and making a final assembly using hundreds of parts with multiple operations and thousands of tasks all add up to a complex manufacturing process. Without collaboration between departments, and an ERP system that can facilitate collaboration, machinery and equipment manufacturers can get lost in the weeds.

Often a disconnect typically exists among design, engineering, operations, and suppliers within a machinery shop. Not coordinating complex builds and having a lack of visibility throughout an organization can affect delivery dates and final product quality. But, one of the key advantages ERP software brings to machinery manufacturers is the ability to integrate multiple sets of data from different applications and departments across a product's life cycle. ERPs connect an entire shop, allowing for better communication and collaboration, meaning manufacturers can better facilitate the high level of communication and teamwork that is required within their manufacturing processes.

ERPs reduces the potential for quality problems or redundant work because a shop is working off of the same reliable information that anyone working from anywhere can access and use at any time. Manufacturers can enter data once, share it throughout their operation, and keep all documents and tracking information in one place for everyone to access. With integrations with accounting and engineering software, machinery manufacturers can avoid re-keying data, and can easily transfer information, like complex BOMs, from CAD software to their ERP, ensuring accuracy.

Many machinery and equipment manufacturers manufacture both a standard catalog of parts and equipment as well as create custom equipment for their clients. These manufacturers need an ERP system that is built from the understanding that custom manufacturing requires greater coordination between product development, estimation, production planning, and sales. An ERP built exclusively for custom manufacturers gives them an all-in-one-place to store and manage the complete range of information it needs for a custom job. Manufacturers can view details of open orders, prices, and preferred vendors, and can see the impact of their choices on production, finance, and procurement. An ERP eliminates the need for individual spreadsheets and creates a deeper level of connection between departments. The engineering department, crucial to the custom manufacturing process can easily interact, communicate, and share information with other key departments, such as purchasing and production with an ERP. Everyone can

get the information they need to do their jobs effectively. For example, including knowing what long-lead items are needed so that they can be ordered early on during the design phase, which will ensure the items arrive in time.

Tackling the challenges faced by machinery and equipment manufacturers

Genius ERP is ERP software designed for the specific needs of custom manufacturers working in the machinery and equipment sector. With over 60% of our customers in this sector, we specialize in providing manufacturing software systems that solve the business challenges of machinery and equipment manufacturers. Designed with only manufacturers in mind, Genius ERP is a good fit for industrial machinery and industrial equipment manufacturers working in all modes of production, as well as those who handle servicing and spare parts.

Wasted engineering time

A lot of engineering time can be eaten up by transferring the Bill of Materials, or BOM, out of a CAD system into an ERP. A BOM is the comprehensive list of parts, items, assemblies and other materials required to create a product, as well as for instructions required for gathering and using the required materials. An accurate BOM is one of the most critical elements of a custom manufacturing job, and transferring all of this important information out of a design system and into an ERP is crucial.

With a fully integrated system like Genius ERP, the engineering department can seamlessly export a BOM from a CAD system into an ERP, creating a fully itemized list of the materials, making it simple to compare the materials needed for the project against what is already on hand, as well as prepare for production. Not only will manufacturers save time and remove errors that come from manual data transcription and entry, but they will also be able to get more jobs done on time and on budget. The engineering department can spend more time working on design and engineering tasks, allowing machinery and equipment manufacturers to do more with their current level of resources. Selecting an ERP with this functionality is key for machinery and equipment manufacturers.

Inventory issues

Parts get allocated twice or aren't on the shelf when needed. However, with a connected system like Genius ERP, this struggle does not have to be eternal. Real-time inventory control, lets manufacturers avoid material and long-lead item shortages while optimizing the supply chain for rolling stock of goods available when required. Effectively managing inventory and keep stock levels at the right level reduces operational costs and allows manufacturers to better invest their resources into things like growing their business.

Accounting headaches and redundant entries

A jerry-rigged system tends to develop around ERP software that requires a lot of oversight and checking, eliminating the potential for greater efficiency. With Genius ERP, everything is centralized, tied to a job number, and historically trackable. Accountants can move beyond the need for tedious and manual checks and balances and have more time to focus on critical tasks.

Genius ERP also helps manufacturers create better quotes, and better understand job costs. Instead of quotes and estimates being educated guesses, with the data available from an ERP you can create a more accurate quote. Although each custom product is unique, ERP contains a stockpile of historical data from past jobs and products that manufacturers can access and analyze to help machinery and equipment manufacturers create better quotes.

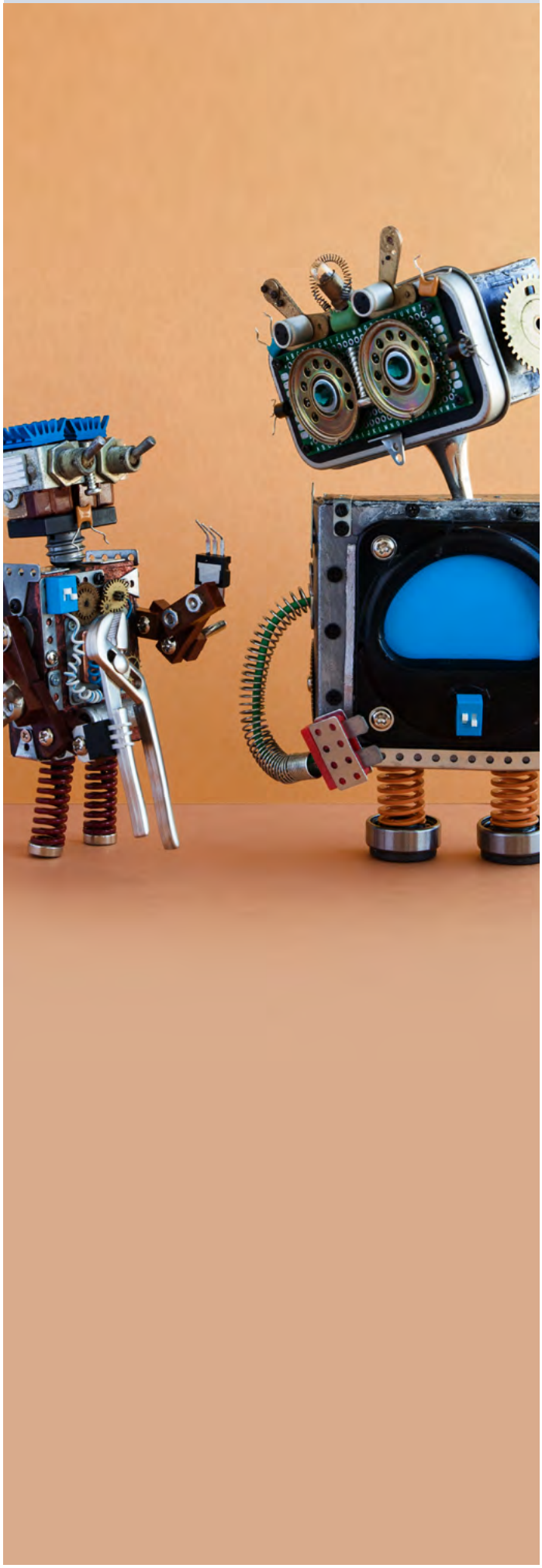
Project Management

Genius ERP allows custom manufacturers to effectively manage all milestones that need to be completed to get a job out of the door on time. Milestone management provides a high-level representation of all the activities that need to be completed in order to deliver a custom job. At every step, a manufacturer will know what task needs to be done and when, the progression of that task, and the exact stage it is at—all in real-time. Having an ERP means that a manufacturer will always have complete visibility over their entire shop, allowing machinery and equipment manufacturers to better manage and oversee all of their jobs.

About Genius ERP

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.



WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF CLOUD ERP?

*Article by **Lucy Thorpe**,*
Head of Content Creations of In Cloud Solutions

The Future of ERP is Cloud. But the Future of Cloud ERP is something quite different. Both are interesting!

The continued case for cloud

With cloud ERP hitting its stride, many companies are finally getting over their concerns about privacy and compliance in order to make the move. Fast-moving SMBs have been the quickest to adopt cloud solutions, while larger organisations have often been held back by their own complexity. Some companies just want to stay where they are.

The future of ERP will reflect the future of business as a whole. As we become more global, more mobile and more data-centric – we will need accessible ERP solutions to support us. This means cloud. Legacy and on-premise systems just can't do that in the same way.

Slowly does it

It's worth pointing out that not all cloud transitions are carried out in one go. Many organisations take the Finance function as a starting point. Then, as confidence grows, they move on to other functions, like supply chain and project management. For those midsized companies who have invested in a suite-in-a-box option, this is a straightforward process, as all the functionality is contained within the ERP system from the start.

Such products are not as well-known as they should be. SAP Business ByDesign, for example, has a relatively low profile, despite being one of the most effective all-in-one solutions for the midmarket. However, it's a useful example to use here, in order to show what tech customers might expect from the cloud in the near future.

Suite in a box ERP explained

The suite-in-a-box option is favoured by midsized companies with between 50 and 1,000 employees who don't have the complex needs of larger companies (who are often looking for highly bespoke on-premise solutions.) A very useful analogy, which explains the concept, is that of the coffee pod machine. Pod coffee is delicious and offers some elements of choice while also being straightforward and easy to use. Bespoke customers, however, would rather brew something more complex to their own specifications and that is fine because that is their choice.

