ERP NEWS
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# Strategic ERP Innovation
## FOR THE INDUSTRIAL MID-MARKET

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# EDITOR'S NOTE

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the June edition of ERPNEWS! This month, our editorial focus is on a topic of paramount importance in the digital era: "Cybersecurity Challenges in ERP: Safeguarding Operations." As ERP systems become increasingly integral to business operations, they also become prime targets for cyber threats. In this issue, we delve into the evolving landscape of cybersecurity, exploring the challenges and strategies essential for fortifying ERP systems against sophisticated attacks.

The importance of robust cybersecurity measures cannot be overstated. With cyberattacks on the rise, it is crucial for organizations to ensure that their ERP systems are secure and resilient. Our articles this month cover a range of topics, from identifying emerging threats to implementing comprehensive security protocols that safeguard sensitive data and ensure the continuity of business operations.

In addition to our in-depth coverage of cybersecurity, we are excited to present an exclusive interview with Dean Forbes, CEO of Forterro. Dean provides a fascinating look into how Forterro has successfully integrated multiple acquisitions, focusing on the European industrial mid-market. He shares insights into the company's innovative approach to research and development, talent acquisition and retention, and the features that set Forterro's cloud solutions apart in the market.

Dean also touches on the critical role of cybersecurity within Forterro's offerings, particularly in protecting mid-market manufacturers from increasingly sophisticated cyber threats. His perspective adds valuable context to our editorial theme, highlighting the importance of cybersecurity in maintaining the integrity and functionality of ERP systems.

We hope this issue provides you with valuable knowledge and practical strategies to enhance your organization's cybersecurity posture. As always, we invite you to share your thoughts and contributions for future editions, helping us continue to bring you the most relevant and impactful content in the ERP world.

Thank you for your continued support and readership. Stay secure and informed!

Warm regards,

Pinar SENGUL, EDITOR

ERPNEWS

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# Strategic ERP Innovation for the Industrial Mid-Market

*In this exclusive interview, ERP News sits down with Dean Forbes, the dynamic CEO of Forterro, to delve into the company's remarkable journey of growth and innovation. Forterro, known for its strategic acquisitions and laser focus on the industrial mid-market, has successfully integrated multiple companies and technologies into its ecosystem. Dean Forbes shares invaluable insights into the key steps and considerations behind these successful acquisitions, the critical role of R&D in driving Forterro's market position, and the strategies employed to attract and retain top talent.*

As Forterro continues to expand its presence, Forbes discusses how the company maintains consistent quality of service across different regions, the significance of cybersecurity in their cloud solutions, and their unwavering commitment to customer satisfaction. Looking ahead, he offers a visionary perspective on the technological trends poised to influence the ERP sector and how Forterro is positioning itself to lead in this

*Interview with*
Dean Forbes
CEO, Forterro

FORTERRO

dynamic landscape. Additionally, Forbes touches on Forterro's dedication to sustainability, social responsibility, and the integration of customer feedback to enhance their products and services.

Join us as we explore the strategic mind behind Forterro's success and gain a deeper understanding of how they are transforming the ERP industry with innovation and excellence.

**1. Forterro has been successful in integrating multiple acquisitions. Can you walk us through the key steps and considerations in successfully merging different companies and technologies into the Forterro ecosystem?**

"Forterro has been built on acquisitions over its entire life, and through every one of our acquisitions, we've been super focused on, and obsessed with, the European industrial mid-market. This sector is vital to the global economy, and it is a privilege to serve it. It's what we like, know and are good at, so when we look for acquisitions, we look for organisations with a similar focus that will add to our overall proposition."

"Sometimes that can be in a particular geography in which we want to grow a presence, and at others, it can be a sub-vertical that we want to move into. An interesting and evolving area for us is horizontals that serve the industrial mid-market. An acquisition might not be ERP as such, but a horizontal application such as Product Lifecycle Management or Business Intelligence, anything that supports those industrial mid-market companies."

"A good example is our recent acquisition of German company, Prodaso. It's an innovative startup specialising in the interface between IoT and AI applications for manufacturing processes. For mid-market manufacturers, AI can be tricky to get to grips with. What role does it play? How should they leverage it? What value can it bring? That's where we can help, harnessing AI and incredible IoT capabilities to add value to our customers – Prodaso will be highly applicable to most of our 13,000+ customers."

"Beyond the technological fit, the most important thing is the culture and tone of the organisation. We like deeply specialised, highly innovative and focused applications. We would never acquire a more general provider and always target organisations that are similarly interested, obsessed, and expert in the industrial mid-market."

