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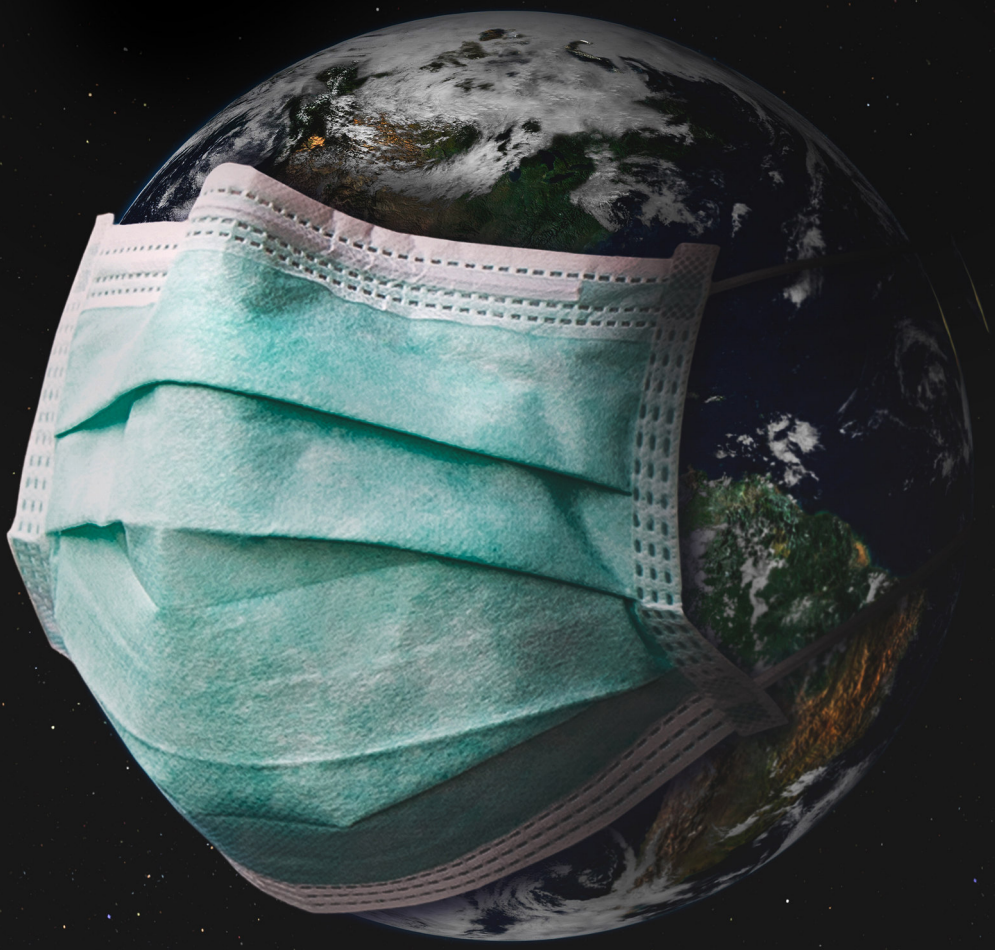
ERP and THE NEW NORMAL



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EDITOR'S NOTE

Last year, we have witnessed a crisis that has completely changed our lives, and we are still trying to adapt to the rules of the "new normal". The new normal had some major impacts not only on our lives but also on the business world and the competitive environment. Most organizations have started to question the adequacy and quality of the systems they are using but others are still reliant on legacy on-premise ERP solutions.

As the cloud ERP systems rise like the stars in the business world, on-premise ERPs are left in the dusty pages of history. Businesses now want to access their ERP software from wherever and whenever they want. If you have second thoughts about the software you are using and have intentions to migrate to a cloud system to meet the everchanging customer expectations, this issue of ERP News Magazine may shed light on your path. Organizations that have already moved to the cloud are likely experiencing minimal disruption to their daily operations in the new normal, but it is never too late!

We want to thank our valuable contributors who have enriched our magazine by participating...

Hope to see you in our next issue...

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ORACLE

ACCENTURE CEO: PANDEMIC HAS "COMPRESSED" DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

*Article By **Joe Tsidulko**,*

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Accenture has seen the emergence of a phenomenon that's significantly hastening enterprise IT buying and implementation cycles—and changing the nature of channel partnerships as a result.

This trend—one Accenture characterizes as "compressed transformation"—is driving systems integrators to lean on technology partners like Oracle to deliver solutions that meet the evolving needs of customers amid rapid disruption, Accenture CEO Julie Sweet told Oracle CEO Safra Catz.

Making that point at a CEO Summit held during Accenture's Oracle Cloud Week, Sweet said their companies' long history of collaboration and close alignment has engendered the ability to adapt to sudden and unexpected market realities. And the shared commitment to constant innovation that Oracle and Accenture have exhibited for decades has given customers confidence the partners can jointly solve unprecedented business challenges brought on by the current crisis.

Enterprises have realized that putting off technology refresh decisions is likely more costly than steaming into them, Sweet said.

Over the last 12 months, Accenture's conversations with customers were often about "how do we go faster and how do we manage transformation in multiple parts of the organization at the same time," Sweet said.

It wasn't so long ago that most large companies considered it risky to move fast—they worried they couldn't handle too much change, adapt to too many new technologies, Catz noted.

The pandemic has flipped that dynamic on its head.

"Now it's clear that if you don't move really fast, it could be fatal," Catz told her counterpart at Accenture.

Working together for 30 years, Oracle and Accenture have delivered cutting-edge innovations—including the deployment of some of the world's largest cloud implementations-- to more than 7,000 joint customers. During that longstanding collaboration, the two companies have also forged bonds and expertise that enable them to accelerate deployments to meet the needs of customers adapting to the current, coronavirus-impacted environment.

In so many of those joint engagements, "the sum is bigger than the two parts ... by a lot," Catz said.
Simplicity and Flexibility Power Customer Success
Covid-19 has "brought everyone extreme clarity about one thing," Catz said: "That the closer they are to their customers, and the more technology they use...even under these work-from-home and other restrictions, the better they will do."

With expedited deployment and trial periods, those customers want technology that's as easy to integrate and use as possible, yet still powerful enough to enable them to get their jobs done at a difficult time.

Meeting those challenges depends on a flexible technology stack that allows for projects that don't have to be carefully sequenced. Accenture and other systems integrators are relying on technology vendors like Oracle to arm them with solutions that are composable, flexible, simple, and highly scalable, Sweet said.

Oracle delivers that kind of innovation in a way that supports shifting customers' culture toward new ways of working, Sweet added.

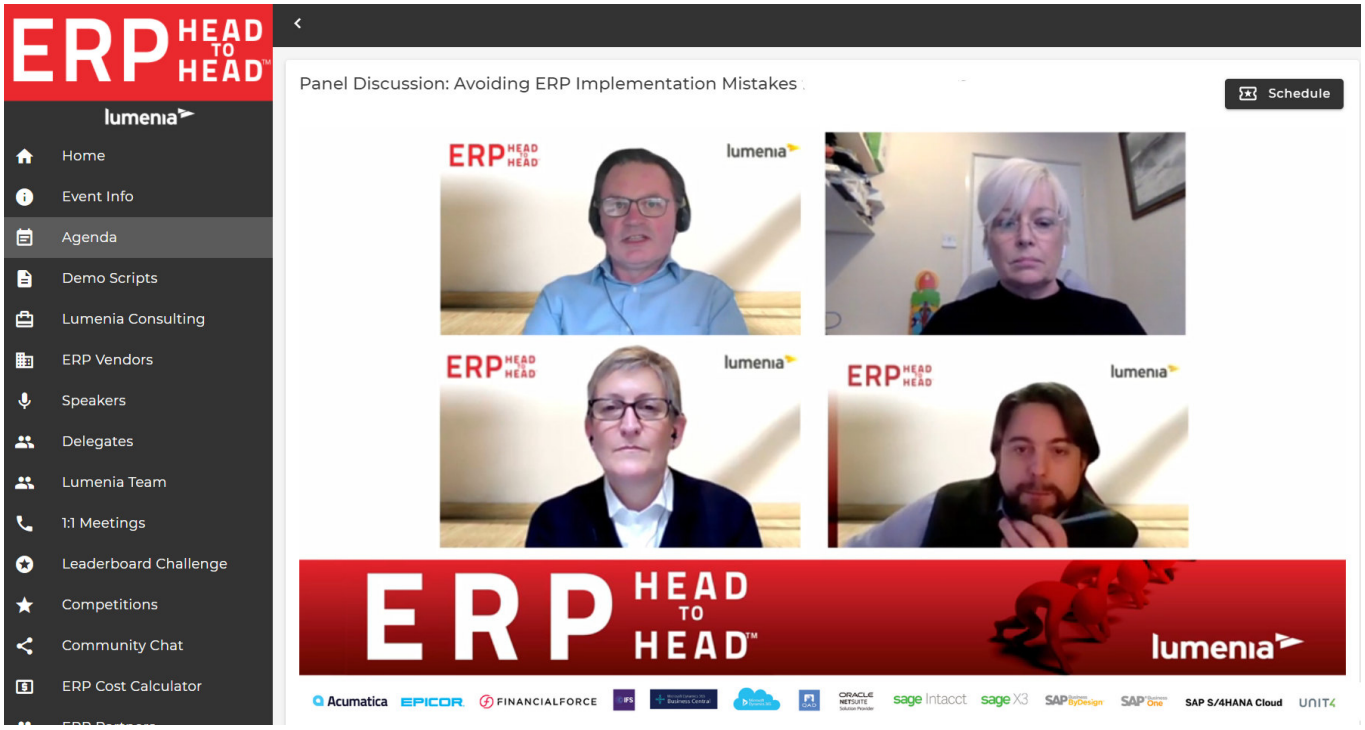
Catz agreed the hard part of digital transformation isn't the technology as much as it's the people. And that's where the Oracle and Accenture alliance really shines.

"They understand every project is the beginning of a long, long relationship and that they can only be successful when the customer is successful," she said of Accenture.

The unprecedented global crisis all businesses have been navigating is ramping the pace at which those relationships are built.

Many organizations that "stayed in the 20th Century realize twenty years in they need to get to the 21st," Catz said.

Seemingly overnight they saw they can't afford their old processes, she added, and that "change has to happen at a faster rate."



LUMENIA CONSULTING HOSTS 17TH ERP HEADTOHEAD™ EVENT – A FANTASTIC VIRTUAL EVENT EXPERIENCE!

The 17th running of the Lumenia ERP HEADtoHEAD™ event was ran virtually again this year. The event allowed for ERP buyers to compare 14 leading ERP vendors and their solutions on-line. Facilitated by leading independent ERP consultants, Lumenia Consulting, the event proved to be a huge success by both delegates and the sponsoring ERP vendors. The event featured streaming of 32 live ERP demos, 3 Lumenia keynote presentations, 2 VIP round-table sessions and an industry focused panel discussion. As we are now all adapting to the 'new normal' of on-line events, engagement and interaction was at an all-time high.

The event kicked off with an introduction by Lumenia's, Consulting Manager and event Chair, Ian O'Toole which was followed by each of the 14 vendors giving an elevator pitch to introduce themselves to the attendees and convince them as to why they should attend their demonstrations. The delegates then chose the live demo sessions that they wanted to attend. The demos followed high-level demonstration scrips covering Finance, Production, Procurement, Projects, Sales Quotation, Supply Chain and Sales High Volume. Delegates also had the chance to listen to three engaging vendor-independent presentations from Lumenia Consulting, on 'Preparing Business Processes for ERP', 'Are you ERP Ready? – Lessons Learned' and 'Characteristics of successful ERP Projects'. The panel discussion, which is always a favourite comprised of 3 panellists from industry discussing how to avoid ERP implementation mistakes.

