ERP NEWS MAGAZINE
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The Power of Mobile ERP

What are the features and benefits of mobile ERP?

Remain Agile and Move Forward

ORACLE NETSUITE

NICKY TOZER
Oracle NetSuite Senior Vice President of EMEA

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EDITOR'S NOTE

In today's business world, having access to information at all times and all places is vital for all industries. Mobile technologies have become an indispensable part of our lives and using a mobile ERP for businesses is becoming crucial for accessing, and sharing the business data in real-time through the mobile devices.

In this issue, we focus on Mobile ERP, which provides the speed and flexibility required by businesses for growth and remaining competitive in every industry.

Two years ago, we interviewed Nicky Tozer, Senior Vice President of Oracle Netsuite EMEA, and asked about the future of the ERP industry and the growth strategies of Oracle Netsuite, but a couple of months later the world has changed permanently. In this issue, we had the opportunity to chat with her again and she has evaluated this extraordinary transformation that the world has undergone and how it has affected the ERP industry. Thank you, Nicky – it is always enlightening for us to learn your opinions!

And don't forget to check out the interviews with Claus Jepsen, Chief Technology Officer of Unit4, and Derk Bleeker, Chief Strategy and Development Officer, Sage – they will shed a light on today's ERP industry and the effects of the pandemic on the business world.

You can start turning the pages to discover the latest news and articles about the ERP industry!

See you in the next issue...

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ORACLE

ORACLE NAMED A LEADER IN THE GARTNER MAGIC QUADRANT FOR CLOUD HCM SUITES FOR 1,000+ EMPLOYEE ENTERPRISES

Oracle announced that it has been named a Leader for the sixth successive year in the 2021 Gartner® Magic Quadrant™ for Cloud HCM Suites for 1,000+ Employee Enterprises for Oracle Fusion Cloud Human Capital Management (HCM). The report evaluates vendors based on ability to execute and completeness of vision. Oracle was placed furthest to the right for completeness of vision for the fourth year in a row.

According to the report, "As organizations support workforces with ever-increasing expectations for connectivity, many in-person conversations with HR administrators have been replaced by interactions with applications. This shift to digital HR administration increases the need for a compelling and personalized UX, as applications become the "face" of HR departments."

"We believe this year's report validates once more our relentless focus on improving employee experience for our customers around the world. Our scores across the board show that we offer one of the most complete HCM solutions in the market, with a deep breadth of global capabilities to support our clients worldwide," said Chris Leone, senior vice president of development, Oracle Cloud HCM. "Over the course of the Covid-19 pandemic, companies have had to navigate constantly shifting environments, such as changing guidance on when it is safe to return to the workplace, tackling the Great Resignation's mass exodus, and responding to employees' new priorities. Our solutions help HR and business leaders to understand and support their organizations no matter what challenges come their way. We are especially proud of the additional recognition around our user experience as we continue to innovate with new capabilities to provide the personalized guidance and development that today's workforce demands, such as Journeys and Dynamic Skills."

The Gartner Critical Capabilities for Cloud HCM Suites for 1,000+ Employee Enterprises report also noted that Oracle received the highest score for Core HR and TM (Global Organization) and Asia/Pacific Market among 6 use cases.

Since the development of the report, Oracle has introduced new Oracle Cloud HCM innovations, including the introduction of Oracle Payroll Core, a flexible payroll management solution that enables organizations to easily configure payroll to meet both local and international pay rules in a single system. Oracle Payroll Core is the latest addition to the comprehensive payroll capabilities within Oracle Cloud HCM that support diverse requirements across organizations, workers, and industries to provide efficient, compliant, and configurable global payroll solutions.

Part of the Oracle Fusion Cloud Applications suite, Oracle Cloud HCM enables HR professionals to make work more human by improving employee experience in the workplace. Oracle provides organizations a complete solution connecting every human resource process—including global HR, talent management, workforce management, payroll, and HR service delivery. It's also the most connected solution across the enterprise, with one cloud unifying HCM across finance, supply chain, and customer experience.

You can read a complimentary copy of the report at: https://www.oracle.com/human-capital-management/gartner-magic-quadrant/

For additional information on Oracle Cloud HCM visit: https://www.oracle.com/applications/human-capital-management/

Gartner, Magic Quadrant for Cloud HCM Suites for 1,000+ Employee Enterprises, By Sam Grinter, Chris Pang, Jeff Freyermuth, Ron Hanscome, Helen Poitevin, Ranadip Chandra, John Kostoulas, Published 19 October 2021.

Gartner, Critical Capabilities for Cloud HCM Suites for 1,000+ Employee Enterprises, By Sam Grinter, Chris Pang, Jeff Freyermuth, Ron Hanscome, Helen Poitevin, Ranadip Chandra, John Kostoulas, Published 21 October 2021.

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 SALES CLOUD AND MICROSOFT TEAMS HELP BUSINESSES GROW BY REMOVING BARRIERS TO REMOTE SELLING

SAP SE (NYSE: SAP) announced that the integration of the SAP Sales Cloud solution with Microsoft Teams is now available to all customers. SAP made this announcement at the SAP Customer Experience LIVE: Unplugged event being held October 26–27, 2021.

In today's world, "remote selling" is no longer an exception, it has become the norm. Sales professionals across the globe use Microsoft Teams to meet with customers and engage in sales activities. The integration of SAP Sales Cloud and Microsoft teams enables users to access customer and sales information instantly from Microsoft Teams. While in customer meetings, they can update records in real time without ever leaving the Microsoft Teams environment.

"Traditional sales automation solutions are record-keeping tools that focus on performing administrative tasks," said Sameer Patel, chief marketing and solutions officer of Customer Experience at SAP. "They can distract sales professionals from high-value activities. SAP Sales Cloud is different because it removes complexities, adapts to changing needs of sales professionals and strives to make it easier for them to focus on customers and closing deals. The integration with Microsoft Teams is another great example of how SAP makes it easier for sales professionals to engage with customers and grow revenues."

"Microsoft Teams is the new way people and sales professionals connect, collaborate and stay in the flow of work in today's hybrid world," said Nicole Herskowitz, Microsoft Teams general manager. "We are excited that partners like SAP are building Teams Apps and native integration to enable collaborative solutions that help our mutual customers improve team productivity and better serve customers."

"It is more important than ever to eliminate friction in the sales process, remove administrative tasks and provide our sales professionals with the right sales solutions that help them focus on our customers and engage with them anywhere and anytime," said Gamze Senkal, manager of Information Technology at Eczacıbası Building Products, part of one of the leading industrial holding companies in Turkey. "With the integration of SAP Sales Cloud and Microsoft Teams, our sales professionals can access the latest customer information with one click from Microsoft Teams and are able to update sales records in real time without ever leaving Microsoft Teams. By eliminating duplicate data entry and record keeping, SAP Sales Cloud helps ensure that our sales professionals are focusing on our customers and value-added activities."

To attend SAP Customer Experience LIVE: Unplugged, please check out the agenda and register.

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.

WHY LARGE ENTERPRISES SHOULD NO LONGER SECOND-GUESS MOBILE ERP ADOPTION

Article By ***Chenthil Eswaran*** ,
Practice Head of Enterprise Business Applications,
Aspire Systems

Every successful technological innovation has been driven by a shift in generational thought processes. Although ironically and often dubbed as "next-generation" technology, most are based on the current demands and habits of key stakeholders like employees and customers. It's when enterprises can no longer hold back on investing in the future because even the present situation calls for it. And the mobile-first mindset is already emerging across all major business processes - whether executing repetitive day-to-day tasks or taking on strategic and mission-critical initiatives. So, when it comes to creating an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) strategy and implementation, which is the backbone of enterprises operations, developing a mobile-centric approach can be crucial.

Why large enterprises view mobile ERP as value accelerator

ERP workflows cut across the enterprise - leveraged and managed by teams like HR, marketing, sales, finance, facilities management, etc. Such users get access to vast data repositories and business functionalities to improve how they work, communicate, and collaborate. And with mobile ERP, they can break past the confines of desktops and instead use handheld devices to get things done. Instead, they get equipped with a powerful mobile-friendly dashboard so that real-time insights are available at their fingertips – with the ability to seamlessly access, update, share information - as and when required. Since they can use it anytime and anywhere, it goes a long way to enable employees to add timely value to the enterprise.

Typically, and thus far, mobile ERPs were mainly used by small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs). This is because it was a current need, considering that they were looking to capitalize on opportunities untapped or missed by the legacy players. However, the continued rise of digital user empowerment and the sudden emergence of remote work culture has also led to large enterprises incorporating mobile ERP solutions.

One of the reasons is the generational shift in how the average user interacts with technology. Today, the average age of an employee is between 30 to 35 years, which means ERP must cater to late millennials and the subsequent Gen Z workforce. And you don't require market statistics and survey findings to understand that mobile solutions can help significantly enhance their productivity levels. But, more importantly, in the recent past, mobile ERP has found the answers to many of the tough questions that once prevented large enterprises from considering it a viable solution.

Some of the benefits of mobile ERP are:

- Synchronizing enterprise-wide operations and ensuring business continuity/growth during unexpected workplace disruptions
- Enabling quicker availability of information in real-time with a higher degree of accuracy – thereby increasing workforce performance optimization
- Strengthening and extending the scope of supply chain dynamics with rapid-fire access to inventory or vendor-related analytics
- Helping deliver better customer experiences by equipping the workforce with BI insights to personalize interactions and faster resolve support requests

How mobile ERP has evolved to answer the tough questions

Is mobile ERP a fully mature approach yet?

While solution providers may argue that they offer end-to-end problem solvers, attaining complete maturity may still be a few years behind. But there's no doubt that there's enough progression to encourage the large enterprises to adopt.

How soon will it trigger the expected ROI?

In most cases, the answer is invariably "depends on when your users start using it properly." In the case of implementing mobile ERP, the surge in remote work expectations has already pressurized enterprises to ensure that employees get access to the same information and functionalities from their homes as they do while at the workplace. If implemented the right way with the provision of world-class support, it can immediately start leading to measurable business outcomes. Is it secure enough?

There's a chance that enterprise data may get accessed through unsecured mobile networks. Cyber attackers are also likely to attack the vulnerabilities inherent to mobile devices. But mobile ERP has gone away from traditional security measures to develop a tiered strategy that proactively protects sensitive data and workflows from malicious attacks or accidental leaks. It is powered by AI to detect and remediate suspicious activities and increase the enterprise's risk mitigation capabilities.

Does it allow easy and affordable customization?

The best mobile ERP solution can be effortlessly customized at all levels. At a macro level, enterprises can customize it to suit their technology ecosystems and their unique business processes. At a micro level, they can set up their preferred language, currency, and time zone details or interface changes like page layouts, default email client, fields/objects, and role-based access controls.

Will it require a lot of user training?

As earlier indicated, the modern user is aware of the atypical mobile interface and how intuitive its features can be. So, there would a drastic reduction in the amount of training needed for them to pick up speed in maximizing their performance. In fact, modern mobile ERP solutions also come with intuitive searching features and a simplistic UI, which may require zero training!

Can it provide real-time data to improve BI capabilities?

A smart mobile ERP solution provides real-time information at the right time - to the right person – no matter where they are, as long as they have a handheld device with stable internet connectivity. Basically, it bridges the gap between the availability of operational analytics and the ability of users to harness them as actionable business intelligence.

Uberization of ERP: The future is closer than you think

"Uberization" may sound like a buzzword, but it's where many major businesses are heading in order to weed out existing barriers to innovation. Similarly, the mobile ERP of today is different from what it would be in the near future. For instance, there's a big difference between developing a mobile ERP app and enabling ERP application usage on mobile devices. As more large enterprises grow in confidence over adoption, they will focus on creating a mobile ERP app, which is unquestionably a more user-friendly approach.

The future of mobile ERP also depends on the evolution of autonomous technology. Going by patterns in other industries, tomorrow's mobile ERP would offer a whole new set of self-powered usability experiences - as AI-enabled systems perform tasks, conduct checks and balances, execute end-to-end transactions, take strategic BI-based decisions, and more.

Hence, the easiest question for today's enterprises to ask would be – when should I implement mobile ERP? And to answer that with another question, **why haven't you already?**

Chenthil leads go-to-market strategy , implementation , support for ERP,CRM,HCM at Aspire Systems. He joined Aspire in 2008 and is a Thought Leader in ERP,CX transformation. Has strong passion for AI.Prior to his current role, he held various ERP, CRM consulting,application development,application maintenance and managerial positions having overall 25 years experience. He also has experience in multiple ERP, CRM implementations across Australia, Middle East, Africa and North America.