The future of cloud ERP: Disruptor Technologies

At the heart of the product roadmap is the desire to listen to current users and make life better for them, which gives rise to new improvements every year. Many of these will be delivered via disruptor technologies like Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning.

The best cloud companies will be looking at these technologies to deliver tangible business benefits – giving time back to the user, rather than searching for problems that fit their high-tech solution. (More on this later)

> **MANY USERS DON'T WANT THE BOTHER OF CREATING THEIR OWN PERSONALISATIONS. THAT'S WHY BUSINESS BYDESIGN ENGINEERS HAVE CREATED A LIBRARY OF POPULAR SCENARIOS THAT WILL MAKE THE USER'S JOB EASIER. PICKING A PRE-CONFIGURED KPI OFF THE SHELF IS MORE CONVENIENT THAN CREATING YOUR OWN.**

The future is user-friendly

Each generation comes to cloud ERP technology with higher expectations than the last. The Apple kids want intuitive and stylish interfaces and won't settle for less. That's why even recently designed products need to be constantly improved. And more and more they are looking for time-saving shortcuts.

For example, many users don't want the bother of creating their own personalisations. That's why Business ByDesign engineers have created a library of popular scenarios that will make the user's job easier. Picking a pre-configured KPI off the shelf is more convenient than creating your own.

Predicting the Future

One way SAP uses Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning is in predicting what users want to do. The system learns for example, that a certain

combination of keystrokes is usually followed by a request for a certain report. It can then prepare the report in the background and pull it up faster when you ask for it.

Investing for the future

Another big area of Investment is on mobile. Cloud ERP users should be getting the same seamless experience from mobile as they do with the desktop version - unless of course there is an even better, mobile-specific way of doing things. The Business ByDesign app, for example, has an approval function you can act with a single swipe – helping you to get work done on the go.

Analytics

A big part of ERP's job is keeping the CEO out of jail and it's a comfort to know that the best cloud ERP providers have teams constantly scouring the globe for changes in regulations to keep customers compliant.

Information you can use

The biggest task for Cloud ERP today is to give customers access to their own information, wherever they are, in the formats that are the most useful to them. The future lies in finding the best possible way to keep on doing this – quickly, accurately and efficiently.

About 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 head of content for the UK based company In Cloud Solutions – the home of expertise in SAP cloud product Business ByDesign.

HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT IMPLEMENTATION PARTNER

This is such a crucial decision and it is worth taking the time to get it right. How well a software package is implemented is critical to how much value you get from it.

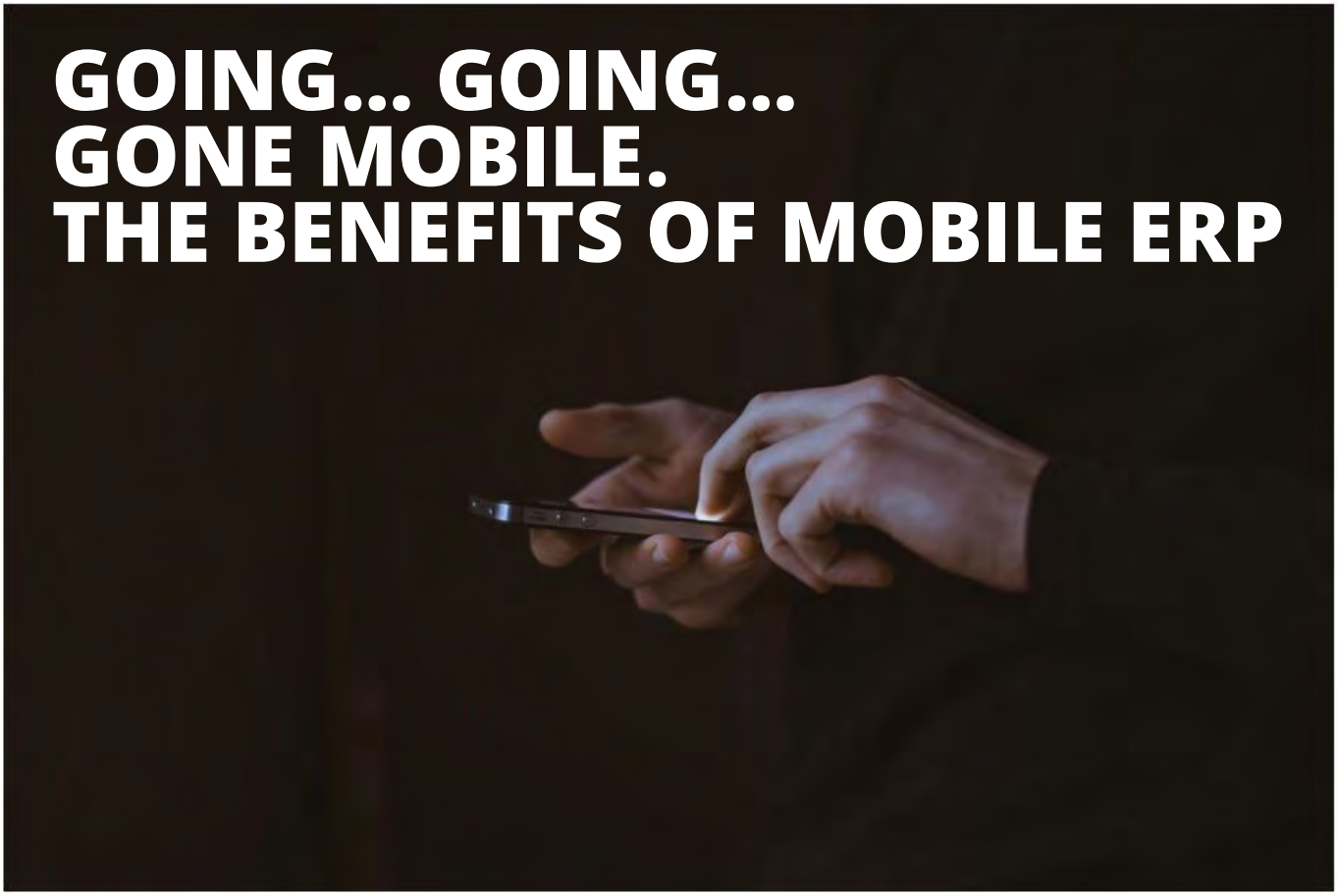
First up - cloud implementation projects are as much about business change as they are about technology – so accept that there is going to be some disruption. But with the right preparation and advice, you can minimise this and make your project a success.

Secondly, remember that the implementation process is mainly about people – so select your team and your partners wisely. Enthusiastic, patient, knowledgeable, good communicators? All these are things to look out for when making your choice. Above all, choose people you can work with and trust to give you the best advice. Good luck!

Lucy Thorpe,
Head of Content Creations of In Cloud Solutions

INCLOUD SOLUTIONS

GOING... GOING... GONE MOBILE. THE BENEFITS OF MOBILE ERP



priority™

*Article By **Eran Rozenfeld**,*
Managing Director, Priority Software U.S.

Traditional ERP was designed for desktops, but modern ERP is designed for laptops, smartphones, and tablets. It's not surprising, since mobility and longtime companion, real-time communications, pretty much lead the pack when it comes to software development and implementation.

This is why no one will dispute the fact that we are all 'mobile moguls' on every conceivable front, not just in business. So, it stands to reason that mobile ERP is no stranger either and that it has, all on its own, taken over the way companies handle their operations.

Mobile ERP is not a single application, but rather, a set of solutions that enable users to design their own mobile processes based on their workflows and needs. Sounds simple, right? In theory and in practice, it is – and it's best explained, like this:

In your average mobile ERP setup, users can enjoy having the comfort of using their ERP system via mobile devices, smartphones, and tablets, instead of a stationary computer. Mobile ERP enhances mobility, for real-time operations, on-the-go, from any location and at any time, boosting operational efficiency and productivity.

Mobile ERP: A win-win for you and your business

At the heart of mobile ERP is its ability to enable users to easily create, access and share business information via their mobile devices. This means real-time data access when and where you need it – to get the job done. Mobile ERP apps are abundant. The most popular apps include Mobile SalesForce, Mobile Service, Proof of Delivery, Warehouse (for WMS), Mobile Point-of-Sale (POS), Purchase Approval, and Employee Attendance, where workers can conveniently click-in work/project hours.

An ideal mobile ERP application will ultimately streamline your business operations and communication, yielding what you want most – improved collaboration and greater productivity. Here are five of the top (but not all) of the benefits of mobile ERP:

- **Improved Customer Service**

Allows customer service teams to improve service and support quality with fast and easy access to timely, relevant data.

- **Productivity Equals Success**

Today's on-the-go ("mobile") employees spend hours on the road or in airport terminals. Mobile ERP makes the best use of otherwise 'idle' time, helping to boost productivity with the information they need – at their fingertips.

- **Customers Are Key**

When customer-facing employees have fast and easy access to customer information, like purchase orders, and invoices, data is up to date and response time is fast and on track.

- **Real-Time is... Real.**

Accessing and processing real-time company data anywhere and at any time, helps employees/managers make informed decisions in real-time, with all the information they need.