**2. Your R&D team plays a critical role in driving innovation at Forterro. Could you provide specific examples of recent innovations or products that have significantly impacted your market position?**

"R&D is intrinsic to what we do, and as a software company, there are several ways that we could approach this. Because we are so focused on the industrial mid-market, we choose to place great emphasis on customer product feedback. That's something I'm incredibly proud of because, despite our rapid growth, Forterro customers still have a very direct line and high-impact voice in the roadmap of our products. The primary driver of our roadmaps is still customer feedback boards."

"Whenever you see us investing in something, it's usually because customers have asked for it. The cloud is becoming an ever-greater focus for us, and we are looking at it less product by product and more at a Forterro level. This brings the weight and expertise of Forterro to a singular cloud for process. Rather than 15 products independently trying to chart their own journeys in the cloud, we can collectively move faster and innovate quicker."

**3. Employee acquisition and retention are major challenges in the tech industry. What strategies or programs has Forterro implemented to attract and retain top talent, and how do you measure their success?**

"It's undoubtedly a challenge for most of the industry, and to make Forterro attractive to prospective employees, we utilise our company structure. Because we have grown so much through acquisition across the past decade, our product teams are located regionally, but they are essentially now working for a major multinational company. This opens up a whole world of opportunity for them, to work across geographies, disciplines and teams, and this is hugely attractive to prospective employees."

"For example, if someone on one of our local product teams starts to evaluate their career aspirations and wants a change in role or location, we can do that. If somebody wants to move out of a French-specific role into an international role, our structure makes that a possibility. Since we have rebranded fully to Forterro we can balance the local customer

intimacy with the strength and reach of a multinational brand – that's something few others can match."

> "Forterro has been built on acquisitions over its entire life, and through every one of our acquisitions, we've been super focused on, and obsessed with, the European industrial mid-market."

"I often talk about our employees being the number one stakeholder community to satisfy. That's not always an easy message for shareholders! But I'm resolute because the only way to deliver great products and service to customers is with a happy, thriving, retained employee community. And the only way to deliver shareholder value is with a happy and retained customer community. If I don't do a good job for employees, everything else will fall away."

**4. The cloud is increasingly seen as the future of ERP. What specific features or capabilities of Forterro's cloud solutions do you believe set them apart from other cloud-based ERP offerings in the market?**

"It's difficult to speak to product specifics as we have many products. But like our on-premise solutions, all our cloud products are 100% focused on the industrial mid-market, and that unique focus and specialisation really does set us apart from more general solution providers."

> "Despite our rapid growth, Forterro customers still have a very direct line and high-impact voice in the roadmap of our products. The primary driver of our roadmaps is still customer feedback boards."

"At a Forterro level, one of the most important things in the cloud is cybersecurity. Our core market consists of organisations for which defending themselves against sophisticated cyberattacks is not first nature. That's an area where we can be incredibly helpful, providing that peace of mind that they are safe in the way that we build, architect, and deploy our cloud. Accenture has data that shows 43% of cyberattacks are aimed at mid-market businesses and only 14% are prepared to handle such attacks, so it's vitally important."

"When we move a mid-market manufacturer's ERP from on-premise into a very secure, well-architected and highly defensible cloud, we take much of that risk away. So, while features are important, security is becoming even more so, especially when cyberattacks are up 600% since 2020."

**5. Mid-market manufacturers and retailers have unique needs. Can you discuss how Forterro tailors its ERP solutions to address specific pain points in these industries, perhaps with some examples of client success stories?**

"The industrial mid-market is 100% of our focus, and we often say internally that there's no issue or pain point we haven't seen before. In addition to the deep customer listening I spoke about earlier, we are becoming better and better at sharing learnings across the company. Eight years ago, we were structured by product line, with minimal sharing going on. A big part of what we do now is through greater unification, sharing more internally and speeding up innovation."

"There are many examples, but a powerful recent one is Xtreme Motorsports, which manufactures high-quality Performance Car Upgrades for motorsport racing. After implementing Fortee, our new entry-level cloud-based ERP solution, the company overhauled its production. Xtreme had previously relied on traditional tools, such as spreadsheets and extensive paperwork, to manage the different stages of production. This was highly inefficient, leading to operational headaches and last-minute scrambles."

"The implementation of Fortee marked a huge shift for them. Fortee's ability to handle optimum batch sizes and streamline complex manufacturing stages, such as in CNC machining, drastically reduced Xtreme's time and resource wastage. This shift from smaller, inefficient batches to larger, more cost-effective ones has been transformative for staying competitive."