The winner of the "ERP HEADtoHEAD™ Best Vendor Demonstration - UK 2021" was Sapphire Systems, demonstrating SAP S/4HANA Cloud, with an overall delegate satisfaction rating of 95%. In close second and third positions where QAD presenting QAD Adaptive ERP and NoBlue presenting Oracle NetSuite respectively.
The next event takes place again on 19 - 20 October 2021. For further information and to pre-register check out the event website www.erpheadtohead.com

Lumenia Consulting is an independent ERP consulting organisation, specialising in business transformation through the implementation of Enterprise Resource Planning and related enterprise software applications.

About Lumenia

Lumenia is an independent ERP consulting organisation, specialising in business transformation through the implementation of Enterprise Resource Planning and related enterprise software applications.

PDI ENHANCES ITS ERP SOLUTION WITH FOODSERVICE PRODUCTION MANAGEMENT

The expanded, data-powered capabilities will empower convenience retailers to satisfy consumers with a better, tastier, on-demand foodservice experience

ATLANTA – March 29, 2021 – PDI (www.pdisoftware.com), a leading global provider of enterprise software solutions to convenience retailers and petroleum wholesalers, has expanded its foodservice solution to include cloud-based production management capabilities that will enable retailers to deliver a fresher foodservice experience to their customers.

For decades, convenience retailers of all sizes have used PDI's foodservice inventory management capabilities to ensure they have the right type and amount of ingredients for their site-level recipes. With the sophistication of production management capabilities, PDI's customers can now take advantage of three new, innovative features: sales forecasting, job scheduling, and production planning.
Here are the benefits for retailers:

- Uses transaction data to identify baseline demand, seasonal trends, and event adjustments that boost the bottom line
- Reduces unnecessary downtime and ensures complex tasks are covered across all sites and dayparts based on store-level business needs
- Improves efficiency and optimizes productivity throughout the foodservice lifecycle to deliver a more delicious customer experience
- Decreases spoilage and waste by avoiding over- and under-stocking items

Foodservice was one of the hardest-hit categories in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As the category continues to recover, convenience retailers around the world are looking for ways to deliver a satisfying and profitable foodservice experience. PDI's enhanced application helps accomplish that objective by providing the tools to manage pre-production and production tasks, ensuring kitchens are making the right amounts of the right items at the right time.

"Foodservice has been a growing category for convenience retail for quite some time, and despite the temporary setback the pandemic caused, we're confident this category will continue to grow," said Drew Mize, executive vice president and general manager of ERP Solutions at PDI. "Our decades of proven expertise in the foodservice space, combined with our recent production management enhancements, will help retailers plan, control, and execute foodservice programs that will forecast demand with data-driven accuracy and maximize profitability."

For more information about PDI's foodservice solution, visit https://www.pdisoftware.com/retail/.

About PDI

Professional Datasolutions, Inc. (PDI) software helps businesses and brands increase sales, operate more efficiently and securely, and improve critical decision-making. Since 1983, PDI has proudly served the convenience retail and petroleum wholesale industries. Over 1,500 companies, representing more than 200,000 locations worldwide, count on PDI's solutions and expertise to deliver convenience and energy to the world. For more information about PDI, visit us at www.pdisoftware.com.

SAP COMPLETES PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY PILOT TO IMPROVE SUPPLY CHAIN AUTHENTICITY

SAP SE (NYSE: SAP) announced the completion of an industry-wide pilot utilizing self-sovereign identity (SSI) credentials to establish trust in the pharmaceutical supply chain for indirect trade relationships.

The pilot is the first step toward establishing an industry-wide standard that will mitigate the risk of noncompliance for pharmaceutical companies.

The U.S. Drug Supply Chain Security Act (DSCSA) requires stakeholders in the pharmaceutical supply chain to interact with other entities for product verification and tracing even when they do not have a direct business relationship. DSCSA also requires such interactions to be limited to authorized trading partners.

One of the legal requirements of DSCSA is the verification of salable returns. This process is already established and supported by SAP Information Collaboration Hub for Life Sciences, which executes tens of thousands of verifications every month. In order to provide our customers with the best solution for compliance with verifying the identity and authorized trading status of partners, SAP chose an open, interoperable technology to validate all stakeholders in the pharmaceutical supply chain, including competitors.

Together with SAP partner and wallet provider Spherity GmbH, verifiable credentials issuer Legisym LLC, and leading pharmaceutical manufacturers and U.S. wholesalers, as well as other serialization solution providers, SAP proved the ability of SSI to validate authorized trading partner status in indirect trade relationships as they occur during verification of product packs as required by U.S. legislation.

"The inability to verify the identity and authorized trading partner status of companies requesting verification put us at risk for noncompliance" said Dave Mason, Novartis Americas Supply Chain Compliance and Serialization lead. "The use of verifiable credentials ensures that we can establish trust across the supply chain and that we comply to the letter of the law."

As early as May 2021, this functionality will be available to existing customers of the SAP Information Collaboration Hub for Life Sciences, to help ensure customers can achieve compliance quickly. To drive the utilization of SSI technology across the industry, SAP also plans to participate in the newly founded Open Credentialing Initiative (OCI).

"Digital transformation is critical for the life sciences industry to be able to quickly and effectively address public health needs," said Matt Laukaitis, SAP Consumer Industries global general manager. "This work is yet another example of SAP's leadership with the life sciences ecosystem of partners and customers to address their industry-specific solution requirements. By establishing an efficient process for transmitting and verifying authorized trading partner status, the supply chain is more safe and secure."

About SAP

SAP stands for Systems, Applications, and Products in Data Processing (Anwendungen und Produkte in der Datenverarbeitung in German). SAP was founded in 1972 in Walldorf, Germany and now has offices around the world. SAP innovations help more than 400,000 customers worldwide work together more efficiently and use business insight more effectively. Explore our leadership, history, sustainability, diversity, FAQs, and more.

ASC LAUNCHES DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION PROGRAM

IFS is Proud to announce an agreement between ASC and IFS:

Australian-owned submarine and warship builder ASC is embracing the digital future by launching a digital transformation program, identifying and rolling out new technology and innovation across its cutting-edge defense programs. As Australia's largest locally owned defense prime contractor, ASC's leadership in the digital space is expected to have flow-on effects for hundreds of Australian and overseas suppliers to its Collins Class sustainment and warship construction programs. IFS was selected to provide enterprise resource planning (ERP) capabilities to help ASC enhance operational efficiency in mission-critical areas.

ASC's critical business systems will be significantly enhanced through a sweeping digital transformation. This comprehensive program will set the ground for ASC's digital shipyard transition: facilitating more streamlined processes, enhanced integration between systems, and the expanded use of real-time data to drive optimised decision-making across the organisation.

ASC's digital transformation program will strengthen its Enterprise Resource Planning system and introduce cutting-edge technologies to enable its workforce and optimise its capabilities to support the sovereign sustainment of the Royal Australian Navy's Collins Class submarine fleet, now and into the future.

ASC Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director, Stuart Whiley, said the digital transformation is important to ensure that ASC continues to deliver Collins Class availability at beyond international benchmarks for the Royal Australian Navy, in terms of costs, function and availability.

"This project will keep ASC at the cutting-edge of submarine sustainment innovation. It will ensure we maintain an efficient, cost conscious culture as we continue to deliver world-class service and value for money to the Royal Australian Navy," Mr Whiley said."

ASC is committed to the growth and development of its employees. The new systems will ensure they are skilled in the latest digital systems, streamline their work and provide greater job satisfaction.

"Our people will be better equipped to do their jobs by working with real-time data, integrative platforms and improved knowledge-sharing that will enable them to focus on the areas of their expertise.

"Aligning our digital systems with our suppliers will realise additional productivity improvements.

"The project will create approximately 35 new jobs, based across South Australia and Western Australia."

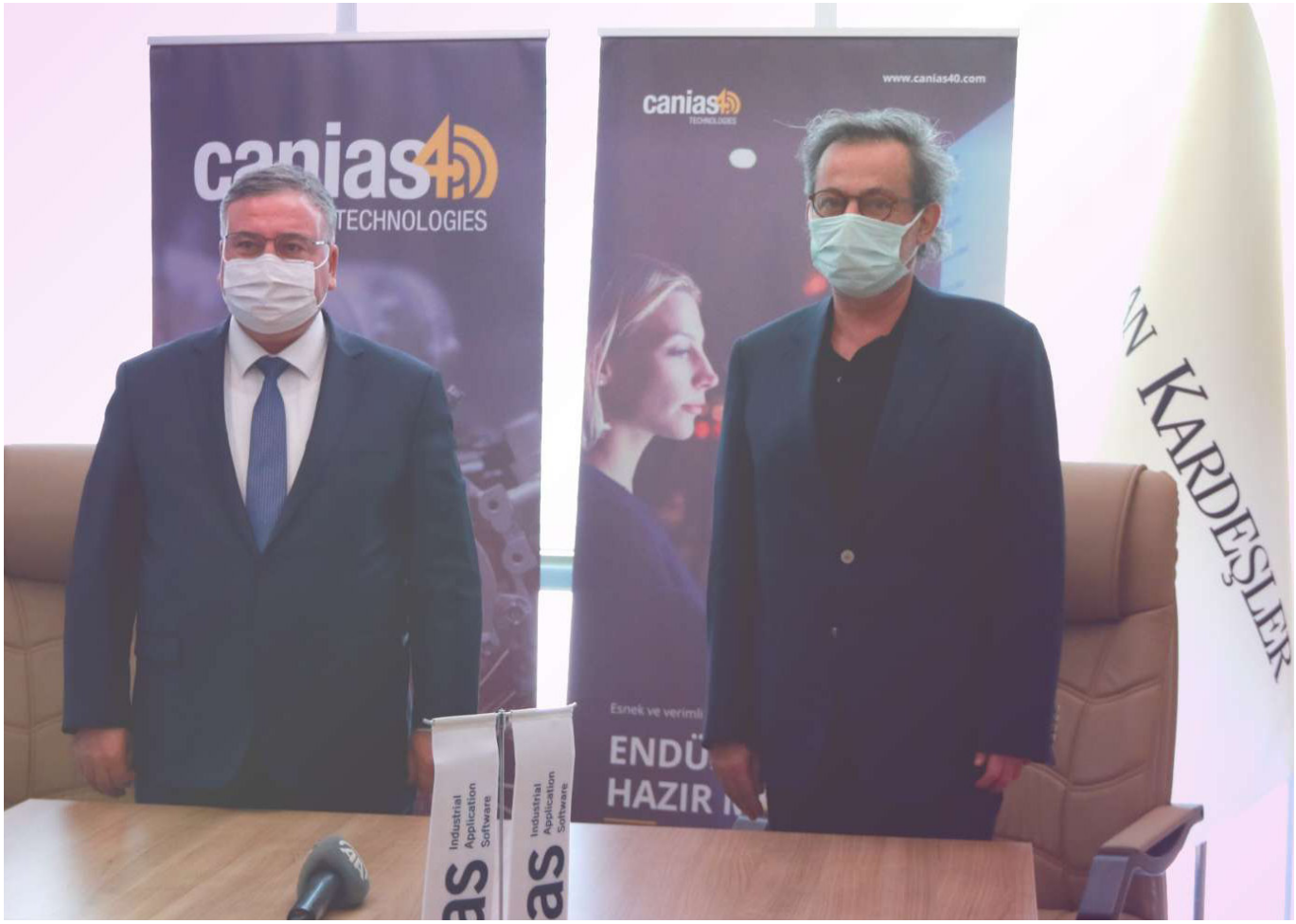
It will be coordinated and delivered by ASC's implementation partner, professional services consultancy Deloitte.