- **It's All About the Data.**

With mobile ERP, accumulated and newly-entered data is automatically updated into the company's ERP system. No need to re-enter data, reducing potential manual errors. The Future of Mobile ERP – "In the palm of your hand"

If your business is on the road to mobility, remember that your in-house ERP system should have a responsive UI, so that mobile ERP can be easily accessed from various devices, adjusting itself to the screen size. You'll also want to ensure that you'll have a wide selection of mobile apps and dedicated field solutions, tailored for specific professionals and work processes. And perhaps the icing on the cake, a Mobile Application Generator, an innovative tool that enables non-developers, system admins or users, to create their own mobile apps in minutes, without any programming knowledge. Because of its immediate access to your work, your team's work and your overall operations, it's clear that mobile ERP can and will grow in popularity – and fast. Mobile ERP, already prevalent in organizations of all sizes, must also have the ability to scale with the business. A strong and viable mobile ERP system will do just that, but to be of real value, it must also have the tools necessary to integrate with new technology solutions. Don't settle for anything less.

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

Eran is an experienced ERP sales professional with close to 20 years of ERP software expertise, including project management, process analysis and system implementation. Prior to joining the Priority U.S. management team, Eran was Founder & CEO of Infobase Information Technology, a Priority ERP software consultancy and implementation provider based in Israel. He holds an MBA in Marketing from the UK's Darby University and a BA in Economics from Bar Ilan University, Israel.

HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT IMPLEMENTATION PARTNER

There are seven important things that every prospective buyer must know prior to choosing an implementation partner. However, when it comes to selecting an ERP software vendor, be it a replacement, upgrade or brand new system, this 'shortlist' is not only recommended, it's mandatory.

Vendor Stability.
Whether you're purchasing directly from the manufacturer or from a reseller, assess stability – find out how long they've been in business, how many employees they have and what their install base is. You want to choose a software vendor who will be around for a long time.

References.
Ask for references. Even if the software is a perfect fit, you need to check the vendor/reseller from every angle. The vendor should put you in touch with references using the software, and resellers, with other companies for whom they've provided similar services.

Working Demo.
No matter how attractive a sales pitch may seem, it's never enough. You need an actual working demo, and not what's coined as a demo environment. Tell the vendor what your needs are and insist that they show you some of the functionality working on their application.

Software Upgrades & Version Release.
Make sure your vendor's up-to-date with the latest trends and continues to upgrade their software in line with tech advances. Be sure you ask about frequency, policy, and costs: How do they handle bug reports and feature requests? How often do they release new versions and what, if any costs are involved?

Maintenance & Support.
To protect your investment, focus on what your vendor's M&S terms, different support levels, guaranteed response time, upgrades & service packs, toll-free calls, and web or email support. Make sure you get what you signed up for.

Implementation.
Be suspicious of vendors that agree to show you their solution before singling out who you are, what you do, and what you need. For starters, your ERP vendor should provide these implementation services (at the drop of a hat): Business/system analysis, Project management services, Installation, Customization, Set up reports/business rules, Data conversion/migration to a new system, and Training.

Training.
The vendor should have a clear plan for training your team, with either built-in user documentation, file-based, or a combination of both. Ask to see documentation samples, ensure that basic training is included in your offer, clearly define training objectives, and consider nominating a "superuser" from your team who will train other employees in-house.

Eran Rozenfeld,
Managing Director, Priority Software U.S.

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5 REASONS YOUR BUSINESS NEEDS ADAPTIVE ERP

*Article By **Brent Dawkins**,*
Director of Product Marketing, QAD

In business, the mantra used to be: the big fish eats the small fish. But with the rate of change accelerating worldwide, the mantra has become: the fast fish eats the slow fish. Speed is everything. The ability to recognize business disruption, pivot quickly and turn that disruption into a competitive advantage is crucial. Nowhere is this truer than a manufacturer's business processes.

Companies that use monolithic and rigid software, especially when it is used by the entire company, can struggle to react quickly enough. With so much rapid change already happening today, enterprise software, like Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), Demand and Supply Chain Planning (DSCP), Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and Quality Management Systems (QMS) must be agile and pass that agility on to the companies that employ it.

Manufacturers should fully understand the following five areas where adaptive ERP can boost business performance compared to legacy enterprise systems.

Adaptive ERP Simplifies Advanced Technology Adoption in Manufacturing Organizations

In an era of constant disruption, manufacturers need a solution that enables the quick adoption of new technologies like IoT, machine learning, artificial intelligence, RPA, data lakes, digital twins - and others that aren't even on the radar yet. A Forbes 2018 article highlighting research from Scott D. Anthony "confirms that indeed, for leaders to thrive in today's constantly disruptive way of life, they must be transforming today's and tomorrow's businesses." This quote certainly applies to the rapid introduction of new technologies and the beneficial role adaptive ERP can play in simplifying and adopting advanced technologies in your manufacturing organization.

Rapid Deployment Capabilities Allow for Effective ERP System Upgrades

Taking SAP as a Big ERP example, a recent study indicated that SAP customers have a roughly 50-50 chance of achieving a successful project with just under half (48%) of the respondents indicating that their project failed to achieve the business objectives. Given that Big ERP systems support a company's key business operations, failing to

reach an ERP project's goals can have a devastating impact on the bottom line, a CIO's effectiveness and the progress of any business strategy.

Long gone are the days when companies have to suffer through lengthy implementation projects with monolithic software suites that come with high project costs, business disruption and IT frustration. More and more, CIOs want their new ERP solution deployed rapidly to mitigate costs and boost time to benefit. Manufacturers now realize how important implementation speed is in support of their ability to minimize costs and risk to the business.

Next-generation ERP providers deliver more adaptive and less complex systems that allow clients to quickly tailor the software to their business and be cost-effective when it's time to upgrade. Getting a system up and running rapidly saves money, and speed is now a key consideration for any enterprise software decision.

Real-time Data Visibility Enhances Operational Efficiency

Visibility into the business is a hot topic for many manufacturers, especially those that currently rely on outdated processes or have overlooked the importance of rapid access to business data for enhancing business efficiency and delivering operational performance improvements.

NEXT-GENERATION ERP PROVIDERS DELIVER MORE ADAPTIVE AND LESS COMPLEX SYSTEMS THAT ALLOW CLIENTS TO QUICKLY TAILOR THE SOFTWARE TO THEIR BUSINESS AND BE COST-EFFECTIVE WHEN IT'S TIME TO UPGRADE. GETTING A SYSTEM UP AND RUNNING RAPIDLY SAVES MONEY, AND SPEED IS NOW A KEY CONSIDERATION FOR ANY ENTERPRISE SOFTWARE DECISION.

Access to real-time information and a single source of truth allows manufacturers and key trading partners to improve decision accuracy based on the same set of information. This is superior to a scenario where manufacturers rely on manually intensive efforts to access and exchange information, or where data resides across multiple technology systems.

More agile and effective information visibility strategies result in more accessible and actionable information across the organization. With greater access to real-time production, financial, supply chain and other data, manufacturers and their trading partners are in a better position to deliver innovative products, drive critical manufacturing processes and provide a positive customer experience.

Adaptive ERP Allows for Faster Adoption and Implementation of Industry Best Practices

Changing business realities leads to changing best practices that should be quickly adopted into processes to keep companies aligned with their

goals. Manufacturing has changed in many ways over the last 25 years, and the changes seem to keep coming. Growing country regulations, tariff upheaval, increasing customer mandates, pressure for digital transformation and other issues are forcing manufacturers to constantly evolve. This makes it hard to know if your company's operational methods are appropriate for sustaining your business and maintaining a competitive edge in the changing marketplace. Many manufacturers are reluctant to adjust to new methods of thinking and, while equipment tends to evolve quickly, work processes stay "business as usual" and often rely on paper-based transactions.

Adaptive ERP helps manufacturers stay current with specific industry requirements and standards, mandated regulations and industry-specific business processes and terminology. This includes meeting automotive standards like MMOG/LE, validation processes in Life Sciences, various country-specific financial regulations and other regulatory requirements.

Extensible Software Systems Allow for Scaling and Future Growth

Rigid systems can slow companies down. In response to change, extensible software simplifies the delivery of new functionality required by a business and lowers the cost of future upgrades. For example, a software solution is considered extensible when users or administrators have the ability to define new features and introduce new functionality within the software solution. Extensibility allows manufacturers to rapidly extend and create new applications. This helps manufacturers stay current and reduces gaps between business needs and standard enterprise software functionality. The extensibility delivered with adaptive ERP reduces software complexity, minimizes code creation and makes upgrades easier.

Now is the time to thoroughly evaluate how well your enterprise software capabilities adapt to business changes and disruptions. This is the year to review your software systems and turn business disruptions into competitive advantages – remember, it is the fast fish that eats the slow fish.

How agile and effective are your ERP system and other enterprise software solutions? How might your business performance improve with an adaptive ERP?

About QAD

QAD Inc. is a leading provider of flexible, cloud-based enterprise software and services for global manufacturing companies. QAD Adaptive ERP for manufacturing supports operational requirements in the areas of financials, customer management, supply chain, manufacturing, service and support, analytics, business process management and integration. QAD's portfolio includes related solutions for quality management software, supply chain management software, transportation management software and B2B interoperability. Since 1979, QAD solutions have enabled customers in the automotive, consumer products, food and beverage, high tech, industrial manufacturing and life sciences industries to better align operations with their strategic goals to become Effective Enterprises.