About Aspire Systems

Aspire Systems is a global technology services firm serving as a trusted technology partner for our customers. We work with some of the world's most innovative enterprises and independent software vendors, helping them leverage technology and outsourcing in our specific areas of expertise.

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ORACLE NETSUITE

REMAIN AGILE AND MOVE FORWARD

Interview with ***Nicky Tozer,***
EMEA Senior Vice President at Oracle NetSuite

It's been 2 years since Nicky Tozer, Oracle NetSuite Senior Vice President of EMEA answered all our questions about NetSuite and the company's growth across the region. Nicky also talked about what to look out for and prioritise in your ERP selection process. A couple of months after this interview the pandemic hit the world and the world has entered a completely unprecedented era. And in this issue, Nicky is again with us to discuss how the pandemic has affected the ERP industry, what awaits us in the future of the ERP industry, and what to consider when choosing ERP software during and beyond the pandemic.

It has been two years since we have talked about NetSuite's growth in EMEA and evaluated the ERP industry together. Over these two years, the pandemic has left lasting scars in every industry. How has the crisis affected the ERP industry?

NetSuite has continued to grow. Globally, our Q1 revenues are up 28% and today over 27,000 organisations rely on NetSuite to help them run critical parts of their operations. That growth is testament to what a good ERP system can help achieve.

The past 18 months have highlighted, how, more than ever, an organisation needs crystal clear visibility into its finances and cash flow, inventory, supply chain and customers. Data is critical to helping customers make difficult decisions quickly to solve challenges and grasp the opportunities that businesses across all industries face.

When we spoke in 2019 I said that ERP needed to keep up with shifting market dynamics and continue to evolve into something everyone can take advantage of to give business leaders the visibility, control, and agility they need to grow their business. Today that's truer than ever – the ERP industry is well-placed to help organisations navigate the path back to consistent growth.

In our previous interview, you stated that we would have expected to see 'emerging' technologies like AI, machine learning, blockchain, and predictive analytics become more embedded in ERP. Covid-19 has certainly sped up the adoption of digital technologies by several years. What awaits us in the future of the ERP industry?

The important thing is that new or 'emerging' technologies that are embedded in ERP help solve a real-world problem and do not add complexity for users. AI and machine learning are a great case in point – it is not about simply making these technologies available. It is about trying to make sure they work in harmony with how customers are already using ERP systems and having a defined objective in mind. For example, how can machine learning benefit users by automating manual tasks, or delivering new insights?

From a NetSuite perspective, we are always looking to deliver

WHETHER IT'S NEW BUSINESS MODELS, LABOUR SHORTAGES, RETENTION ISSUES, NEW MODELS FOR HOW AND WHERE WE WORK, OR NEW EMPLOYEE EXPECTATIONS – THERE'S A LOT FOR BUSINESSES TO DEAL WITH AND NETSUITE IS HELPING.

Nicky Tozer,
EMEA Senior Vice President at Oracle NetSuite

more useful features to customers. We've just launched SuiteBanking, and named HSBC as our first SuiteBanking partner. The solution effectively merges ERP with fintech, and helps customers automate key financial processes and gain full visibility into their cash flow by bringing together automated accounts payable and accounts receivable processes. In doing so, NetSuite is the first cloud ERP to integrate fintech into a unified suite. At the same time, we've announced NetSuite Analytics Warehouse to help customers spot patterns and surface insights from NetSuite and third-party data to help improve their decision-making capabilities.

We continue to focus on the technologies that have the potential to improve the lives of our customers and help them meet new opportunities.

What are the key challenges NetSuite customers are looking to solve right now?

Whether it's new business models, labour shortages, retention issues, new models for how and where we work, or new employee expectations – there's a lot for businesses to deal with and NetSuite is helping.

Businesses are looking for a foundation that allows them to be agile. Whether that's using real-time data to understand, plan and forecast for the next stage of growth or funding; determine which products or services to focus on, or to use their data for insights. Linked to that is that businesses need to keep a close eye on liquidity and cash flow. Having cash in reserve has never been so important as it helps businesses remain agile and take advantage of new opportunities. They also need a wide, consolidated view across every aspect of the business.

Businesses are also looking to deal with complexity and aiming to boost productivity. Many are fundamentally rethinking where their workforce will be situated in the future, and the rules and strategies to successfully work together in remote teams. They are having to guarantee access to tools and data, deal with skills shortages and make sure they are driving productivity regardless of employee location.

The pandemic has clearly accelerated cloud adoption and most software companies are now encouraging their customers to go all-in on the cloud. What are the benefits of Cloud ERP during the Covid-19 era? And what differentiates Oracle NetSuite from other cloud solutions?

'Cloud' comes more naturally to us than other ERP vendors. NetSuite was the first cloud software company and the first to provide a single integrated system to help organisations run their business in the cloud, and that hasn't changed.

Over the past 18 months and during the transition to remote working, finance and operations teams using on-premises solutions were likely less able to adapt as quickly and efficiently to changing business conditions as their cloud peers. NetSuite customers were unlikely to have that challenge. On a purely practical level it's harder to work virtually without virtual (cloud) access to the information you need to run your business.

Fast-growing international businesses turn to NetSuite. More than 150 customers on NetSuite have gone public just this year and 65 percent of tech-based IPOs this year are running on NetSuite. It's testament to the capabilities NetSuite provides, and how we are constantly working on improving the features for our customers.

What should businesses consider when choosing ERP software during and beyond the pandemic?

The key consideration is what issues need to be addressed. What are the outcomes you want to achieve, and what are you trying to solve? Decide what you want to achieve and where you want to go as a business, and make sure you have

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> **MY MAIN GUIDANCE TO CUSTOMERS IS TO ALWAYS CONSIDER OUTCOMES WHEN SELECTING AN ERP SYSTEM.**

WE CONTINUE TO FOCUS ON THE TECHNOLOGIES THAT HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO IMPROVE THE LIVES OF OUR CUSTOMERS AND HELP THEM MEET NEW OPPORTUNITIES.

room to be flexible and adaptable within the system you use to support those goals.

Customers often approach us with a particular problem or goal in mind. We've just announced the expansion of our Advanced Customer Support service to provide prescriptive playbooks to help meet a particular goal and help enable customers accelerate their return on investment. The playbooks are based on our experience and the data and insights from thousands of NetSuite implementations. They intend to help customers address operational challenges such as revenue recognition, project profitability, and supply chain management and can also help support key growth milestones, such as a geographic expansion, preparation for an IPO and merger/acquisition activity.

My main guidance to customers is to always consider outcomes when selecting an ERP system.

In 2019, we spoke about the role of women in technology. What progress have we seen since then?

The role of women in technology, and elevating more women into senior leadership roles in this industry, is very close to my heart. Last week I took part in a brilliant session organised by Oracle Women's Leadership (OWL) on the theme of 'I have your back', discussing how we can empower and develop current and future generations of female leaders in our business.

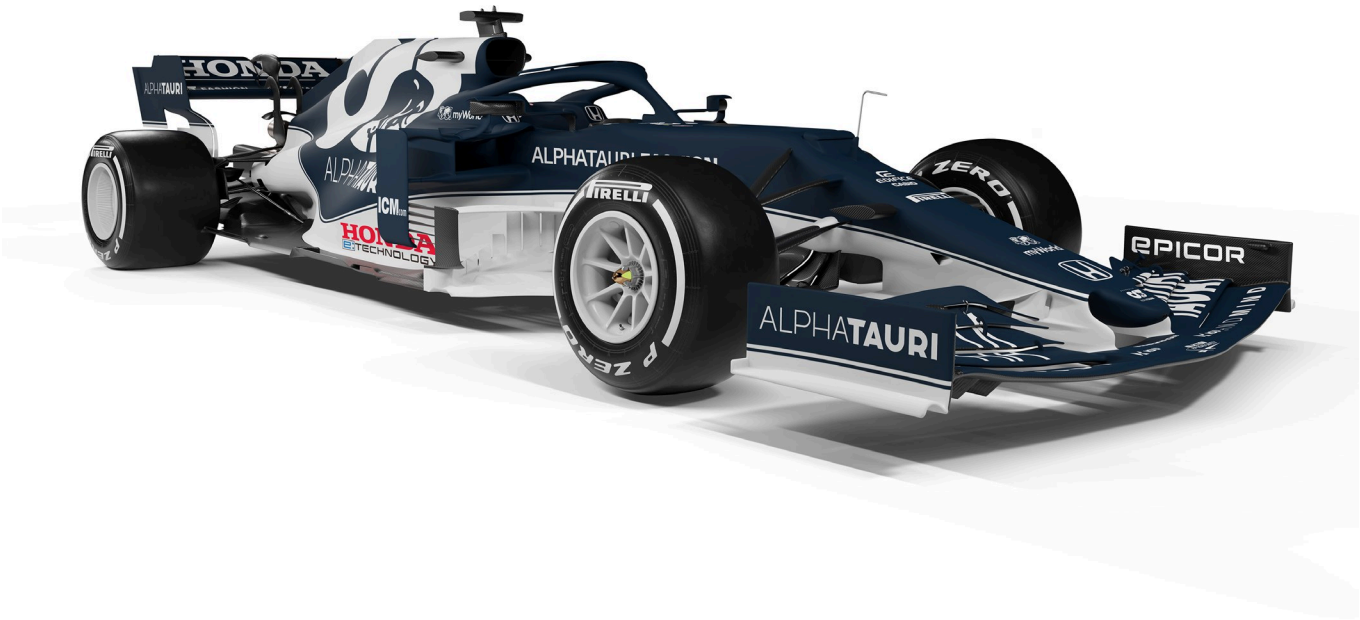
Industry-wide, I think we need to need to acknowledge the need for conscious change when it comes to both women in leadership and wider diversity and inclusion issues. We need to constantly challenge ourselves to lay the groundwork for people to prosper socially, economically, culturally and politically.

Nicky Tozer is Oracle NetSuite's Senior EMEA Vice President. In this role, Nicky is responsible for drivingsales strategy and operations, and building and leading a world class organisation across the entire EMEA region, taking Oracle NetSuite's strong footprint in the region to another level. Prior to this role, Nicky led Oracle NetSuite in Northern Europe, establishing NetSuite's presence across Benelux and the Nordics, in addition to leading the UK. Nicky is no stranger to Oracle, as prior to joining NetSuite, she spent 5 years working within the Oracle Applications business within the Manufacturing, Retail and Distribution industry vertical. With over 20 years of experience in the IT industry, Nicky has worked across a number of disciplines in the field of ERP, CRM, EPM and Business Intelligence. Nicky holds two degrees in the fields of Management Science and Psychology.

About Oracle NetSuite

For more than 20 years, Oracle NetSuite has helped organizations grow, scale and adapt to change. NetSuite provides an integrated system that includes financials / Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), inventory management, HR, professional services automation and omnichannel commerce, used by more than 27,000 customers in 215 countries and dependent territories.

Learn more at https://www.netsuite.com. Like us on Facebook, and follow us on LinkedIn, Instagram, and Twitter.



EPICOR GIVES SCUDERIA ALPHATAURI A COMPETITIVE EDGE

Epicor is the data management engine at the heart of the Formula 1 team's ability to streamline production, correlate components with telemetry data, and maximise vehicle performance. Epicor logo to debut on Scuderia AlphaTauri cars at the Formula 1 Aramco United States Grand Prix in Austin, Texas

Epicor, a global leader of industry-specific enterprise software to promote business growth, and Scuderia AlphaTauri today announced that Epicor has been named the Team's Official ERP Partner. The multi-year agreement builds on an already successful long-term technology relationship and solidifies Epicor as the powerful driver behind Scuderia AlphaTauri's operations, enabling the team to focus on continuous performance improvements, both on and off the track.

"In our data-driven world, there is no offseason. The demand for high quality data and intelligence across every aspect of our business and racing operations is paramount." said Franz Tost, Team Principal of Scuderia AlphaTauri. "Epicor is at the center of everything we do, and this technology partnership makes perfect sense for us. We're able to quickly deliver the right information to the right people at the right time, which gives us a competitive edge. We are looking forward

> **"IN OUR DATA-DRIVEN WORLD, THERE IS NO OFFSEASON. THE DEMAND FOR HIGH QUALITY DATA AND INTELLIGENCE ACROSS EVERY ASPECT OF OUR BUSINESS AND RACING OPERATIONS IS PARAMOUNT.**

to go racing with Epicor for many years to come and achieve always greater results."
In a racing environment where success is measured in milliseconds, real-time performance data and attention to every detail is critical. The Epicor Kinetic industry productivity platform for manufacturers enables Scuderia AlphaTauri to centrally manage all processes and data across its operation, optimising every aspect of the team's production, inventory, component testing, and financials with greater speed, accuracy and organisational visibility.

