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2-Tier ERP Strategy

aptean

Ready for **What's Next, Now™**

CEO & PUBLISHER
Harun DOYURAN
harun@erpnews.com

MANAGING DIRECTOR
Pinar SENGUL
pinar@erpnews.com

EDITOR
Yagmur SAHIN
yagmur@erpnews.com

ASSOCIATE EDITORS
Katie SLIMOV
katie@erpnews.com

Burcu Nihal DEMIRCI
burcu@erpnews.com

ART DIRECTOR
Sena Çarlık
sena@erpnews.com

FOR ADVERTISING
advertise@erpnews.com

VISIT US
www.erpnews.com

Yagmur Sahin

EDITOR'S NOTE

"You never step into the same river twice"

Heraclitus

We cannot keep doing the same things and expect different results in these unprecedented times. In this new world order, where change is the only constant, the only way businesses can be successful is to gain new perspectives and adjust to the changing circumstances.

Most businesses are aware that they need to successfully implement successful digital transformation strategies to stay relevant. Some of them might be taking their first step on their digital transformation journey, or they might have just discovered the flaws in their existing systems and looking for a way out. This issue will be a guide for those who are willing to digitally change and for those who want to do it fast. Yes, we are talking about having the best of both worlds with a 2-tier ERP system.

In this issue, where you can find everything you wonder about 2-Tier ERP, you can also gain a new perspective on how you should be moving forward and this issue will shed a light on your path. Also, the latest news, articles, and two exclusive interviews about the ERP industry are waiting to be discovered!

See you in our next issue!

CONTENTS

Issue # 17, May 2021

KAISER PERMANENTE TRANSFORMS HR WITH ORACLE CLOUD ____ 6

*News from **Oracle***

SAP INTEGRATION SUITE RECOGNIZED AS A 2021 GARTNER PEER INSIGHTS CUSTOMERS' CHOICE FOR ENTERPRISE INTEGRATION PLATFORM AS A SERVICE ____ 7

*News from **SAP***

PDI ACQUIRES FUEL SAVINGS APP GASBUDDY OPENING NEW PROMOTION CHANNEL FOR RETAILERS AND CPGS ____ 8

*News from **PDI***

ALLIANCE NAMES EPICOR THE 2021 TECHNOLOGY PARTNER OF THE YEAR ____ 9

*News from **Epicor***

KEY TO THE SUCCESS POST-COVID ____ 10

*Interview with **Jon Roskill,***
CEO, Acumatica

TRACKER SELECTS IFS TO ENHANCE AND EXPAND ITS SERVICE OFFERING ____ 12

News from IFS

EMPERA HALI WILL MANAGE ITS BUSINESS PROCESSES WITH CANIAS4.0 ____ 13

News from IAS

SAP INTENSIFIES COMMITMENT IN THE FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19

News from SAP 16

2021 RETURN TO GROWTH OUTLOOK

*Interview with **Dan Miller**,*
Sage EVP of Medium Segment & SVP of Product for Sage Intacct 18

WHAT IS TWO-TIER ERP AND HOW DOES IT WORK?

*Article by **Ian McCue**,*
Sr. Associate Content Manager 20

GETBUSY TURNS TO NETSUITE AS IT GETS BUSIER

News from Oracle Netsuite 23

TWO TIER – THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

*Article by **Lucy Thorpe**,*
Head of Content, InCloud Solutions 24

WHY CUSTOMER LOYALTY MATTERS NOW, MORE THAN EVER

Article by Holly Simmons,
Infor EAM Strategist 28

TRENDS THAT SHAPE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IN 2021

*Article by **SAP**,* 30

THE FUTURE OF SERVICE SOFTWARE FLEXIBILITY HINGES ON CONTAINERIZATION

*Article by **IFS**,* 32

TWO-TIER ERP STRATEGY

*Article by **Nishant Joshi** ,* 34

KAISER PERMANENTE TRANSFORMS HR WITH ORACLE CLOUD

Kaiser Permanente partnered with Oracle to modernize its business processes with Oracle Fusion Cloud Human Capital Management (HCM) to deliver intuitive employee experiences, simplify complex HR processes, and meet the health and safety needs of its workforce.

Kaiser Permanente is one of the largest not-for-profit healthcare providers in the US with 39 hospitals, more than 700 medical offices, and 12.4 million members. Committed to providing excellent experiences to both patients and employees, Kaiser Permanente wanted to improve its ability to deliver personalized, digital experiences for its workforce. Kaiser Permanente rolled out Oracle Cloud HCM across its organization and was able to streamline crucial HCM systems while facing the significant business and talent management challenges that come with managing teams of essential workers during a global pandemic.

"The healthcare industry has been subjected to significant disruption requiring a flexible approach to both business operations and workforce management," said Chris Leone, senior vice president of development, Oracle Cloud HCM. "With Oracle Cloud HCM, Kaiser Permanente can enhance the employee experience by providing quick and easy access to helpful HR resources and information, managing complex work schedules, providing payroll, helping to increase productivity in recruiting, establishing new ways of learning, and improving decision-making with end-to-end talent management. Having a cloud-based HCM system improves access to key resources for these essential workers and will help Kaiser Permanente quickly address future workforce challenges as they arise."

"The use of Oracle Cloud HCM is a key step in our strategy to simplify and modernize our technology. It enables us to replace multiple aging applications with a single, scalable enterprise-wide platform; a significant step in our journey toward innovative, cloud-based solutions. We look forward to realizing many benefits from this step in the months and years to come," said Diane Comer, Kaiser Permanente's chief information and technology officer.

Kaiser Permanente is working with Oracle to modernize multiple business processes across its organization. Kaiser Permanente has also selected additional Oracle Cloud Services to modernize its electronic medical records data warehouse and disaster recovery preparation and to improve analytics and member insights.

About Oracle

Oracle offers suites of integrated applications plus secure, autonomous infrastructure in the Oracle Cloud. For more information about Oracle (NYSE: ORCL), please visit us at www.oracle.com.

SAP INTEGRATION SUITE RECOGNIZED AS A 2021 GARTNER PEER INSIGHTS CUSTOMERS' CHOICE FOR ENTERPRISE INTEGRATION PLATFORM AS A SERVICE

SAP SE (NYSE: SAP) announced SAP Integration Suite, a key solution powering SAP Business Technology Platform, was named a Customers' Choice in the 2021 "Gartner Peer Insights 'Voice of the Customer': Enterprise Integration Platform as a Service."

SAP is one of only two vendors to be named a Customers' Choice in this category and received a 4.6 out of 5 overall rating. Ninety-three percent of the customers indicated that they would recommend SAP Integration Suite as their preferred enterprise integration platform as a service.

Gartner Peer Insights Customers' Choice Distinction is a free peer review and ratings platform designed for enterprise software and services decision-makers.

"We believe this recognition is a further validation that SAP Integration Suite is a proven solution to support our customers with their growing integration needs across all landscapes," said Juergen Mueller, chief technology officer and member of the SAP Executive Board. "Companies are using SAP Integration Suite to stay agile and competitive as they transform their businesses into an intelligent enterprise. We are continuously listening to customer feedback to make sure we deliver a valuable experience."

Customer reviews go through a strict validation and moderation process in an effort to ensure they are authentic. Some of the reviews include:

"Best Cloud Platform For Multiple SAP Solutions: Best cloud platform for our organization. Fast and reliable cloud platform for business applications. Better integration capabilities and allows to integrate multiple SAP solutions." — Assistant professor in the education industry
"Reliability, Trust, Content And Performance Are A Basis For A Stable Integration Platform: Very good collaboration between SAP and our company when it comes to discussions or needs that we want to address. Openness and trust is an important factor, as well as the reliability of people and the products themselves in terms of availability, stability and performance. The huge advantage SAP gives us, is the predefined integration content which we find on the API Business Hub. These pre-configured integration scenarios save us time and money. Also to be mentioned is the strong user community." — Director, business application platforms, in the manufacturing industry

"Very Robust Platform: Integration layer tied with the SAP SCP platform bring easier integrations thru external services and platforms. In general they are easy to use and have very good performance and stability. Also it´s and SAP Roadmap for integration of SAP Products and Services." — Enterprise architect in the energy and utilities industry
"Lower TCO: SAP Cloud Platform integration provides seamless integration with SAP and NON-SAP products and financial benefits. The financial benefits are related to a lower Totall Cost of Ownership (TCO)." — Integration specialist in the services industry

Vendors placed in the upper-right quadrant of the "Voice of the Customer" quadrants are recognized with the Gartner Peer Insights Customers' Choice distinction. A maximum of seven vendors can qualify. To qualify, vendors must have a product that is listed in this market on Gartner Peer Insights, have their overall rating (out of five stars) above or equal to the mean rating for that market, and receive 50 or more eligible published customer reviews during the one-year submission period. In addition, customer reviews must be representative of a broad mix of enterprise clients from different industries, company sizes and deployment regions.

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.

PDI ACQUIRES FUEL SAVINGS APP GASBUDDY OPENING NEW PROMOTION CHANNEL FOR RETAILERS AND CPGS

PDI (www.pdisoftware.com), a global provider of leading enterprise management software for the convenience retail and petroleum wholesale industries, has acquired GasBuddy, a mobile app used by drivers to find and share real-time fuel prices. With this acquisition, PDI extends its capabilities in direct-to-consumer delivery of promotional offers and communications, and engagement of consumers in convenience store and petroleum loyalty rewards programs.

GasBuddy has five million active mobile users, representing billions of fuel gallons and hundreds of millions of dollars of convenience retail spend. The GasBuddy app currently generates fuel pricing information on 150,000 stations across North America. While most of its peer-to-peer interactions are from users searching and posting local gas prices, the app also enables reviews of facilities and supports wayfinding.