Brent Dawkins is QAD's Director of Product Marketing with over 20 years of manufacturing and supply chain experience. In his spare time, you can find him hiking the Rocky Mountains of Colorado, coaching youth hockey or enjoying time with family.

"HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT IMPLEMENTATION PARTNER"

Choosing the right implementation partner goes beyond the usual factors. In order to achieve the business outcomes identified in a turbulent and fast-changing world, companies need a partner that is rapid, agile and effective. Rapid means a partner should be able to deliver a single site implementation in three months or a major company roll out in two years. Agile means being able to adapt to disruption in the industry and to the project timeline and be effective in doing the right things to accelerate time to benefit. Above and beyond this, it is all about cultural fit and a genuine partnership approach. We implement our QAD Adaptive ERP using our Easy Onboarding Methodology to meet our customers' needs for rapid change.

Robin Riordan,

Sr Vice President, Global Services , QAD

QAD

DOES YOUR 2020 IT STRATEGY INCLUDE MOVING SAP TO THE CLOUD?

ABSOFT
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*Article by **Eilidh Clarkson,** Sales Manager- SAP Support & Technical Services at Absoft Limited*

The Cloud has become a part of our everyday lexicon; whether that's discussing where we've saved the photos from our mobile phones, to why a move to the cloud is spearheading your company's five-year efficiency strategy (which is what I personally am more interested in and will talk about in this article, in case you had doubts) - you cannot turn around in business today without someone asking if you're on the cloud yet. What's more, are you reaping the huge financial benefits associated with that move?

There's quite a bit of pressure associated with both those questions, and as migration can appear to be no easy task, those questions - seeking proof of instant, positive results - can strike an element of fear into the heart of many an organisation. "Cloud" is such a buzz-word that it can be hard not to feel the urge to adopt a "cloud-first strategy"; in other words, migration of your IT systems into the cloud, in order to unlock operational and cost efficiencies.

But what are those efficiencies? ... There are many reasons for considering a move to the cloud – not least because everyone is doing it. So, let's take a step back and start with the right questions in the right order, shall we?

- What do you want to achieve from a move to the cloud? And - What do you need the cloud to achieve for you?
- And how much effort is required, not only to make the migration but to then (crucially) ensure that the cloud is providing you with the results you envisaged.

This is where companies and organisations can become disenchanted with their migration to the cloud; when the tangible results required to justify an investment are hard to gauge. But why should this be? There are several reasons, but fundamentally I believe that this is reflective of a developing trend to move large parts of IT infrastructure into the cloud immediately, but – for a number of reasons – to leave an SAP system on-premise.

And I understand this; the migration to the cloud of a business-critical system – especially one as complex as SAP (which includes control of financial accounting, HR, sales and distribution, material management and quality management) – can be viewed as one step too far. It's intangible; it doesn't have the (literal) solid heft of an on-premise server, and the perceived risk of cloud migration in this instance can appear to far outweigh the benefits. But there is an element of working in the dark here. To what extent do businesses really understand the benefits – and supposed risks – of cloud migration, in order to make that decision?

Security

First up is the very issue that is responsible for holding most wary companies back from an SAP migration to the cloud; security. However, experience has indicated that many organisations struggle to keep on-premise security

patching up-to-date, not to mention the maintenance required in keeping the operating system and database versions current. We've all heard news from across the globe which has documented the ramifications of a company data breach or attack. A private company, PLC or government body – it matters not; a breach in any type of information security is bad press at the very least. It compromises not only company data but also reputation – often with disastrous results.

Despite this, companies continue to keep their business-critical information within on-premise systems – struggling to keep them up-to-date and safe. In contrast, a cloud-based system provides options for minimising downtime with quick system spin-ups and replication when completing patching or update activity.

Flexibility

To future-proof a business, scalability is critical. Adding a new module, acquiring a new entity or scaling your business can create a huge amount of work for your IT department. An on-premise server is likely to be close to its limit; adding more data will cost time and money. Rather than second-guessing your organisation's future plans, the cloud allows you to plan for what you need today and not what you 'might' need in 3-5 years' time, providing you with the flexibility to scale up (or down) as required. The cost efficiencies associated with this ease of change are not hard to quantify.

Reinforcing that flexibility, the cloud can open a world of efficient automation options that previously wouldn't have been available, whether that be having systems online only during business hours or during critical processes – or using a multitude of options to test business continuity and disaster recovery processes.

Clarity

The cloud offers constant access to real-time analytics. Depending upon your business, the ability to react instantly optimises opportunities whilst minimising problems. For organisation-wide understanding and awareness of situation change, real-time customer relationship management and a faster learning process, RTI provides almost immeasurable efficiencies.

For a company with global locations, or global growth plans, efficient analysis of RTI across multiple services lines in multiple locations is critically important to growth; indeed, your clients will probably expect that level of analysis and the subsequent efficiencies which are passed on to them.

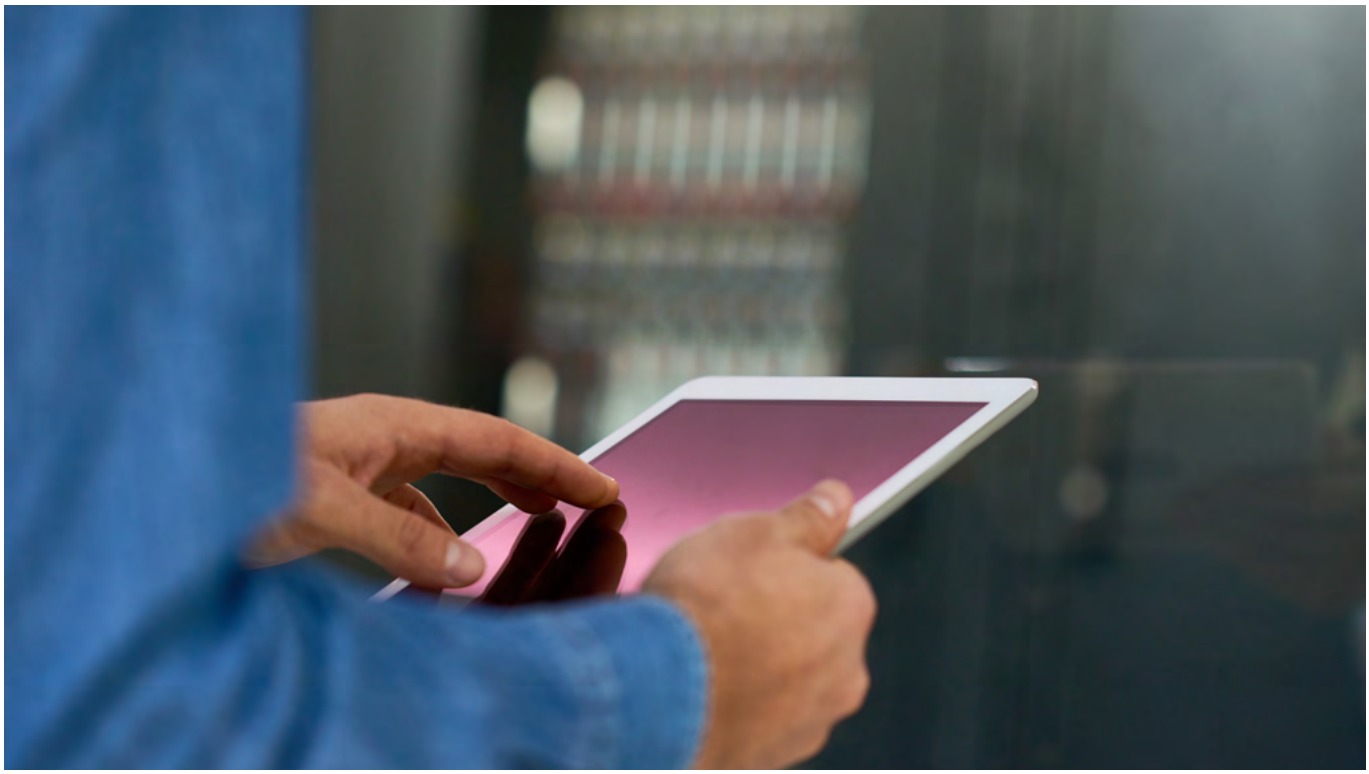
Cost

The received wisdom is that a "lift and shift" migration into the cloud will be instantly cost-effective, relieving your organisation of aging and failing hardware that requires constant maintenance. And at first glance, it does appear to be as simple as that.

Taking those advantages into account makes a shift to the cloud seem like the proverbial no-brainer and one which thousands of companies across the UK have already made – but with varying results.

So what goes wrong? Why does the cloud not always provide the answers and efficiencies it promised it would?

A shift to the cloud is an investment, and like all investments, it needs serious consideration. Is there a point in shifting your IT system to the cloud, if risk-aversion means you exclude your business-critical systems such as SAP? Possibly not; the ROI will be increasingly hard to find. So rather than moving to the cloud because it's the "thing to do", embark on a straightforward rationalisation, which may result in a priority list of elements that need to make it from on-premise systems into the cloud.



Instigate a strategy of data archiving and review the services you currently subscribe to; are they still necessary now that you're planning to migrate to the cloud? A bit like decluttering your house before you move, getting your systems in order prior to migration results in more efficient, safer move – with far less room for breakages and the resultant blame.