"F1 demands a commitment to excellence, something in which the Epicor and Scuderia AlphaTauri teams align," said Paul Stoddart, Epicor CMO. "Epicor is excited to be an essential partner enabling the team's constant drive for performance, something we strive every day to deliver for all of the makers, movers and sellers we serve worldwide."

Just one racing car is made up of more than 14,000 precision components. Many of those parts are custom-made onsite by technical designers and engineers. Historically, managing production of each unique part, understanding lifespan, and ensuring the right parts were ready for race day proved challenging with older, siloed software systems and manual processes.

Today, with Kinetic, Scuderia AlphaTauri can automatically render an entire schematic structure of its racing cars and every part, all serial-tracked, and store a snapshot of that structure coded to a specific race. During component production, Kinetic automates the job creation process for each part, minimising data entry and speeding productivity. The team also has granular visibility into which machine, operator, and tools were used to manufacture each part, helping develop cost-analysis models that inform make-or-buy decisions, as well as quickly correcting any production issues before getting to the track.

During testing, Scuderia AlphaTauri overlays all telemetry data collected on the track from the more than 900 sensors onboard each racing car, providing a precise and accurate view into individual part performance, when each part is installed or replaced, and predictive analytics. The team can also automatically "unwind" the data to earlier snapshots of the car structure to pinpoint potential component issues and ensure a problem is not replicated.

The Epicor wordmark will debut on the AT02's front wing endplates at the upcoming Grand Prix in Austin, celebrating the beginning of a long brand and technology partnership with the ERP innovator.

For more detail on how Scuderia AlphaTauri benefits with Epicor, please visit our website.

About Epicor

Epicor Software Corporation equips hard-working businesses with enterprise solutions that keep the world turning. For nearly 50 years, Epicor customers in the automotive, building supply, distribution, manufacturing, and retail industries have trusted Epicor to help them do business better. Innovative Epicor solution sets are carefully curated to fit customer needs and built to respond flexibly to their fast-changing reality. With deep industry knowledge and experience, Epicor accelerates every customer's ambitions, whether to grow and transform, or simply become more productive and effective. Visit www.epicor.com for more information.

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UNIT4

FUTURE-PROOF AND UNIFY YOUR BUSINESS

Interview with ***Claus Jepsen,***
Chief Technology Officer at Unit4

The past two years have harshly reminded businesses of the importance of digital transformation and mobile technologies have become an indispensable part of our lives. Claus Jepsen, Chief Technology Officer of Unit4 explained the steps companies can take for digital transformation during the pandemic and how implementing a mobile ERP solution will benefit your business. We also talked about what awaits us in the future of the ERP industry and the features that differentiate Unit4 from other ERP vendors.

Could you tell our readers about yourself and your role at Unit4?

I'm Claus Jepsen, Chief Technology Officer at Unit4. I have several decades of experience in the technology sector. At Unit4, I oversee the development of intelligent software for mid-market companies. I'm focused on building cloud-based, scalable solutions and bringing innovative technologies such as AI, chatbots, and predictive analytics to ERP.

The pandemic has resulted differently for every company and the move to digitalization has accelerated significantly in this era. What are the long-run effects of the pandemic on the digital strategies of the upper market and mid-market software companies?

The long-term effects of the pandemic on mid-market companies are around people-centric digital strategies and applications. When it comes to enterprise application strategy, it has been found that the top three priorities are now remote working, collaboration, and productivity.
While companies put significant focus on profit and productivity as they seek to sustain their business, the pandemic also shined a spotlight on the need to focus attention on their people. Shifting focus from profit to people can be done by digitalizing the workplace to make it people-centric and having systems in place that facilitate and unify these two essential pillars of a business.

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A KEY ELEMENT FOR SUCCESS IN A WORLD GOING THROUGH ACCELERATED DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IS TO HAVE A FLEXIBLE PLATFORM ON WHICH COMPANIES CAN BASE THEIR TRANSFORMATIONS.

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Claus Jepsen,
Chief Technology Officer at Unit4

What advantages does Unit4 provide to its customers in the age of COVID-19 where digital transformation is critical to the survival of businesses?

A key element for success in a world going through accelerated digital transformation is to have a flexible platform on which companies can base their transformations. Such a platform needs to be open, extensible, and flexible. Unit4 delivers the most modern and flexible enterprise application platform that through OpenAPI, extension technology together with low/no-code offerings allow companies to mold the solution to fit their specific needs, by breaking down the traditional barriers that exist in traditional enterprise software.

Many companies have not yet taken a step towards digital transformation. What are the first steps companies can take for digital transformation?

The purpose of a company's digital transformation is twofold: to future-proof and unify the business. Companies who digitalize their workplace are making it so their technologies allow them to meet the challenges that arise now and in the future while unifying the business around all data, processes, and people to facilitate communication and collaboration. Implementing integrated ERP is the first step companies can take for digital transformation, as it simplifies processes, is cost-effective and timely.

Mobile technologies have become an indispensable part of our lives. What are the reasons to go mobile with ERP?

There is a myriad of reasons to go mobile with ERP applications. Mobile ERP allows greater functionality by providing instant access to real-time business data and increased visibility overall. ERP applications provide a competitive vantage point by having up-to-date information that helps teams deepen business relationships and response times, making it easier and more convenient to enter relevant data accurately and retrieving information for faster and better decision-making. 6. What are the advantages of the Unit4 mobile apps? What are the features that differentiate Unit4 from other players in the market?

The mobile solutions within Unit4 Business World allow employees to free up time by using digital, modern, and more efficient solutions. These mobile solutions take care of the time-consuming and often frustrating administrative tasks so that employees can refocus their energy on more complex projects. Features include timesheets, expenses, and task approval processes.

What are your predictions for the ERP software industry in 2022?

In the coming year, ERP software will continue to evolve in many areas. First is extensibility and integration. I believe that ERP systems will become easily extensible platforms that match the business processes and integrate into other technologies without the need for coding.

We can also expect to see ERP implementation using pre-configured vertical-specific solutions. Like using templates in other areas of the business, this will allow for a quicker and easier process.

Finally, more and more companies will be moving to the cloud. With digital transformation moving at a rapid pace, an all-SaaS approach is likely for many organizations. While this may go beyond the 2022-time frame, all companies could eventually move entirely to subscription-based cloud solutions.

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> **THE PURPOSE OF A COMPANY'S DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IS TWOFOLD: TO FUTURE-PROOF AND UNIFY THE BUSINESS**

About Unit4

Unit4's next-generation enterprise solutions power many of the world's most people-centric mid-market organizations. Our state-of-the-art cloud platform, ERPx, brings together the capabilities of Financials, Procurement, Project Management, HR and FP&A onto a unified cloud platform that shares real-time information and is designed with a powerful, people-centric approach, so employees can benefit from better insight and become more effective and increasingly engaged. It supports rapid and continuous change while delivering individualized fit for customers at scale, delivering the right tools to unify the processes across their organization, and connect their people. Unit4 serves more than 6,000 customers globally including, Bravida, Havas, Migros Aare, Americares, Save the Children International, Action against Hunger, Metro Vancouver, Forest Research, Southampton City Council, Habitat for Humanity, Selkirk College, FTI Consulting, and Surrey County Council.

For more information please visit https://www.unit4.com/, follow us on Twitter @Unit4global, or visit our LinkedIn page

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Visit **https://www.unit4.com/experience4u** to register today.

UNIT4
In business for people

WHAT ARE THE FEATURES AND BENEFITS OF MOBILE ERP ?

The features and benefits of mobile ERP include:

1. Breaks information silos
2. Streamlines workflow
3. Top-notch security algorithms
4. Accurate reporting

Multi-Legislation
Multi-site
Multi-location
Multi-currency
Multi-lingual
User Security

Nishant Joshi,
Technical Writer, Sage Software Solutions Pvt Ltd

"WHAT ARE THE FEATURES AND BENEFITS OF MOBILE ERP ?"

Mobile ERP makes life easier for both your customers and your people. As our work lives change to incorporate working from anywhere, mobile ERP become a no-brainer. Improving customer experience, carrying out admin tasks, getting alerts and reports while away from the office, are all now essential. Smarter decisions on the go? Yes please.

Lucy Thorpe,
Head of Content, InCloud Solutions

INCLOUD SOLUTIONS

THE POWER OF MOBILE ERP

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

Create, access, and share business data in real time via mobile

Mobile is one of the primary means of communication in the business world. This was undoubtedly true before the pandemic but is more important than ever now that our options for working work outside the office have flourished. As the automation of business processes gains momentum this is only going to accelerate.

Huge volumes of data are being generated by intelligent, connected devices which is then brought into our business systems – we want access to that data in forms that are useful to us. When this kind of information is at our fingertips, we can make smart decisions wherever we are. Mobile ERP enable us to do that.

What is mobile ERP?

Mobile ERP gives you access to your business solution wherever you are, either as a dedicated mobile app or a standard mobile browser.

Companies that don't incorporate real-time data sharing and mobility will take longer to get things done than their competitors and their customers' experience will be diminished.

Mobile ERP solutions are making it possible to perform all

> **"**
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> **MOBILE ERP GIVES YOU ACCESS TO YOUR BUSINESS SOLUTION WHEREVER YOU ARE, EITHER AS A DEDICATED MOBILE APP OR A STANDARD MOBILE BROWSER.**

business functions while on-the-go, and are speeding up the process of automation, facilitating real-time communication and enhancing profitability and efficiency for businesses.

Mobility: from novelty to business standard

If you buy your groceries on your mobile, why shouldn't you carry out business tasks that way as well?

Up until recently, the office computer was the main way to access ERP functionality but with the move to the cloud there is no reason why you can't access your ERP system from anywhere with an internet connection. With 4G and even 5G that means mobile.

This new business standard is appealing to many different groups, from digital first millennials to people who need access to the latest information while on the road e.g. your sales team.

5 Benefits of Mobile ERP

Task complete

Tasks can be completed whenever is convenient. Anything from approving a requisition, reviewing financial statements, submitting a leave request, or planning a trip – can all be done via mobile ERP on the go.

Manage sales, improve customer service

A sales representative on the road with access to mobile ERP can become far more productive – they now have access to previous sales statistics, as well as information on the quickest route. Any information the customer might need as part of the sale is now available instantly and when the sale is closed the order can be placed immediately. With the order received in real-time the customer can even be offered a delivery date.

Efficiency increased

Cut down on time-wasting paperwork. Because transactions can be carried out on the spot in real-time via mobile ERP, there is no need to duplicate tasks by adding information into the system later. This cuts down on the number of data entry mistakes, saving money and time.

Informed decision-making from anywhere

The business information that flows into your system can now be delivered to you in the form of useful reports in real time. With the increase in hands-free bots you can even ask your smart speaker to go into your system and fetch them for you. The improvement in user friendly reports and even predictive analytics will set you on the road to making informed decisions quicker and from anywhere.

Competitive Advantage

The happiness of your people and the excellence of your customer experience are fast becoming the key indicators of a successful company. When your teams are more efficient working from anywhere and your customer service is elevated using the power of forward-thinking technology, you are tackling both these metrics head on.

This SAP video is a great introduction to the benefits of mobile for the intelligent enterprise of all sizes.

https://www.sap.com/assetdetail/2021/06/0a5b2c16-e47d-0010-bca6-c68f7e60039b.html

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

SAGE ANNOUNCES ACQUISITION OF GOPROPOSAL TO HELP ACCOUNTANTS ACCELERATE PRACTICE MANAGEMENT IN THE CLOUD

*Interview with **Derk Bleeker,***
Chief Strategy and Development Officer, Sage.

We talked with Derk Bleeker, Chief Strategy and Development Officer, Sage about the acquisition of GoProposal, a U.K.-based provider of proposal management software for small and mid-sized accountancy firms, and how this acquisition will help SMBs deliver on their digital transformation.

Could you tell our readers about yourself and your role at Sage?

I joined Sage 7 years ago and have held a number of strategic, financial, and commercial roles, culminating in joining the Sage Executive Committee (ExCo) about 18 months ago. As Chief Strategy and Development Officer, I lead across several disciplines, including corporate strategy, acquisitions, transformation, and planning. The simplest way to think about it is that I am responsible for the long-term transformation of Sage as a business – be that organically or inorganically – obviously in conjunction with the CEO and the rest of the ExCo.

While the world has been struggling with the crisis, businesses were also trying to ensure the continuity of their business processes. What benefits has Sage provided for its customers during this period?