PDI intends to enhance GasBuddy's current offering, extending the ability of convenience retailers to attract new consumers to shop at their stores, receive offers funded by CPGs, and enroll in the retailer's loyalty program. Additionally, PDI will enable retailers to extend personalized fuel pricing offers in real time to consumers who are on-site or driving nearby. Retailers will also have an opportunity to promote in-store products.

"By enriching the crowd-sourced gas pricing information and the related conversations that consumers are having," stated Brandon Logsdon, president and general manager for Marketing Cloud Solutions at PDI, "we can help retailers drive greater sales and loyalty precisely when and where consumers are ready to buy. This will enhance the experience and utility of the app for its millions of users."

GasBuddy CEO Sarah McCrary added, "GasBuddy has built an amazing and engaged community. With PDI resources behind them, our users will get even more benefits from the app moving forward. This is a big win for everyone."

In addition to the promotional capabilities PDI intends to extend, the company will also enhance GasBuddy Business Pages, which enables listing services and reputation management. Business Pages will be integrated with existing PDI products and services to provide convenience retailers with more holistic visibility into consumer sentiment, while providing compelling insights about store visits, purchase behavior, and business performance.

Berenson & Company and Moelis & Company served as exclusive financial advisors to PDI and GasBuddy respectively in connection with the transaction.

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.

ALLIANCE NAMES EPICOR THE 2021 TECHNOLOGY PARTNER OF THE YEAR

The Aftermarket Auto Parts Alliance, Inc., has announced Epicor as the 2021 Technology Partner of the Year. The announcement was made during the Alliance's virtual IT Summit Thursday afternoon.

"At the heart of everything we do is the customer and our partners," said Tim Hardin, senior vice president and GM of Epicor. "On behalf of Epicor and our automotive aftermarket team, thank you to the selection committee for this prestigious award. It affirms that we are delivering insight in ways that have sustained during this unprecedented year and energizes us for the future."

The recognition is given to the Alliance technology partner who best supports and serves the Alliance membership. The Alliance IT Committee, which served as the selection committee, voted unanimously in support of Epicor.

"Epicor does a fine job for us and we are grateful for their partnership," said John R. Washbish, president and CEO. "They are a deserving choice for this year's award."

The Technology Partner of the Year announcement, typically made during the Alliance's in-person IT Summits, closed out the virtual general session Thursday. About 100 attendees signed on to the two-day virtual event.

"Epicor has provided exceptional value both to the Alliance and our shareholder owners, particularly over the past year," said Dale. E. Hopkins, vice president and CIO. "We appreciate their ongoing support and congratulate them on this achievement."

Hopkins and the IT Committee noted that Epicor offered tremendous support in many different ways to merit the award.

"Congratulations and thank to our longtime vendor, technology partner, and friends at Epicor," said Mike Carr, chairman of the Alliance's IT Committee. "Epicor has supported the Alliance and all our shareholders for years, with Warehouse, Store and Shop computer systems, Cataloging and Data Analytics. This past year was interesting, to say the least. Epicor stepped up to enhance the tools that we use to monitor our business and how COVID is and did affect our day-to-day operations. They also continued to deliver new product and tools, like Heavy Duty BI/Data, new Vendor Invoice/Purchase Data Module. Along with their Graphical Catalog for our Business-to-Business website, MyPlace4Parts, a real game changer. These are just a few things that Epicor did above and beyond to make them the Aftermarket Auto Parts Alliance Technology Partner of the Year."

About Epicor

For almost 50 years, Epicor has worked hand-in-hand with our customers to get to know their business almost as well as they do — creating industry-specific software solutions and services that help them do business better. That's working with you, for you.

Acumatica KEY TO THE SUCCESS POST-COVID

*Interview with **Jon Roskill** ,*
CEO, Acumatica

With the pandemic, it became crystal clear how important cloud systems are for business processes to continue uninterruptedly. In this context, we interviewed Jon Roskill CEO, Acumatica, about the advantages of cloud systems.

Many businesses had just begun their cloud-migration journeys before the pandemic and were caught off-guard. What awaits businesses post-pandemic, and do you think they are prepared for this?

Now that vaccines are becoming available, the country is beginning its journey of getting back to pre-pandemic life and business. With an eye on the coming recovery, some experts suspect a V-shaped economic rebound will take place. In addition, news outlets have reported a new-year boom in retail sales. This boost comes at the same time as additional federal stimulus checks, a decline in unemployment numbers and greater household savings thanks to consumer cutbacks.

Based on these elements, economists are forecasting a surge of economic growth in the coming year. This means that as the pandemic dwindles, businesses will be flooded with eager consumers ready to spend.
Key to the success of any business post-COVID will be its ability to digitally transform. In the past year, businesses have learned the importance of digital processes firsthand, with many rushing to implement cloud-based collaboration and process management tools. Understanding how to maximize newer digital tools and continuing digital transformation efforts will be especially relevant in industries such as travel and hospitality, where consumers will first emerge from their cabin fever.

What would you advise companies trying to carve a path to growth in the new normal that will emerge post-pandemic? Do you think businesses must maximize their cloud investments to be successful in the post-pandemic environment?

Companies absolutely need to maximize their cloud investments to be successful in the post-pandemic environment and beyond. And research indicates that business leaders agree. Specifically, 61% of enterprises plan to optimize their cloud costs in 2021, making it a top IT and business initiative for the next five years.

Innovation and IT leaders need to maximize speed and efficiency to prepare for the approaching economic rebound and position themselves for growth. Given that much of the workforce has embraced a hybrid model of business, employees need access to business software from any location and across all their devices. Further, finance teams will need to upgrade from error-prone legacy accounting systems such as QuickBooks and Excel. Companies that act now to future-proof their business management solutions will experience business continuity, save time, foster growth and gain a competitive edge.

Could you tell us about the ways to get real ROI from cloud investments?

Making legacy analog processes digital is merely a band aid covering dysfunction. To truly future proof a business and see ROI on cloud investments it must become a connected business – a central goal of digital transformation. This means that it synchronizes all its records, data sources and systems, providing a single source of business truth. A truly connected business is streamlined, efficient and agile – equipped to tackle new challenges and opportunities that come its way.

How can businesses make cloud adoption easier? What advantages does Acumatica offer to its customers in the new world order?

Acumatica and Acumatica's partners have perfected a seven-step plan for cloud implementation success. The steps are to:

1. Assemble your team and executive champion
2. Define your requirements
3. Develop a project plan
4. Develop a data migration plan
5. Develop a test plan
6. Develop a training plan
7. Plan for go-live

For more complex implementations, companies should break the entire project up into stages. The first stage being financials, second stage inventory management and/or eCommerce, and third stage being manufacturing/distribution. By taking a staged approach, businesses are biting off independent chunks and bringing them live separately, which will ensure a high likelihood of success of the overall project.

Though go-live seems like the finish line, there are a few other considerations companies and deployment partners will need to discuss. The considerations include third-party and custom applications, continued refinement of business processes and planning for ongoing support needs.

Acumatica cloud ERP is a comprehensive business management solution built on a future-proof platform. It provides anytime, anywhere access to company data as well as the core financials, reporting tools, customizable dashboards, drag-and-drop automation (and more) that will help businesses meet their financial and operational needs even during economic shifts. Central to Acumatica's mission is its Customer Bill of Rights, which clearly outline its commitment to better business practices and set the industry standard for customer service.

How do you think the C-suite should navigate the business management systems to boost productivity and business growth to get ready for the challenges post-pandemic?

C-suite leaders should approach their business management systems with enthusiasm. These leaders should be champions for the success of the business, and they should recognize the inherent value of cloud-based, digital tools for their company. With that in mind, leaders can take advantage of learning and self-help tools available within their business management systems. Using these resources, they can better understand how to utilize the software's capabilities. In addition, C-suite leaders can partner with their cloud provider(s) to personalize and tailor the solution to their individual business needs.

ACUMATICA CLOUD ERP IS A COMPREHENSIVE BUSINESS MANAGEMENT SOLUTION BUILT ON A FUTURE-PROOF PLATFORM. IT PROVIDES ANYTIME, ANYWHERE ACCESS TO COMPANY DATA AS WELL AS THE CORE FINANCIALS, REPORTING TOOLS, CUSTOMIZABLE DASHBOARDS, DRAG-AND-DROP AUTOMATION (AND MORE) THAT WILL HELP BUSINESSES MEET THEIR FINANCIAL AND OPERATIONAL NEEDS EVEN DURING ECONOMIC SHIFTS.

__Jon__ has 25 years of leadership experience in the software business. He joins Acumatica after a 20-year career at Microsoft where he led efforts in many areas including product development for developer tools, as well as the business operations, strategy, and marketing for all of Microsoft US. Jon's most recent role was Corporate Vice President for the Worldwide Partner Group where he led a global sales and marketing team of more than 5,000 employees and Microsoft's 640,000 partners.

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.

TRACKER SELECTS IFS TO ENHANCE AND EXPAND ITS SERVICE OFFERING

Tracker, the largest provider of telematics-based data insights for vehicle and home monitoring services in South Africa, continues its digital and business transformation journey through partnering with IFS. Tracker has selected an IFS solution that spans enterprise resource planning (ERP) functionality, cutting-edge service management capabilities and AI-powered customer engagement tools. The solution will ensure an elevated customer experience and reduce time and costs across Tracker's entire operations.