**6. As Forterro expands its market presence, how do you ensure that the quality of service and support remains consistent across different regions and customer segments?**

"Our customers score us at multiple levels – the quality of the interaction, the time to respond, was the final outcome resolved to their satisfaction. We also track our performance against contractual obligations, and there's a very high degree of performance measurement, and in many cases we also link compensation to that. We have never tried to second guess the score or outsmart it. If a customer says the interaction was substandard, then as far as we are concerned, it was. And we then do something about it."

"Our business success is based on keeping our customers happy and retaining them. Our retention rate objective clearly states the number of customers we need to retain in a year, and we measure ourselves against that and hold ourselves accountable."

"There's also been a transformation across the business, in terms of establishing and sharing best practice to ensure those levels remain high. We operate as a whole instead of as individual teams, providing better services all around."

> "Our structure allows us to offer employees opportunities to work across geographies, disciplines, and teams, making Forterro an attractive place to work. Our employees are the number one stakeholder community to satisfy."

**7. Looking ahead, what do you see as the most significant technological trends that will influence the ERP sector in the next five to ten years, and how is Forterro positioning itself to lead or adapt to these trends?**

"AI is an obvious place to start. That's AI in the context of how we use it ourselves to make the business more efficient and more able to deliver high-quality, high-impact services to our customers, as well as how we bring AI to add value to the applications our customers use. How do we help them improve? How do we help them see into the future? How do we help them become more profitable?" "But I think it goes beyond that. Business applications have, for decades, been heavily user-focused and UI-focused. With these modern 'monster UIs', if you're trained sufficiently, you can do anything and everything within the application. I think applications will go the other way and become heavily contextual and oriented to that moment. Users will be confronted with just a tiny set of choices because the application will understand that there are only a few options at this moment in the production cycle."

"This will involve removing a lot of the noise that application providers like us have been piling into our products, and we'll all have to recondition ourselves in how we use products and think in a very different way. It'll be the death of UI."

**8. Sustainability and social responsibility are becoming increasingly important in the corporate world. How does Forterro integrate these values into its operations and strategy, and what initiatives are you most proud of?**

"These issues should be a focus for any business in any industry. There's a generation of employees now that chooses who they work for based on the social values of the organisation as much as they do on benefits and remuneration.

It's also becoming a factor for customers, and I love how that's coming into the decision-making process."

"For us, as we move to the cloud, we know it can have a significant environmental footprint, in terms of the power it consumes and the impact that that can have on the environment. So, we're constantly looking at who we use as our cloud provider, where they are located and what obligations they place on themselves or we can place on them to ensure they are environmentally responsible. That's quite an undertaking for a company, but one we must take."

"We also currently have a huge focus on employee well-being. I'm very aware that as we continue to evolve into more remote working habits, employers must prioritise employee well-being. That's everything from how they physically conduct their work at home to how we set tasks and objectives for them. And the way that we check in to make sure that they're doing OK and being supported. We're investing a lot there and have just launched a custom-built employee well-being app, so we know how important this is."

"And something particularly close to my heart is women in leadership. Tech is notoriously poor for gender balance, especially in leadership roles. Forterro is slightly ahead of the industry in that respect, but we don't want to be slightly ahead. We want to be best in class, so we need to do more, and we want to do more."

**9. Customer feedback is crucial for continuous improvement. How does Forterro gather and incorporate feedback from its clients to enhance its products and services?**

"We base a lot of our product roadmap on customer feedback. That R&D from that really drives our competitive advantage. We run very focused customer-centric product boards, have several customer communities, and run feedback sessions, so we ensure there is always a way to give them that voice into our roadmap and service enhancement."

**10. Training and support are vital for the successful implementation of ERP systems. How does Forterro ensure that its clients receive the necessary training and ongoing support to maximise the benefits of their ERP investments?**

"People learn, consume, and retain information in very different ways, so we try to reflect that in how we approach training. We still offer traditional, classroom-based training, but COVID accelerated the move away from that and led to more remote digital training."

"Since then, we've cut our training into different components, which can be consumed in many ways, depending on preference. We use gamification of small components within an application, tutorial videos around feature clusters, and examinations that help reinforce learning. It's been a big area of investment for us to try and approach education in as many ways as possible."