We know our customers were hit by the pandemic and faced uncertainty, but they showed great resilience. In recent research, 60% of SMBs we spoke to shared that they have coped well with the barriers COVID-19 placed on them, making big changes to how their business operates. Sage builds solutions to help SMBs deliver on their digital transformation, elevating their work beyond the day-to-day and freeing them up to focus on their customers. Much of Sage's investment is going into solutions that remove friction from our customers' day-to-day life. GoProposal is a great example of a tool that does exactly this by enabling accountants to spend less time managing the paperwork, so they can spend more time with their customers. Other great examples include the AI-driven outlier detection and intelligent time capabilities we added to Sage Intacct during the pandemic.

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THE GOPROPOSAL ACQUISITION DEMONSTRATES SAGE’S COMMITMENT TO SUPPORTING ACCOUNTANCY PRACTICES THROUGH THIS DIGITALISATION JOURNEY, AS ACCOUNTANTS ARE A KEY BACKBONE OF THE SMB ECOSYSTEM AROUND THE WORLD.

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Derk Bleeker,
Chief Strategy and Development Officer,
Sage.

Sage has recently announced that it has acquired GoProposal, a UK-based provider of bid management software for small and medium-sized accounting firms and this has been Sage's fourth fintech investment in the last 12 months. What does this acquisition reflect about Sage's strategy of growth?

As noted above, this acquisition – and in fact, all the acquisitions Sage has been making recently – have been about accelerating our ability to help customers digitize and automate their business processes, so that they can "elevate their work" and give them the freedom to focus on what matters to them. We see acquisitions as a great way to accelerate, complementary to our own investments and growth, and absolutely expect to continue to add technology, capabilities and customers through acquisition over time – integrating these with our existing solutions to create value for customers. Finally, the GoProposal acquisition demonstrates Sage's commitment to supporting accountancy practices through this digitalisation journey, as accountants are a key backbone of the SMB ecosystem around the world.

SMBs were the most severely affected by the pandemic and accountancy practices are crucial for them to survive. How will the acquisition of GoProposal help Sage to support SMBs?

This acquisition sends a strong message to the accounting community that Sage is committed to building a portfolio of modern and forward-thinking practice management solutions in the cloud. For accountants, this is the opportunity to transform their practices and get them ready for the future - reviewing and re-engaging with the clients they support and emerging more productive and profitable than ever. Accountancy practices play a vital role in helping SMBs to thrive – and by supporting them in digitizing their practices, Sage can play a vital role in enabling them to focus on providing their SMB customers with great service and advice and to help them capitalize on the emerging opportunities as the world emerges from the global pandemic.

As the world emerges from the global pandemic, what advice would you give to businesses that have been strongly affected by the pandemic and yet not have taken any steps for healing the wounds?

My advice would be to use this moment to reset your strategy and future-proof your business model based on everything you learned over the last 18 months. The pandemic took us on a fast-forward journey to the future, but the underlying macro-trends it accelerated are not going to disappear, even if the pace of change might slow. So, it is critical that you set up your business to thrive under these new conditions, not just survive. Use people you trust and who know your business well, like your accountant or technology partner, to test your strategy and help you map out and deliver on your transformation journey, to ensure you are ready for whatever the future holds.

About Sage

Sage is the global market leader for technology that provides small and medium businesses with the visibility, flexibility and efficiency to manage finances, operations and people. With our partners, Sage is trusted by millions of customers worldwide to deliver the best cloud technology and support. Our years of experience mean that our colleagues and partners understand how to serve our customers and communities through the good, and more challenging times. We are here to help, with practical advice, solutions, expertise and insight.

SAP NAMED A LEADER IN 2021 GARTNER® MAGIC QUADRANT™ FOR PROCURE-TO-PAY SUITES FOR THE SIXTH TIME IN A ROW

SAP SE (NYSE: SAP) announced that independent analyst firm Gartner Inc. has positioned SAP as a Leader in its 2021 "Magic Quadrant for Procure-to-Pay Suites" report.* Gartner evaluated 12 vendors, and following an evaluation of SAP Ariba and SAP Fieldglass solutions named SAP a Leader based on its "Ability to Execute" and "Completeness of Vision."

This is the sixth consecutive time Gartner has named SAP a Leader in the Magic Quadrant for Procure-to-Pay Suites.

Gartner defines the procure-to-pay (P2P) suite market as "integrated solutions with automated workflows to request, procure, receive and pay for goods and services across an enterprise. These solutions are marketed as suitable for processing, at a basic level, all types of spending including indirect goods, direct goods and services. P2P suites optimize the purchasing process, resulting in improved financial controls, process compliance, cost savings (or cost avoidance) and mitigated risk."

"The tumultuous past few years have highlighted just how important procurement is to business health and resilience," said Etosha Thurman, chief marketing and solutions officer, Intelligent Spend and Business Network, SAP. "Gaining real-time visibility into all aspects of the supply chain — from trading partners' inventory and capacity to enterprise-wide spend — has proven crucial. With SAP solutions, our customers gain a holistic, unified view of all types of spend. We believe our Leader position in this report underscores our best-in-class solutions and continued innovation — particularly our improved buying experience and unmatched network vision."

SAP solutions rely on digital networks to create source to pay process efficiencies that improve procurement performance and drive business value. SAP Business Network brings together Ariba Network, SAP Logistics Business Network and SAP Asset Intelligence Network to help transform fragmented supply chains into unified, collaborative and intelligent networks. The network provides greater agility, visibility and collaboration between organizations and their trading partners. SAP also continues to invest in deeper integration between its intelligent spend management and enterprise resource planning solutions.

A complimentary copy of the Gartner report is available here.

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.

HOW TO SELECT AN ERP SOLUTION PART TWO - SOLUTION EVALUATION

Article By ***Chris Devault***
Director, Selection Consultants & Influencer Relations at QAD

Once you've set the foundation for selecting a new ERP solution and aligned a core team with a project manager to drive the process, the evaluation process can begin.

What's the first step? Do your research using every resource you can. Scour online industry journals and analyst information for possible ERP vendor candidates. Selection consultants can also be a great source of insight into the real-life track records of ERP companies. You can choose from selection consultant firms, consulting and CPA firms or process optimization consultants, depending on the complexity of your project. And industry peers may also have some recommendations based on recent implementations.

Which vendors to include and how many?

Each industry is unique and has a certain set of standard functional areas and requirements. Some vendors provide applications broadly designed to apply to all industries, with functional areas including manufacturing, distribution, professional services, retail, healthcare, education, hospitality, etc. Some vendors focus on only one or a subset of specific industries. There are only a few ERP and ERP-like applications in the marketspace designed for enterprise size organizations ($5B+) and a slightly larger group for large organizations ($750M - $5B), but options are still limited. Vendor options in the mid-market space ($50M - $750M) are more plentiful. For small organizations with conservative growth paths (<$50M), there are many options for ERP vendors.

To ensure the software you select covers both ends of the spectrum, I recommend that your organization looks at systems that are a bit larger and more complex than you think you need as well as at least two applications that are right in the wheelhouse for your organization's size. One of these wheelhouse options should be a low cost option. This ensures you're covering all bases and will instill some confidence when you start to second guess the vendors you bring in as finalists. It will happen.

Evaluation criteria

The user experience includes the user interface -- the design, look and feel. The application needs to be intuitive, and processes need to be swift and concise. Processes should not take six or seven screens and click-throughs to complete. Evaluate the software from an end user perspective under typical day-to-day scenarios. How many of these processes can be done with Robotic Process Automation (RPA)? RPA applications are not just for production floors, they can be leveraged in many accounts receivable and accounts payable

sub-processes and in the overall workflow. Even with unique needs for billings/collections or payments, many processes can be automated, reducing the human capital burden for that particular activity.

Basic vs. advanced functionality

Organizations often make the mistake of falling into the functionality trap of ERP vendors. These traps don't just include the bells and whistles. Vendors often oversell not only the current functionality of their solution, but also the functionality that will be available in the future.

Take Advanced Planning and Scheduling as an example. During the sales process, vendors often tout the ability of "what if" scenarios within their version of a graphical planning board. A fully functional graphical planning board with advanced planning and scheduling is one of the most powerful applications that a company can leverage for competitive advantage. The application takes in and analyzes data on inventory levels, locations and availability such as what supplier information is coming in and when; what if our number one customer demands we push up their order by a certain time; and what is on the production schedule for today, tomorrow and into the short-term future. When running end-to-end, Advanced Planning and Scheduling also takes employee HCM data into account, accessing PTO information such as which employees are trained and certified to run certain machines, along with who is willing to work overtime. Very rarely are these graphical planning boards fully implemented and leveraged, but as organizations take advantage of more functionality and build on customer demand and supplier information, they can grow into this type of functionally and it will provide a digital advantage.

Most organizations start with implementing some form of basic rough cut capacity planning. This is a series of reports and queries that help to establish a rough cut plan that then can be further manipulated by a scheduler, but does not provide the ability to conduct "what if" scenarios in as much detail or as efficiently as full AP and S applications.

Fully automated material requirements planning (MRP) is another place where vendors oversell. Most vendors highlight their automated MRP functionality in their demos. Of course, it is usually loaded with standard demo data and hosted in the cloud, and a slick demo resource can show multiple pre-loaded screens that present the output and MRP suggestions. When vendors are asked to run it live, the system can often produce errors and is slow in the cloud/demonstration database.
Organizations really need to see how they are actually going to be using the system in a phased approach. Typically a basic, out-of-the-box configuration enables more benefits than what is perceived by that organization.

Vendors should be able to show basic MRP, more like "PO lite". Realistically, a phase 1 implementation of full MRP is not automated, and purchasing is actually done with a series of data points around inventory stock levels, min/max/safety info, some basic supplier lead time and historical data and maybe some customer demand from finance. This is how the organization is actually going to leverage and purchase within the system. Of course, this is a simple example but warehouse locations, stocking methods and risk level are some other components that go into a centralized or decentralized purchasing approach.

The bottom line is that you need to see exactly how you will be using the software in most functional areas and for most daily activities. Vendors typically demo all the bells and whistles (which includes their full product suite) but they only scope out a fraction of that for an implementation. The result is often completely different from the buyer's expectations.

Other areas are critical to evaluate during this process as well including technology platforms with core and advanced apps, integrations, and the ability to quickly enhance the application without touching any actual code.

Most vendors have moved to a cloud-based, subscription model so organizations no longer need to update, maintain and manage the application in a server room at their facility. Whether it is a single tenant or multi-tenant model, let the vendor manage as much of their own application as possible.

Finally, don't underestimate an ERP vendor's ability to provide industry-specific best practices. A vendor's understanding of the unique elements of your industry and how they incorporate that knowledge into their ERP solution should carry weight in your decision.

Vendor viability

Much like finding a great partner in business, or top-notch employees who create a thriving culture, or the best equipment one can find at a good price, finding the right vendor that will support your business through good and bad and make it easy to invest in technology and services is critical.

Of course you want a vendor trending in all the right directions, measured by product roadmaps, R&D investment, market presence and performance and acquisition strategy, to mention a few. But you also want confidence that your organization will have a great experience with the chosen vendor. You don't want to be a vendor's largest customer; you want to be assured your vendor has already "been there, done that" and both experienced and solved any identified challenges. You also don't want to be the smallest organization in the clientele pool, which often means getting lost in the shuffle with corporate/executive sponsorship.
Make sure your organization's voice is heard. There should be some courtship in the sales cycles where management and executive teams from both sides meet and do a pow wow or two. Relationships from technology (support and development), services (consulting and training) and executive sponsorship, if nurtured properly, can thrive during implementation and beyond. If you are a mid-sized or large organization and aligned with the right vendor, a CEO from the client side should have access to the CEO and other C-level executives. It will be limited, but introductions can be made and the groups can be on one another's radar.

If critical business situations occur and issues escalate, access and familiarity with C-level resources is critical and can be a decisive factor in an ERP implementation or technology project.

> **"ORGANIZATIONS OFTEN MAKE THE MISTAKE OF FALLING INTO THE FUNCTIONALITY TRAP OF ERP VENDORS. THESE TRAPS DON'T JUST INCLUDE THE BELLS AND WHISTLES. VENDORS OFTEN OVERSELL NOT ONLY THE CURRENT FUNCTIONALITY OF THEIR SOLUTION, BUT ALSO THE FUNCTIONALITY THAT WILL BE AVAILABLE IN THE FUTURE.**

Choosing the correct vendor is a long and arduous process; often solutions that were not initially thought of as viable solutions come through and prove out to be the best option. Casting a wide net to include many vendors initially may cost a little extra in time and resources but will prove to benefit greatly down the road.

Come back next month for the third of this three part series on How to Select an ERP Solution, entitled Pre-Implementation Planning.

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.