Established in 1996, Tracker's base of more than 1.1 million active subscribers enjoy a range of services, including vehicle telematics, home solutions, roadside assistance, as well as business solutions for fleet managers. These services provide customers with peace of mind and cost saving through a focus on safety and business efficiency. Tracker has evolved significantly over the last 25 years thanks to a culture of continuous innovation. The company has grown into the preferred partner for turning raw vehicle tracking data into valuable insights and services.

The partnership with IFS is the next step in Tracker's digital transformation strategy. This will provide better business insights resulting in an accelerated release of new services, improved customer engagement and experience, and Tracker being able to provide the appropriate value-adding services to its customers at the right time.

Tracker has chosen a holistic IFS solution that encompasses broad functionality including finance and human capital management, cutting-edge service management capabilities and AI-powered customer engagement tools.

"As we take the next step on our digital transformation journey, we require a platform that will enable us to connect more intimately with our stakeholders whilst still ensuring the same excellent experiences that our customers have become accustomed to," Tracker, CTO, Deon du Rand said. "The IFS platform's comprehensive nature and IFS's stellar track record in the service sector were driving factors in our decision."

Emma Murray, Managing Director, IFS Africa, added, "I am proud to welcome such a well-respected brand as Tracker to the IFS community. By basing its digital transformation project on a single enterprise solution, Tracker will benefit from increased productivity and improved data quality driving better decision-making. IFS's open and enabled architecture will also give Tracker total freedom in extending their capabilities to ensure they keep delivering outstanding service to their customers."

Learn more about how IFS empowers service businesses at www.ifs.com/corp/industries/service/.

About IFS

IFS develops and delivers enterprise software for companies around the world who manufacture and distribute goods, build and maintain assets, and manage service-focused operations. Within our single platform, our industry specific products are innately connected to a single data model and use embedded digital innovation so that our customers can be their best when it really matters to their customers—at the Moment of Service. The industry expertise of our people and of our growing ecosystem, together with a commitment to deliver value at every single step, has made IFS a recognized leader and the most recommended supplier in our sector. Our team of 4,000 employees every day live our values of agility, trustworthiness and collaboration in how we support our 10,000+ customers. Learn more about how our enterprise software solutions can help your business today at ifs.com.

EMPERA HALI WILL MANAGE ITS BUSINESS PROCESSES WITH CANIAS4.0

IAS (Industrial Application Software) has reached an agreement with Empera Halı, one of the important carpet producer company in Gaziantep. Empera Halı decided to manage its 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 Ömer Kaplan, Chairman of the Board of Empera Halı. At the meeting held at the headquarters of Empera Carpet, the two companies took the first step of their cooperation.

We Offer Integrated Solutions With One Software

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 spoke about the initiated cooperation and said "Gaziantep is one of Turkey's most important industrial centers. Here, we are starting a new road with Empera Carpet. IAS as this way we come out with Industry 4.0 vision.To support the major companies like Empera Halı on their digital transformation journey, and providing them the technology in order to enable them one step ahead in the face of global competition in Turkey and Global areana, is a great pleasure. We have a long way to walk together and we will achieve great success in this process. We will support Empera Halı in this process with our 30 years of experience, integrated software solutions and our expert staff."

We Invest for Future

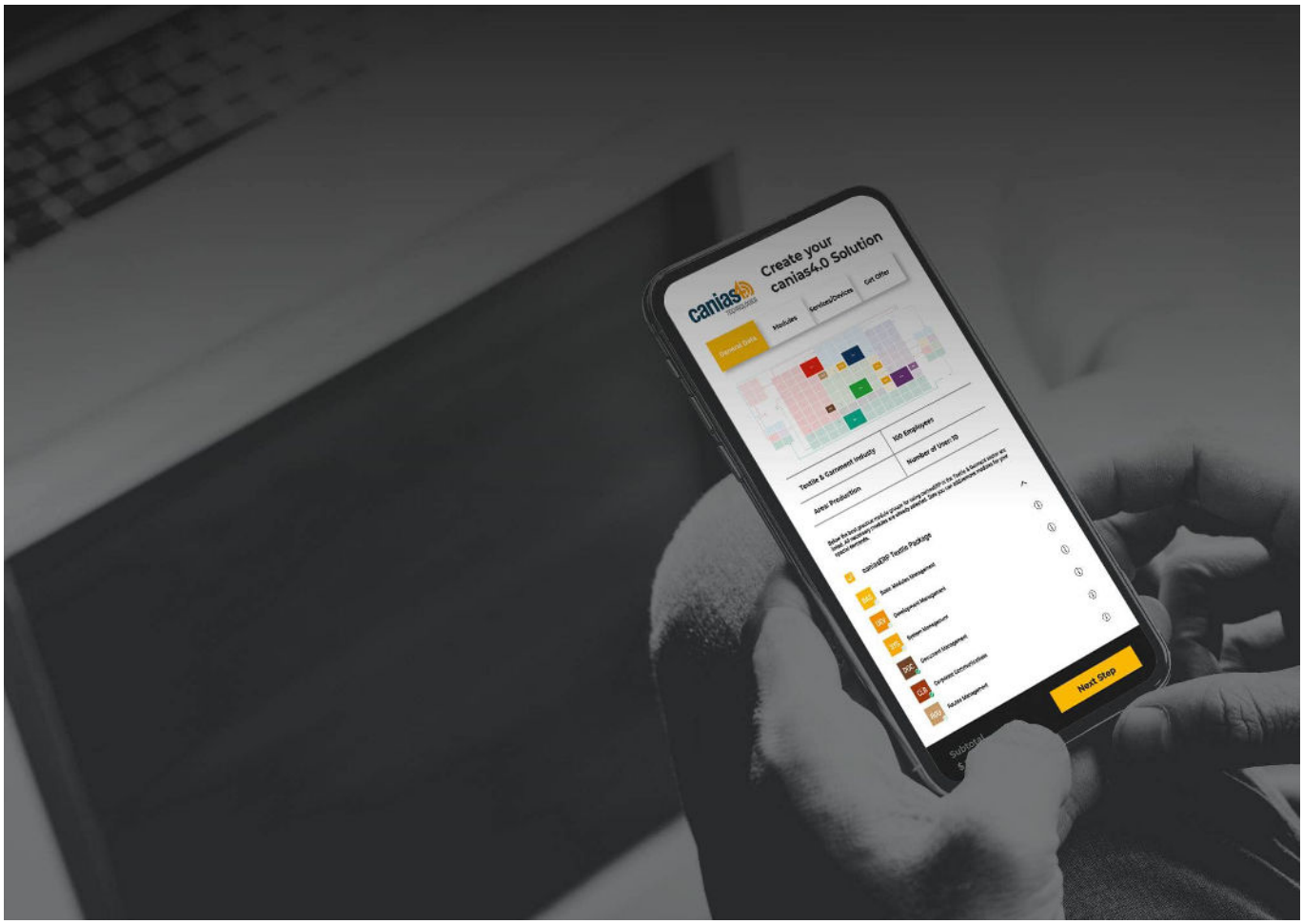
Having met with IAS Chairman of the Board of Directors Karabiber, Empera Halı Chairman of the Board Kaplan said, "When we started looking for software, we met with many companies. We compared the software. The important thing for us was to have a product that could accelerate us. We are a strong company in our industry and we are growing 40 percent annually. That's why we wanted a flexible and user-friendly software that could understand us, produce fast solutions, and adapt to our processes. We decided on

> "WE FOCUSED ON PRODUCING QUALITY AND EXPERIENCE, AS A COMPANY, WE INVEST IN THE FUTURE. WHILE DOING THIS, IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO HAVE A FIRM LIKE IAS THAT WILL SUPPORT US.

canias4.0, the software that best meets these demands, and we agreed with IAS. We are currently exporting to 70 different countries. Our aim is to announce a Turkish brand in the world. We want to leave a permanent work, a beautiful system for the next generation. We focused on producing quality and experience, as a company, we invest in the future. While doing this, it is very important to have a firm like IAS that will support us ".

We Will Produce Quick Solutions with canias4.0

Expressing his wishes about Empera Carpet's journey with canias4.0, Kaplan said: "We live in the age of technology. Everything is changing rapidly. For us, as our product range increased, it became more and more difficult to manage our business processes. Tracking products and creating company memory has become a serious problem. Therefore, we are aware that digital transformation is inevitable. Digitalization is difficult for the textile industry. For example, in our company, no product is produced in a fixed way, our products are variable. Therefore, it is not an easy task to realize digital transformation here. However, we believe that we will be successful in this process by producing fast solutions thanks to the flexible and integrated structure of canias4.0."



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.