Deloitte Australia National Maritime Leader, and Lead Engagement Partner, Jesse Sherwood said: "Deloitte is incredibly proud to be selected as ASC's implementation partner. We are excited about sharing our broad and deep expertise in delivering complex transformation programs with ASC to help them digitise and modernise sustainment, while innovating to future-proof their business."

The transformation will utilise enterprise resource planning solution IFS which is highly regarded for its seamless integration of different functions.

IFS Australia and New Zealand Managing Director, Warren Zietsman, said: "After a competitive bid process, we're honoured that ASC has selected IFS as its ERP system of choice, as it embarks on this ambitious and exciting initiative. "ASC plays a vital role in Australia's naval defence and we feel privileged to be supporting them in the delivery of its new digital backbone. Our defence expertise will be central to arming ASC with a solution that will offer them agility in their operations and the flexibility to meet changing market demands."

Additional suppliers Novacura and BluePrism will also participate in the program.



KAPLAN KARDESLER HALI CHOOSE CANIAS4.0 TECHNOLOGIES

With more than 30 years of experience, IAS (Industrial Application Software), serving in 16 languages in 31 countries with more than 1000 customers, more than 30 thousand users and more than 50 business partners, had an agreement with one of the biggest companies in Gaziantep and one of the pioneers of its sector. Kaplan Brothers decided to manage business processes with canias4.0 Technologies. A contract meeting was held with the participation of Yasar Hakan Karabiber, Chairman of the Board of IAS, and Selahattin Kaplan, Chairman of the Board of Kaplan Kardesler Halı. At the meeting held at the headquarters of Kaplan Brothers Carpet, the two companies took the first step of their cooperation and signed a contract.

We will guide with our 30 years of experience

The board members of the two companies that started the cooperation came together at the contract meeting. IAS Chairman of the Board of Directors Yasar Hakan Karabiber commented on the meeting and said Gaziantep is one of Turkey's most important industrial centers. Kaplan Kardesler, on the other hand, is one of the biggest companies in this region. Now we are going on a road together. As IAS, it is a great pleasure to support the digital transformation journey of important companies such as Kaplan Kardesler and to offer technology that will enable them to be one step ahead of their competitors on this path we set off with the vision of Industry 4.0. We have a long way to walk together and we are confident that we will achieve great success in this process. They are extremely prepared and determined to carry themselves into the future. We will provide great support and provide great advantages to Kaplan Kardesler in this process with our 30 years of experience, integrated software solutions and expert staff."

We Have A Local and National Software

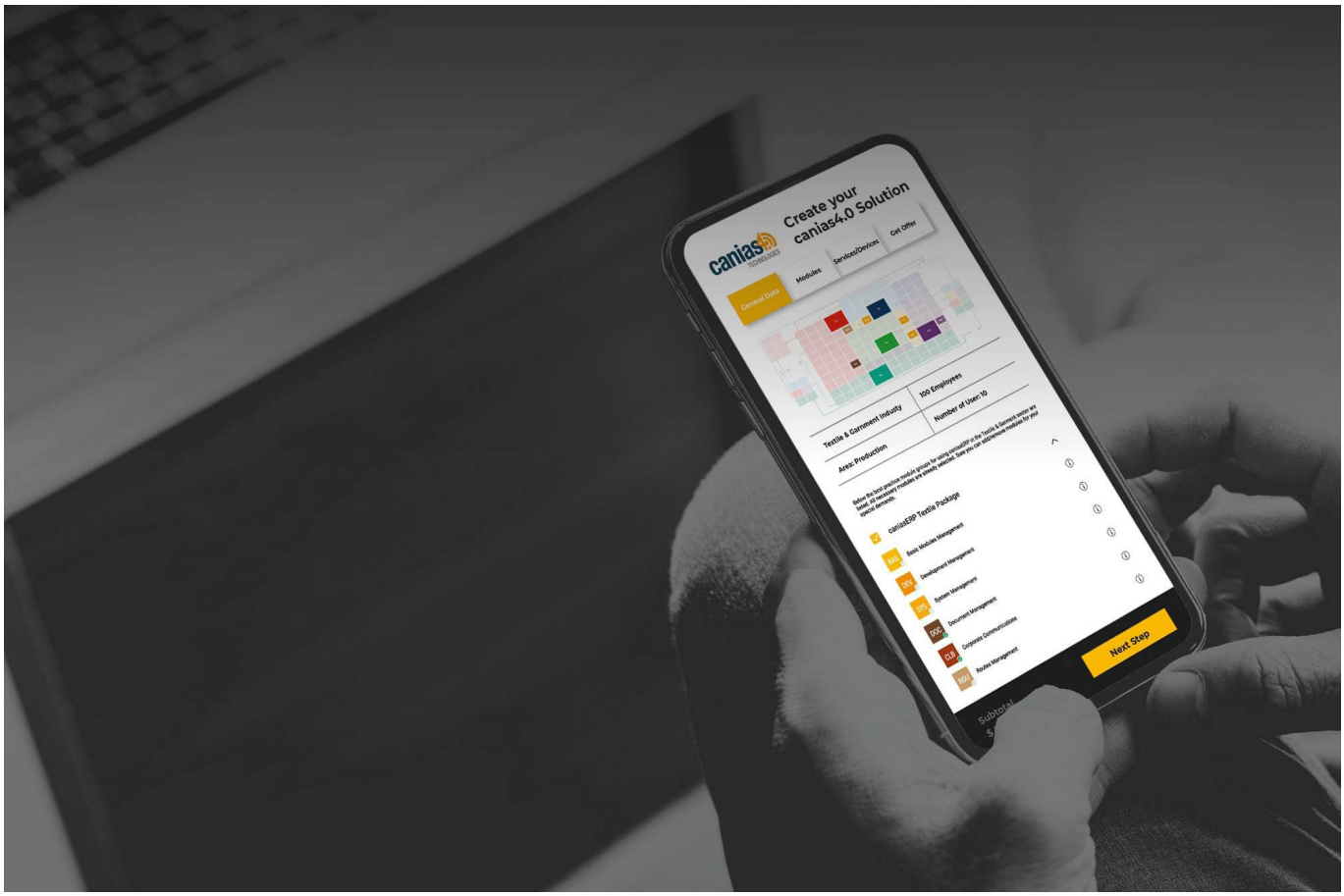
Kaplan Kardesler Carpet Chairman Salahattin Kaplan, who stated that he is very pleased with the work they have started with a global scale Turkish company, also

> **"IN THE MEETINGS WE HAVE HELD SO FAR, WE HAVE SEEN THAT WE CAN ACHIEVE THE FLEXIBLE AND FAST SOLUTIONS WE WANT WITH THE TECHNOLOGIES OFFERED BY IAS WITH CANIAS4.0 AND ITS EXPERIENCED TEAM.**

emphasized his belief in the project at the meeting. Kaplan said, "We continue our digital transformation project with the solutions IAS offers with canias4.0. We had attempted to work with world-renowned foreign companies before, but we could not get the efficiency we wanted. They did not understand our demands and could not speak our language. They could not produce flexible, fast solutions and could not provide adequate solutions to our demands. In the meetings we have held so far, we have seen that we can achieve the flexible and fast solutions we want with the technologies offered by IAS with canias4.0 and its experienced team. If the project we started today is successful, we will be an important reference to other companies in the Gaziantep region. We would be very happy about this "

Will Lead Digital Transformation in Gaziantep

Offering many solutions such as automation, IoT, big data, cloud, business intelligence and e-Government integrations, especially the enterprise resource planning solution caniasERP, in an integrated structure, IAS continues to guide the digital return journey of companies. canias4.0 Technologies are increasing their effectiveness all over the world day by day. With its collaborations with major firms and technological leadership, IAS performs partnerships with major companies in the industry in Gaziantep. IAS is also expected to increase its effectiveness in the region in the future.



About caniasERP

Since the early days of IAS, the dream was to be the game-changer in the ERP industry by providing best-in-class solutions. IAS developed its own unique software development platform, TROIA in 1997 and released caniasERP 6.01 in the year 2000 as one of the first few ERP solutions available online with full functionality. TROIA, open-source and platform-independent integrated development environment, and its exceptional flexibility feature are the core strengths of caniasERP, as evidenced by various third-party studies.

Over the years, the brand "caniasERP" has played an important role in helping companies gain Operational Excellence in Industries such as Automotive, Aviation & Defense, Printing, Packaging, Textile & Garment, and Machinery & Industrial Automation.

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

With over 250 professionals and consultants and excellence R&D centers and subsidiaries in Germany, India, Turkey, UAE, and Korea along with business partners in across the world, IAS is one of the highest-rated ERP vendors with its solution, caniasERP, available on-premise, on-the-cloud and also mobile devices.

IAS, over the years, has received many prestigious awards and acknowledgments in various countries, such as ERP Excellence by GPS Germany in 2017 and Best of 2018 in ERP Solutions category by Initiative Mittelstand in Germany.

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

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

AGILOFT LAUNCHES NEW USER INTERFACE AND ENHANCED AI FOR CONTRACT LIFECYCLE MANAGEMENT TO ACCELERATE ENTERPRISE PRODUCTIVITY

Agiloft, the global standard in no-code contract lifecycle management (CLM), today announced its latest product release featuring a new intuitive user interface to boost usability and make the platform easier to search and navigate. In addition to the interface, the 2021 spring product release adds a substantial improvement to Agiloft's AI capabilities, enabling enterprises to streamline contract import, review, and analysis.

"The latest release is all about making it easier to work in Agiloft's contract lifecycle management platform and utilizing AI to improve contract management processes for large enterprises," said Andy Wishart, Agiloft Chief Product Officer. "Our new interface adds more intuitive navigation, table views, and search, while our enhanced AI capabilities greatly improve accuracy and speed in reviewing and analyzing contracts."
New features and enhancements include:

New User Interface: Search, view, and navigate faster than ever with the new, intuitive interface.
Quickly navigate tables arranged in horizontal tabs, view tables grouped by use case, and customize table displays.
Learn how to navigate the platform more easily with the updated design.

New Search: Get exact results more easily with improved search capabilities.
Combine the breadth of a global search with a targeted table-specific search to quickly find information.
Identify contracts with central themes such as deal value or risk scoring.
Capture and narrow down relevant results with intuitive filters.

New Microsoft 365 Apps: Streamline workflows with improved Microsoft apps.
Accelerate negotiation with AI-enabled contract review, while working in Microsoft Word.
Create and update a clause library from contract documents.
Merge email with contract records for easy tracking and auditing in Outlook, whether on PC, Mac, or Outlook online.

Enhanced Adobe Sign Integration: Simplify the signature process with Adobe Sign e-signature, now fully integrated with Agiloft.

Manage complex signing matrices that require the full use of Adobe Sign roles.

Send documents to different parties to sign, then track and manage within the system.

Reorder documents and correct signers even after creating the agreement.