BPA PLATFORM PROVIDES NEW REVENUE STREAM FOR SYSPRO PARTNER

Codeless Platforms is pleased to announce that it has added ROI Systems Group, Inc., a SYSPRO partner since 1998, to its partner programme. ROI Systems Group, which is based in Michigan, USA, will now be using BPA Platform to integrate SYSPRO with a wide variety of third-party applications, including CRM, eCommerce and EDI solutions.

"We had a customer that was looking to integrate SYSPRO with an eCommerce site that they had already established, but we could not help them out at that point. However, they discovered and introduced BPA Platform to us and that's when we started having conversations with Codeless Platforms," revealed Kevin Kent, President of ROI Systems Group, Inc.

"We've always had requests for integration, particularly for eCommerce sites that a customer may have already established or for a particular eCommerce platform, as well as older applications, so that area really piqued our interest. Once we started talking with Codeless Platforms and understanding the possibilities, we started looking at different projects that were available and realised it would be another revenue stream for us. BPA Platform is a nice bridge tool to be able to do more for our existing SYSPRO customers, and for new customers as well."

Since 1992, ROI Systems Group, Inc., has specialised in providing multi-user manufacturing, distribution and accounting systems solutions throughout the Midwest (USA). These systems include ERP software, Just-in-Time (JIT) supply chain management, bar coding, eCommerce, EDI and CRM.
"We've been a partner with SYSPRO for 23 years, selling into the manufacturing market throughout the Midwest, although we do have some customers in Mexico and California. We also do a great deal of development - SQL, C++, C# applications - so that's another pretty important arm of our business. Although we do a lot of custom applications, custom reports etc., they are pretty much built around the SYSPRO environment," explained Kevin Kent.

"There's a lot of very good speciality software tools out there that may not have integration into SYSPRO, such as CRM products, websites and other third-party applications, which we didn't have a solution for. Therefore, we basically had to either point customers in another direction or send them to people that might be able to help them. However, with BPA Platform, we now have a straightforward integration tool. My business partner, who manages more of the technical side, said he wished we had a product like this 20 years ago. It would have saved us a lot of time."

"Working with Codeless Platforms' consultancy team was very beneficial for us. We kind of came into this a little bit blind, never having really done an integration like this before, and in a short time they helped us a great deal, especially getting our technical team up to speed. We're a lot more prepared for the next project. The feedback from our team has been very positive; they are very pleased with BPA Platform."

About Codeless Platforms

Founded in 1999, Codeless Platforms is at the forefront of business process automation and rapid application development. We have a proven track record of developing and delivering agile, flexible and robust next generation software solutions, empowering businesses to get the most from their data as well as the ability to respond to the rapidly changing business demands of today. Our knowledge of the marketplace and channel has grown in line with this development and established us as a highly experienced and reputable software company, working closely with partners and software vendors, such as Access, Epicor, Infor, Microsoft, Sage, SAP and SYSPRO. With over 450 global partners, more than 8500 customers use Codeless Platforms' software solutions, ranging from diverse global organisations to the small local enterprise. The company is headquartered in Poole, UK, with representative offices throughout the world.

WHAT DOES IT REALLY MEAN TO AUTOMATE YOUR ACCOUNTS PAYABLE SYSTEM?

Article By ***Chenthil Eswaran*** *,*
Practice Head of Enterprise Business Applications,
Aspire Systems

The need for automating finance-related processes is yesterday's news. Today, most future-ready CFOs are already leading the charge on making workflows faster and more accurate. By unleashing the power of AI, automation, analytics, and blockchain technologies, they are able to build a unified and scalable data-led strategy that turns the finance function into a value creator, not just a cost-saver or cash flow manager.

Accounts payable – a sweet spot for automation

One of the sweetest spots of finance automation is the accounts payable process, considering that it is one of the most complex and laborious processes. There are also multiple touchpoints and a lot of paperwork, making it prone to constant errors and unexpected delays. Another deciding factor is that the accounts payable lifecycle requires a three-way matching workflow involving invoices, order receipts, and purchase orders. This ensures a failsafe approach to verification before any payment gets released. And if in case the matching criteria are not met – then, the invoice is put on hold.

For the past several years, the average enterprise's vendor ecosystem has expanded at an accelerated pace to adapt to market dynamics and deal with customer demands. Hence, without an automated accounts payable system, synchronizing crucial details like invoice numbers, order receipts, offers or discounts, and purchase orders can become an operational nightmare.

Challenges of using an outdated traditional system

- Resource draining and wastage due to data entry and verification – increasing pressure on IT, business, and finance teams
- Poor information visibility – causing late/duplicate payment issues or fraud instances and triggering financial/reputational risks
- Siloed reporting capabilities – auditing becomes more complex and time-consuming

Hence, instead of dealing with so many siloed and confusing workflows, automation is a no-brainer for those looking to future-proof their accounts payable processes. Now, assuming that you have an existing ERP system in place, a third-party cloud-hosted solution can be integrated into your legacy systems where all the data has been stored. But this does not really constitute "automation" - which we shall address towards the end. Otherwise, it would be best to go

cloud-first in order to take full advantage of all the solution's features and create end-to-end digital workflows – including payment gateways.

Three major components of an automated accounts payable system

Now, it's also important to understand what makes a futuristic accounts payable system tick because you would be exposed to the technologies that drive it. So, let's look at the three major components that make it a game-changer for enterprises.

Robotic Process Automation (RPA)

Leveraging RPA can lead to three significant savings –cost, effort, and time. For instance, it automates the process of raising requests for invoice approvals and matching them to respective purchases orders while ensuring that all the information gets captured in the accounting software. Using intelligent algorithms, RPA helps avoid mismatched invoices, eliminates siloed points of data ownership, and guarantees a significant increase in invoicing data accuracy. RPA can also be used to accelerate the execution of payment, which can be extremely vital, given that many vendors offer early-payment discounts that can be effortlessly availed.

Additionally, if you are going for a fully automated cloud-based accounts payable system, you can also enable an end-to-end procure-to-pay process.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The impact of AI on the accounts payable process is seemingly endless - depending on the capacity of your technology ecosystem for innovation. While it powers the engine that simplifies and accelerates critical tasks like expense report auditing, cash flow scheduling/maintaining/optimizing, and compliance/risk assessment, today, it has grown into a more strategic tool. For example, autonomous accounts payable systems provide deep-dive visibility that can make a huge difference to business-critical tasks like vendor management.

You can automate the vendor rating mechanism, which means that you can take informed decisions regarding selection, renewal, or renegotiation. AI empowers you to rate them based on quantifiable metrics rather than going by patterns that can be misleading.

Blockchain

Historically, accounts payable workflows have been person-dependent. Unless one gets their job done on time, the other will be unable to proceed – thereby triggering time lags, inaccurate information, and resource drainage. With blockchain technology, you can build a centralized digital repository of records that would otherwise be managed at multiple touchpoints by multiple resources. It allows for real-time processing and verification-based accessibility – making the overall accounts payable lifecycle more transparent and fraud-free.

Benefits of accounts payable automation

- Get equipped with interactive dashboards that simplify real-time data visualization for smart decision-making during escalations
- Enable time, cost, and effort savings by streamlining and boosting repetitive yet intertwined processes
- Increase overall data accuracy and hygiene to overcome erroneous/duplicate payments and improve fraud protection
- Ensure seamless auditing by storing and updating a comprehensive data trail without facing the risk of lost paperwork
- Capitalize upon early payment discounts from vendors by accelerating the speed of invoice routing and approval

Final thoughts

Anybody can tell you that automation is here to stay for finance teams to improve the way they work and manage key processes, such as accounts payable. But here's something that they usually do not tell you – just because you have outsourced this process to a cloud-based third-party solution provider does not mean that you have embraced automation!

The cold truth is that business outsourcing can be crippling to your enterprise's ability to innovate and remain adaptive. Plus, you have high licensing costs to worry about. However, if your automated accounts payable system has near-autonomous capabilities, you can easily set up and establish controls that are best suited for your enterprise. Since market dynamics continue to evolve rapidly, this could be invaluable to improve workplace collaboration, enhance workforce productivity, and deliver great end-user experiences.

Chenthil *leads go-to-market strategy , implementation , support for ERP,CRM,HCM at Aspire Systems. He joined Aspire in 2008 and is a Thought Leader in ERP,CX transformation. Has strong passion for AI.Prior to his current role, he held various ERP, CRM consulting,application development,application maintenance and managerial positions having overall 25 years experience. He also has experience in multiple ERP, CRM implementations across Australia, Middle East, Africa and North America.*

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OptiProERP MANUFACTURING

WHY YOUR MANUFACTURING BUSINESS NEEDS MOBILE ERP

*Article By **Allan Lessing** ,*
Director of Customer Solutions, OptiProERP

Smartphones and tablets are driving our behavior and daily tasks such as sending a payment, arranging transportation, making a dinner reservation, placing an online order, getting directions, and so much more. People perform tasks wherever they are today. It's convenience for which they are accustomed.

As businesses discover the benefits of having these same opportunities to increase convenience, productivity, and flexibility in the workplace, they are seeking out business systems, such as ERP systems, that are not only mobile-enabled but mobile-first in many aspects. Let's examine what mobile ERP is and how it helps manufacturers improve employee productivity, flexibility, and the customer experience.

What Is Mobile ERP?

Mobile ERP is an ERP solution designed for mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets. It maintains functionality and the user interface to be mobile-friendly and even optimized for mobile use. Ultimately, mobile ERP lets employees use the ERP system via smartphones, tablets, and laptops instead of having to be at their desk or workstation. It allows managers to stay informed, sales people to have access to customer information on the road, and service staff to view service history and more.

Mobile Makes Real-Time and On-Time Possible

As noted before, we are in an era of a mobile society that uses their phones and tablets for all types of tasks. That isn't about to change. Having the flexibility to transact business processes while on the move makes sense because it allows employees to do their work wherever they are locatedkeeping workflow in constant motion.

Mobile makes it easier to conduct key business processes. It improves productivity and increases efficiency. Let's take a look at how businesses can achieve more with a mobile-friendly ERP system.

Greater Productivity

With mobile ERP, sales and service staff can perform work and customer-facing functions on the road. Other employees can access critical information wherever they are as well so if they have an appointment, are traveling, or need to work

from home, they can still get to important operational data. Users of mobile ERP can enter data immediately, eliminating redundancy and improvingreal-time accuracy.This gives assurance to management that business intelligence, inventory counts, and financials are correct and up-to-date. For manufacturers, mobile ERP feeds data to production managers to help them do cost analysis, material planning, schedule tasks, and complete orders. With mobility, quality control uses its real-time metrics to determine and report the root causes of scrap and rework, and machine operators use real-time data to keep on top of machine and work center performance.

Shop floor employees can receive work orders on their mobile devices, issue materials at their fingertips, and report defects. Employees can log in and out of jobs and supervisors can monitor employee productivity and adjust schedules on their mobile devices. Real-time data alerts help staff to avoid bottlenecks and downtime. There is also access to forecasting to avoid material shortages, machine breakdowns, and other issues.

Mobile ERP minimizes paperwork on the shop floor and in the warehouse, where transactions such as inventory transfers, counts and inquiries to goods issues and receipts, picking and picklists, returns and receipts, timesheets, and more are handled. Warehouse staff can use mobile devices to locate items quickly and show different levels of inventory to include deadstock. They can scan barcodes to know which SKUs are on order, on the shelf, in another warehouse, or in transit. With mobile ERP the warehouse team can see sales orders on their devices to know what needs to be picked and they can choose from different algorithms for packing materials including zone, wave, and batch packing.

Smarter Decision-Making

Being able to have access to data at any time and from anywhere allows employees to make more informed and more timely decisions. They can look at information in-depth to determine what truly makes sense instead of having to base decisions on conversations with staff or from data that isn't up-to-date.

Mobile dashboard builders allow KPIs and other relevant information to be displayed on devices as needed to stay informed. Some mobile ERP applications allow such things as "drag and relate" analytics, interactive analysis with Excel, role-based and configurable widgets, and advanced cash flow forecasting to deliver reliable and aggregated data for smart and timely decisions.

Fast and Accurate Data Capture

Mobile ERP allows users to capture data immediately to avoid mistakes from having to manually reenter at a later time. This applies across the company with sales, service, warehouse, shop floor, and customer service. Being able to access data where needed quickens the collection and analysis process and increases efficiency.

Gathering and inputting critical data at the source provides real-time access to important information helping managers better schedule and streamline operational processes to reduce costs, improve productivity, and help the business grow.

For manufacturers, real-time data capture enabled by mobile ERP is critical. Acquiring data on the shop floor such as machine, resource, and labor utilization, non-conforming products, and machine breakdowns are not only key to seamless operations but also in determining more accurate costing, profitability, and productivity. Being able to access data that provides increased visibility, greater accuracy, and enhanced manufacturing and business performance, can be transformative.