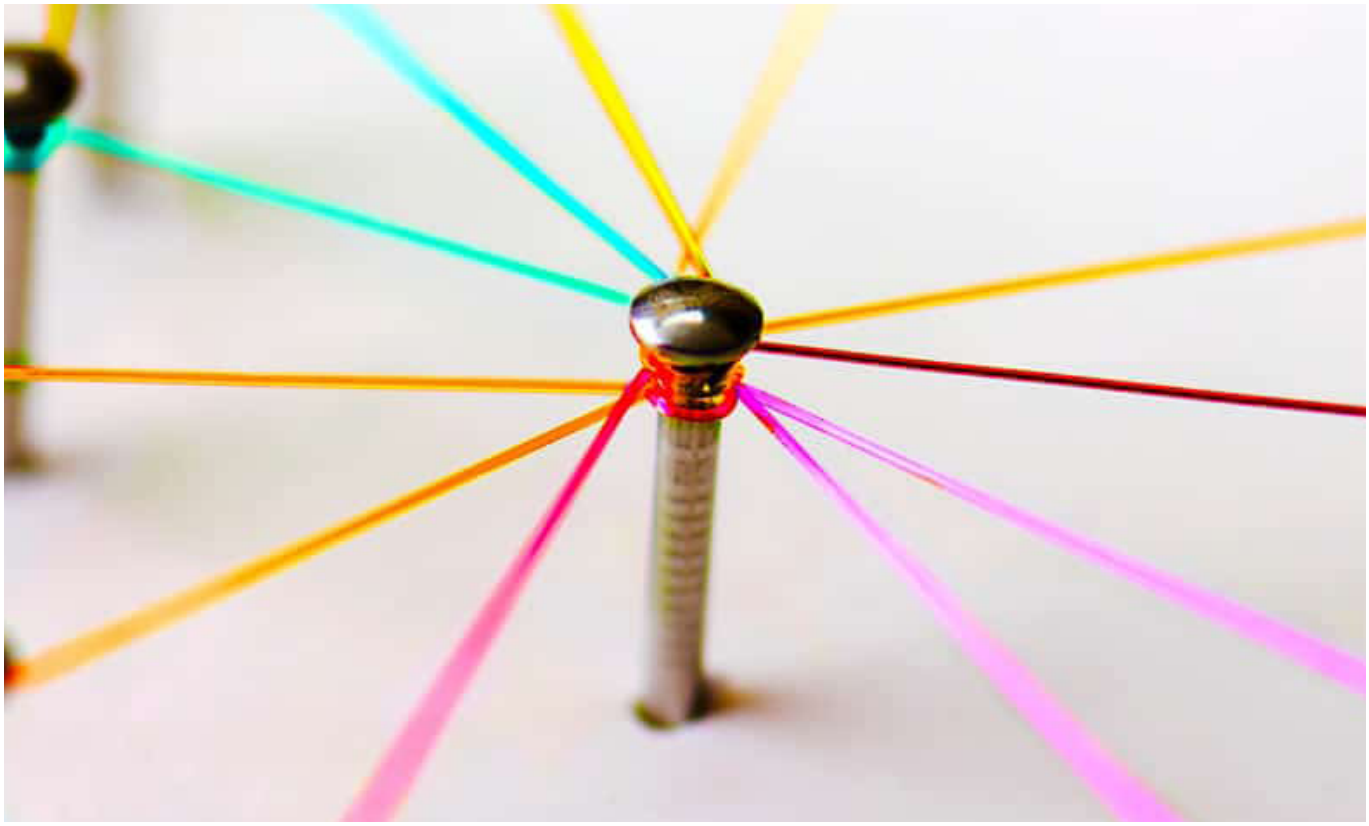
IAS, today more than ever, is committed to providing superior quality on its solutions and services to leverage efficiencies in companies to reach operational excellence and expand its operations into further global markets.

ORACLE
NETSUITE

Business Grows Here

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

Learn More



SAP INTENSIFIES COMMITMENT IN THE FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19

As SAP collectively work to turn the corner on the COVID-19 pandemic, the range of impact across the globe is becoming more visible. The surge of infections in India is a call for greater investment to help our collective cause.

SAP established a €3 million COVID-19 Emergency Fund, used to support organizations on the front lines, including the World Health Organization (WHO) and the CDC Foundation. Today, we are doubling our commitment by adding another €3 million for a total of €6 million to the COVID-19 Emergency Fund.

Of this new donation, €1 million will go to COVAX, the vaccines pillar of the Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator. COVAX is co-led by the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), Gavi, and the WHO, as well as long-term SAP partner UNICEF. Its aim is to accelerate the development and manufacture of COVID-19 vaccines and to guarantee fair and equitable access for every country in the world.

Beyond that donation, we will use the emergency fund to support India-based employees, their families, and the communities in which they live and work. Kulmeet Bawa, president of SAP India, and Sindhu Gangadharan, senior vice president and managing director of SAP Labs India, are doing everything possible to support the massive relief effort on the ground. Local SAP India teams are facilitating vaccination to employees and their families at our SAP Labs India facilities.

In parallel, SAP continues to work closely with non-profit organizations and strategic partners, including the NASSCOM Foundation and UNDP India, to support the community to:

- Augment public health and healthcare infrastructure
- Offer preventative care measures for citizens, including SAP employees
- Deliver homecare support for citizens, including SAP employees
- Conduct awareness and sensitization campaign for
- COVID-19 vaccination

The battle against COVID-19 affects all of us; we can only win it together. As a company with more than 103,000 employees from 145 countries and cultures, we share in the global responsibility to address the devastating impacts of this pandemic.

Beyond our social commitments and support of our global employee base, SAP remains committed to the success and resilience of our customers. Progress has been made, but the fight is far from over.

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.

WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF HAVING A TWO-TIER ERP SYSTEM?

The use of two-tier ERP systems delivers on the complexities often found in 'headquarters' environments, while preserving the comparative simplicities of 'subsidiary' environments.

Here at ZAP, we develop SaaS that collects data from geographically disparate ERP deployments, brings it together in a common model, and supports consolidation activities such as currency conversion.

Anyone using two-tier ERP needs to that ensure data required for more complex scenarios isn't eliminated for the sake of consistent analytical insight from the top of the organization to the bottom...

Trey Johnson,
Chief Evangelist, ZAP

ZAP

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COMPANIES NEED TO TAKE A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

*Interview with **Dan Miller** ,*
Sage EVP of Medium Segment & SVP of Product for Sage Intacct

Sage has just released the findings of a survey of U.S. finance leaders uncovering the impacts of COVID-19 on small and medium business strategy. We interviewed Dan Miller, Sage EVP of Medium Segment & SVP of Product for Sage Intacct, about this extraordinary period and the results of their survey.

1- Sage has just released the findings of a survey of U.S. finance leaders uncovering the impacts of COVID-19 on small and medium business strategy. What was the idea behind doing the survey at this time?

The idea behind our "2021 Return to Growth Outlook" report was to better understand the realities of what businesses endured throughout 2020 as they navigated the COVID-19 pandemic and worked to find their footing in the "new normal." We wanted to delve into how the pandemic impacted business strategy, customer retention, employee recognition, and community engagement, as well as identify their business outlooks. It really helps to see the challenges businesses faced, how they pivoted to keep operations running, and ultimately, what this means for 2021 and beyond.

2.You mentioned the focus of the survey was how the pandemic impacted business strategy, customer retention, employee recognition, and community engagement. Could you briefly summarize how businesses were affected by the unprecedented challenges they have faced?

The COVID-19 pandemic changed the world in an instant. As life and business as we know it were flipped on its head, companies were forced to adapt in order to survive. SMBs were especially hard hit by the pandemic, and experienced negative impacts across all aspects of their business. From decreases in demand for goods and services to interruptions in the supply chain to figuring out how to transition employees to remote work and more – these companies were faced with a myriad of challenges all at once. However, our survey results show that flexibility was crucial for businesses in weathering the initial challenges of the pandemic, as companies began offering more options to customers, adjusted business strategies, implemented new initiatives, and experimented with digital solutions. It also showed the resilience of people. Despite the challenges and realities of how this affected many of us personally, we have seen people pull together and make a difference for their colleagues and in the communities around them.

3.With the report finding that 46% of businesses implemented long-term or permanent remote working policies, how do you think these new working policies affected the employees in the long run?

I'm not sure anyone knows exactly how this past year will affect employees in the long run. In much the same way businesses had to pivot quickly, so did their employees. Many were forced to work from home, often with other family members or kids sharing the same space. A lot of people also had to get used to holding all their meetings virtually over Zoom or similar technology. The encouraging part is that a lot of businesses learned that they could still execute in this new environment. It is also interesting to see what skills companies expect to focus on in their hiring – with the survey showing that technological skills, remote working skills, and managerial skills expected to be more important for new hires in 2021 than before.

Most companies are still deciding how they will return to work. While businesses have seen some success with remote working, that does not replace the energy of face-to-face collaboration. It will be important to take advantage of what we have learned while being fully remote and then also leverage collaborative spaces. It remains to be seen if offices will go back to something like what they were before, or if they will be turned into collaboration spaces where the norm is everyone works remote at some point and teams only come together periodically? Only time will tell.

4.According to the study, more than one-third (38%) of businesses say the pandemic accelerated digital transformation plans by three to four years, while 14% say it accelerated plans by more than five years. Do you think the business should prioritize product and process or customer support and service improvements while digitally transforming?

To some extent it is all interconnected. Companies need to take a comprehensive approach to digital transformation. However, you can't do everything at once. Companies must consider where they are in their transformation and how much needs to be adjusted. While technology will likely be at the heart of the transformation, moving from a bad manual process to a bad digital process doesn't solve your problems. It is important to use your digital transformation journey to understand what is working and what isn't, so you can decide where to best apply digital technology for overall business improvement. Where to start will be different for each company.

5.It seems that the businesses are confident of experiencing growth this year. Do you think they have readied themselves completely to overcome the unexpected challenge that they may face in the new normal?

It is very encouraging to see that so many of the businesses are not only expecting to grow compared to 2020, but nearly three-quarters expect to meet or exceed their pre-pandemic revenue levels by the end of the year. I think that reflects businesses having had the time to review their strategies based on what they expect that new normal to look like. Of course, if there is one thing we have learned from the pandemic, it is the importance of expecting the unexpected for your business. It will be important to identify the key drivers of the business to create multiple scenarios and assessing the potential impact to your business. Successful companies will be able to pivot quickly to any changes, and that puts pressure on Finance teams to have modern budgeting and planning technology in place that can handle those demands for real-time adjustments.

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6.We have all seen how important the role of finance is during times of crisis. Do you think the CFO's should be more involved in cross-company functions to experience growth that the businesses expect to see in the coming years?