Expanded AI Toolkit: Review and analyze contracts faster and more accurately.

Get up and running in minutes with AI models developed to extract key terms and clauses from third-party paper.
Quickly locate existing clauses, determine how they align with preferred wording and verify if any requirements are missing.

Optimize Agiloft's new AI Core architecture for exceptional accuracy and security.

"As the number one provider of agile CLM software, Agiloft helps customers automate their most complex contract processes and quickly adapt these processes when business needs change," said Eric Laughlin, Agiloft CEO. "With Agiloft's new intuitive user interface, it is easier than ever to configure our no-code CLM platform to precisely fit your needs faster and with less resources.
To view Agiloft's newest release, sign up to attend our 2021 Spring Release Webinar here.

About Agiloft

As the global leader in agile contract lifecycle management (CLM) software, Agiloft provides significant savings in purchasing, enables more efficient legal operations, and accelerates sales cycles, all while drastically lowering compliance risk. Agiloft's adaptable no-code platform ensures rapid deployment and a fully extensible system. Using contracts as the core system of commercial record, Agiloft's CLM software leverages AI to improve contract management for legal departments, procurement, and sales operations. Visit www.agiloft.com for more.

ORACLE
NETSUITE

Business Grows Here

The First and Last ERP System You'll Need to Run Your Business

Learn More

HOW CLOUD ERP IS HELPING BUSINESS EMBRACE THE NEW NORMAL

Cloud ERP has paved the way for new ways of working that will bring big business benefits. They include;

- Increased productivity: streamline your business processes using a single shared system and get things done across departments.
- Take decisions using the latest company data and get teams acting on them fast wherever you are.
- Flexibility to change direction.
- Speed to market - get your products out there quickly.
- Hybrid working with the option of an office/home blend, for a happier workforce, functioning optimally at all life stages.

Lucy Thorpe,
Head of Content, InCloud Solutions

INCLOUD SOLUTIONS

DISCOVER THE ADVANTAGES OF ZAP DATA HUB, A CLOUD DATA AND ANALYTICS PLATFORM!

*Interview with **Trey Johnson**,*
Chief Evangelist and Leader of ZAP

Technological tools have become more important to businesses than ever before. In the competitive environment shaped by the new normal, it is necessary to choose the right tools to achieve success. In this context, we made a special interview with ZAP, one of the important players of the market, on the importance of both ZAP Data Hub and BI tools.

1. Could you tell us about yourself and your career in the ERP industry?

My name is Trey Johnson and I am ZAP's Chief Evangelist and leader of our Americas business. My time with the ERP industry has been spent on the data side of the business. I have spent the last 25+ years working with data and analytics. Today, I lead our team in taking our great data management & analytics SaaS software out to ERP users to tackle a number of data and reporting issues.

2. Enterprise software such as ERP and CRM store data securely and quickly. However, they may not fully meet the customer's needs when it comes to reporting. For this reason, 3rd party applications that are more agile and have more flexible reporting capabilities come into play. At this point, what does ZAP Data Hub offer its customers?

ZAP Data Hub (also available as Sage Data & Analytics in the Sage world) offers the end-to-end capability to collect data smartly from one or more ERP applications, and then blend this data with other sources, such as CRM applications, cloud datasources, line of business applications, and even Excel data.

With all this data in one place, companies can then use ZAP's out-of-the-box analytics with Microsoft's Power BI, Tableau or ZAP's own data visualization layer. Traditional reporting tools do nothing to alleviate the complexity of reporting off complex ERPs, but ZAP solves that problem first and foremost – and then gives the user option of using whatever BI product makes sense for them.

3. BI tools stand at a very important point when it comes to reporting. What are the features that distinguish ZAP's BI technology from other tools regarding the accessibility from all data sources and the integrations it provides?

The composite of our capabilities is a very managable, approachable end-to-end experience for our mid-market ERP customers. It's also very user-friendly, and with no coding or extensive training required. From our sophisticated solution for those with multiple data sources, to supporting other BI tools, to providing a world-class, out-of-the-box experience with our analytics... With ZAP Data Hub and Sage Data & Analytics, organizations are in a much better position to get business intelligence across the entirety of their business. ZAP's ability to deliver comprehensive views of finance, sales, manufacturing, purchasing, inventory management and more – in whatever combination a business needs – is powerful. Most BI tools work on silos of data, whereas our view is that your data in totality is the real platform for insight.

4. ZAP and Sage partnership provides many advantages to users, especially in terms of being affordable. Could you please tell us about these advantages?

We are very fortunate and proud to offer solutions with Sage to their ERP customers. The scalable nature of our SaaS offering for data & analytics, means we can work with all configurations of mid-market customers PLUS scale up for those with enterprise-level ERP data needs. We have worked exceptionally hard with Sage to launch a solution – Sage Data

> **WITH ZAP DATA HUB AND SAGE DATA & ANALYTICS, ORGANIZATIONS ARE IN A MUCH BETTER POSITION TO GET BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE ACROSS THE ENTIRETY OF THEIR BUSINESS.**

& Analytics (SD&A) – that offers all the right capabilities in an economic way: analytics and outcomes in days not months, and in a manner which resonates with all decision makers. It's really exciting to currently be speaking with so many Sage sales partners about this! It genuinely seems we're solving for problems they've never been able to fully address in the past.

5. Sage, the market leader in cloud solutions, recently announced the first Sage Data & Analytics SaaS offering in the cloud for Sage 300 and Sage 100. What are the benefits of this unique integration for users?

We chose the product name because Sage Data & Analytics (SD&A) gives the Sage 300 and Sage 100 community the benefit of having access to all of their data as well as experiencing out-of-the-box analytics for all decision makers. Besides the intrinsic elements of the cloud, Sage users also benefit from working with their Sage-certified business partner to leverage SD&A and explore all the unique elements of the data in their ERP as well as delivering a robust analytical experience.

Because of ZAP's long-standing relationship with Sage, products from our prior OEM relationship focusing on Sage X3, support for data in most other Sage ERPs (such as Sage 500, and Sage Intacct) and now our OEM expansion for Sage 300 and Sage 100, customers – through their business partners – can all benefit from the same very high quality data & analytics experience. Regardless of how their Sage ERP needs evolve over time.

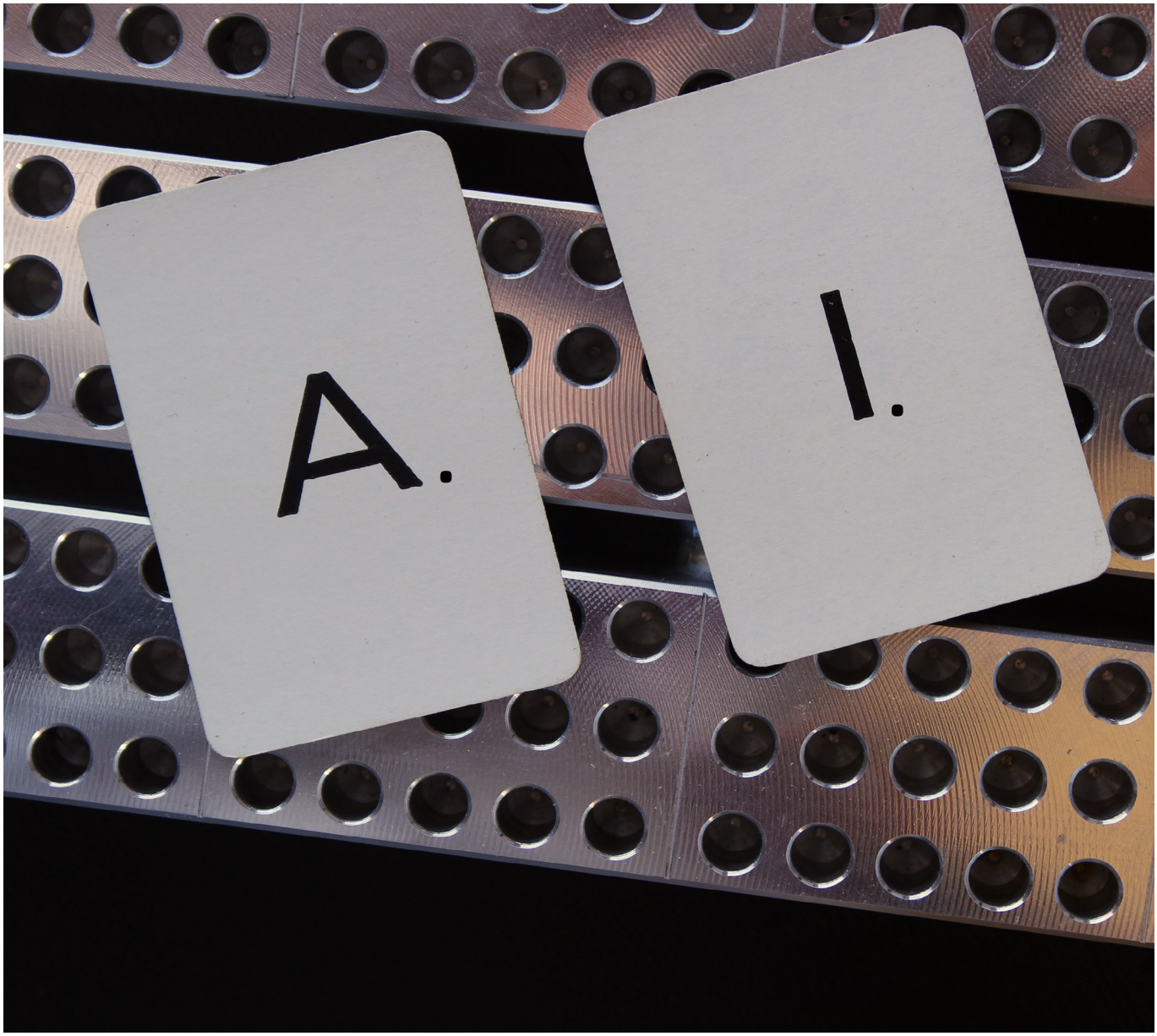
6. The world is experiencing an extraordinary period. The pressure for businesses to adapt to the new normal is increasing day by day. How does Cloud ERP help businesses adapt to the new normal?

I have experienced first-hand organizations are coming to ZAP with a real lack of data-based business insight. This lack of insight – characterized by bad or missing analytics and bad or missing data – means never truly knowing what 'normal' is. Even if it changes often! ZAP Data Hub, as a cloud data & analytics platform, delivers the ability to craft new analytics often, using a variety of BI tools. What does crafting new analytics mean in practice for a business? In short, being able to ask and answer pertinent questions about its finance and operations. Additionally, our SaaS platform ensures that whatever data is relevant, be it a spreadsheet or another critical business system, we have the cloud capabilities to support customers having a blended view of their data to gain the insights they need.

About ZAP

Founded in 2001, ZAP is a global software company headquartered in London, with offices and partners across Europe, North America, Middle East & Africa, and Asia Pacific.

Our ZAP Data Hub software – and its solutions for Microsoft Dynamics, Sage, Salesforce, SAP Business One, and SYSPRO – are used across all industry sectors, from mid-size businesses to Fortune 500 and FTSE 100 organizations. Flagship customers include Aston Martin, Costa Coffee, Regal Entertainment Group, SANIFLO, and Tarmac.