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***About Dean Forbes***

*Dean Forbes joined Forterro as CEO in March 2021. He leads overall operations and go-to-market activities, and serves as head of the Forterro Executive Board.*

*Dean has enjoyed an extensive and successful career in executive and senior leadership roles for a number of international software companies. Prior to Forterro, he led the growth and expansion of CoreHR in Europe – with the organisation later acquired by The Access Group.*

*Earlier, he had been CEO of Paris-headquartered SaaS company KDS, where he steered growth and international expansion.*

*In 2020, Dean founded the Forbes Family Group (FFG), where he serves as Chairman – actively coaching and mentoring leaders within the firm's investment portfolio. He is an unwavering champion of social mobility initiatives, both as part of uncovering new investment opportunities for FFG, and through initiatives sponsored within the local communities.*

***About Forterro***

*Since it was founded in 2012, Forterro has grown to employ more than 1,600 employees who work from over 40 office locations around the world to support specialised software solutions and more than 13,000 small and midsize manufacturers. Headquartered in London, Forterro is a category leader in one of the largest and most steadily growing markets in software, with strongholds in each of Europe's top production economies, as well as regional service hubs and development centres around the world. Forterro is home to a diverse range of local and vertical industry software solutions - each one uniquely developed by the midmarket, for the midmarket. For more information, visit www.forterro.com.*

# Certinia Welcomes New Chief Product & Technology Officer Raju Malhotra

*We're excited to announce the newest addition to Certinia's leadership team: Raju Malhotra joins us as Chief Product & Technology Officer. With a proven track record of driving product strategy and delivering customer-centric solutions, Raju brings to Certinia a wealth of experience and expertise in product management and development honed through years of dedication and innovation in the tech industry.*

Raju's previous experience includes leading product and engineering teams for several high-growth publicly-listed and private companies. He joins us most recently from PAR Technology, a leading global provider of B2B SaaS solutions for the restaurant and retail industries, where he served as Chief Product & Technology Officer. Prior to this role, Raju was Senior Vice President and General Manager for Marketing Cloud at Salesforce where he led the development of the Customer Data Platform. He has also served as Chief Product & Technology Officer at a private equity portfolio company and held several leadership roles during his 12-year tenure at Microsoft.

At Certinia, Raju will play a pivotal role in shaping the future direction of our product portfolio, ensuring that we continue to deliver best-in-class solutions that meet the evolving needs of our customers.

We'd like to extend our deepest gratitude to Dan Brown, who will be departing Certinia. Dan's invaluable contributions to Certinia's journey and unwavering dedication to our customers have set a high standard for innovation and product excellence that will continue to guide Certinia in the years ahead.

As we embark on this next era for our product organization with Raju at the helm, we do so with confidence and excitement for the possibilities that lie ahead. Together, we look forward to building upon the strength of our product foundation, embracing new opportunities with technologies like AI, and continuing to deliver exceptional value for our customers.

certinia

*Press Release from Certinia*

# 5 Ways to Free Your Manufacturing from Inefficient and Outdated Processes

*Freedom is generally defined as the power or right to act, speak, or think as one wants without hindrance or restraint.*

The license to act as one pleases offers a host of benefits, but it can also produce consequences that limit your freedom. The same can be said of your manufacturing. The choices you make on people, machines, software, and technology come with both benefits and consequences.

In the manufacturing industry, one of the biggest constraints on freedom is getting stuck in yesterday – doing things the same way over and over because they have been successful in growing the business. However, success in the past does not guarantee continued success in the future, especially when new technologies, processes, markets, and customer needs can change seemingly overnight.

The best and most successful manufacturers are those who define freedom as the ability to change, adapt, and improve for the common goal of growing. They see it as imperative for keeping up with the evolving industry and ever-changing customer needs. During conversations with many of these manufacturers, five common themes

*Whitepaper by*
Adam Grabowski
Director, Global Shop Solutions

Global Shop SOLUTIONS

around developing and maintaining freedom were repeated.

***1.Provide a clear view of your manufacturing.***

In manufacturing, it's hard to manage what you can't see – which is what happens when working off paper documents and spreadsheets. Aside from the human error that plagues manual data tracking, paper documents and spreadsheets often get lost or misfiled and are almost immediately outdated. ERP consolidates all production data into one integrated digital system, providing complete control over how you track, measure, view, and analyze the information needed to operate a successful business.

With today's mobile technologies, ERP can provide access to the data you need, when you need it, from any device. When employees can access real-time data anywhere at any time, information sharing becomes a process improvement tool rather than a bottleneck. Shop floor personnel can do their jobs faster and with fewer mistakes, so you can get products out the door on time while eliminating sources of internal waste.