Absolutely. CFOs are uniquely positioned to see across all areas of the business. Over the past few years, there has been a significant shift in the strategic nature of their role. They have moved from being the go-to person for financial history to a strategic advisor to the business and confidant to the CEO. That change continues as we emerge from the pandemic, as nearly eight in ten respondents to our recent survey expect the CFO to have somewhat more or much more influence on the direction and success of their business in 2021. As businesses increasingly move to cloud financial solutions, CFOs have greater access to real-time financial and operational data, as well as predictive analytics, to make decisions. Instead of just focusing on backwards-looking reporting, CFOs have become true strategists, who base their outcomes on empirical data and can share that knowledge across business functions.

Dan Miller *is a proven leader in the cloud financial management industry. For more than 25 years, Dan has led successful product organizations with his expertise in product strategy, product management, experience design, engineering, and customer education. He currently leads the overall Medium Segment organization for Sage, which focuses on meeting the needs of midsize businesses, while also serving as SVP of Product focused on Sage Intacct.*

About Sage

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.

ORACLE NETSUITE

WHAT IS TWO-TIER ERP AND HOW DOES IT WORK?

*Article by **Ian McCue**,*
Sr. Associate Content Manager

As a company expands, whether organically or through mergers and acquisitions, the benefits of a unified view into financial systems don't diminish. If anything, it becomes more critical. But trying to extend a primary enterprise resource planning (ERP) system to encompass diverse business units or subsidiaries that may have entirely different reporting and compliance structures is a sure way to get mired in complexity.

Instead, look at your organizational chart for inspiration, and think in layers.

What is Two-Tier ERP?

Two-tier ERP is an approach to enterprise resource planning technology that uses two systems to address the needs of large businesses with multiple locations and/or subsidiaries. Under this strategy, headquarters will use a Tier 1 ERP that's highly customized and has the functionality to run a large, global company, while subsidiaries or smaller business units use a less resource-intensive Tier 2 ERP that better suits their needs.

With two-tier ERP, the business integrates the two ERP systems so information automatically flows from Tier 2 to Tier 1. This allows for master data management, or a single source of accurate data for the entire enterprise. Although the responsibilities of each system can vary, the Tier 1 software often handles core business functions like finance, human resources and procurement. The Tier 2 system manages activities, like sales, marketing or manufacturing processes, that are more specific to each subsidiary or location.

This ERP strategy became popular as vendors developed less expensive suites with more prebuilt functionality as alternatives to legacy ERP systems that burdened companies with long, expensive, and usually on-premises implementations and extensive configuration requirements. Many companies realized a two-tier approach was far more economical and less work than replacing the Tier 1 ERP or moving a new subsidiary or acquired company onto its enterprise software.

Tier 1 vs. Tier 2 ERP

There are two distinct categories of ERP systems with different capabilities, each designed for businesses of a certain size.

Tier 1

A Tier 1 ERP is built for the world's largest businesses that have operations around the globe. These systems are very expensive to install, maintain and upgrade. Customizing them to meet the business' vast requirements takes a lot of effort, which leads to long implementation times. Companies typically have an IT team dedicated to managing this software.

Tier 2

A Tier 2 ERP is designed for midsize companies and small enterprises. This type of ERP is usually much less expensive and easier to launch than Tier 1 software. Some solutions in this category target specific industries, like manufacturing or retail, and come with more out-of-the-box functionality for accounting, sales, human resources and supply chain (including order and inventory management). One software vendor could offer both Tier 1 and Tier 2 ERP solutions.

Let's look at big-picture business advantages of a layered model then dig into more tactical benefits.

Two-Tier ERP Advantages

Two-tier ERP has become a popular approach for enterprises that want a powerful system at the corporate level but need a complementary solution for subsidiaries or international locations.

On a strategic level, when a company is acquired, any effort to impose a monolithic Tier 1 ERP system is likely to cause disruption—the last thing an acquirer wants. If the goal is to help the subsidiary run better and more profitably, the advantages of a lighter-weight, more customizable Tier 2 system become clear. For the parent company, there's no compromise in terms of gaining access to data, and the IT team avoids the headache of linking (possibly very) disparate ERPs.

That's not to say there won't be any disruption. Perhaps the subsidiary is using a very basic system that can't integrate with the parent company's Tier 1 ERP, or maybe there's no modern financial software in place at all. In that case, the IT team or integration partner would do well to sell the subsidiary on the nuts-and-bolts benefits of having its own ERP.

Benefits of Two-Tier ERP

On the ground, the benefits of a two-tier strategy include:

Cost savings: This is perhaps the most appealing aspect of two-tier ERP, especially for companies facing other costs involved in M&A activity. Implementation, maintenance and upgrade costs tend to be reasonable, particularly if the parent company has standardized multiple subsidiaries on the same Tier 2 system. Further, since the Tier 2 system requires less attention and can share IT resources with the corporate office, the company could eliminate some IT headcount, especially due to redundant positions, or redirect that talent toward projects that benefit the business more directly.
Meet specific business needs: A business unit within an enterprise may have software requirements different from those of the primary business because of what it sells or the industry it serves. A specialized ERP tailored to the smaller business' needs will simply work better for finance and could

drive efficiencies it wouldn't realize with the Tier 1 system.
Greater flexibility and control: Since a Tier 2 ERP is less complex and "lighter," it's faster and easier to adjust the software as necessary. This empowers these smaller segments of a large corporation to respond to changes in the market or shifts in customer behavior in a timelier manner. It also gives these units more control over their operations and processes.
Address local requirements: A subsidiary in a different country may need a system that uses a different currency or language and must comply with local laws. There could be subtle cultural or regional disparities that affect how this office operates. A Tier 2 ERP can accommodate all of those special considerations if they are not included in the Tier 1 system.
Better user experience: Tier 1 systems are often difficult to use and have an intimidating learning curve. A Tier 2 ERP is more likely to have a user-friendly interface and a better overall user experience. This could also cut down on training costs.

> **"TWO-TIER ERP IS AN APPROACH TO ENTERPRISE RESOURCE PLANNING TECHNOLOGY THAT USES TWO SYSTEMS TO ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF LARGE BUSINESSES WITH MULTIPLE LOCATIONS AND/OR SUBSIDIARIES.**

Two-Tier ERP Use Cases

Through many failed projects and blown budgets, large businesses have learned it often doesn't make sense to migrate an acquired company or new subsidiary onto a Tier 1 ERP.

Let's break down a few use cases where a two-tier ERP strategy makes sense:

Subsidiaries that have a business model distinct from the larger company. For example, the main office sells computer hardware and software while the subsidiary focuses on IT services and consulting.
Subsidiaries that sell into a different industry than the larger enterprise or serve a niche market. This could require certain features that the Tier 1 ERP doesn't have.
Business units or offices that operate out of a different country than headquarters. The Tier 2 ERP can not only use the local language and currency but be configured to follow that country's tax laws and other regulations.
Organizations that become part of another corporation through a merger or acquisition. Bringing another business' processes and operations onto an existing ERP can be extremely time- and cost-intensive, so giving the organization a dedicated platform is often a better choice.
An acquired company that doesn't have a formal business management system or uses basic, introductory software.
A company that wants to take advantage of the features and user-friendliness of a newer solution while still utilizing its legacy ERP for certain business functions or processes. This is a much faster and simpler alternative to replacing the main ERP, which could be a massive project.
Choosing an ERP System for a Two-Tier Strategy

First and foremost,companies need to find a Tier 2 ERP that will easily integrate with the Tier 1 system to enable master data management. This will ensure there is always a central, accurate source of information and prevent manual data entry and endless headaches.

The complementary system should also support standard back- and front-office functions, like accounting, supply chain, sales, marketing and operations, along with specialized needs at the company. It should display real-time data and have powerful reporting capabilities. For international locations, support for multi-currency and multi-language is essential. The Tier 2 software should be adaptable so it can not only meet the needs of but evolve with a specific business model or industry. Look for a modular setup.

Additionally, the initial cost and total cost of ownership (TCO) for a Tier 2 ERP should not be onerous. That's part of the reason why many enterprises choose a SaaS ERP, as it's faster to implement and requires minimal maintenance since the vendor hosts the solution on its own infrastructure and handles all upgrades and patches. SaaS ERP appeals to companies that already have to dedicate a lot of human and capital resources to keeping their Tier 1 ERP running smoothly and would prefer a turnkey option for remote sites.

When it comes to selecting a Tier 2 ERP, corporations can:

Let a subsidiary or international location complete its own evaluation process and select any vendor. However, what analysts calls the "laissez-faire" approach could lead to integration issues with the Tier 1 system.
Give the business unit a list of approved solutions or software providers. These could be systems the main office vetted and knows will play well with its enterprise software—preferably with prebuilt integrations—or Tier 2 solutions offered by the Tier 1 ERP vendor.

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.

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GETBUSY TURNS TO NETSUITE AS IT GETS BUSIER

It is not often we see a startup split from its parent company, delist from the Australian Securities Exchange (ASX), move to a new country, successfully list on the London Stock Exchange, and rapidly scale. But that's exactly what the GetBusy team did.

It's such an inspiring business story and one part that I really like is that to manage all these changes and lay the foundations for future growth, the GetBusy team selected Oracle NetSuite to help operate their subsidiaries, act as a central point of information, and consolidate their financials.

GetBusy helps organisations securely collaborate

GetBusy's document and task management software serves over 67,000 across the UK, U.S. and Australia, and since its 2017 split from Australian software giant Reckon, and subsequent relocation to a UK headquarters, it has routinely recorded strong annual growth. Meanwhile, its share price has risen nearly 200%.