AUDITORIA.AI RAISES $15.5 MILLION TO USHER IN THE ERA OF ZERO-TOUCH AUTONOMOUS FINANCE

Venrock Leads the Series A Financing for the Pioneer in Cognitive Automation for Finance and Accounting

SANTA CLARA, CA – AUDITORIA.AI, a pioneer in AI-driven automation solutions for corporate finance teams, announced it has raised $15.5 million in an oversubscribed Series A round. Venrock led the round, with participation from Workday Ventures and existing investors, including B Capital Group, Engineering Capital, Firebolt Ventures, and Neotribe Ventures.

"As the industry's first ERP-centric cognitive automation platform, we are powering the next generation of intelligent automation for global finance teams," said Rohit Gupta, CEO and co-founder, Auditoria. "This new round of funding furthers our mission of transforming the corporate finance back office and accelerates the reality of the zero-touch self-driving back office. We are now at the forefront of finance innovation with our focused efforts to drive greater efficiencies for CFOs and finance teams."

This funding round brings the total raised by the company to more than $22 million since inception. Auditoria intends to use these funds to accelerate innovation in artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning (ML), Natural Language Processing (NLP), and data science to transform corporate finance with additional Auditoria SmartFlow Skills, to build out its foundational hires in sales, marketing, and customer success, and to foster strong industry partnerships and community development.

"Finance operations automation is the future for corporate finance," said Brian Ascher, partner at Venrock. "We have been on the hunt to invest in the right team with the experience and innovative technology necessary to transform corporate finance, and we have found that in Auditoria. We envision a day when every global finance team is using Auditoria to streamline and automate back-office operations."

Auditoria helps modern finance teams accelerate finance transformation by dramatically improving cash performance. Built with cutting-edge AI, ML, Cognitive RPA, NLP, and Computer Vision, Auditoria streamlines and automates collections, adds controls to procurement spend, and optimizes cash performance. Auditoria integrates with industry-leading ERP applications, including Oracle ERP Cloud, Oracle NetSuite, Sage Intacct, and Workday, as well as collaboration tools like Microsoft Office 365 and Google Workspace.

"While the corporate finance back office has been slow to adopt new technologies, Auditoria is the answer for finance leaders looking to innovate and automate back-office processes," said Tien Anh Nguyen, Chief Business Officer at UserTesting. "We have increased predictability and immensely improved our receivables productivity with Auditoria. We're now able to complete three to four times the amount of tasks thanks to Auditoria's autonomous technology and modern, compelling user experience."

In the year since the launch of the company, Auditoria has reached several milestones that have positioned the firm as a leader in digital finance transformation. More than 200 organizations are now leveraging Auditoria SmartFlow Skills, and the company has secured strategic partnerships with several leading accounting, audit, and risk management firms, including Armanino, AST LLC, BrainSell, MCS Group, RSM US LLP, and Wipro Limited. Additionally, Auditoria has been recognized by Constellation Research in its "Shortlist for Cognitive Automation" and recognized as the "Best Finance Compliance Solution" of 2020 by Tech Ascension.

"The massive shift from RPA to intelligent, autonomous apps is underway," said R "Ray" Wang, CEO and founder, Constellation Research. "The industry is ripe for change, and companies on the front lines of creating the self-driving, autonomous organization of the future are taking both mindshare and marketshare. I advise any forward-looking CFO to consider these types of solutions as their technology of choice to transform their corporate finance function and catapult their back office into the autonomous future."

To learn more about Auditoria and how it is transforming the corporate finance back office, set up a test drive today: https://info.auditoria.ai/request-test-drive

About Auditoria

Auditoria is an AI-driven SaaS automation company for corporate finance that automates back-office business processes involving tasks, analytics, and responses in Vendor Management, Accounts Receivables, Planning, and Audit. By leveraging natural language processing, artificial intelligence, and machine learning, Auditoria's platform removes friction and repetition from mundane tasks while also automating complex functions, such as predictive analytical forecasting. Corporate finance and accounting teams use Auditoria to accelerate business value while minimizing heavy IT involvement, improving business resilience, lowering attrition, and accelerating business insights. Give your finance teams superpowers at Auditoria.ai.

Follow Auditoria on LinkedIn and Twitter to stay connected.

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5 CLOUD ERP BENEFITS WE LEARNED ABOUT IN LOCKDOWN

*Article by **Lucy Thorpe**,*
Head of Content, InCloud Solutions

How Cloud ERP is helping business embrace the new normal

"Re-entry" is something we are hearing a lot about lately and the next six months will be a time when many businesses re-appraise what they want their place of business to look like. Will it resemble a brightly coloured kids play area with basketball hoops – will it be a shiny chrome and leather expanse with sweeping views over the city or will it look a bit like the same kitchen table you've been sat at for the last year? When you go back to work with cloud, it can look like any of these – depending on your company culture of course! Cloud has given us the flexibility to carry out core business functions wherever we are and that is just the start. There are many business advantages already being felt by those who went into lockdown with cloud ERP on board. So let's take a look at them to see whether we want to take them forward with us into the "new normal".

Five cloud ERP benefits we learned about in lockdown.

Speed

The speed at which multiple anti-covid vaccines were invented, trialled, approved and rolled out has been a revelation.
This is not the "usual" way things are done in Life Sciences. But rule books have been ripped up and new ways of working have been forced into being through necessity. I joined one live life sciences event in which vaccine creators were talking candidly about how they had fast tracked their work by "multi-streaming" activity with several stages taking place in parallel, with remarkable results.
With Cloud ERP, software can be used to run multiple projects – easily keeping track of resources, staff and finances from where ever you are.

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> **WE MAY OR MAY NOT SEE OTHER PANDEMICS IN THE FUTURE, BUT PIVOTING IN RESPONSE TO CHANGING MARKETS IS HERE TO STAY.**

Greater productivity

Far from seeing a reduction in productivity during lockdown, remote teams often worked smarter and more effectively from home. In some cases this boiled down to teams taking decisions themselves, only referring up when absolutely

necessary. This resulted in fewer delays as well as being more effective with resources. Teams spread globally will continue to benefit from the way cloud systems bring people together collaboratively – in projects as diverse as Life Sciences and pop music. ERP solution users can keep track of tasks and budgets, while automation speeds up potential bottle necks like approvals.

Access to decision makers

Without access to decision makers very little gets signed off, which is why the vaccine inventors were given unprecedented access to the right people at the right time in order to move things forward at pace. This was obviously a lot easier to organise when everyone was confined to their homes! However, with teams now more accustomed to being spread apart geographically and leaders buying into the benefits of agility - that crucial access can be facilitated remotely rather than waiting for the dreaded "board meeting", which can see project momentum halted in its tracks.

Embracing the Pivot!

We all pivoted during lockdown – or that's what the lovers of business-speak would have us believe. Much as we love/hate business language – the concept was spot on. We flipped, switched-up, spun and turned on a dime to make things work because we had to. In some cases delivery modes changed to encompass digital ordering or curb side pick-up, while elsewhere whole businesses switched up their manufacturing lines to make new products like hand sanitiser or PPE.
Those who struggled least already had cloud technology in play.
We may or may not see other pandemics in the future, but pivoting in response to changing markets is here to stay. So if cloud ERP was on your to-do list before – you are doing something about it now – right?

Hybrid working

Much has been made of the shocking statistics around the way women have been disadvantaged by the pandemic. A McKinsey survey has found that one in 4 women has either left or is considering leaving the workforce as a result of Covid. There is talk of progress towards equality being put back 50 years. This can not be allowed to become entrenched. It seems like the quick win here is to embrace the hybrid working models we have developed during the pandemic.
A "return" to the office may in many cases be desirable, particularly for younger people who have lost out on so much – but for those who can be more productive from home, this has to remain a choice. Digital technology makes this possible, covid made it a reality. We have the proof that it works.
Other areas where lessons have been learned include e-commerce and supply chain and you can read more case studies here about how Covid galvanised SAP partners and their clients through specific digital projects. These are the companies who are now reaping the benefits of cloud ERP in

Lucy Thorpe is an in-house writer and content creator for cloud solutions consultancy In Cloud Solutions based in Reading & London in the UK - they are members of the worldwide United Vars network of SAP consultancies.

About InCloud Solutions

In Cloud Solutions is an SAP Platinum Partner offering ERP software solutions, training, and consultancy to SMEs. Based in the UK In Cloud Solutions are experts in the ERP solution SAP Business ByDesign, cloud-based ERP for mid-sized business. www.incloudsolutions.co.uk

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ERP AND THE NEW NORMAL

*Article by **Nishant Joshi**,*
Technical Writer, Sage Software Solutions Pvt Ltd

Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems had already become the backbone of businesses a long time ago. The pandemic has only increased the relevance of ERP systems by helping companies withstand the significant pressure to meet customer demands on time. In this new normal, employees are working from home because of social distancing norms. And ERP systems are playing a significant role in allowing them to work flawlessly from geographically distant locations. They also manage critical functions across all departments, including sales & marketing, finance & accounting, supply chain, vendor management, and maintaining robust and long-lasting customer relationships.

The second wave of pandemic worldwide has proved that the virus is showing no signs of slowing down. People are falling sick and the death rate is increasing rapidly. It means that the remote work culture will only strengthen in the future. ERP solutions provide an effective solution to this problem by allowing multiple business departments to collaborate and work as a cohesive force.

This article will shed light on how ERP systems enable companies to work effectively in the pandemic and what the future holds.

1. Relevance of On-Cloud ERP solutions will rise.

On-Premise ERP solutions are legacy software systems that require significant investments in infrastructure and hardware. Their biggest disadvantage is that they are immobile, meaning employees cannot access them on their mobile devices. Suppose your salesperson has to collect essential documents from the customer. In that case, he will have to visit the customer's place, collect the papers, come back to the office, and upload the documents in the ERP system.

Unfortunately, almost all countries went through a series of lockdowns where transport facilities were restricted, and moving from one location to another was virtually

impossible. The new normal will see the rise of On-Cloud ERP systems as they allow businesses to function from geographically distant locations. Coming back to the example mentioned above, the Cloud-based ERP software will enable the salesperson to collect and upload the customer's documents from their office premises only.

Moreover, On-Cloud ERP systems have the following advantages as well:

a. They provide a comprehensive overview of the inventory and warehouse to all business stakeholders.

b. They share real-time reports with authorized personnel that help to brainstorm effective strategies.

c. They allow small businesses to set up an ERP system without investing substantially in labor and hardware costs.

d. They update faster without any production interruptions and security vulnerabilities.

e. They allow businesses to expand at a fast pace.

f. They help businesses to reduce their carbon footprint.

2. ERP systems will dominate the healthcare industry.

The healthcare industry has been under significant pressure since the beginning of the pandemic. Doctors, nurses, virologists, and healthcare staff have been working 24/7 to develop vaccines, provide medical treatment, and issue emergency guidelines whenever required.

Healthcare ERP Software helped medical institutions immensely in the following ways:

a. They efficiently manage the front desk by obtaining essential information such as appointment timings, bed availability, doctor schedule, etc.

b. They allow the healthcare staff to manage inventory in an orderly fashion, from placing orders for lab coats, surgical instruments, and medical cartons to sending daily reminders and alerts to vendors, suppliers, and distributors.

c. They help reduce operational expenditure by managing ADT (Admission, Discharge, Transfer) costs, reducing long waiting times in ques, decreasing operating room times, and eliminating infection and medical errors.

d. They also allow physically disabled patients to have virtual interaction with doctors in real-time, thereby eliminating the need for a face-to-face meeting.

e. They allow doctors to collect vital health information about the patients using remote monitoring devices and smart wearables.