This prepared approach to cloud migration has resulted in startling financial efficiencies for one of my clients. Based on the public sector, they reported a reduction of server hosts by 40% through landscape rationalisation, ultimately leading to reduction of 50% in hosting costs once in the cloud. From this, it's quite clear that moving your IT system to the cloud doesn't have to be a huge transformation project which causes large amounts of stress and risk. Rather, that process of rationalisation allows cloud moves to be undertaken cleanly and cheaply, unlocking small (and sometimes large) gains as part of a wider process.

However, critical to its success and subsequent value for money is the confidence to ensure that post-rationalisation, your business-critical systems are amongst the first to migrate on to the cloud.

That is where the real gains lie for any organisation.

To help you map out that journey to "your SAP in the cloud" Absoft offers services for every stage of the process, with road-map and assessment planning workshops completely bespoke to you and your needs. For more information.

> **"BASED ON THE PUBLIC SECTOR, THEY REPORTED A REDUCTION OF SERVER HOSTS BY 40% THROUGH LANDSCAPE RATIONALISATION, ULTIMATELY LEADING TO REDUCTION OF 50% IN HOSTING COSTS ONCE IN THE CLOUD.**

About ABSOFT

Headquartered in the UK, Absoft is a leading SAP® specialist with project delivery and implementations in over 40 countries worldwide, since 1991. Absoft provide SAP ERP implementations, process optimisation, M&A transition and SAP support services across multiple industries, for both cloud and on-premise systems. Our consultants' hand-on expertise and functional knowledge ensure we deliver best practice technical solutions for our customers and maximise their return on investment in SAP, which has resulted in Absoft being named an SAP Partner Centre of Expertise. For further information, visit: www.absoft.co.uk or get in touch at info@absoft.co.uk

Eilidh Clarkson - Currently busy with helping businesses optimise their SAP migrations to the Cloud and ensuring it's working as well as it can, Eilidh began her career on a service desk role before moving into Technical Support and IT Contracts and Procurement. She also helps clients with their journey to S/4HANA.

HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT IMPLEMENTATION PARTNER

Your ERP system will be the beating heart of the business – the means by which you manage the critical side of your operations - finance, compliance, security, HR, output optimisation... the list goes on. And there's no doubt that such a wide-ranging system needs to run 100% flawlessly, 24/7/365.

Taking that into consideration, it's understandable that finding and choosing the right provider could be not only time-consuming but also nerve-wracking. Then there is the possibility that even after long, careful considerations your chosen provider changes behaviour after the implementation and issues creep in. And if you are not entirely comfortable with your ERP support provider, it really is too critical a part of your business just to "make do". It's bad enough that we do this with our domestic utilities, internet or phone providers (don't deny it!); we definitely should not fall into that trap with our businesses. Throughout the almost 30-years we've been an SAP ERP consultancy we have heard a lot of grim stories from clients who came and stayed with us after receiving unsatisfactory support/services from their previous partners. Lack of care, attention, transparency, expertise – leading to a lack of trust - are among the most frequent issues starting sometimes right after the implementation stage. No one is perfect but some major problems and disappointments can be avoided.

If you depend on ERP software to keep your business running you need to have the right people looking after it. And according to us this is your most important consideration when choosing the right implementation partner (together with, of course, expertise, cost, timeframe, industry understanding, track record, resources, requirements and so on). Some tips to include in your research is, for example, checking with a potential ERP provider what percentage of current revenue comes from returning customers (with Absoft it is 80% and our first client is still a client), or if what their customers say about the service they receive. The time you invest in this research would yield great long-term results and you will also discover much more about the provider on the way.

Choosing an ERP implementation or support partner requires careful consideration and thorough research. "How to choose the right implementation partner?" - a short answer to this question is nearly impossible and potentially misleading, so we have selected to emphasise on one key consideration which might be the most frequently ignored – trust, communication, and relationships... Who is looking after you?

Whether you are only just starting your research and have your eyes on SAP, or have already chosen an SAP partner but are frustrated with the lack of attention and trust – download this "What is SAP support" guide with some useful tips: https://www.absoft.co.uk/blog-article/what-is-sap-support or review our transitioning methodology here: https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/thinking-changing-your-sap-

Jennifer Brown,
SAP Application Support and Compliance with Absoft

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HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT IMPLEMENTATION PARTNER

While many factors can contribute to a great implementation partner, at Silverware, we believe that characteristics such as experience, competence, and sound business practices are central to having the right solution expert in your corner. The right partner has experience in what they are doing, and who they are serving. They understand the industry and the distinct needs of your business. However, most importantly, they put the customer's needs first, in a fair and principled manner.

Alexander Glueckler,
Product Manager of Silverware

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HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT IMPLEMENTATION PARTNER

A clear and consistent answer.
Every company has its own organization and processes. It is important to ensure that the integrator keeps an open mind and is an active listener. His role is to propose a proven solution able to fit your current and future issues (industry, regulatory, technology...). His proposals have to be clear with regard to the entire offer.

Operating mode.
The proposed methodology is a key factor of success for all ERP projects. Change management is crucial. Make sure of its quality and adaptability for your organisation.

A complete offer.
The chosen partner will have to support you from the choice of functionalities to the implementation, including project management, training, and maintenance. While cloud-based solutions are experiencing a significant growth, reviewing the offer carefully (mainly from partners exclusively working on hosting platforms) is strongly recommended.

A well-established player.
It is relevant to ensure the ability of the partner to support you in the long term period. For instance, be aware of his company background, organisation, key figures, and evolution during the last 5 years.

A relationship of trust.
Managing an ERP project is not only a choice of technology solution but also a choice of people. Choose persons whom you trust the expertise of course but also their ability to commit themselves to you. A relationship is built on a mix of professionalism and transparency.

Recognition.
Do you know how the integrator is recognized? His ecosystem, editor partner and customers, are the base you have to ask for. So, do not hesitate to request.

Guy Leclercq,
CEO DEVEHO Consulting Group,
Worldwide Sage X3 integrator

5 MASSIVE ERP FAILURES REVEAL VITAL ERP IMPLEMENTATION LESSONS

Your impartial software advisor

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- Lesson #1—Focus on Business Issues Instead of Technical Issues
- Lesson #2 - Choose Standardized Processes over Non-Differentiating Features
- Lesson #3 - Manage Expectations, Including Timelines, Budget, and Resources
- Lesson #4 – Deploy a Dedicated Change Management Team
- Lesson #5 – Formulate a Contingency Plan

Albert Einstein never said, "The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting a different result." Nevertheless, this misattributed wisdom is repeated worldwide without a hint of irony, proving the validity of the idea that people often fail to learn from mistakes.

Nearly half of all enterprise resource planning (ERP) software implementations fail the first time around, which suggests that companies and stakeholders have been making the same errors repeatedly. Let's explore five of the biggest historical ERP software implementation failures, the cost of these disasters, and the lessons to be learned from other people's mistakes.

Lesson #1—Focus on Business Issues Instead of Technical Issues

Company: Nike
Estimated Sunk Cost: $400 million

"This is what you get for $400 million, huh?" asked Phil Knight, co-founder of Nike, after one of the most expensive software glitches in history.
The largest, most ubiquitous athletic shoe company in the world witnessed more than $100 million in sales evaporate, along with a 20% drop in stock value and numerous class-action lawsuits. ERP implementation failure was at the heart of this shocking plunge, specifically the addition of i2 predictive supply chain software.

Problems began to appear when the system foretold a greater demand for Kevin Garnett branded sneakers instead of Michael Jordan branded ones. Nike found themselves shipping thousands of units which went unsold, while retailers didn't have access to the Air Jordan inventory which consumers were demanding.

Nike's $400 million ERP software glitch started when the company's implementation focused on tech instead of business issues. Supply chain success for Nike was established by getting purchasers and retailers to commit to orders well

in advance of product delivery. The sort of "crystal ball" forecasting provided by i2 simply didn't fit well with Nike's business model and the established practices that had helped to fuel the company's success.

ERP implementation failures often begin when companies focus on technology instead of the tech supporting important aspects of business functionality. When Nike turned its focus on tightening their supply chain instead of attempting to predict the future, the company began to regain its status as a dominant brand.

Lesson #2 - Choose Standardized Processes over Non-Differentiating Features

Company: Avon
Estimated Sunk Cost: $125 million

Avon Products has been one of the biggest direct-selling businesses in the world for well over a century, relying on millions of door-to-door representatives to peddle beauty and health products across international markets. As a multi-level marketing concern, Avon's revenues depend on the company's ability to support these representatives, making it as easy as possible for salespersons to place orders and distribute products to customers.

Avon partnered with an international vendor to implement an order management system that allowed reps to input sales orders over mobile devices. The vision behind this movement to enhance mobility centered on the ability to directly input orders into the supply chain, allowing Avon to respond directly to this demand within the supply chain.

In this case, ERP failure resulted from Avon and the software vendor implementing a system that reps found so difficult to use that many of them simply stopped selling for the company. The backend of the ERP software worked well, but Avon and the vendor didn't collaborate to improve the user-facing portion of the system. After a notable loss of representatives in Canada, Avon scrapped worldwide implementation despite a $125 million investment—an extreme cost for failed ERP implementation.