This rapid growth often left staff having to work overtime to navigate around data gaps caused by a patchwork of systems used from its demerger. For example, GetBusy ran Sage Accounts in the UK, QuickBooks in the U.S., Excel for currency conversion, and a separate ERP system developed in-house – a scenario that GetBusy's CIO Jason Ross refers to as its "technology dark ages."

GetBusy gets more efficient with ERP

To address these challenges and gain real-time access to data, the GetBusy team knew they needed an integrated financial system and after considering FinancialForce and Sage Intacct, they implemented NetSuite OneWorld ERP in just three months. That timing was key as when remote working accelerated and customers needed to securely pass digital documents and collaborate, GetBusy's SaaS-based solutions jumped in popularity.

"Our mission to make people productive resonated more than ever in 2020. As our Chairman said – GetBusy has the right products, in the right place, at the right time," said Ross. "Without NetSuite, we would not have been able to function properly. Our old ERP system was on-premises, and things weren't connected. Information didn't flow in the same way as it does now."

With NetSuite, GetBusy was enabled to build an automated currency conversion process that integrated with its Salesforce.com CRM system and its Chargebee billing software. The unified system syncs customer and billing data across platforms and automates accounts receivable functions that are critical to the sales and credit-control teams. In addition, OneWorld helps GetBusy's international subsidiaries to process multiple currencies and be flexible to local taxation rules. As a result, the GetBusy finance team now has greater visibility into each of its product lines and subsidiaries and is better able to quickly drill down into performance, and create detailed reports for different business stakeholders.

To manage recurring subscription revenues, which make up over 90 percent of GetBusy's revenues and are key to its financial performance, NetSuite revenue recognition enables the GetBusy team to recognise current and future revenue by analysing actual revenue and providing in-depth forecasts that dynamically respond to anticipated income.

"We've always strived to be a data-driven organisation," said Ross. "With NetSuite, we can be led by accurate, real-time data, which allows us to be agile. We use it to collect as much data as possible, understand it as simply as possible, then come to the best possible decision. You must determine your own personal success with data. If you don't report on it, it didn't happen."

SuiteApp integration helps users get busier in 2021

To build on the success of its NetSuite implementation, GetBusy has recently developed a NetSuite SuiteApp integration. The application will help NetSuite users organise documents and tasks and obtain eSignatures from vendors, customers and colleagues.

Having closed its 2020 books in record time with 31 percent more cash, GetBusy says it is now embarking on an ambitious investment programme to expand its document management and collaboration tool businesses. It also says it is eyeing further U.S. growth with a rapidly expanding office as it looks for new ways to capitalise on the trends that have made its tools so popular over the last year.

We are excited to be part of GetBusy story and with NetSuite, it now has a platform to match its ambitions.

TWO TIER – THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

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

When a company uses different enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems to run separate parts of the business, this is known as a two-tier ERP strategy. It is an approach which has evolved because the needs of large, complex organizations are fundamentally different from the requirements of smaller, simpler ones. A smaller outfit, typically a subsidiary, can be much more effective when it runs an ERP solution that matches its specific needs and is not overburdened by the complexities required by its parent organization.

Problems associated with managing the subsidiary network on the parent system.

If you decide to bring your subsidiaries onto your current enterprise level ERP then you could be in for a number of problems including;

- High levels of IT complexity and costs
- Operational inefficiencies
- High operational costs in the subsidiary
- Difficulty incorporating new acquisitions

Each according to their need

The global enterprise often relies on some highly customised business processes which have been developed over many years. On-premise solutions will have been customised by in-house IT teams to create and build on the competitive advantage that has made them successful. In some instances, like manufacturing, they will be using industry specific solutions or functionality not required by the subsidiary.

> **"THE DIGITALLY BASED INDUSTRY 4.0 BRINGS WITH IT THE PROMISE OF UPGRADING COMPANIES TO A TRULY CONNECTED, INTEGRATED, AND INTELLIGENT ENTERPRISE.**

Meanwhile the subsidiary prefers to be agile and speedy. Their needs are far better suited to a system that uses standardised best practice and is easy to learn and maintain. I'm thinking of something like SAP Business ByDesign here, which is based in the cloud and scales very easily. With

simple support requirements it is quick to implement and integrates with the corporate system - particularly if that system is SAP S4/Hana!

(To reap the benefit of a two-tier system you don't necessarily have to choose solutions from the same vendor but it will make for the most seamless fit.)

2-Tier ERP is a gateway to Industry 4.0

While all companies looking to incorporate subsidiaries can benefit from this strategy, it is of particular help to manufacturing companies as they move towards Industry 4.0.
The digitally based industry 4.0 brings with it the promise of upgrading companies to a truly connected, integrated, and Intelligent Enterprise. Benefits include;

- Real-time visibility and monitoring of the production process across multiple plants and geographies.
- Joined up operational insights with data being shared and analysed across manufacturing entities.
- New entities can be added in to a collaborative system as required.

You can unlock the value of Industry 4.0 by connecting production with end-to-end process execution along the entire length of the supply chain. Creating genuine company-wide connections means much greater flexibility overall as well as building resilience to changing markets.

More benefits (should you need them!)

- Access real time live reports across the entire group including two-way information flow.
- Improve decision making with accurate data at your finger-tips.
- Keep tight financial and regulatory control.
- Light cloud-based subsidiary solutions can be implemented twice as fast as tier-one ERP.
- Lower overall IT costs.

Best of Both Worlds with 2-Tier

As we have seen, the ERP requirements of a large enterprise can overburden a smaller subsidiary with complexity. Therefore a 2-Tier system is well worth considering. The parent company can expect to benefit from high levels of visibility across the entire "family" while making the onboarding of new companies much more straight forward. For their part, the subsidiary gets the best system to manage their business – keeping the attributes like flexibility and agility that made them great in the first place. Meanwhile, everyone can be happy that embedded best practice means governance is taken care of and everyone can get on with doing the things they do best.

In Cloud Solutions is part of the Sapphire Systems group – and is a trusted SAP Partner specialising in the mid-market ERP solution SAP Business ByDesign.

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

ORACLE

WHY CUSTOMER LOYALTY MATTERS NOW, MORE THAN EVER

*Article by **Holly Simmons,***
Vice President, CX Product Management, Oracle

No one could have predicted how the year would unfold – what impact it would have on marketers and what our new definition of 'normal' would look like. As we approach the post-pandemic world of marketing, loyalty takes center stage as brands shift their strategies to focus on customer retention, reengagement, and defining what's next.

We are honored to have been named a Leader in The Forrester Wave™: Loyalty Solutions, Q2 2021. Of the 14 loyalty solution providers recognized, Oracle was named a Leader and received the highest possible scores in the criteria of loyalty management, integration and partnerships, and global support and deployment. You can view the full the report here.

According to the report, "Coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic, brands are reinforcing their loyalty efforts to reengage customers. [...] Marketers need a loyalty solution provider that intimately understands them and their customers in order to help them be more agile, pivot faster, and thrive in an environment where everyday loyalty programs are ubiquitous."

I couldn't agree more with Forrester's commentary. In a year when consumers tried new brands at unprecedented rates, marketers had to rely on technology and analytics to make quick, informed decisions to meet rapidly changing customer needs, and engage and retain valuable customers. Oracle CrowdTwist Loyalty and Engagement has proven to do just that by powering some of America's Best Loyalty Programs, including Foot Locker, Meineke, rue21, Shoe Carnival, Tarte, and Zumiez.

The Forrester report also notes that "Oracle brings deep partnerships and global deployment to the table, and the CrowdTwist team continues to offer effective strategy and analytics services." Additionally, client references applaud its "...proactive ideas to drive business during the pandemic."

If you're interested in learning more about how to deliver personalized loyalty programs, please visit us here.

> **"COMING OUT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, BRANDS ARE REINFORCING THEIR LOYALTY EFFORTS TO REENGAGE CUSTOMERS.**

About Oracle

Oracle offers suites of integrated applications plus secure, autonomous infrastructure in the Oracle Cloud. For more information about Oracle (NYSE: ORCL), please visit us at www.oracle.com.

"WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF HAVING A TWO-TIER ERP SYSTEM?"

Why overburden your small subsidiaries with complexity, when they can get everything they need out of the box with agile cloud ERP? When you adopt a 2-Tier ERP strategy you can;

- Onboard your subsidiaries fast
- Keep overall IT costs down
- Get all the information you need - live - across the group
- Give your subsidiaries the freedom to do what they do best

Lucy Thorpe,
Head of Content, InCloud Solutions

INCLOUD SOLUTIONS

IS SAFETY DRIVING ASSET MANAGEMENT INVESTMENT... OR NOT?

Article by ***Bas Beemsterboer,***
Infor EAM Strategist

What is workplace safety? Merriam-Webster dictionary describes safety as "the condition of being safe from undergoing or causing hurt, injury, or loss". While this description is accurate, it doesn't help much when trying to describe safety in an industrial context. So, if we would describe occupational safety from an engineering point of view it could sound like this: "to prevent the lives of workers from unwanted energy-release incidents". An energy-release incident is any unwanted transfer of energy (electrical, mechanical, hydraulic, pneumatic, chemical, biological or thermal) that produces injury/damage to persons, property or processes.

Even though workplace incidents have always happened, and prevention or especially treatment of injuries was already a practice when Egypt's pyramids were constructed, the types of energy being used in the workplace have increased dramatically over the last century and a half. In order to cope with energy releases, multiple strategies have been defined in the past century, ranging from not using energy at all to treatment of energy after unwanted releases have occurred. Of course, both are undesired so somehow we need to find a way to prevent or at least control these hazardous energy releases.