3. ERP systems will transform the supply chain industry.

The supply chain industry involves multiple partners working together to deliver the final product to the end-consumer. It essentially involves three actors:

a. The vendor supplying raw materials.

b. The company converting raw materials into finished products.

c. The distributor delivering the finished products to the end-user.

We all know that the pandemic had forced restrictions on people and goods' movement from one location to another, which impacted supply chains worldwide. ERP systems played a significant role in bringing business functions back to normal in the following ways:

a. They help build supply chain towers that use AI and advanced algorithms to identify potential challenges and find efficient resolutions for them.

b. They allow supply chain companies to manage their activities across multiple channels, including retail, e-Commerce, and direct-to-door service. In short, it helps them to increase their revenues and cut operational costs.

c. IoT-enabled ERP systems allow supply chain companies to instantly share real-time updates and information with different business stakeholders.

d. They allow supply chain companies to interact with customers and collect their feedback to increase the company's reputation.

Conclusion

The pandemic has transformed the business landscape across the world. Digital revolution is happening rapidly and companies that fail to catch-up will have to shut down their doors. Today is the right time for you to invest in ERP systems to improve your productivity, increase revenues, cut down operational expenses, and strengthen market competence. The earlier you start, the better your prospects will be.

Nishant Joshi likes to read and write on technologies that form the bedrock of the modern-day and age like ERP, CRM, Web Apps, machine learning, data science, AI, and robotics. His expertise in content marketing has helped grow countless business opportunities. Nishant works for Sage Software Solutions Pvt. Ltd., a leading provider of CRM and ERP solutions to small and mid-sized businesses in India.
You can learn more about him on Linkedin

About Sage Software

Sage Software Solutions Pvt. Ltd. is a leading ERP and CRM solutions provider, driving business transformations. Our ERP software helps manufacturing industries manage their accounts, inventory, and supply chain with faster execution time.

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THE SECRET INGREDIENTS TO SUPPLY CHAIN TECH SUCCESS

*Article by **Cas Brentjens**,*
Infor Vice President of Supply Chain Management for APAC

Real-time visibility, predictive insights, prescriptive decision support, and real-time collaborative execution are the four areas supply chain professionals need to reach the flexibility and agility required to increase speed, reduce costs and satisfy customers. All of this can be achieved through a supply chain control tower.

Visibility is the foundation of every control tower capability, with all advanced decision making and responses within the execution window relying upon the quality of visibility. Keeping order, shipment, and inventory status updated for all parties to see in real-time is critical to success. But this often proves a core challenge for control towers since highly dynamic supply chains can change at a rate of over 50 changes per second.

Visibility that captures GPS & IoT data can provide real-time updates to orders, shipments, and products. Many planning and logistics control towers offer this visibility but lack the cross-domain alignment for decision making.

Analytics control towers attempt to pull data together to provide a dashboard view of the supply chain, but these still rely heavily on batch updates and data crunching. Neither approaches provide the end-to-end breadth of visibility or the real-time status of supply chain operations needed for optimal response.

While many planning control towers compensate by building complex data models or expanding unstructured data lakes, there is only one way to ensure real-time, end-to-end visibility: connecting all supply chain parties to a single platform in order to generate a single source of truth for orders, shipments, and inventory that is always up to date.

This means utilising a multi-tenant, multi-enterprise business network that leverages a single data model to connect all parties to digital supply chain data. Changes and updates are reflected immediately in the network and visible to all relevant parties. High-quality, real-time, shared data is the necessary cornerstone of building a data-centric supply chain.

Change happens, and can't be avoided. Despite improvements in supply chain planning, companies cannot perfectly plan for an imperfect world, but relying on early detection of changes can help your organisation control its effect on your supply chain.

For example, when machine learning algorithms are applied to real-time visibility, they can help predict late shipments before companies receive carrier notices or, worse, the customer complains. Supply chain professionals with visibility to network inventory levels can monitor demand and supply balance to predict potential stockouts in time to prevent lost sales.

Predictive alerting is an essential capability for providing supply chain professionals with the agility they need to act quickly. Still, the massive amounts of complex data involved can quickly overwhelm those tasked with running your supply chain.

An essential component of predictive technologies is separating true, actionable signals from noise. Machine learning algorithms that incorporate historical supply chain data, as well as external data sources, help determine what is genuinely an actionable signal versus one that can be ignored. This allows the focus to be directed to the most critical tasks and avoids losing time on events that don't require action.

The ability to recognise a crucial alert is only half the battle. Making the right decision requires decision support capabilities for approaching the resolution in the most intelligent manner.

Aggregation is helpful to identify common-cause events impacting multiple shipments and orders. By bundling total value at risk or total customer exposure, supply chain professionals get a more accurate picture of each resolution action's comparative magnitude.

Prioritisation is essential to align resolutions with company strategy, whether it be cost reduction, velocity, customer service, or some combination.

In-context information is vital to making quick decisions. Bringing relevant information needed to make decisions to the supply chain professional and eliminating time-consuming calls and emails for updates liberates time from data gathering and allows for instant analysis.

Prescription takes decision-making to the next level by leveraging real-time network insights and intelligence to present the next best steps according to both the supply chain's real-world condition and the company's business goals.

Advanced analysis of events and available resolutions requires swift execution. Given the dynamic nature of supply chains, delays of days and weeks between analysis and execution can make certain resolutions unavailable, throwing the entire process back to square one, or worse, too late. Companies need to align quickly, both internally and with external suppliers, carriers, and forwarders, to ensure that all parties take timely action.

Decisions must be swift, collaborative, and immediately reflected, but relying on traditional communication and batch updates to systems puts successful resolution at risk. A connected supply chain network with shared data, processes, and insights leads to the most effective resolutions because all parties can collaborate directly with each other in-network from a single source of the truth.

About Infor

Infor is a global leader in business cloud software specialized by industry. Providing mission-critical enterprise applications to 67,000 customers in more than 175 countries, Infor software is designed to deliver more value and less risk, with more sustainable operational advantages. We empower our 17,000 employees to leverage their deep industry expertise and use data-driven insights to create, learn and adapt quickly to solve emerging business and industry challenges. Infor is committed to providing our customers with modern tools to transform their business and accelerate their own path to innovation. To learn more, please visit www.infor.com.

WHY DOES ERP NEEDS A MODERN LAYERED SERVICES PLATFORM?

*Article by **Evan Quinn,***
Principal Director of Marketing, QAD

The evolution of ERP from a specialty app to a business-critical amalgamation of solution has faced daunting difficulties over the years. Basically, ERP has gotten too big, too ungainly, too rigid. There are those who have said that "ERP is dead," suggesting its costs, risks and lack of flexibility outweigh its value. It has been compared to a monolith, an immovable object with a business unfriendly mind of its own. Is ERP dead or at least dying? Fortunately for those hundreds of thousands of companies invested in ERP, and at least some of the vendors that supply ERP software, there is a savior, which is, in could be referred to as a "modern layered services application platform." We will simply refer to it as a "modern platform."
How did ERP become so important – and big? What negative side effects are associated with ERP's march to enormity? How do modern platforms help ERP, and the businesses that use ERP, become a more relevant and flexible solution for now and tomorrow?

The Problems Caused by Big ERP

Unfortunately, the notion that the monolithic ERP solution is a great thing for organizations carries some glaring flaws, such as:
• Hard to Change: The set of common ERP processes, under the pretense of efficiency and best practice standardization, makes it increasingly difficult for a company to adapt to change. Instead of ERP serving an organization's changing needs, a monolithic ERP often becomes a yoke around the organization's neck, forcing the company to adapt to the ERP. Clearly the other way around - ERP adapting to the business - is the preferred approach. The last thing a CEO needs is a mission critical application that impedes the company's progress.

• Missing Best of Breed: All the parts of an ERP are not equally effective. For example, some ERPs excel at inventory management but offer weak capabilities for finance; some provide excellent asset management features but skimp on service management. In those business areas where a company tries to differentiate itself, it may want best-of-breed applications versus a "good enough" ERP version of the solution. For many companies, this big bland vanilla ERP too often proves that "good is not good enough."

• The Customization Trap: To get around the weak areas of an ERP solution, a company will often customize the ERP. While this helps the ERP maintain relevancy initially, customizations cause huge headaches over time. For example, there is the question of who supports the customization? Every time a company wants to upgrade its ERP it has to retest and perhaps redevelop each customization. This tartar buildup becomes so entrenched that some companies give up on upgrading. Foregoing moving to the latest version means that some companies end up with ERP versions that are 10 years old, or older. Often ERP vendors will, understandably, stop supporting very old versions of their software. Sometimes the servers and storage on which the old ERP runs face end-of-life and/or are not performing well and cannot be improved.

• Missing Technology Innovations: Everywhere you look, if you track the field of information technology, there are new emerging technologies. Examples include robots, data lakes, AI, multi-cloud, machine learning, software defined storage, a wide range of innovative analytics, 5G; the list is nearly endless. Guess what? If you are stuck on that immovable 10-year-old ERP, your company benefits from none of these new technologies. Your "state of the art" technologies trapped by that old ERP are probably 15 to 20 years old.

Modern Platforms to the Rescue

For those companies barely surviving on old, monolithic ERPs, there is hope, and that entails moving to an ERP that is based on a modern platform. One of the biggest mistakes a company trying to replace that 10-year-old ERP monolith could make is to blindly stick with what is known. "We want to stay with our incumbent provider because we know them, they know us, it will be easier." While that argument may have some merit if your incumbent has modernized their ERP on top of a modern layered services application

platform, companies that do not make the leap may find themselves, again, in what is sometimes referred to as "The Death Cycle of ERP." Why opt for an ERP with a modern platform? Here are some key reasons:

• Layered services: A modern platform abstracts all the services it provides into layers. For example, security is important to everything in the world of software. Such a platform might include security-related services at a low or lowest layer. That means everything that gets built on the platform above that layer inherits all the security services. Old ERPs were often developed in a "spaghetti code" fashion with many workarounds, including security. Layered services ensures that, as you go up the stack, you worry about less and less. Need to enhance security? Do so in the underlying modern platform and everything above it benefits. Need to enhance the user experience? Offer those services via the platform and the apps above it can take direct advantage.

• Emerging technology adoption: One of the difficulties many companies face is determining how and when to take advantage of emerging technologies. Sticking to an old ERP certainly inhibits the adoption of newer technologies. ERP built on a modern platform, however, makes technology adoption easier and safer by embedding a proven emerging technology as a service in the platform. The ERP solution, and other solutions built on the platform, are then able to take direct, and safe, advantage of the emerging technology. Want to make some cutting-edge analytics available to all the apps? Embed the analytics technology in the platform.

• Low/no code extensions and apps: With everything layered, the top layer, the app layer, becomes a relatively simple undertaking. For example, customizations can be replaced by apps or extensions built on the platform that are not impacted by upgrades. Using abstraction, such as through RESTful APIs, the platform vastly simplifies the development of extensions and new apps, all built using a "low/no code" development platform. That means business analysts can sometimes make minor changes or extensions to the ERP to keep it relevant with coding. Slightly more complex change or new apps might only require some simple scripting. Do you need to enhance part of the ERP that is too vanilla for you? Low/no code enables you to do that without locking you into an old ERP version.
ERP lifecycles are notoriously long, often measured in decades. Companies make large investments in ERP and run much of their business on ERP. ERPs are complex, multi-functional solutions. But ERP does not need to be highly resistant to change anymore and does not need to act as a drag on a company's growth.