Instead of focusing on standardized processes that make life easy for sales personnel, the ERP implementation featured non-differentiating functions which didn't add value. In this scenario, what should have been a differentiator—digitizing the sales process via mobile platforms—simply did not work.

Since Avon uses direct sales contractors for revenue instead of internal employees, the mobile sales platform increased complexity and reduced usability for sales reps, the opposite of adding value for salespeople and customers.

Companies should avoid non-differentiators within ERP implementation, opting for tried-and-true standard processes when possible. This does not apply to ERP features which differentiate businesses from the competition.

Lesson #3 - Manage Expectations, Including Timelines, Budget, and Resources

Company: U.S. Air Force
Estimated Sunk Cost: $1.03 billion

One of the most egregious examples of ERP failures might be the US Air Force snafu which drained more than a billion dollars from public coffers. This branch of the US military was attempting to consolidate hundreds of data silos into a single, streamlined database for all of its financial systems.

Seven years and a billion dollars later, the Air Force decided to stop the project altogether even though it wasn't complete. Scope creep had inflated costs further, so finishing the implementation would have added another $1.1 billion to the overall cost of a finished system. Personnel turnover during this project further complicated issues, slowing down implementation while increasing costs for training and project governance.

In this failed ERP case, the US Air Force did not manage expectations, beginning with a budget and timeline goals. Merging hundreds of databases into a streamlined system turned out to be more difficult than the military had expected, creating massive scope creep that ballooned into complete unsustainability.
Human resources was another aspect which experienced scope creep, as some project managers and military officers viewed the ERP implementation as an opportunity to secure a promotion. This resulted in "six program manager changes in eight years, five program executive officers in six years (and) ten different organizational constructs", according to the Air Force's Acquisition Incident Review team.

Strict management of expectations for budget, timelines, and resources helps to prevent these types of ERP disasters.

Lesson #4 – Deploy a Dedicated Change Management Team

Company: Waste Management
Estimated Sunk Cost: $100 million

Waste Management, the biggest company of its kind in North America, decided to partner with one of the largest global vendors to implement a new ERP without having to extensively customize the product. The two companies agreed upon an 18-month implementation cycle, which involved costs estimated at more than $100 million, with the expectation that Waste Management would realize more than $350 million in cost benefits.

When the project snowballed into a failed ERP, the lawsuits began to fly. Waste Management believed that the software giant didn't deliver the solution as promised. The vendor responded by stating that Waste Management had ducked its responsibility through an inability to define its business requirements, including receiving input from "sufficient, knowledgeable, decision-empowered users and managers" to collaborate on the project.

After years of pre-trial litigation, the two sides eventually agreed to a settlement to the plaintiff (Waste Management) for an undisclosed amount. If Waste Management had deployed a team dedicated to change management for ERP implementation, the project may have succeeded in the long run. Instead, a lack of dedicated change management was used against the company in a court of law.

Waste Management's failure to clearly define specific requirements during the early stages of their ERP project placed the company in a poor position to implement a competent change management plan.

Lesson #5 – Formulate a Contingency Plan

Company: Hewlett-Packard
Estimated Sunk Cost: $160 million

Sometimes, failed ERP implementations occur because of a perfect storm of smaller issues which combine to undermine the entire process. This was the case for Hewlett-Packard's attempt to install several ERP systems at once to simplify processes and realize cost savings.

Instead of reaping the expected rewards from increased integration and automation, HP witnessed a slow-motion disaster for ERP as one system after another failed to integrate. Legacy system data was lost, data silos hid information in places that were difficult to access, project teams were unable to communicate effectively with one another, and the software itself eventually broke down into a buggy mess.

Additional stress was added during the implementation due to an unexpected rise in demand for HP products, which required a functional software system to fulfill the extra orders. Unfortunately, the ERP implementation team was too busy dealing with numerous complications to the implementation to respond to the uptick in demand. This prevented HP from converting increased consumer demand into profit.

The Chief Intelligence Officer at the time, Gilles Bouchard, admitted that Hewlett-Packard would have greatly benefitted from including a "contingency plan for four, five, or six weeks" to safeguard against losses due to smaller issues gathering into the perfect storm. Bouchard ended up presiding over an early example of enterprise resource planning failure which cost a whopping $160 million—one which to this day serves as a cautionary tale about failed ERP implementations.

Avoid ERP Failure by Learning from Past Mistakes

Remember the quote about insanity wrongly attributed to Einstein? It was conceived by mystery novelist Rita Mae Brown in the early 1980s, but there's no secret behind evading the ERP failures of the past: recognize mistakes which lead to failure and avoid repeating them. Looking back at and learning from personal mistakes is valuable, but it's better to learn from mistakes made by others, thus avoiding the pain of repeating their errors. The five real-world examples given should help you do just that.

Remember that TEC's software selection programs focus on a proven software evaluation and selection process that leads to the successful implementation of ERP software while avoiding expensive pitfalls.

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. For more information, please visit www.technologyevaluation.com.

CLASH OF THE TITANS 2020: AN INDEPENDENT COMPARISON OF SAP, ORACLE, MICROSOFT, AND INFOR

PANORAMA CONSULTING GROUP

The Clash of the Titans 2020 report which provides important information for the software industry, can give you a hint as to what awaits the ERP industry. Here are the important points of the report;

Panorama Consulting Group developed its annual Clash of the Titans analysis to compare the "titans" of the enterprise software industry: SAP, Oracle, Microsoft, and Infor.

Clash of the Titans 2020 analyzes responses collected from Panorama's ERP Benchmark Survey between November 2018 and September 2019. The dataset includes 134 respondents who have selected or implemented SAP, Oracle, Microsoft or Infor ERP solutions for their organizations. The analysis is based on a variety of solutions offered by the four vendors.

Panorama is in no way affiliated with SAP, Oracle, Microsoft, Infor or any other software vendor or reseller.

Digital Business Transformation

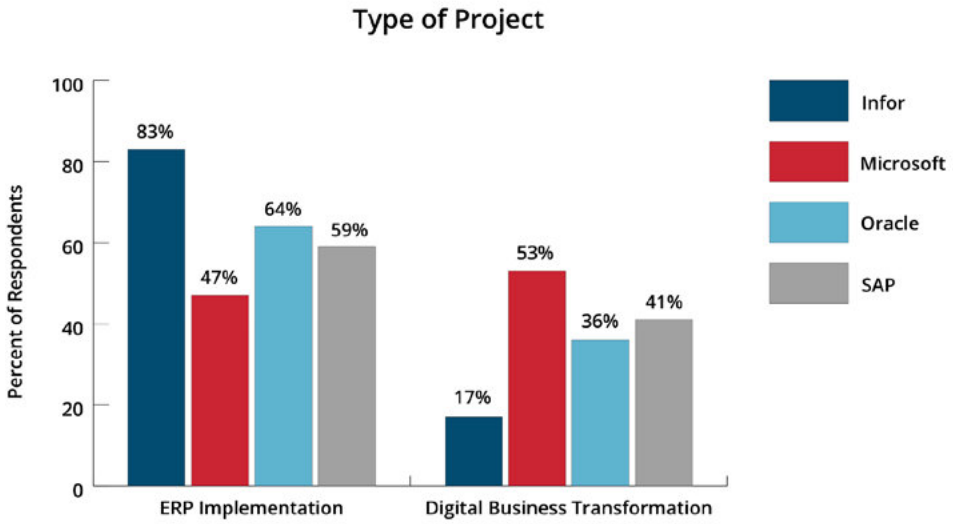
Respondents were asked to describe their initiative as either a digital business transformation (according to Gartner's definition) or an ERP implementation.

Digital business transformation is most common among Microsoft customers.

Many Microsoft customers are smaller companies, and as they grow, they need to create new revenue streams – thus the need for digital transformation.

Digital business transformation is least common among Infor customers.

At this year's Inforum conference, Infor mentioned that approximately two out of ten of their projects are truly digital transformations. The majority of their projects are digital optimizations, meaning they are focused on improving.



> **ERP IMPLEMENTATIONS ARE ABOUT INCREASING EFFICIENCY WITHOUT CHANGING YOUR BUSINESS MODEL. IN CONTRAST, DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION MATERIALLY CHANGES WHAT PRODUCTS ARE DELIVERED AND HOW THEY ARE DELIVERED TO CUSTOMERS.**

Business Initiatives Included in Digital Strategy

A focus on eCommerce functionality is most common among Microsoft customers.

Microsoft products are best suited for small to mid-sized companies, and these companies are often focused on building strong customer relationships. Implementing eCommerce functionality allows them to work with customers more efficiently.