Improved Workflow

With mobile ERP, staff can receive workflow alerts to learn when a task is waiting for approval so they can respond from their mobile device. No longer does a process have to wait for someone to return to the office to move forward. If a salesperson is with a customer, they can easily enter information and it will be updated across the company such as to customer service or the warehouse when an order is placed.

For manufacturers, using mobile ERP that is specific to manufacturing processes allows their staff to easily communicate and collaborate to understand what is happening on the shop floor, with inventory, and the supply chain for efficient and streamlined operations.For example,

> **MOBILE ERP MINIMIZES PAPERWORK ON THE SHOP FLOOR AND IN THE WAREHOUSE, WHERE TRANSACTIONS SUCH AS INVENTORY TRANSFERS, COUNTS AND INQUIRIES TO GOODS ISSUES AND RECEIPTS, PICKING AND PICKLISTS, RETURNS AND RECEIPTS, TIMESHEETS, AND MORE ARE HANDLED.**

mobile ERP allows your warehouse team to input barcodes and RFID to streamline packing and distribution. Mobile access enables staff to move quickly from one order to the next without having to move over to a workstation since their mobile device can automatically enter the data when an order is completed.

Enhanced Service

With mobile ERP, service reps have fast access to information such as customer history, order status, or warrantiestoprovide faster and better service. They can manage and resolve service tickets and view KPIs related to their performance. Service reps can use their mobile devices to take a photo to capture important details, scan a QR or barcode, find the customer's location on a map, and include attachments of important service call details.

Sales reps can ensure they have their customer's latest information when stopping by for a visit and they can perform tasks on-site to avoid errors and redundancies. They can create new sales opportunities, update the lead

status, view sales leads by industry or activity days, view KPIs like best selling items or top customers, etc. Some mobile applications allow reps to sort customers by order value, frequency, or account balance, create a new customer account,and attach a document or special pricing.

Competitive Advantage

Working on the move and capturing and accessing data wherever you keepoperations more fluid. Decision-makers have accurate information to make informed decisions quickly. Everything about mobile ERP allows a company to be more productive and effective – and more competitive.

Not Without Some Challenges

While mobile ERP has significant benefits, as with most everything, there are some challenges to consider. First off, when using a mobile ERP, you likely won't be able to run with the same operational procedures as before, especially if they are outdated,and IT will need to make adjustments to accommodate mobile access. With everyone having a different type of mobile device, you'll need to ensure that they can all work with the system. As the system is updated, it will also be necessary to make sure the mobile devices continue to be connected.

Security can play a role as cell phones can be stolen and data can be compromised. Phones can also get viruses just as computers do. If the internet goes down, there will not be access to data which will slow productivity. With employees using personal phones for company transactions, it can be difficult to manage who has access to those devices. And, since IT can't maintain employees' phones, it will be up to employees to keep them operational.

Mobile Is Now - And That's Not Changing

Even though some challenges need to be overcome, mobile ERP will continue to be the future of business as advantages outweigh the limitations. Greater visibility, enhanced performance, increased connectivity, and improved flexibility are all major benefits gained through a mobile ERP solution allowing companies to significantly improve the way they do business.

As the Director of Customer Solutions, Allan Lessing serves as OptiProERP's resident operational and business process advisor, ensuring that the global team from sales, implementation, and customer success, has a deep understanding of each customers' operations. Allan is also responsible for best practices to help customers optimize their business processes. Allan has more than 35 years of hands-on manufacturing operations and IT systems experience.

About OptiProERP

OptiProERP is an industry leading ERP solution for manufacturing and distribution. OptiProERP delivers best-in-class industry functionality embedded into SAP Business One, the market-leading business management platform for small and midsize enterprises. Customers gain an end-to-end business management solution, including financials, accounting, sales, CRM, and industry-specific functionality that fully leverages deep industry expertise of over 20 years dedicated to serving manufacturers and distributors.

OptiProERP is an eWorkplace Manufacturing solution. eWorkplace Manufacturing is SAP's strategic industry partner for manufacturing and distribution and its first OEM partner as part of SAP's global PartnerEdge Program. Serving manufacturers and distributors for over 20 years with OptiProERP and BatchMaster as its two ERP solutions, eWorkplace Manufacturing has gained the trust of over 3,000 customers globally.

PROPHIX BROADENS ITS REACH AND CAPABILITIES WITH THE ACQUISITION OF SIGMA CONSO

Prophix, a global leader in Corporate Performance Management (CPM) software, today announced the acquisition of Brussels, Belgium-based Sigma Conso, a CPM software and services provider with a recognized expertise in financial close management and financial planning and analysis.

Prophix has acquired Sigma Conso from Fortino Capital, a European B2B software investor. The acquisition will see Sigma Conso's technology being added, and eventually integrated, into the Prophix solution. Similarly, their employees will now become part of the Prophix organization.

As an innovative leader in cloud-based CPM, Prophix enables mid-market companies across multiple industries worldwide to improve their financial reporting capabilities, while also standardizing and streamlining the budgeting process to generate significant ROI through a faster time to close, reduction in budgeting errors and an ability to reforecast in a more agile way. Integrating Sigma Conso's financial close management tools with Prophix's cloud CPM software provides customers with more powerful and flexible consolidation and reporting capabilities that addresses even the most complex audit demands, while it also further strengthens Prophix's reach in key European and Asian markets.

"This partnership is a perfect example of the whole being greater than the sum of its parts," said Alok Ajmera, president and CEO of Prophix. "The addition of Sigma Conso's technology and resources strengthens Prophix's consolidations capabilities while also extending our global reach. Similarly, Sigma Conso joins Prophix's ranking as a leading cloud CPM software provider with more than 1700 active customers worldwide, industry-leading retention rates and best-in-class customer NPS."

Dominique Galloy, Sigma Conso CEO, said: "This is an exciting announcement for our team. Prophix and Sigma Conso are fully aligned in terms of our culture, customer focus and dedication to building world-class software. We really look forward to being a part of the Prophix family and see this as a tremendous opportunity."

Acquiring Sigma Conso is part of a broader strategy that began in January 2021 when Hg, a leading global software investor, took a majority ownership position in Prophix. By facilitating this transaction, Hg builds on its goal of accelerating and scaling Prophix's growth, while funding further development of its product capabilities. This deal between Prophix and Sigma Conso also reinforces Hg's focus on mission critical B2B software sitting at the intersection of Hg's experience in ERP and Tax & Accounting.

Louis Kinsella, Principal at Hg, added: "There has been a dramatic increase in the attention being paid to the CPM space over the past 12-24 months. This will only continue as companies and organizations realize the value these solutions bring to their financial operations. Consequently, this deal is very much in line with Hg's strategy of investing in high-quality businesses so that they can grow to reach their full potential. We are convinced that bringing on Sigma Conso as part of Prophix will achieve just that."

Filip Van Innis, Investment Director at Fortino Capital, said "By joining forces, both companies will become an even stronger contender in the "Office of the CFO" space. Sigma Conso's European and Asian footprint will extend Prophix's reach and allow the group to be operating in a truly global way. We are proud and grateful of our journey with Sigma Conso and have confidence in its next step, together with Prophix and Hg."

The specific terms of the transaction were not disclosed.

About Prophix

Your business is evolving. And the way you plan and report on your business should evolve too. Prophix helps mid-market companies achieve their goals more successfully with innovative, cloud-based Corporate Performance Management (CPM) software. With Prophix, finance leaders improve profitability and minimize risk by automating budgeting, forecasting, and reporting and puts the focus back on what matters most – uncovering business opportunities. Prophix supports your future with AI innovation that flexes to meet your strategic realities, today and tomorrow. Over 1,500 global companies rely on Prophix to transform the way they work. To learn more, visit Prophix.com.

rpi consultants

MOBILE ERP NOW AN EXPECTED NECESSITY

*Article By **Michael Grace***
Chief Unicorn Strategic Services / Tech Pro Unicorn

When was the last time you walked into a bank to ask a teller for your balance? Or the last time you had to rush back to your office for access to a computer to check your work email? Are you old enough to remember having to wait until you got home to watch the news? Likely, none of these examples accurately reflect how you currently conduct banking, check your email, or consume news. In today's world, nearly all of us leverage our mobile devices to conduct these tasks.

Our personal day-to-day experiences often set our expectations for how our work should look and feel. Job applicants in today's world expect to browse, apply, and communicate about jobs online and through convenient apps, but also expect to make use of apps and tools that make work easier once they are hired. There are a multitude of conveniences mobile tools offered in today's workforce, including the ability to run reports, perform inventories, send messages, perform transactions, and check balances, among many others. Access to these functionalities is now a commonplace workforce expectation.

Many ERP platforms have been developing mobile functionality for years, often starting from simple tasks such as basic employee self-service functionalities. Employees have long awaited mobile access to their information such as PTO balances, policies, and for simple tasks such as requesting time off. Over the years this functionality has evolved and is now much more robust. Performing a variety of HR functions via mobile application is now available for many, if not all employees. Employees rarely actually need to contact Human Resources or meet with anyone in person to change withholdings, perform open enrollment, or even to receive training. This has dramatically increased employee satisfaction while reducing labor costs associated with staffing an HR Service Center.

Mobile functionality is now also easily extended to people managers, allowing them to perform management functions such as compensation, reviews, and other tasks. These mobile capabilities satisfy the employee and manager alike, making their relationship much more amenable and accessible. The majority of mobile ERP platforms now offer an easy-to-use functionality that extends from an employee's initial application through the end of their tenure.

In addition to the above, reporting and notifications are also well-handled by mobile platforms, and are now part of the standard delivery package for most modern ERP platforms. What an amazing concept: to actually receive a notification in real-time, when something is relevant, as opposed to 30 days later at the end of the month when the information is no longer relevant to affecting change!

Modern leadership now requires fast and easy access to

information, and generally speaking, has no interest in paper reports piling up on their desks. Leaders now expect an ERP to deliver

information directly to their mobile devices and the manufacturers of these products have responded in kind. Most ERP platforms currently have a concept of personas or roles, and the types of information important for each. Built-in and standard functionalities for the roles of CIO, CEO, CFO should provide relevant reporting at the touch of a button.
We are also seeing developments in mobile functionality for supply chain and finance where it was previously limited to inventory, asset management, and (in a more limited capacity) accounts payable. Now, employees working in finance and supply chain are looking to join their colleagues and perform more functions via tablet or mobile phone. Being on the go and having the ability to check on a GL transaction can be valuable during a tight month end. Entire supply chain operations are now available on a mobile ERP platform, par balances, reorders, receiving all of this is being empowered by mobile ERP products.

The real challenge with mobile ERP functionality is how surrounding business processes must change to support and reflect it. For an organization to truly adopt a modern ERP that includes mobile tools, they must change their processes to maximize the value from these efficient new tools. I have seen business processes that do not include mobile functionality. Not because the tool they own didn't deliver it, but because they never adopted it, or changed the necessary processes and training to empower and enable people to use it successfully. Any modern-day ERP will include mobile capabilities and it is important that the organization wholeheartedly adopt these. Failures of today's ERPs can often be attributed directly back to leadership's failure to change business processes and correctly adopt and adapt to the functionality delivered within the software they purchased.

When companies search for differentiators in ERP solutions, mobile functionality is what they are looking for. If we expect mobile capabilities in our daily life with our bank, insurance, or even our thermostat, we must deliver the same functionality within our organizations. There have been mobile advances with FedEx, UPS and shipping companies, advances within how catering operates for the corporate world, now it is time to adopt mobile within our own corporate processes.

The ability to modernize how we interact with employees is one of the most exciting advancements mobile ERP has to offer. Historically, we interact with our employees at key points on their journeys, such as their hiring, benefit enrollment, and performance evaluations. What if we changed this by leveraging mobile ERP functionality? What if we used this new tool to not only deliver information to our employees but also to communicate with them?

Feeling heard, the ability to contribute, and a sense of speaking with and not being spoken to are critical for employee retention. Think of this in terms of listening to a podcast versus talking with a friend. The first is a one-way communication you hear but are possibly ambivalent about, and the other is a two-way interaction you are more involved and invested in. It is harder to leave a friendship than your favorite podcast. This same concept can be embedded into the latest mobile ERP applications: the ability to gather and converse with your workforce. Pulse and opinion surveys timed appropriately give employees a much-desired voice into how the company direction is set. It is proven to make a difference and move the retention needle in a positive direction.

Deploying mobile ERP features is no longer a pipedream to adopt in some distant future, as it is here now and will soon become a workforce expectation.