> **"MAINTENANCE 4.0 ENABLES AN EMERGING APPROACH TO ASSET PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT (APM) THAT DELIVERS SUPERIOR OPERATING PERFORMANCE AND GUARANTEE A BETTER WORKFORCE AND PRODUCTION SAFETY.**

One way to prevent unwanted energy releases, or at least to prevent the ensuing incidents, is to apply a Permit to Work (PtW) system, especially when it provides capability for lockout/tagout procedures on top of the PtW paperwork. It makes sense to integrate such a system in the application for asset and work management that is typically already in place for corrective and preventive maintenance work. After all, it is the maintenance engineer or technician who is mostly at risk when entering or accessing the machine and exposing himself to the energy releases.

In spite of the fact that PtW modules are available in modern work management systems, there are still incidents happening every day. In the United States, 3.1 preventable fatalities per 100.000 full-time equivalent workers were reported in 2019*, and a staggering 4.6 million medically consulted injuries. In the European Union (in 2018), the number varied from 0.6 to 4.6 preventable fatalities per 100.000 FTE workers*, depending on the country, and 3.1 million preventable injuries in total. Big numbers, and they are not necessarily declining, which is a cause for concern.

In recent years, in my role as Director of Solution Consulting, I am seeing Safety Management emerging as one of the primary reasons for our customers to invest in a proper Enterprise Asset Management system. This trend is most notable in the petrochemical industry, and it is likely caused by a desire to accelerate digital transformation to become more agile as well as in the food and beverage business where prevention of contamination risks is a top focus.

That's why Maintenance 4.0 has emerge as a framework at a time when change is rapid, the cost of unplanned outages or avoidable safety issues must be anticipated and mitigated. Maintenance 4.0 enables an emerging approach to asset performance management (APM) that delivers superior operating performance and guarantee a better workforce and production safety.

What the rest of the world needs now is to follow suit and leverage the examples and standards set in this industry and apply them where it is most needed. A focus on safety can save lives when implementing a work and asset management solution. So, is safety a driver to invest in a best of breed asset management solution? Definitely yes !

In Infor latest guide " Why asset management must evolve into Asset Performance Management", you'll read more about a new set of technologies and tools that is revolutionizing asset management, and which can help you increase your overall business safety.

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.

TRENDS THAT SHAPE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IN 2021

*Article by **Evan Morris**,*

2021 is a year for bouncing back for companies battered by the COVID19 pandemic. It is during the process; businesses will understand the importance of digital transformation.

You will see that digitally-prepared companies will bounce back faster than the ones relying on the traditional ways of doing business.

What is Digital Transformation?

Digital transformation is about rethinking technology. It is about businesses using technology, people, and processes to deliver more value to customers.

You can define digital transformation as the process of using digital technologies and supporting capabilities to create a powerful business model.

Usually, higher operational efficiency is one of the benefits of companies actuating a digital business model.

What are the Top Digital Transformation Trends for 2021?

Now, you know that digital transformation is beneficial for businesses. Let us not stop here; instead, let us explore the top digital transformation trends for 2021.

The trends are:

Eruption of Customer Data Platforms (CDP)
Today is the age of data. Businesses produce vast amounts of data at various stages of operations.

Even events, like customers interacting with your salespeople or purchasing products or services, will generate vast data.

Businesses generate data regardless of their size, but the issue is how they use it to gain insights into their customers' behavior and choices.

It poses no problem for smaller businesses with a limited number of products and services, but managing data is a big challenge for large companies.

Data comes from multiple sources for large businesses, such as products, marketing channels, and customers, and management of such data calls for advanced approaches.

To manage complex and vast data, a CDP can help by acting as a unified source of customer information.

Businesses can use the information to create personalized marketing campaigns with the help of the data to gain more customers.

In a study, Oracle found that companies using CDP are 2.5 percent more valuable in customer lifetime than those not using it.

There is also another thing to note: CDP is not only for the marketing department to use. Its usage extends to finance

and IT departments to make quick decisions about services, products, and investments.

Refocus on Cybersecurity

The digital transformation started as an approach to develop processes and products a few years ago. Subsequently, businesses began putting into action initiatives like DevOps as part of their faster go-to-market strategies.

But one aspect was ignored by businesses, and that was – security. However, it is no longer an aspect to ignore as the number of cyberattacks is increasing.

In 2020 alone, more than 445 million cyberattacks were reported by the media. So, businesses have to keep a tight vigil over possible cyberattacks.

IT companies have already responded to the need with their Chief Information Security Officers (CISO), keeping cybersecurity at the top of their goals.

There is no one-size-fits-all approach against cyber attacks. Businesses can create a balance between people, processes, and technology to implement cybersecurity measures.

Businesses can no longer allow their security practices to move at a snail's pace. The methods today have to move at the speed of digital transformation. The focus has to be not on speeding up a process but also on speeding up a process safely.

CISOs must act as advisors to the internal IT team, and their advice becomes crucial when deploying new technology.

Businesses should integrate new technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML), and the cloud into security solutions to guard their businesses against cyber attacks.

Given the growing cyber threats to businesses, cybersecurity is a critical digital transformation trend to watch out for in 2021.

Multi-Cloud Architecture

Technological innovations have elicited the multi-cloud architecture from the single architecture variant.

Multi-cloud architecture involves distributing applications and workloads of an organization in one or two private or public clouds. It also provides more straightforward ways to manage remote work with security.

Moreover, the architecture serves multiple purposes, like resilience, data residency requirement, and disaster recovery.

Despite the benefits, the architecture also poses a challenge in the guise of higher complexity associated with infrastructure management.

Businesses can tackle the challenge by implementing cloud management and automation solutions to manage their multiple cloud infrastructure.

AI Democratization

Democratization AI is one of the striking digital transformation trends to look out for in 2021. It can accelerate the speed of digital transformation within an organization.

It makes AI-based tools accessible to every person in an organization to identify patterns, make decisions, predict, learn, and improve.

Given the growing tech integration among businesses, enterprises of all sizes are likely to implement AI in their systems and processes.

Without the necessary resources to make the integration, firms can take help from AI-as-a-service providers and AI solutions from vendors like Google, Microsoft, and AWS.

Again, it is also not without drawbacks which include implementation complexity and expensiveness.

Contactless Solutions

Of late, using contactless solutions is on the rise, primarily due to the restrictions imposed during the COVID19 pandemic.

Contactless dining and digital payments are the recent digital transformation trends that have attracted businesses the world over.

Due to the pandemic, restaurants have implemented contactless solutions to take customer orders during the prevalence of social distancing norms.

It includes the online mode of ordering and in-seat ordering, which involves customers ordering food from their seats using a mobile app or a QR code.

With QR codes, customers can browse menus, order food while seated, and even pay with a mobile device.

Similarly, people can avoid physical contact while shopping in a store with the help of digital payments, enabling people and businesses to access the digital economy.

Contactless solutions and digital payments have been playing a key role in accelerating digital transformation.

Automation

Automation and digital transformation go hand-in-hand. Adoption of one necessitates the implementation of the other. When businesses automate more of their processes, the speed of digital transformation also increases parallelly.