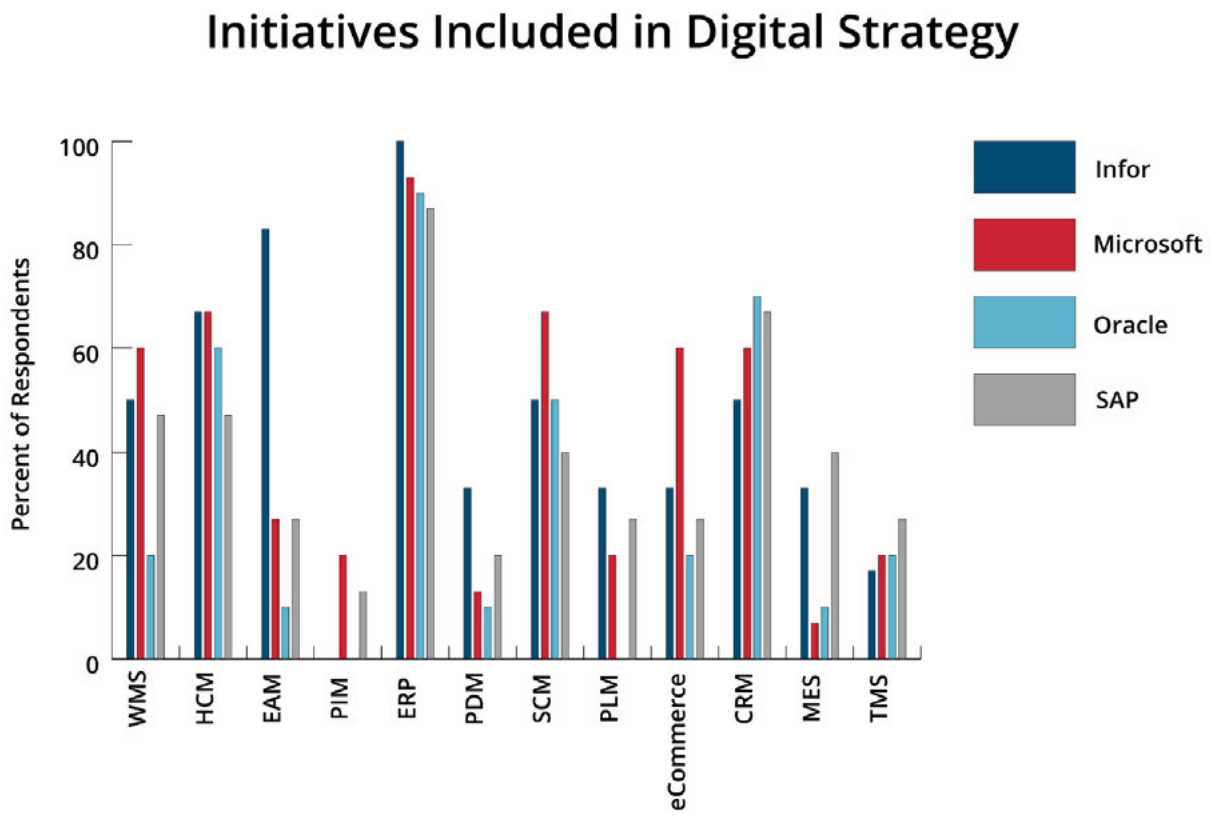
In our experience, we have found that many organizations are implementing eCommerce functionality instead of increasing their human capital. For example, one of our clients has a small web presence but wants to drive more web traffic using eCommerce functionality to improve the customer experience.

A focus on CRM functionality is most common among Oracle customers.

Oracle has recently put a focus on transforming the customer experience with the use of technology and data. They started top-down with the addition of a new customer experience manager, and the investment is proving beneficial.

A focus on EAM functionality is most common among Infor customers.

EAM has been a focal point for Infor for many years, and Infor's presence in the EAM space is ever-growing. This is because Infor's solutions have deep enterprise-type functionality.



A FOCUS ON MES FUNCTIONALITY IS MOST COMMON AMONG SAP CUSTOMERS

MOST SAP CUSTOMERS IMPLEMENTING S/4 HANA ARE COMPLEX, SO MES FUNCTIONALITY IS IMPLEMENTED AFTER THE INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION PHASE. HOWEVER, SAP CUSTOMERS THAT HAVE ALREADY IMPLEMENTED SAP ECC OFTEN CONSIDER MES FUNCTIONALITY FOR A STANDALONE PROJECT TO ENHANCE THEIR EXISTING SYSTEM.

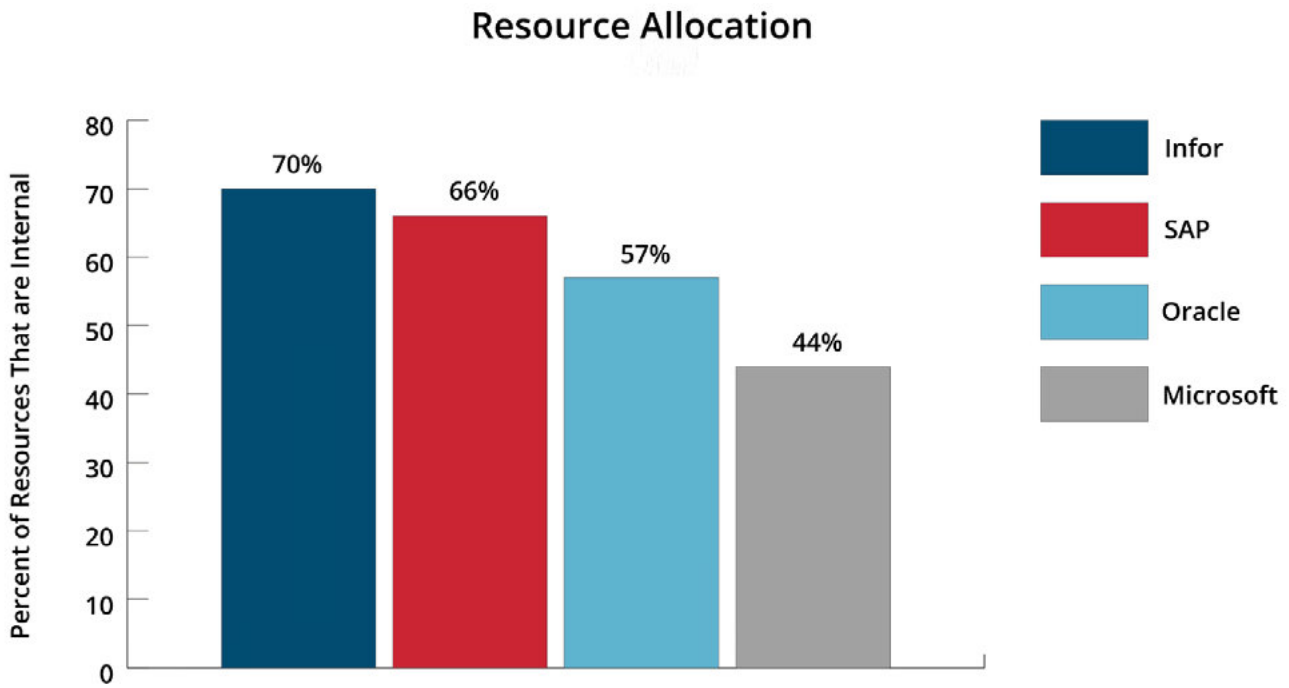
Internal vs. External Resources

Infor customers use the most internal resources.

Infor focuses on direct consulting services which require a significant amount of client involvement as Infor's consulting resources are not infinite.

Microsoft customers use the most external resources.

Microsoft's dependence on channel partners to implement and configure "last mile" functionality increases their customers' reliance on partners for implementation. While partners tend to position themselves as being more involved during implementation compared to working directly with the vendor, an organization's ability to become self-sufficient also is important.



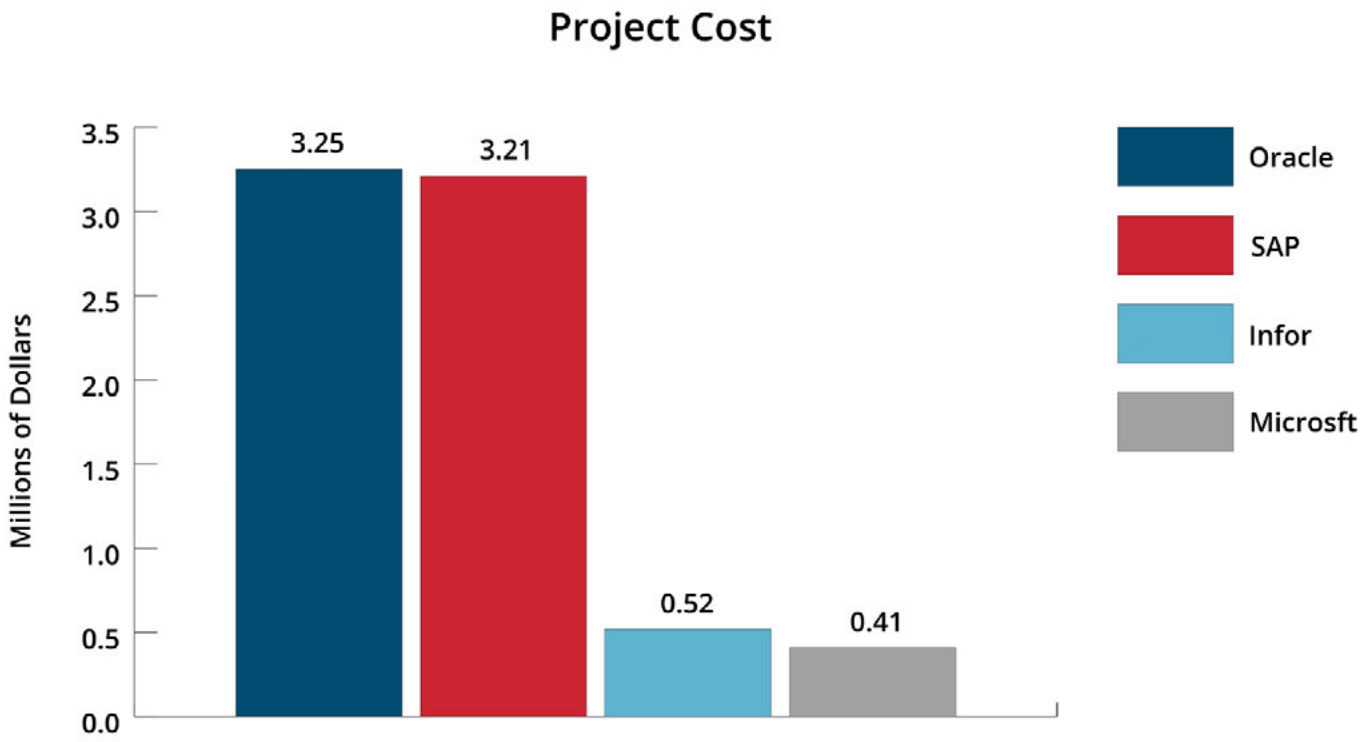
Project Cost

Organizations that completed the implementation of an Oracle product spent the most on their projects.