Modern platforms are cloud-friendly, often based on RESTful APIs, use a layered-service architecture, offer low/no code development to help extend the ERP (and other solutions built on the platform), safely speed up the adoption of emerging technologies, and, most importantly, help keep ERP aligned with the business.
If based on a modern platform, the ERP your company uses may very well still be relevant to the business and continuously support business change for the next decade or more.

Evan Quinn is the principal director of marketing at QAD. He is an experienced tech industry professional who has worked at companies like Chase Bank, Symantec, Gartner and currently QAD. He is focused on development, product management and marketing in enterprise applications and app dev.

About QAD

In 1979, QAD was founded by Pamela Lopker, who was later joined by her husband Karl Lopker, as a small startup solution to address a large gap in complete, integrated business software for manufacturing companies. We began with a few local customers, supporting them from our headquarters in Santa Barbara, California. But as our customers took their brands to the next level—international—we adapted quickly to keep up. Today we support customers in over 100 countries around the world. Our products have gone global, too, and we have spent years innovating and growing our offering as our customers expand their businesses overseas. You'll often hear us say that at the heart of QAD is a strong and loyal customer community. We really believe that to create the best full-featured manufacturing ERP software for our customers we need to work together. We pride ourselves on our customer engagement and our commitment to continually evolve as the manufacturing industry changes. It's been over four decades; we still focus solely on manufacturing—we live and breathe it every day alongside you. Together we are building an Adaptive Manufacturing Enterprise.

ORACLE NETSUITE

NETSUITE OPENAIR 2021 RELEASE 1 SNEAK PEEK: REDESIGNED USER EXPERIENCE AND ENHANCED PROJECT CENTER TO BETTER VIEW AND MANAGE PROJECTS

*Article by **Joseph Clancey**,*
Product Marketing Specialist, Oracle Netsuite

Services organizations are always looking for ways to optimize their project management processes to drive higher profits. Their goal: deliver projects on time, maximize efficiency and drive growth. This requires tools and processes that can automate operations and improve visibility into all aspects of the business.

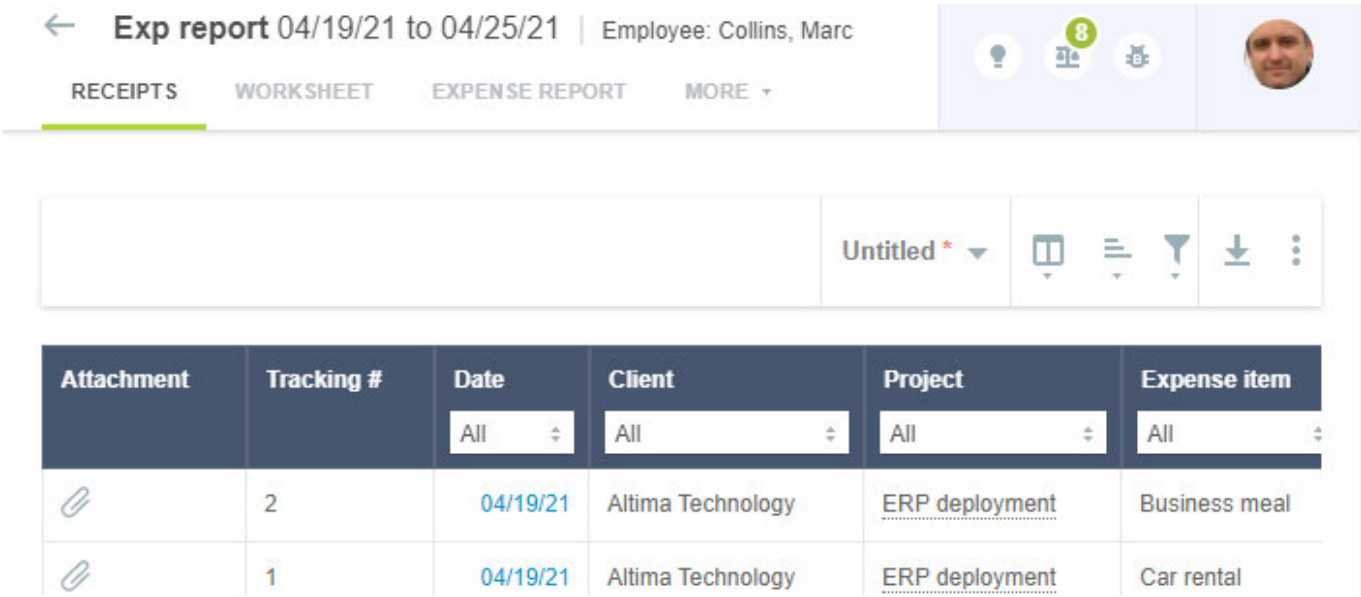
With NetSuite OpenAir 2021 Release 1, services organizations can help service delivery teams better focus on core project components, like managing bookings from a single screen and simplifying workflows. This release also features ongoing enhancements to the user experience with redesigned list views in the administration module, improved reporting capabilities as well as mobile enhancements.

User Experience: Redesigned List Views

With this release, NetSuite OpenAir optimizes the way organizations look at projects, enhancing the platform so that you can work faster with the newly updated list views, administration module setting screens and new screen header and tab navigation.

In this release, more list views received a makeover in the global settings; Projects - under the organization tab and employees under the users tab now have a simpler look for better usability.
The Administration module received more list view redesign enhancements for faster navigation and greater visibility.
Remodeled record header and in record tab navigation is available for resource requests to make for a faster and more consistent user experience.
Dropdown options and filter settings also get more flexibility, so you can now refine column filters and dropdowns.
and updating dashboards. This lack of cohesion creates further uncertainty when you need to align project status and financials.

Services teams need a central repository to access the right data. Otherwise, managers will waste time trying to correct and fill in the missing pieces, leading to wasted resources, unbilled hours and more risk. For example, when a project manager adds a project update to a project management tool
Project Center: Simplify Project Management from a Single Screen



In OpenAir 2021 Release 1 users can more easily manage project bookings in the project center. The project center will now become one of the main screens that project managers will use to drive their ongoing projects. NetSuite has made enhancements to include as much information as possible without overwhelming the screen. A new Gantt chart provides an easier view and streamlined management of projects and tasks. Enhancements include:

Bookings can now be deleted directly from the project center.
Users can now evaluate form permissions, form rules and form scripts for each booking record. This increases visibility across the project and will notify users of any errors that occur.
Key information on booking rows: total booked hours, start and finish dates, and grouped bookings are also now visible for increased awareness on projects so that users can manage their projects from one location.
Changes on group bookings row now changes all bookings in the group to eliminate additional work and allow for a more efficient experience when managing projects.
NetSuite Connector: Enhanced Workflows for Increased Customization

NetSuite OpenAir 2021 Release 1 has extended the data that the NetSuite Connector tool can access through NetSuite and OpenAir. Users can now set up custom workflows and mapping for greater flexibility and visibility. Custom mapping can now be done just like standard mapping for simplicity and can be integrated to run manually, set to schedules or triggered by scripting. Administrators can now assign permissions and delete workflows from the workflow list while improvements to the import and export administration section now aligns with the workflow menu.

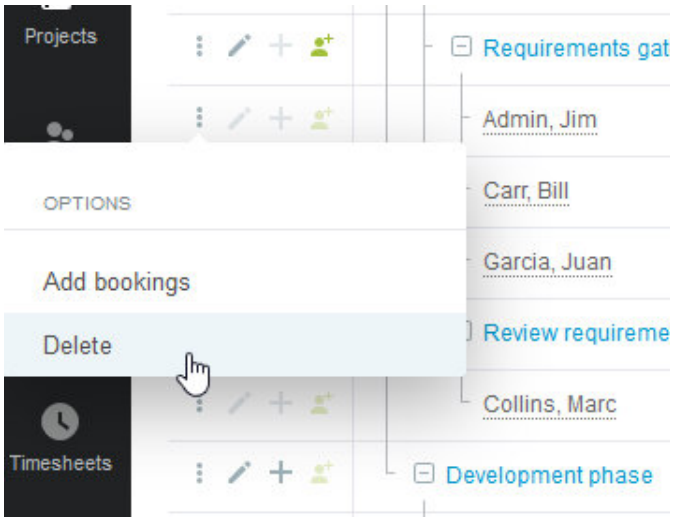
Mobile: Quickly View Time Entry Details form Anywhere

NetSuite OpenAir 2021 Release 1 also allows organizations to take advantage of the enhanced timesheets features with OpenAir Mobile 3.0 and 3.2. With the latest versions of the iPhone (3.2) and Android 3.0 app, you can now:

Get a quick overview of time entries in the timesheet list view.

Gain a detailed view of time entries in the timesheet calendar view.
Add or modify multiple time entries at the same time for improved project performance.
Group time entries by project or task using timecards for enhanced flexibility.
These are just a few of the highlights in OpenAir 2021 Release 1. For more information on the full list of features and how to use them, be sure to check out the 2021 Release 1 notes and the 2021 release 1 new feature webinar.

The preceding is intended to outline our general product direction. It is intended for information purposes only and may not be incorporated into any contract. It is not a commitment to deliver any material, code, or functionality, and should not be relied upon in making purchasing decisions. The development, release, timing, and pricing of any features or functionality described for Oracle's products may change and remains at the sole discretion of Oracle Corporation.



About Oracle Netsuite

Oracle NetSuite pioneered the Cloud Computing revolution in 1998, establishing the world's first company dedicated to delivering business applications over the internet. Today, it provides a suite of cloud-based financials / Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), HR and omnichannel commerce software that runs the business of companies in more than 100 countries.
For more information, please visit http://www.netsuite.com.

THREE KEYS TO MAXIMIZING VALUE IN THE CLOUD

Article by ***Dr. Stefan Sigg,***

Chief Research and Development Officer,Software AG

Sometimes, you just cannot resist building a piece of technology yourself; not realizing that it will indeed take more time and resources than simply buying it.
But it also means you won't be able to take advantage of the ownership of your app or system in the cloud; you lose your "sovereignty" and could be relegated to some deep dependencies that hinge on the security and stability of the platform you're working on. Before you know it, you're building things you don't have to!

There are numerous solutions out there you can implement and emulate, so that you can connect to these rather than build from scratch. Leverage what's out there – or even adopt a complete full-stack solution of readily available pieces connected via APIs.

It's what I call the LAST MILE. The final lap. The last dash for the finish line as you provide a fully integrated solution with all the technology personalized to a specific customer. It's the endgame, comprised of the ideal solution you want to provide above and beyond even your business's own capabilities.

Build on what's already built

Think of it as "building" on top of what's already been built. You're amplifying what already works. You're making something that's good even better. And owning it allows you more independence in the cloud.

Here are three ways to maximize technological value and offerings in the cloud:

Use good independent tech stacks for the "other miles." Don't just pull from any source. Do the research and determine viability. Remember, these will be your building blocks. Make sure the foundation is sturdy.
Don't get bogged down with building your own platforms. Even platforms can be adopted, so pay close attention to not only what applications you can pull onto your stack, but even where you can stack them.
Don't bury yourself into a technology stack. In other words, don't overdo it. The last mile doesn't have to be an "extra" mile.
That's ultimately the challenge with home-built software stacks, in that sometimes you end up depending too much on just one route, or platform, or vehicle to get where you need to go. So, what happens when there's "construction"?