As production processes become more visible, management can make informed decisions based on accurate data rather than intuition or guesswork. ERP tools such as tailored key performance indicators (KPI), customizable Dashboards and visual web programs that display live data on the shop floor enable fast decision making on schedule changes, hot jobs, and other issues that demand immediate attention.

The efficiencies produced by having access to fully integrated data can be staggering. For example, it used to take Corsair Electrical Connectors, a producer of military, commercial, and aerospace aircraft connectors, 60 hours a week to create a voluminous report used to determine if the company had the materials on hand to start jobs. Now, their ERP system automatically calculates the materials on hand, determines which jobs need them, and correctly assigns them based on due dates – all within four hours.

***2. Improve your key metrics.***

Tracking and measuring key metrics is one of the most important processes in a manufacturing enterprise. It gives a clear picture of specific areas of the business as well as an overview of how the business is doing regarding goals and expectations, while providing information vital to identifying areas for improvement.

Without a fully integrated ERP system, capturing key metrics in a timely manner can be one of the most difficult processes. Using job costing as an example, let's take a look at how ERP can turn monitoring key metrics from a cumbersome undertaking into a precise, accurate task that provides reliable data as soon as a job is complete.

Few tasks are more important to get right than job costing. Without accurate numbers you can rely on, quoting and estimating often miss the mark, and determining the profitability of individual jobs becomes a hit-or-miss process. At the end of the year, you can get a rough idea of whether you made money, but the data doesn't say which products are turning a profit and which are losing money, or why.

ERP software enables manufacturers to track costs with remarkable precision, starting with clocking in and out of jobs correctly, validating the time collection, and issuing materials to the job all in real time. Shop floor personnel electronically log in and out of jobs, and the system automatically assigns the correct costs to their hours. Managers know exactly what each employee works on and how long it takes to complete a sequence. The system automatically assigns any time not logged into a job to indirect.

Precise job costing also makes estimating and quoting more accurate. Suppose you estimated $500 to produce a part, but it actually cost $750. Did raw materials cost more than expected? Did quality issues require rework? Was overtime needed to complete the job? All this information is instantly available in the ERP system for analysis. Furthermore, reviewing historical data for the part can indicate whether the discrepancy was a one-time anomaly or an ongoing trend that needs attention. When you collect labor, issue materials, and track costs with precision, you can estimate and quote with confidence.

> "Embrace the power of effectively monitoring key metrics."

Accurate job costing also has a beneficial impact on scheduling. When you know with certainty how many labor hours it takes to complete a job and how much capacity exists at each workcenter, you can schedule with greater precision. This, in turn, enables the setting of realistic due dates for on-time delivery every time.

These are the kind of results you can expect in every area of your business with ERP KPI software. With the data KPIs provide you can review monthly and quarterly key metric reports, analyze executive summaries that let you drill down into detailed data, and predict future actions and results. In the long run, KPIs encourage the development of a proactive decision-making culture where managers make evidence-based decisions that benefit your business.

***3. Generate better outcomes.***

ERP software can have different impacts depending on what your business is trying to accomplish. In general, manufacturing companies can expect the following outcomes:

- Move parts through the shop faster.
- Schedule and deliver on time.
- Get your quality right.
- Know your costs.
- Grow sales.
- Maintain accurate inventory.
- Control labor costs.
- Improve efficiency by going paperless.
- Integrate your technology and machines.
- Serve your customers faster and better.

ERP also helps improve your company's competitive position. Suppose you typically ship jobs in two weeks and a customer asks for a one-week turnaround. Most manufacturers would accept the job hoping they can meet the delivery date. This decision often results in working overtime, higher costs for expedited materials, late delivery, and losing money on the job.

ERP lets you know with certainty whether you can meet the deadline without disrupting other jobs in the process. It identifies all the steps you must complete to ship in one week, shows your available labor and resource capacity, and determines whether you have the materials on hand for the job. This changes your thinking from a delivery date mindset to an operations completion approach so you can make the right decision about whether to accept the job.

ERP also enables you to provide faster, more responsive customer service. When customers call in about the status of a job, the typical response sounds like, "Let me check on that and get back to you." With ERP, sales reps can instantly see the current status of the job and give customers an immediate answer. They can also check available capacity and materials on hand before agreeing to a requested due date. In today's world, quick responses and fast turnaround times produce happy customers. ERP makes both a way of life.