The Oracle products that were implemented included Oracle Fusion, Oracle EBS, Oracle Cloud, Oracle NetSuite, and Oracle JD Edwards. Organizations implementing these products purchased an average of 432 licenses - significantly more than customers of other vendors.

Organizations that completed the implementation of a Microsoft product spent the least on their projects.

The Microsoft products that were implemented included Dynamics GP, Dynamics 365 for Finance & Operations and Dynamics 365 Business Central. Organizations implementing these products purchased an average of 310 licenses - significantly less than customers of other vendors. Microsoft typically sells D365 Business Central to the SMB market at a much higher volume than it sells D365 F&O to larger organizations.



"A COMPANY'S UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS REGARDING THE TOTAL COST OF OWNERSHIP ARE OFTEN THE FIRST DOMINO TO FALL IN AN ERP FAILURE. THIS LEADS TO FAILURE BECAUSE COMPANIES END UP CUTTING CORNERS ON ACTIVITIES THAT ARE CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS.

Project Duration

Given the number of resources, time and money dedicated to an ERP project, even the slightest delays will affect the budget. To avoid delays, be sure your project plan includes overlooked activities, like requirements gathering, system design, testing, and ERP data migration.

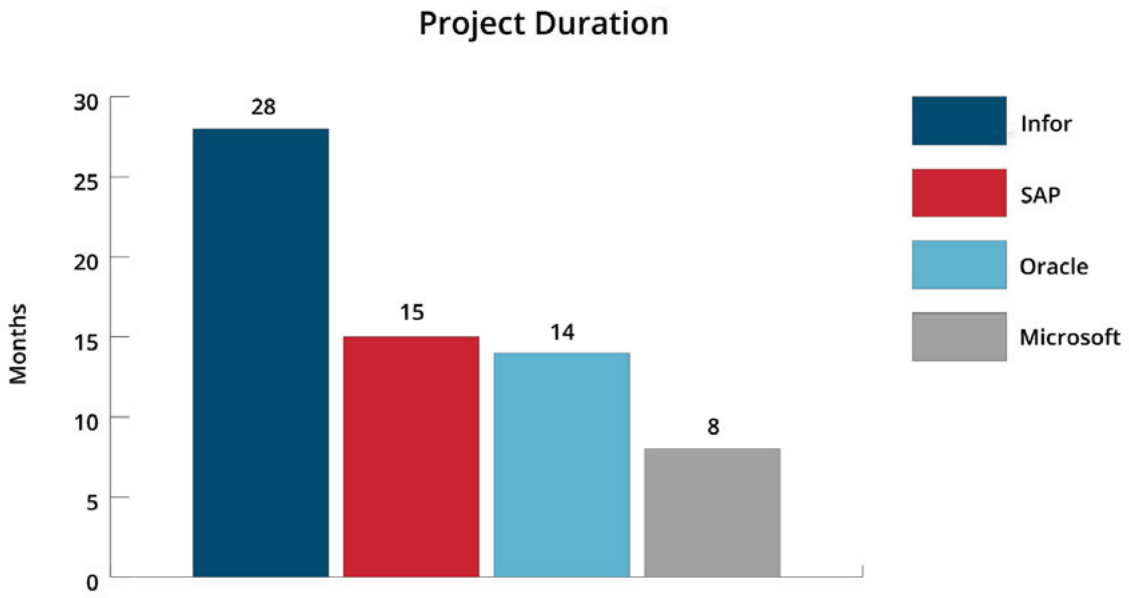
Organizations that completed the implementation of an Infor product had the longest project durations.

The Infor products that were implemented included Infor LN, Infor SyteLine, Infor CloudSuite, Infor M3 and Infor Visual. Organizations implementing these products purchased an average of 263 licenses.

However, fewer licenses did not translate into a shorter project duration. This likely is because Infor has seen an influx of enterprise-level clients implementing multiple applications in phases. These clients must configure advanced functionality to meet complex requirements, which takes time.

Organizations that completed the implementation of a Microsoft product had the shortest project durations.

Microsoft's channel partners have caught up with their development of IP applications. The channel partners are expanding their client base with more pre-configured, niche functionality. This functionality requires less configuration which reduces implementation time.



Conclusion

While you may want to select a well-known ERP system, the best solution depends on your unique business needs. A better question is, "What are the best ERP systems for my future-state processes and organizational goals?"

In other words, before beginning ERP selection, you should define a digital strategy. Consider the pain points of your current IT infrastructure and determine what needs to change to support your objectives.

This will help you develop a business case convincing executive to invest. Be sure to highlight not only the benefits of ERP software but also the costs and risks.

While an ERP implementation can bring many business benefits, they entail significant risk. Fortunately, you can mitigate risk by focusing on business process reengineering and organizational change management.

Panorama's ERP consultants help organizations prepare their people and processes for ERP selection. Contact us to learn how you can prepare for a successful selection.

About Panorama Consulting Group

Panorama Consulting Group is an independent, niche consulting firm specializing in business transformation and ERP system implementations for mid- to large-sized private- and public-sector organizations worldwide. One-hundred percent technology agnostic and independent of vendor affiliation, Panorama offers a phased, top-down strategic alignment approach and a bottom-up tactical approach, enabling each client to achieve its unique business transformation objectives by transforming its people, processes and technology. Panorama's services include ERP Selection, ERP Implementation, ERP Contract Negotiation, ERP University, Digital Strategy, Technology Assessment, Change Management, Human Capital Management, Business Process Management, M&A Integration, Turnaround Analysis, Crisis Management, Financial Restructuring, Operational Restructuring, Project Auditing & Recovery and Software Expert Witness Testimony.

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5 BENEFITS OF MOBILE ERP

*Article by **Yagmur Sahin**,*
Editor of ERP NEWS

Imagine that you can't access your phone for an hour on a busy day. Can you imagine waiting in the bank to deposit your bills, losing hours for a simple transaction? We described these situations, which we had difficulty imagining today as ordinary ten years ago. Nowadays it is almost impossible for us to survive without our phones, not only our social life but also our business life is entrusted to these devices in our pocket!

We can easily say that the life of a non-mobile business is not so long nowadays when there's little time left until 2020. But we should not forget the fact that it's not the solution, it's how you use it! So, you may have adopted mobile technologies to your business, but if you don't use them correctly and efficiently, you're wasting your time and money. In this article, I want to introduce you to a great duo to save both your money and your time. Mobile technologies and ERP systems! Let us explain what you can do with Mobile ERP and how your business will take advantage of it in 5 titles;

1- Flexibility

Perhaps some people remember the stacks of files on their desks. At that time, people sacrificed half of their working day to find the information they were looking for. In addition to the loss of time, we should not forget the archive rooms full of files. With this cloud environment that puts an end to all this and gives an incredible advantage, businesses no longer have to sacrifice time and space. If we evaluate the situation in terms of mobile ERP, we can say that the cloud provides convenience from the data logging.

In addition, thanks to Mobile ERP, your business processes become more flexible. Storing your data in a cloud environment provides great value for productivity.

2- Data Quality

Data is undoubtedly the most valuable part of today's business world. Mobile ERP offers a great advantage in terms of data that forms the basis of the ERP system. Helping you to collect data more easily; Mobile ERP can be designed to capture bad data and eliminate it from entering your ERP system. At the same time, quality data is of great benefit at the reporting point.

3- Greater Visibility

Mobile ERP allows you to track activities in multiple areas. You can easily monitor business operations in different departments or locations with the help of mobile devices. By anticipating the demand, you can make your plan and evaluate the status of your business in real-time with the data and information you get from different points.

4- Competitive Advantage

You can also gain a competitive advantage with Mobile ERP. You can instantly access real-time data of your business and take the necessary actions on your mobile device. You can shorten approval times with Mobile ERP that sometimes take days, which provides a great advantage to senior executives who have full access to mobile devices, especially in terms of approval mechanism.

5- System Agility

Mobile ERP applications allow you to simplify strenuous and time-consuming processes for most users. Adding flexibility in addition to existing ERP applications, Mobile ERP not only saves you time but also saves you money.

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