A lifelong obsession and a very distinctive hairstyle may have been an inspiration, but his unique insights, thoughtful analysis, and ability to predict the future of all things tech are the real reasons his clients call Michael Grace the Tech Pro Unicorn – and it's why RPI Consultants is proud to have him on our team.

Michael is a technology thought leader who speaks and writes about how organizations and even entire industries should transform the way they do business by leveraging innovative new technologies. He specializes in Digital Transformation, including Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), Enterprise Content Management (ECM), and Robotic Process Automation (RPA). Michael has deep experience in the Healthcare and Finance industries, including project work with Dignity Health, Cancer Treatment Centers of America, Phoenix Children's Hospital, Deloitte, and The Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco.

About RPI Consultants

RPI Consultants was founded in 1999 to help organizations better leverage enterprise technology and software applications to streamline and automate business processes and increase operational efficiency. Today, we're basically doing the exact same thing but with a whole lot more experience, decades of lessons learned, and a bigger team of industry thought leaders and technology experts.

Our primary areas of focus surround the Infor CloudSuite, Kofax Intelligent Automation, and Hyland product and solution suites. We have also exploited our deep industry and product knowledge to develop the Yoga Flexible Software platform, a collection of widgets, tools, and software to help fill the gaps between enterprise technology and real-world business requirements.

Our competencies have grown into dedicated practices, and our practices have evolved to become recognized leaders in their respective industries and functional areas. Our foundational market strategy is simply to establish long-term relationships with good customers to be the best implementation and consulting partner possible. We treat your business as if it were our own, because it is.

THE POWER OF MOBILE ERP

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

Mobile ERP systems are the most in-demand business management software solutions in the market today because of various reasons. Firstly, they allow business stakeholders to access critical business information from anywhere.
Secondly, they streamline the workflow of different business departments allowing them to work in close collaboration.
Moreover, they have advanced security algorithms that safeguard crucial data from getting hacked, stolen, corrupted, or manipulated.
This article will shed light on various benefits of a mobile ERP and how it's helping companies across several industries to maximize their productivity and profits.

1. Breaks information silos

Information silos are one of the biggest roadblocks in the smooth functioning of a company because they limit the movement of data between different departments. The following example explains this in greater detail. Suppose the customer service team collects numerous client reviews describing the merits and demerits of a company's product line. But the product development team never receives those feedbacks. In such a scenario, the latter will fail to incorporate new changes in the existing product line, resulting in a drop in sales.

On the other hand, a mobile ERP solution facilitates the free flow of essential business data between various departments. As a result, department A doesn't require permission to access important files and documents from department B. Hence, the work speed increases significantly and each department in a company works as a cohesive force.

2. Streamlines workflow

Think of the following scenarios:

The salesperson goes to meet the client for a product demonstration.
The salesperson needs to collect critical documents.
The salesperson requests the client to edit information.

The salesperson has to visit the client's place in all the three scenarios mentioned above. This way, they lose a lot of time and there is also substantial risk of misplacing or damaging the physical documents.

Mobile ERP allows salespeople to collect digital copies of essential documents through their smartphones. Therefore, sales reps can collect, store, and edit documents from their workplace.

3. Top-notch security algorithms

A recent survey shows that cybercrimes have inflicted damages totaling USD 6 trillion in 2021. Moreover, this figure is expected to jump to USD 10.5 trillion by 2025, an increase of 15% each year.

Mobile ERP solutions have state-of-the-art security algorithms that protect critical business data from falling into the hands of hackers and market competitors. The best point is that only authorized stakeholders can access confidential data. So, important information is safely stored within the company's data repositories and cannot be hacked, stolen, manipulated, or corrupted.

4. Accurate reporting

Reports were created manually by data entry operators until a few years ago. Unfortunately, there were several disadvantages to this type of reporting, such as:

Introduction of human-induced errors.

Data leaks

Takes a lot of time generate reports

Thankfully, mobile ERP systems help generate valuable reports at lightning speed. Let's see them one by one.

a. Multi-Legislation: Suppose MNC X has subsidiaries in three different countries, namely A, B, and C. So, mobile ERP software generates reports based on taxation rules of their respective countries.

b. Multi-site: Suppose the company functioning in country A has multiple distribution services and manufacturing facilities. There can be two cases:

i. One to many: One manufacturing site sends products to multiple order fulfillment sites.

ii. Many to One: Many manufacturing sites send products to a centralized fulfillment site.

Mobile ERP creates integrated databases that can be accessed using identical login IDs, allowing users to generate reports for multiple sites using the same platform.

c. Multi-location: A company can have its offices located across several locations in a country. Office situated at location M can purchase from or sell goods to the office at location N. Mobile ERP software allows users to generate different reports for each location separately.

d. Multi-lingual: We live in a multicultural world where people speaking different languages work together. For example, a Chinese manager might be working for a company in Singapore. The multilingual feature of mobile ERP allows the Chinese manager to view, enter, and edit data in Chinese. On the other hand, an English-speaking employee can view the same data in English.

e. Multi-currency: Exchange rates change each day. These changes, however small, can have a massive impact on the final balance sheet. Therefore, mobile ERP software has a multi-currency feature that automatically converts costs from INR to USD (and various other currencies) and vice-versa.

The best part about mobile ERP is that companies can define various levels of user security. For example, the purchase manager can access only the purchase module of the ERP system. Similarly, the operations manager can access data related to only operations and nothing else.

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 Software Solutions

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CANIAS4.0 MEETS ALL SOFTWARE NEEDS

Could you tell our readers about your firm and your canias4.0 brand?

IAS Holding is a global technology firm that offers, with a single software, all the technologies required by companies in their Industry 4.0 journey. With more than 50 business partners, we offer our services in 31 other countries in 16 languages to more than 1000 customers and 30 thousand users around the world. We have a total of 14 offices in Germany, Turkey, India, the United Arab Emirates, South Korea, Switzerland and the USA and business partners in the four corners of the world to successfully carry out our operations in the global arena. Under canias4.0 Technologies trademark, we offer several innovative solutions particularly including IoT, big data, AI (artificial intelligence), cloud solutions, our own iasDB database, our business intelligence solution caniasIQ and e-government integrations as well as our corporate resource planning solution, caniasERP. Furthermore, we have our own software development platform, TROIA. As well as technological solutions, we offer consultancy and training services to respond to all the needs of our customers.

Companies Need Holistic Solutions
What Are Your Differences Over Your Competitors? Why do customers prefer Canias4.0 and which added values do you offer to your customers?

We provide companies with a holistic and integrated solution to meet all technology needs in their Industry 4.0 journey. As well as facilitating implementation and integration processes, we provide our customers with a great advantage in financial terms, too. This is the key point differing us from our competitors in the industry. Furthermore, we are all free to develop and improve our software development platform and TROIA, which we offer our customers an open-source code, our own database iasDB, user-friendly interface and new licensing model. We provide our customers with flexible and fully integrated software solutions. Thanks to the technologies we offer within canias4.0, our customers may find a solution to all the needs in their work processes. Canias4.0 also eliminates the need for third party software. In brief, canias4.0 technologies provide their customers with the advantages of freedom of movement, speed, flexibility, customizability, improvability and low-cost.

Could you tell us about your goals and investments?

Manufacturing companies make up the majority of our customers. We know the importance of production for them. In this field, it is vital to increase efficiency and to access true data in the shortest time. As IAS, we make improvements by analyzing the perspectives of our customers and taking their needs into consideration. We make a perfect analysis of the needs for companies to become successful in the global competition. So, we have gathered together and offered, under a single roof, all the solutions the companies need in their digital journeys. ERP software is not sufficient on its own anymore. They should be integrated with IoT software that directly works with production machines. We offer this to our customers. But we are still at the bottom of the ladder. In the upcoming days, we will make significant contributions to the work processes of our customers with our developments in artificial intelligence. We have focused our studies on this field, recently. In the meantime, we expand our global operations in a fast way. We have put a particular emphasis on our operations in the South Korean market. We are carrying out significant projects in this country with our business partner. Lithuania, Pakistan, Spain, and France are also among the countries of primary focus for us. We continue our innovative and operational investments without slowing down.

"WE PROVIDE COMPANIES WITH A HOLISTIC AND INTEGRATED SOLUTION TO MEET ALL TECHNOLOGY NEEDS IN THEIR INDUSTRY 4.0 JOURNEY. AS WELL AS FACILITATING IMPLEMENTATION AND INTEGRATION PROCESSES, WE PROVIDE OUR CUSTOMERS WITH A GREAT ADVANTAGE IN FINANCIAL TERMS, TOO.

SMEs Invest in the Future with canias4.0

What are the advantages that you offer to SMEs, what is the message you would like to give to SMEs?

SMEs need technology solutions that both comply with the current scales and are able to offer a flexible structure in line with the growth target. In this respect, our corporate resource planning solution caniasERP, is suitable for every company due to its scalable structure as well as its modular and flexible licensing model, allowing them to transfer their processes to the digital platform. Under canias4.0 Technologies trademark, we offer solutions like caniasERP, IoT, big data, cloud AI, iasDB, caniasIQ, web client and e-Government application integrations as well as consultancy and training services to meet all the needs of our customers. We support and guide companies in their digitalization processes with the help of our innovative products, user-friendly interface, web capabilities and mobile applications. The large-scaled functionality, full process integration and integrated structure of canias4.0 allows companies to monitor all their process on a single system without the need for third party software. In this way, SMEs find the opportunity to take firm steps toward growth while gaining efficiency and saving costs in today's competitive environment. Furthermore, as a visionary firm producing technology, IAS provides a technological infrastructure for all processes SMEs may require 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.

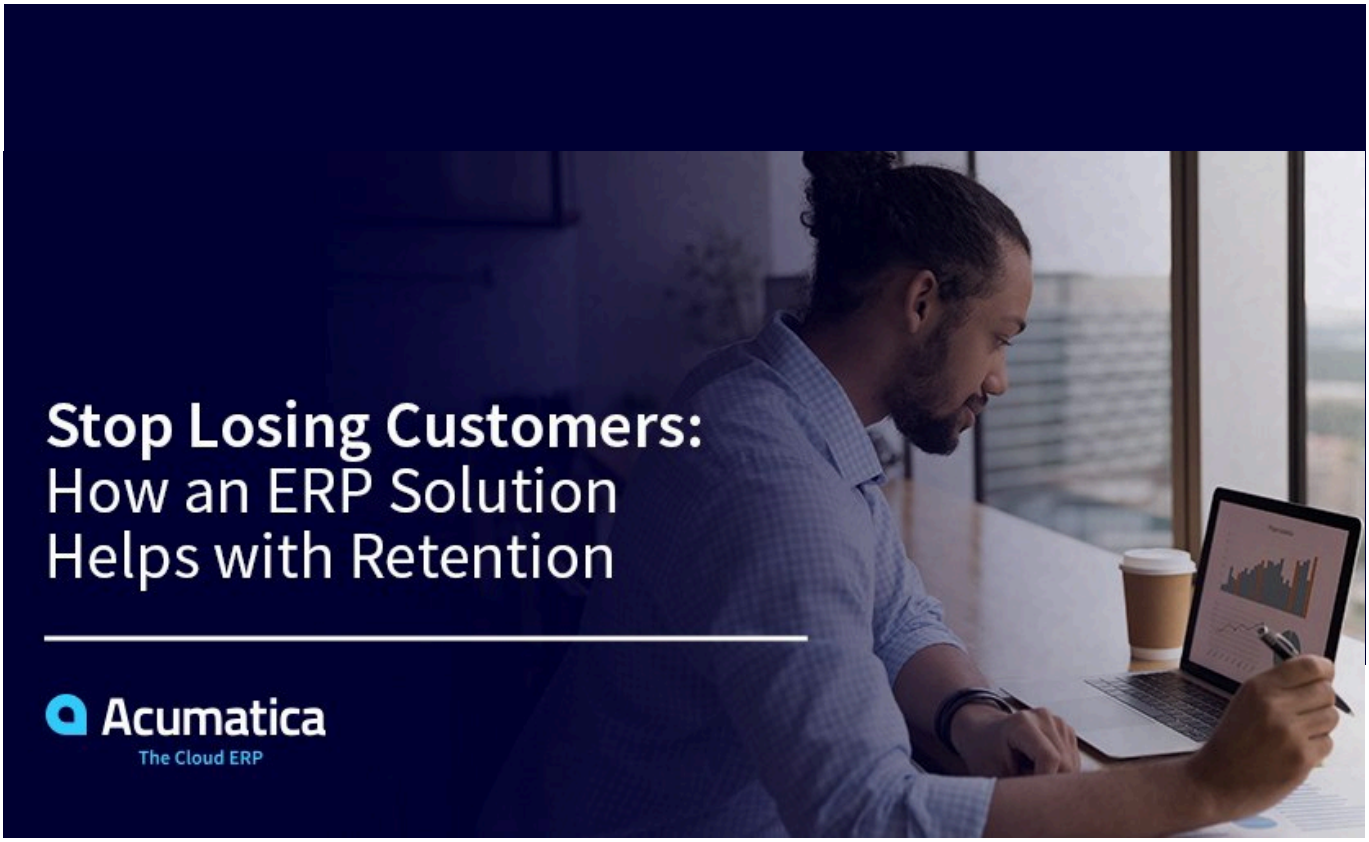
IAS, a global ERP company, catering to over 1000 companies with more than 30.000 concurrent users across diverse industries in more than 30 countries, its core competency has always been in being quality conscious and providing innovative solutions that can be delivered quickly and cost-effectively in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



Acumatica

STOP LOSING CUSTOMERS: HOW AN ERP SOLUTION HELPS WITH RETENTION

Article By ***Michael Augello*** *,*

How much easier is it to lose a customer than to find one? A lot. Vincent Lombardi, famous NFL football coach (not to mention a Pro Football Hall of Fame inductee and the person the NFL Super Bowl trophy is named after), said it best: "It takes months to find a customer...seconds to lose one."