***4. Treat ERP as your most valuable asset.***

When used properly, ERP becomes the engine driving everything in your business. From quoting jobs and taking orders to shipping on time and receiving payment, ERP provides a solid foundation for building the infrastructure and shop floor processes that make manufacturing faster, easier, and more profitable. ERP often changes how manufacturers think about their businesses and opens the door to imagining what could be rather than getting stuck in what is now.

By providing accurate data in every area of the business, ERP also creates a culture of accountability. Machinists know when they're performing well and when they're not. Managers have the data to reward those who exceed expectations and hold coaching conversations with those who fall short. ERP also provides opportunities for employees to develop new skills and capabilities that boost their careers by adding more value to the business.

As manufacturing becomes more competitive around the globe, opportunities abound for manufacturers to bring work back home from areas with lower labor and production costs. Without ERP providing a detailed history of the products under consideration, such a move might be too risky. ERP provides the data needed to determine which opportunities you can take advantage of and which do not align with your current cost structure or strategic objectives.

***5. Build for today and tomorrow.***

In today's "we need it now" customer environment with jobs going out the door at a rapid pace, managers tend to focus on what needs to be done today. Yet, continuing advances in production tools and technologies, combined with the rapidly growing Artificial Intelligence (AI) or the Internet of Things (IoT), will cause the future of manufacturing to look very different than it does today. ERP helps you plan and prepare for the "new now" by providing detailed historical and current data to help analyze where your customers are heading, where your business needs to go to meet them, and what you will need to do to get there.

Today, ERP increasingly communicates with third-party IoT devices and software to expand your manufacturing capabilities. For example, nesting software interfaces can integrate the shop floor cutting process by allowing your ERP system and nesting software to share data with each other. The ERP system sends work orders, workcenter details, inventory data, and other information to the nesting software,

which uses the data to optimize material usage and cut patterns for individual sheets of material. The nesting software then sends cutlist details, material drops, scrap, and estimates for routing and work orders back to your ERP system – all in only a few minutes.

As AI technologies continue to make inroads into the manufacturing landscape, ERP software will play a critical role with integration into the way you do business. Modern manufacturers are already using AI to forecast demand for products based on historical data, market trends, and customer behavior. AI can also predict consumer demand for every SKU in the business by analyzing seasonality, pricing, promotions, and product lifecycles. It can combine supply, sales, finance, and marketing projections into a holistic view of demand across your entire enterprise.

ERP does a good job of organizing and distributing IoT data for analysis, but AI goes one step further by precisely identifying patterns and inconsistencies in real-time. AI algorithms process data from many different sources and present it in a consistent manner, making it easier to structure the data for analysis. AI speeds up real-time analytics by preparing, analyzing, and assessing data as soon as it is available.

The manufacturing industry is still in the early stages of determining how best to deploy AI in conjunction with ERP software, but it seems likely that AI-powered ERP will become the wave of the future. If your current ERP system doesn't free your manufacturing from inefficient, outdated processes, you either have the wrong ERP or you're not using it correctly.

***About Adam Grabowski***

*Adam Grabowski is the the Director of Marketing at Global Shop Solutions. He is responsible for translating the company's business objectives into successful brand, marketing, and communication strategies to drive awareness, revenue, and loyalty.*

***About Global Shop Solutions***

*Global Shop Solutions ERP software provides the applications needed to deliver a quality part on time every time from quote to cash and everything in between including shop management, scheduling, inventory, accounting, quality control, CRM and 25 more. Available in the cloud or on premise, our manufacturing customers benefit from real-time inventory accuracy, improved on-time delivery, lower administrative costs, increased sales and improved customer service. Headquarters in The Woodlands, Texas includes a state-of-the-art R&D facility and Global Shop Solutions training center. Through its offices in the U.S., Mexico, Indonesia, Singapore, Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom, the company supports thousands of manufacturing facilities in over 25 countries and more than 30 industries. For more information please visit globalshopsolutions.com.*

# Unleashing Growth Through Intelligent Orchestration

*As products and services proliferate and technology influences the way consumers make purchasing decisions, delivering a superior customer experience (CX) has become a critical lever for differentiation and profitable growth across industries, from retail and healthcare to telecommunications and banking.*

Forrester's CX Index™ shows that organizations can gain tens, if not hundreds, of millions of dollars in incremental revenue for every 1-point increase in their index. But creating exceptional CX is a pathway littered with obstacles, including skills gaps, misaligned organizational priorities, and the increasing speed of technological change. Exemplified most recently by the acceleration of generative AI.