You throw your hands up. And then all the custom code becomes a crutch. Don't re-invent the wheel, leverage what's out there already in the cloud. Re-usable software components make for an easy drive with no detours.

Make technology offerings you find in the cloud your own, and make the last mile spectacular!

Chief Research and Development Officer for Software AG.

About Software AG

Software AG began its journey in 1969, the year that technology helped put a man on the moon and the software industry was born. Today our platform makes a world of living connections possible. Every day, millions of lives around the world are connected by our technologies. A fluid flow of data fuels hybrid integration and the Industrial Internet of Things. By connecting applications on the ground and in cloud, businesses, governments and humanity can instantly see opportunities, make decisions and act immediately. Software AG connects the world to keep it living and thriving.

SAP AND ONAPSIS PROACTIVELY NOTIFY AND HELP CUSTOMERS PROTECT MISSION-CRITICAL APPLICATIONS FROM ACTIVE CYBER THREATS

SAP (NYSE: SAP) and Onapsis jointly released a cyber threat intelligence report providing actionable information on how malicious threat actors are targeting and potentially exploiting unprotected mission-critical SAP applications.

The companies have worked in close partnership with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) and Germany's Federal Cybersecurity Authority (BSI), advising organizations to take immediate action to apply long-available SAP patches and secure configurations, and perform compromise assessments on critical environments.

SAP and Onapsis are not aware of known customer breaches directly related to this research. The report also does not describe any new vulnerabilities in SAP cloud software as a service or SAP's own corporate IT infrastructure. Both companies, however, note that many organizations still have not applied relevant mitigations that have long been provided by SAP. Customers who fail to apply these protective measures and allow unprotected SAP applications to continue to operate put themselves and their business at risk.

The intelligence captured by Onapsis and SAP highlights active threat activity seeking to target and compromise organizations running unprotected SAP applications, through a variety of cyberattack vectors. Observed exploitation techniques would lead to full control of the unsecured SAP applications, bypassing common security and compliance controls, and enabling attackers to steal sensitive data, perform financial fraud or disrupt mission-critical business processes by deploying ransomware or stopping operations. These threats may also have regulatory compliance implications for organizations that have not properly secured their environments.

"This proactive research effort is the latest example of our commitment to ensure our global customers remain protected," said Tim McKnight, chief security officer, SAP. "We're releasing the research Onapsis has shared with SAP as part of our commitment to help our customers ensure their mission-critical applications are protected. This includes applying available patches, thoroughly reviewing the security configuration of their SAP environments and proactively assessing them for signs of compromise."

The scope of impact from these specific vulnerabilities is localized to customer deployments of SAP products within their own data centers, managed colocation environments or customer-maintained cloud infrastructures. None of the vulnerabilities are present in cloud solutions maintained by SAP.

"As an SAP partner for cybersecurity and compliance, we have observed firsthand the outstanding improvements SAP has made in the recent years to develop more secure software, patch critical vulnerabilities faster and overall proactively ensure SAP customers are secure," said Mariano Nunez, CEO and cofounder of Onapsis. "The critical findings noted in our report describe attacks on vulnerabilities with patches and secure configuration guidelines available for months and even years. Unfortunately, too many organizations still operate with a major governance gap in terms of the cybersecurity and compliance of their mission-critical applications, allowing external and internal threat actors to access, exfiltrate and gain full control of their most sensitive and regulated information and processes. Companies that have not prioritized rapid mitigation for these known risks should consider their systems compromised and take immediate and appropriate action."

To support customers that require investigation, threat remediation and additional postcompromise security monitoring, Onapsis is offering a 3-month free subscription to the Onapsis Platform for Cybersecurity and Compliance, an SAP endorsed app that can be accessed through SAP Store.

About SAP

SAP stands for Systems, Applications, and Products in Data Processing (Anwendungen und Produkte in der Datenverarbeitung in German). SAP was founded in 1972 in Walldorf, Germany and now has offices around the world. SAP innovations help more than 400,000 customers worldwide work together more efficiently and use business insight more effectively. Explore our leadership, history, sustainability, diversity, FAQs, and more.

Acumatica

CLOUD ERP IMPLEMENTATION: MIGRATING YOUR DATA

During a cloud ERP implementation, migrating data is a huge, sometimes complex, step. Acumatica's data migration plan makes it an organized and detailed process.

Cloud ERP implementation: Not easy but worth it

Anyone who has contemplated an ERP deployment, even superficially, has recognized that switching from legacy or multiple, disparate systems to a comprehensive cloud-based ERP solution is a complicated and extensive procedure. Starting with the initial actions of gaining leadership and IT buy-in followed closely by making your ERP selection (Acumatica, in this case), you're ready to take the first four official steps of Acumatica's eight-step ERP Playbook to Implementation success: choosing your deployment option (FYI: Acumatica provides ERP deployment flexibility); assembling an implementation team; defining your requirements; and developing a project plan.

Step five—migrating your data—is technically part of step four. However, because migrating your data in an orderly, defined way is essential to your success, it becomes its own step. To prove how important this step is, let's look at one Acumatica VAR's experience in migrating their data to Acumatica cloud ERP.

Dataquest assists companies with ERP implementations. Before assisting customers as an Acumatica partner, they decided to migrate their data from their separate CRM, ERP, and billing software applications to Acumatica's centralized, single-source-of-truth cloud ERP software.

In Drinking Our Own Champagne: Why Dataquest Migrated to Acumatica Cloud ERP, Arline Welty, Principal, Dataquest,

writes, "We believe in the product, and we wanted to have the firsthand expertise of a migration from another system."

After the data migration, she writes, "This process wasn't just as easy as 'drinking our own champagne'. In a way, the process was more akin to choosing the vineyard site, planning out how to use the land to the best advantage of sun, wind, and rain, selecting which grapes to plant in which area of the field, and finally, getting the vines planted properly for many bountiful seasons to come!"

Though not easy, it was successful, and in the process, they learned that having a "well-defined and clearly prioritized plan was essential." Step four in Acumatica's eight steps to implementation success is exactly that. Our well-defined, clearly prioritized plan orders the data migration tasks in the following user-friendly checklist:

Ensure all existing customer contact information is accurate and up-to-date
Remove incorrect or redundant data (discontinued vendors, contacts no longer with the company)
Remove incorrect or out-of-date company data (old part numbers, discontinued products)

Set up your Acumatica database

Map your legacy ERP data to the new Acumatica database fields
Transfer the data to the new system
Test the new system to verify all legacy data has been moved and is accessible
Verify new data can be added to the system (new product information, inventory item location, new customer information)
(Note: Consult internal team members for their advice on the essential data elements to include from their respective departments, including finance, sales/marketing, warehouse, field services, and shipping/receiving.)

For Dataquest, the migration process and subsequent use of Acumatica as their comprehensive cloud-based ERP solution was the right move.

"We went from handling our billing through Acumatica to really managing our quoting, opportunities, communications, marketing and sales activities there. Having all the data in one place has been incredibly rewarding. We no longer have to sign into disparate systems to look up key information," Arline notes. "We are also excited about where we are heading with the product. Because it has so many built-in features, it's easy to incrementally add functionality."

Cloud ERP implementation: One step closer to success

Data migration is not fast or easy, but Acumatica and our Acumatica partners are committed to making it an easy-to-understand and organized process. We're also committed to making every step of our eight-step process equally successful, and Dataquest's experience is a perfect example.

"Cheers to Acumatica for helping us migrate our business to the Acumatica Cloud xRP Platform so quickly, and for building a tool that can scale for all different audiences," writes Arline. "We toast the experience!"

If you're interested in toasting your own cloud ERP implementation experience, then we hope you'll contact our team today. We'll be with you every step of the way.

Stay tuned for details on step six: Developing a test plan.

About Acumatica

Acumatica is a company on a mission. We are a leading innovator in cloud ERP with customers located around the world. But don't take our word for it — read what analysts like Gartner and Nucleus Research have to say about us.

Acumatica ERP delivers adaptable cloud and mobile technology with a unique all-inclusive user licensing model, enabling a complete, real time view of your business anytime, anywhere. Through our worldwide network of partners, Acumatica provides the full suite of integrated business management applications, including Financials, Distribution, Manufacturing, Project Accounting, Field Service, Retail-Commerce, Construction, and CRM. There is only one true Cloud ERP platform designed for mid-sized customers – Acumatica.

3 QUESTIONS MANUFACTURERS SHOULD ADDRESS FOR DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION SUCCESS

Article by ***Mark Humphlett***

Last week, Phil Lewis, Infor VP Solution Consulting EMEA, spoke at the virtual Future Factories Summit MENA and offered key insights on how manufacturers can successfully digitally transform, and help propel the sector to new heights. According to Phil, manufacturers should take a step back and ask themselves three questions before starting out on a potentially complicated digital transformation journey. Here's a summary of the recommendations:

1. Are we organizationally ready for significant change?

Organizations are only as good as their people, and manufacturers must look carefully at whether they have the right people and culture to support a different way of doing things. It is the people who will be responsible for implementing change, and they should be ready, committed, and on board with any type of transformation plan.

An organization's culture can make or break a digital transformation project and "organizational change management" is one of the key components of such a project. Organizations should aim for an inclusive culture where people feel like they are key contributors to the company's future success.

To achieve this, management teams should encourage a culture of openness to help employees step forward with their ideas. All change, and all transformation, starts with an idea – so it's important for people to feel empowered to put their ideas out in the open.

2. What are we hoping to achieve and what is the outcome?

Delivering successful digital transformation projects is difficult, and if an organization does not understand the destination, the chances of success are minimal. Organizations should invest time and effort up front to understand exactly what they want to achieve from their digital transformation. Ask the following questions: What do we need the change? Why do we need to change it? What is the anticipated impact?

Infor helps customers around the world and across various industries to successfully ideate, design and deliver digital change, and understanding the outcome of a project is an important early step.

No matter how many ideas an organization has, they will fall into one of four categories: customer alignment, employee productivity, supply chain visibility, or operational efficiency.

Customers. Organizations should ask whether they are transforming the way they connect and relate to customers, and whether they want to offer a new product, increase their level of service, or use data to create a new revenue stream.

Employees. Organizations should ask whether they are providing capabilities that help engage the workforce and how digital solutions will help improve workforce productivity, empower decision-making, and remove bottlenecks in processes.

Supply Chains. Organizations should examine if they are simplifying complex supply chains and increasing visibility to anticipate issues and take steps to proactively resolve potential problems.

Operations. When looking at operational efficiency, companies will benefit from asking whether they can streamline the way they operate as a business and if they are using technology to bring efficiency to their processes, to predict issues, and prescribe the next best action.

3. Is our systems landscape digitally compliant and ready?

Before starting a digital transformation project, an organization's systems should be digitally compliant and highly flexible. Ideally, the organization has a systems ecosystem where people can access their work, their data, and their processes without barriers, at any time and from any location. Often having their solutions available in the cloud is the best way forward.

Also, organizations will benefit from solutions built for their specific industry with sector-specific capabilities built in, not bolted on. Heavily modified applications will almost certainly impede upgrades and modernization, introduce risk, and hinder adoption of advanced digital solutions.

Ideally, the organization's end-to-end systems and applications should be running on a common digital platform that provides integrated modern capabilities such as Internet of Things (IoT), artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning (ML), big data, mobility, and predictive analytics.

An organization's IT landscape must support the concept of hyper-connectivity – not just connecting applications and digital capability, but connecting everything: their people, applications, devices, data, customers, and suppliers.

ERPNEWS