He's right, and it boils down to customer retention. Any business in any industry that has customers should understand the value of their customers and the relationship they build with each one. If they don't, the competition, which sells virtually the same product or service, is ready to pounce.

This puts customers in the power position. It's up to businesses to persuade their customers to remain loyal to them, but how?

With a cloud ERP solution and an integrated CRM system, that's how.

CX: The importance of the customer experience
Before diving into how an integrated ERP CRM system helps with customer retention, let's look at an example of how a business interacts (or better yet, should interact) with their customers. We'll use a company that produces and sells fencing.

Depending on the type or types of fencing, the fence contractor may need materials like PVC, wood, or chain link. These materials are readily available, and the contractor can pick and choose which supplier it would like to do business with. The contractor checks out their options, Suppliers A and B. They ultimately decide to go with Supplier A and embark on their CX journey.

CX is short for customer experience. The customer experience encompasses every touchpoint the customer makes with a company, from the marketing that attracted them in the first place, to the sales manager who facilitated the sell, to the customer service they receive after making a purchase. It also encompasses every team member they encounter along the way.

If Supplier A understands the value of the fence contractor, they will understand how critical it is to develop a relationship with that customer. They will personalize their service to fit the customer's specific needs. But what happens if someone on Supplier A's team drops the ball? Perhaps the fence contractor was having a product quality and warranty issue, and no one on Supplier A's team was responding. Or perhaps the contractor needed to be updated on the ETA of a special-order item, and Supplier A didn't try to accommodate the request.

As Vincent Lombardi said, it doesn't take long to lose a customer—even a loyal one. The Fence Contractor's CX with Supplier A has now hit a major roadblock, and they know that Supplier B has the same products. They're willing to sever their ties with Supplier A and give Supplier B a chance.

What should Supplier A have done to retain this customer? They should have recognized that there were unresolved issues with this customer, and that every issue accumulates and helps form a negative overall opinion by the customer. Supplier A needed to review their customer data to be alerted that there were issues so they could react timely and

accordingly to keep the customer happy.

That's where the right customer relationship management tool comes into play.

Acumatica Cloud ERP and Acumatica CRM

CRM software withing a cloud ERP solution helps organizations manage leads, contacts, opportunities, and customer issues or support cases in a single, centralized solution. This means customer information is available, updated, and synchronized in one database. Users have a 360-degree-view into all customer records, written quotes, invoices, and more.

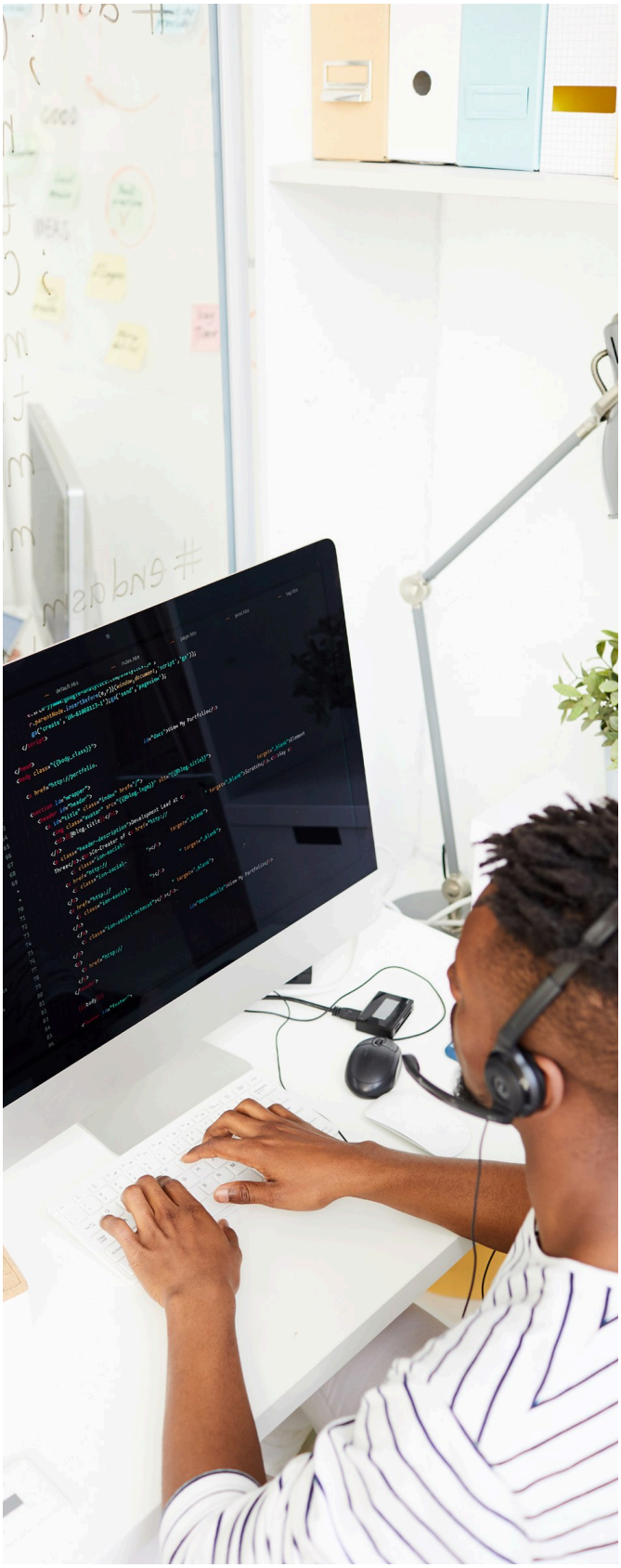
Having information at one's fingertips is a critical component for customer satisfaction and customer retention. If a customer has a problem, the case is recorded within the solution, and someone is assigned to help solve it. Being immediately alerted when problems arise with customer clears the road before it can become a block.

Essentially, "better data, better support" is what boosts customer satisfaction, something Acumatica Cloud ERP understands very well. Aliya Rakimgulova, Sr. Director, Global Technical Support at Acumatica says, "The right CRM software allows you not only to track necessary support metrics like customer satisfaction and service levels, but also to customize the metrics for your business needs. These metrics, based on what customers are reporting, provide powerful feedback and data on how you can enhance your product or service and create a customer roadmap to excellence."

Acumatica Cloud ERP provides CRM, Case Management, Order Management, and configurable business event functionality to help companies recognize customer issues early and from anywhere on any device. Combine these capabilities with flexible licensing and deployment options, pricing based on resources used (not the number of users), and seamless integrations with third-party applications and Acumatica is a wise choice for any business looking to retain customers and grow.

For over 20 years, i-Tech has been helping businesses use technology to get where they want to be. We are business consultants that happen to sell software, but we don't just sell software, we challenge every client with best business practices that will utilize the software to improve every aspect of their organization.

As an Acumatica Cloud ERP Gold Certified Partner, i-Tech is confident Acumatica, and their customer management software, can help your business achieve more. Acumatica's Doug Johnson, VP, Product Management, notes in The 4 'Must Haves' of the Right CRM, "Customers are the life blood of any business. It doesn't matter how good your product or service is, if you don't have customers, you don't have a business. Thus, attracting and keeping customers should be the top priority, and customer relationship management or CRM software is specifically designed with these objectives in mind."



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.

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DO YOU KNOW THE 3 PS DRIVING HEALTHCARE DIGITAL AND VIRTUAL TRANSFORMATION?

Despite decades of annual proclamations by gurus that this finally will be the year of a "tech-tonic" shift in healthcare to digital and virtual care and financing modalities, it has yet to happen.

That is, until now. Despite the most aggressive foot dragging by incumbent healthcare organizations, the three Ps—payment, platforming and personalization—will propel legacy care and financing modalities into the future.

Let's look at how each of the three Ps will accomplish this previously inconceivable objective.

Payment

In healthcare as with any business, there's an inextricable link between money and behavior. Behavior follows money, and money follows behavior.

Fee-for-service reimbursement models pay providers with little regard for cost or outcomes. It's why we as a nation pay more for healthcare than any other country yet don't see our investment manifest itself in superior clinical or population health outcomes.

But that is changing. A decade or more of experimentation with value-based reimbursement models has taught us a lot about what works and what doesn't work in terms of changing behaviors. Most VBR models to date are fee-for-service one-offs. They pay for volume and offer bonuses for hitting cost and quality targets. Others are voluntary rather than mandatory. The results have been mediocre at best.

The next generation of VBR models will offer two-sided risk—a bonus if you do well but a penalty if you don't. They'll be mandatory, not voluntary. Think full-risk bundled payments for episodic care and full-risk capitation for population health.

Such new VBR models will change behaviors to reduce costs and improve outcomes. Central to those twin goals will be digitization and virtualization. Time-saving and cost-cutting automation will replace time-consuming and cost-driving manual tasks. Virtual care options will expand access, increase use of preventative care and enable faster interventions to avoid more intensive and costly interventions later.

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THE NEXT GENERATION OF VBR MODELS WILL OFFER TWO-SIDED RISK—A BONUS IF YOU DO WELL BUT A PENALTY IF YOU DON'T. THEY'LL BE MANDATORY, NOT VOLUNTARY. THINK FULL-RISK BUNDLED PAYMENTS FOR EPISODIC CARE AND FULL-RISK CAPITATION FOR POPULATION HEALTH.

Platforming

Everyone has a platform just like everyone's technology is powered by artificial intelligence and everyone's care model is patient-centered. Overuse of the term platform has rendered it virtually meaningless.

It doesn't mean that all your propriety services to you customers are on a single server, IT system or cloud-based software program. That's integration. That's operations. That's cooking and serving all the food on your entire menu from the same kitchen.

Sticking with that restaurant analogy, true platforming is more like Uber Eats or DoorDash or Grubhub. You can order whatever you want from wherever you want from a single—wait for it—platform that can deliver it right to your door on time. Platform companies create value by seamlessly connecting what they offer to what their customers want on a unified system that engages customers on their terms.

For healthcare organizations, platforming means focusing on outputs based on what customers want instead of focusing on ownership and controlling production based on what the organization wants. That customer-driven pivot will force healthcare organizations to digitize and offer virtual care options that they may or may not own but subcontract for to make it available to their customers on their platform.

Personalization

We've all experienced the third P. You buy something online and then the next time you log on, you get a pop-up ad trying to sell you a related product or service. With every transaction, you leave behind a breadcrumb of who you are, what you want and how you behave.

Retail companies have figured that out. Healthcare companies? Not so much. But again, that's changing. Smart healthcare organization want to know who you are, what you want and how you behave. That's true from both a service perspective (do you prefer in-person or virtual visits?) and from a clinical perspective (do you buy fresh fruit or a lot of smoked meats?).

To capture that non-traditional patient information, healthcare organizations will need to elevate their digital and virtualization capabilities. They'll need to integrate it with existing IT systems like EHRs, patient accounting systems and customer relationship management tools. Like their retail counterparts, healthcare organizations will need to build complete, accurate pictures of each customer, patient or member to succeed in the new healthcare economy.

Unlike their counterparts in retail, though, smart healthcare organization will take personalization a step further via precision medicine. Advances in genetic and molecular diagnostic testing and treatment options will spawn individualized care plans for each patient.

Dig deeper and discover more about the impact of the 3 Ps and see what's driving this "tech-tonic" shift to make healthcare delivery more efficient, customized, and engaging - read the paper.

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.

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