*Article by*
Rob Vatter
Enterprise Platform Services, Cognizant

Cognizant commissioned a report by Forrester Consulting, to delve into the challenges and opportunities presented to deliver exceptional customer experience consistently.
The recent findings show that businesses' inability to overcome hurdles such as these have led to a marked decrease in customer satisfaction among US firms for two consecutive years, emphasizing a pressing need for a reboot of CX.

This is where intelligent orchestration comes into play – a powerful strategy that leverages technology, data, and AI to revolutionize the delivery of services and products.

> "Intelligent orchestration is not (just) a technology upgrade; it's a holistic business strategy that integrates enterprise processes, data, technology, and operations into a dynamic ecosystem to deliver the experience customers want."

**What is Intelligent Orchestration?**

Intelligent orchestration is not (just) a technology upgrade; it's a holistic business strategy that integrates enteprisie processes, data, technology, and operations into a dynamic ecosystem to deliver tge experience customers want. Think of intelligent orchestration like the conductor of an orchestra, but instead of music, it's harmonizing customer interactions.

Intelligent orchestration integrates the elements—processes, data, tech, and operations—into a seamless system that delivers personalized customer experiences efficiently and at scale. This approach not only meets customer needs but anticipates them, ensuring every interaction is as relevant and engaging as possible.

**Quantifiable Benefits and Strategic Insights**

The benefits of intelligent orchestration are both immediate and impactful. Forrester's study, which surveyed 769 decision-makers globally, highlights that companies with mature orchestration practices see over 20 percent higher trust and relevance in customer interactions compared to their peers. These leaders are also 35 percent more likely to report stronger outcomes in critical metrics like CSAT, NPS, and CES within the next year.

Yet, despite these advantages, many firms lag behind. More than 80 percent of surveyed decision-makers recognize the need for better alignment on CX priorities, but 52 percent do not feel that their firm can intuitively anticipate their customers' needs, and only one in four decision-makers strongly agree that their business is driven by a strategy focused on both CX and revenue growth. This misalignment, coupled with inadequate technological adoption and data integration, impedes firms' ability to deliver consistent and effective CX.

> "The benefits of intelligent orchestration are both immediate and impactful. Forrester's study highlights that companies with mature orchestration practices see over 20 percent higher trust and relevance in customer interactions compared to their peers."

**Getting to Exceptional**

The lack of progress towards holistic intelligent orchestration isn't hard to understand. This is a "whole of the enterprise" endeavor, requiring a broad scope of action and alignment across systems and stakeholders. For those business leaders responsible for addressing this challenge, the following steps represent a blueprint for mapping out and implementing enterprise-wide intelligent orchestration:

*Article by Rob Vatter*

***1. Investment in Core CX Enablers:***
To harness the full potential of intelligent orchestration, firms must balance investments in technology, data analytics, and operational efficiencies. Modernizing technology platforms, enhancing data practices to include real-time analytics, and automating operations are essential steps to build a responsive and adaptable CX framework.

***2. Organizational Alignment:***
Implementing intelligent orchestration requires a paradigm shift at all organizational levels. Businesses must ensure that their CX vision is clearly communicated and embraced across departments. This includes securing executive buy-in and fostering a culture that values customer-centric innovation.

***3. Embracing AI and Emerging Technologies:***
The rapid evolution of AI presents a unique opportunity for businesses to differentiate their CX offerings. Companies that integrate AI-driven insights and automation into their CX strategies can more effectively anticipate customer needs and deliver personalized experiences.

***4. Continuous Adaptation and Learning:***
The landscape of customer expectations and technological possibilities is ever-changing. Businesses must commit to ongoing learning and adaptation to stay ahead of trends and effectively utilize intelligent orchestration for sustained growth.

**What Exceptional Looks Like**

Achieving exceptional customer experience (CX) through intelligent orchestration is about executing a holistic strategy that encompasses every facet of the organization. High-maturity firms distinguish themselves by deploying specific practices across strategy, data, technology, and operations that not only enhance CX but ensure it is consistently exceptional.

> "Firms that fail to enhance their CX strategies risk not only stagnation but potential decline amidst rapidly advancing customer expectations and a fluid technological and competitive environment."

***Strategy:***
Leaders in CX don't just support customer experience initiatives as a side activity; they integrate them deeply into the business model. Their leadership consistently emphasizes that investments in CX yields tangible business impact. These firms utilize comprehensive performance metrics that span every level of the customer experience – from individual interactions to overall journey and perception. Furthermore, they are committed to fostering a culture of CX expertise, actively training and hiring skilled professionals and embedding them across departments to ensure that CX wisdom permeates the business.