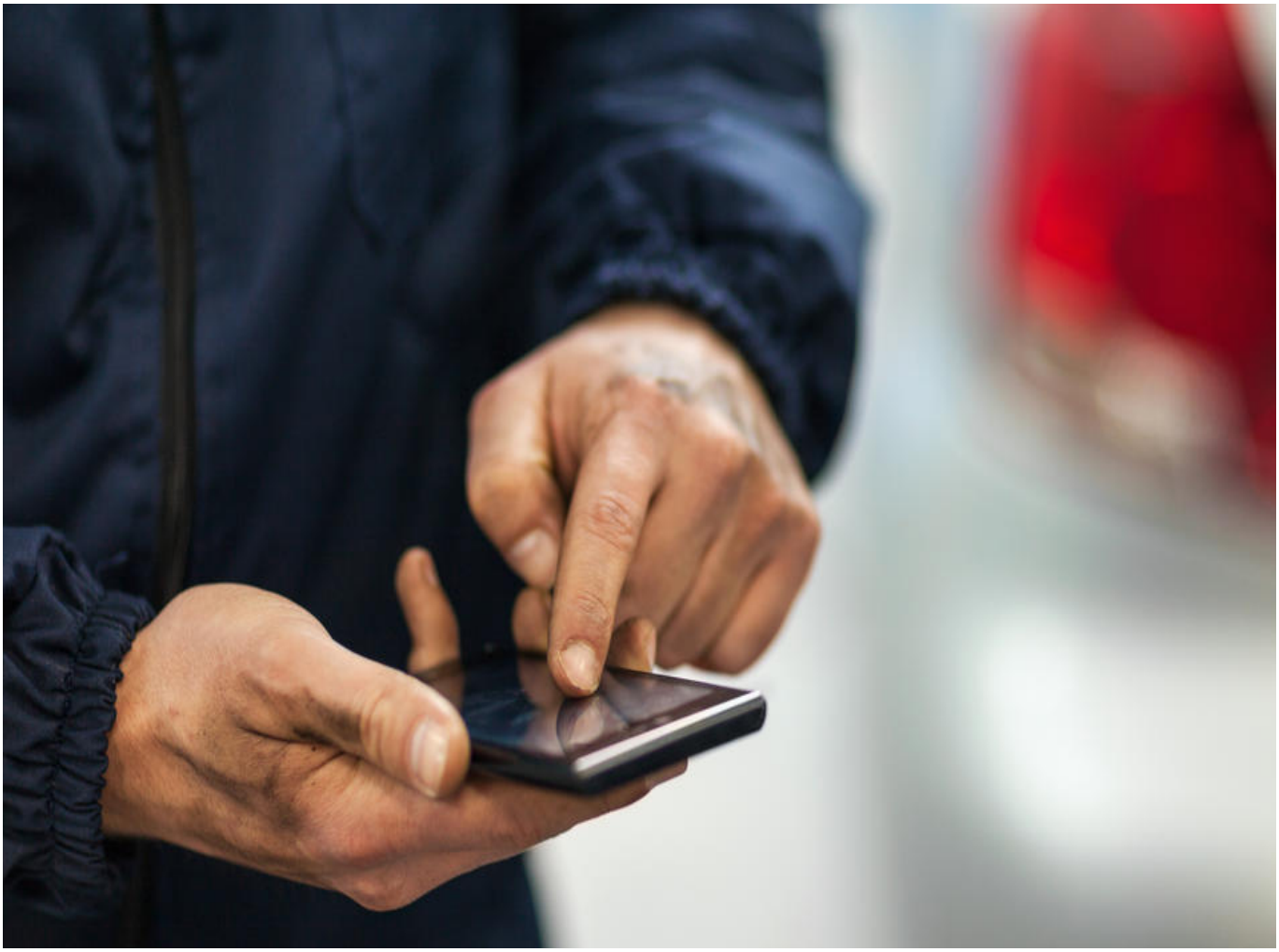
The Final Words

Digital transformation is a strategy that goes beyond technology. What is also important is the goals and statements you should set carefully before defining the digital strategy for your business.

Source: https://blogs.sap.com/

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.



THE FUTURE OF SERVICE SOFTWARE FLEXIBILITY HINGES ON CONTAINERIZATION

I have always been of the mind that the most important thing that software—any software—can do is to get out of your way.

This is true of everything, from our phones, to the myriad of connected devices that have impacted our lives in various ways, and everything in between. If, for instance, a "Smart" thermostat now requires me to look at my phone to do what I previously could do by twisting a dial, it replaces convenience with complexity, and for no good reason. These are the keys of solid programming and are doubly important for technologies that we put in the hands of workers.

This takes on slightly different precedence in service, wherein the goal is not just to allow the technology to make completing actions seamless, the goal is to enhance the service process while not disrupting it in any major way. If in order to build schedules, you need to have availability loadouts three weeks in advance, and can't update them same-day because of illness, or because of a high-priority outage that just came up, then the software is worse than pen and paper, it's an impediment.

It's incredible how many software providers don't understand this fact, and it's why some firms struggle to get their teams to use the technologies at their disposal in the first place. Today, though, I don't want to talk about the user experience of software applications. I want to take this

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> **SERVICE SOFTWARE DEPLOYMENT DEMANDS FLEXIBILITY. THIS BEGINS WITH CONTAINERIZATION**

concept outside of the day-to-day utilization of software, and look at the framework of the software itself.

Because here's the thing: service firms are complex. They are, frequently, a mismatch of cultures, either through means of acquisitions, or organizations working alongside OEMs, or distributors, or aftermarket part manufacturers, or contingent employees, or some Frankensteinian combination of these elements. And service delivery itself doesn't fit into a neat box.

There are different tiers (telcos, for instance, balancing commercial and residential service visits), different types of workforces, and different systems employed depending on the nature of a fix, or a routine appointment, or an emergency, or a predicted event, and so on, and so on, and so on. On a frankly more basic level, some service companies simply require, perhaps for regulatory reasons, their solutions to be managed on-prem. Others have managed cloud space of their own that they want to employ. Others, still, are in a position to move to the cloud. None of these (or any other adoption permutation) are wrong, and software that supports that flexibility will be engineered to support flexibility further down the value chain as well.

Service software deployment demands flexibility. This begins with containerization.

The concept of containerization, in its simplest terms, means that software is packaged (or 'contained' I suppose) in a way, with all ancillary processes, that enables it to be deployed at the discretion of the end-user.

This is the way that IFS cloud has built all of its service, project, and asset management capabilities. By building a cloud-first product, we're able to sell it to companies in the cloud, managing upkeep, upgrades, licenses, and operations for you wholly. Some of our competitors stop there, but that's not true flexibility.

A containerized product—one that lives in the cloud natively, like **IFS Cloud**—can be just as easily packaged and deployed on a home server, with the same internal structure, same APIs, and to the same effect. If your infrastructure requires that, we are ready to meet those needs, not dictate the terms of how you interact with our product.

Alternatively, that container can be handed off to another cloud host, managed independently of the "multi-tenant" cloud instance upon which the software was built. So "single-tenant" cloud hosting.

If you're interested in digging into how this works technically **check out this blog post.**

sage TWO-TIER ERP STRATEGY

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

Is your company expanding organically or through mergers and acquisitions?

Do you have numerous subsidiaries?

Do you have multiple branches spread across a vast geographical location?

If any of these holds for you, then you must implement a two-tier ERP strategy.

The main reason for implementing a two-tier ERP strategy is that the headquarters and the sub-branches have dissimilar reporting and compliance structures. So, if you implement the same Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system to encompass the needs of each business house, you will knit a web of difficulties that may lead to chaos.

This is where a two-tier ERP strategy will come to your help.

What is a two-tier ERP strategy?

In the two-tier ERP strategy, the headquarters use tier-1 ERP software customized to manage critical business functions required to operate a large company. On the other hand, the subsidiaries or smaller branches use a less resource-intensive tier-2 ERP software built to handle their day-to-day needs.

In a two-tier ERP setup, the information flows from tier-2 to tier-1, allowing for master data management. This setup acts as a single source of truth that provides access to crucial business data to each business stakeholder across the entire enterprise. The responsibility of each tier varies, but generally, tier 1 handles core business functions like supply chain, finance and accounting, and human resources. Whereas tier 2 handles other tasks like marketing and sales, manufacturing, and internal communication specific to a particular branch.

Why are companies using a two-tier ERP strategy?

The two-tier ERP strategy became popular when businesses began implementing customized ERP solutions. The following reasons explain why:

a. Customized ERP solutions are less expensive than traditional ERP systems.

b. Customized ERP software takes less time for implementation.

c. Customized ERP systems are built for solving specific business challenges.

On the other hand, traditional ERP systems are burdened with complexities, require extensive configuration requirements, need rigorous technical training, have massive implementation time, and are very expensive.

Due to these factors, many enterprises thought it's far more economical to take the two-tier approach instead of replacing the tier 1 ERP or moving the subsidiary or acquired organization onto the existing ERP system.

Why investing in a Two-Tier ERP system is beneficial for you?

Suppose your company plans on expanding its operations in a different country. You start by acquiring a small company that has a firm footing in that country. This company has been using highly customized ERP software for managing its business functions. Now, if you decide to impose a Tier-1 ERP system on this newly-purchased company, you will have to face severe challenges, both technical and from a human resource point of view. Employees often resist implementing

a new ERP software as they need to spend more time learning the nitty-gritty of the latest software. In the worst-case scenario, the newly acquired company might be using a very basic ERP software that cannot integrate with your company's tier-1 ERP software.

What are the benefits of using a two-tier ERP strategy?

There are numerous benefits that you can gain by implementing a two-tier ERP strategy. Some of them are as follows:

1. Customize according to business needs.

A small business unit may build products and serve audiences that might be starkly different from those of the primary business. For example, Microsoft makes operating systems, whereas Bethesda, a subsidiary of Microsoft, excels in developing fast-paced shooter video games. Both have very different software requirements and target segments. It would be best if they use a tier-2 ERP system for Bethesda to help drive greater efficiency, speed, and profitability.

2. Reduce operational expenses.

Big enterprises with a large number of subsidiaries can save high costs by implementing a two-tier ERP system. The following points explain how:

a. By having multiple subsidiaries on the same tier-2 system, the parent company can save implementation, maintenance, and upgrade costs.

b. The tier 2 ERP system can share IT resources with the corporate office, which means that the subsidiary can reduce its IT headcount and redirect its workforce towards mission-critical tasks.

3. Accommodate local needs.

Subsidiaries, especially those located in foreign countries, need a system that accommodates different currencies and languages and must comply with local laws. Also, there are subtle cultural, regional, and ethnic differences that dictate the functioning of subsidiaries. A tier-2 ERP system helps address local requirements even if the tier-1 ERP doesn't.

4. More user-friendly experience.

Tier-1 ERP systems have a steep learning curve that requires employee participation. Unfortunately, most employees resist investing time and effort to learn how to use an ERP system. On the other hand, tier-2 ERP software is user-friendly and requires less time to learn. This way, companies can also cut down on training costs.

Conclusion

If you have multiple branches spread worldwide, then you must adopt the two-tier ERP strategy. It will allow the subsidiaries to account for differences in currency, local compliances, language, and culture conveniently. You can decrease operational expenses by reducing IT headcount and delivering greater efficiency, speed, and profitability. Since it's easy to learn the nitty-gritty of a two-tier ERP system, you can also save training costs.

What are the advantages of having a two-tier ERP system?

A two-tier ERP system allows handling the headquarters' functions and customizing for the needs — software requirements and target segment — of the subsidiary. It also allows the parent company to save implementation, maintenance, and upgrade costs. Moreover, the tier 2 ERP system can share IT resources with the corporate office that helps reduce the subsidiaries' IT headcount and redirect its workforce towards mission-critical tasks. Simply put, the tier-1 ERP software takes care of the functioning of the headquarters, while tier-2 is responsible for managing the day-to-day activities of the subsidiaries.

Nishant Joshi likes to read and write on technologies that form the bedrock of 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.

About Sage

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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