***Data:***
At the core of exceptional CX lies a robust data strategy. Top-performing firms develop a 360-degree view of their customers, enabling not just comprehensive reporting and insights but also real-time optimization of customer interactions. They enhance their data capabilities by integrating real-time behavioral and sentiment analysis and leveraging both internal and external data sources, including second- and third-party data like social media interactions and website visits. Moreover, these leaders employ advanced analytics, including predictive models and machine learning (generative AI will play a key role here), to anticipate customer needs and tailor their strategies proactively.

***Technology:***
Tech underpins the ability of firms to deliver on their CX promise. High-maturity firms expand strategic vendor partnerships to fuel innovation and focus on technology solutions that go beyond data aggregation and enable data curation and activation. They also implement a fully rationalized suite of AI technologies that span automation, cognition, and learning, ensuring that their technological infrastructure supports dynamic, intelligent CX delivery.

***Operations:***
Operational excellence is crucial for seamless CX. High-maturity firms increase automation in CX processes and enhance support services to be more responsive and effective. They allow customers to fluidly move across channels and touchpoints

without redundancy, maintaining continuity and context throughout the customer journey. Additionally, these firms turn to CX partners to bolster organizational capabilities and embed AI in processes to make them more efficient and effective, thus continuously improving the speed and quality of customer interactions.

**Not an Option**

Embracing intelligent orchestration is no longer optional. It's imperative for businesses aiming to thrive in a competitive marketplace. Firms that fail to enhance their CX strategies risk not only stagnation but potential decline amidst rapidly advancing customer expectations and a fluid technological and competitive environment.

Intelligent orchestration represents a significant advancement in how businesses can strategically leverage people, processes and technology to meet modern customer demands. By integrating CX strategy, data, technology, and operations into a cohesive ecosystem, businesses can position themselves at the forefront of their respective industries, unlock future growth, build and maintain customer loyalty, and establish a formidable competitive edge.

***About Rob Vatter***

*Rob Vatter is EVP, Enterprise Platform Services at Cognizant. Rob leads the company's enterprise platforms and applications business. which helps enterprises orchestrate across their technology ecosystems to solve the underlying problems that impact business outcomes.*

*Article by Rob Vatter*

certinia

# New Global Service Dynamics 2024 report reveals biggest challenges and opportunities for PSOs

*Despite the massive opportunity presented by AI for the services industry, 54% of services leaders surveyed report that adapting to AI will be one of their biggest external challenges over the next year.*

That's just one of the big takeaways from our inaugural *Global Service Dynamics Report*, based on a survey conducted by market research firm Dimensional Research of over 1,000 professional services organization (PSO) leaders and executive decision-makers across key global markets.

*Article by*
Greg Smith
Head of Global Product and Solution Marketing, Certinia
certinia

The report provides insights into trends and opportunities observed by services leaders, with the primary goal of understanding the key external and internal challenges they will face over the next 12 months and the strategies they plan to employ to mitigate them.
The data reveals that while AI is perceived as a challenge, it's also an opportunity for PSOs to reach their business objectives and respond to the economic downturn.

PSOs can (and should!) be a profit center for businesses when managed efficiently. One avenue to drive that efficiency is the strategic deployment of AI to boost the capacity of teams — not replace them.

Below we dive deeper into some of the industry dynamics we discovered.

**The economy and AI are driving strategies for professional service organizations**

You read correctly; the state of the economy and AI are reported as services leaders' top two challenges facing their business — outranking competition and a tight market for skilled professional services labor.

Although economic uncertainty is beyond their control, businesses can build resilience by improving their work processes. To succeed, they must evaluate their AI maturity and equip themselves with the necessary skills, tools, and resources.

While AI is recognized as a threat, PSOs are also looking for ways to use AI as an advantage. When asked specifically how AI will help the professional services teams, the top answers were to increase efficiency (81%), improve service quality (69%), and increase profitability (66%).

**PSOs should have a seat at the table for corporate growth strategies**

As interest rates stay in flux and access to capital is constrained, increasing business profitability is vital. The report found efficiency and profits rank top of mind for 2024, and services teams are being used to grow revenue and help mitigate economic challenges.

Virtually every company (99%) expects their PSO to contribute significantly towards achieving its key business objectives. In fact, nearly two-thirds (63%) see their PSO teams as a profit center, earning these teams a seat at the table when charting corporate growth strategies.

PSOs also have a growth mindset. A majority (82%) of those surveyed increased their PSO team size in 2023, with even more companies (85%) planning to grow their teams in 2024.

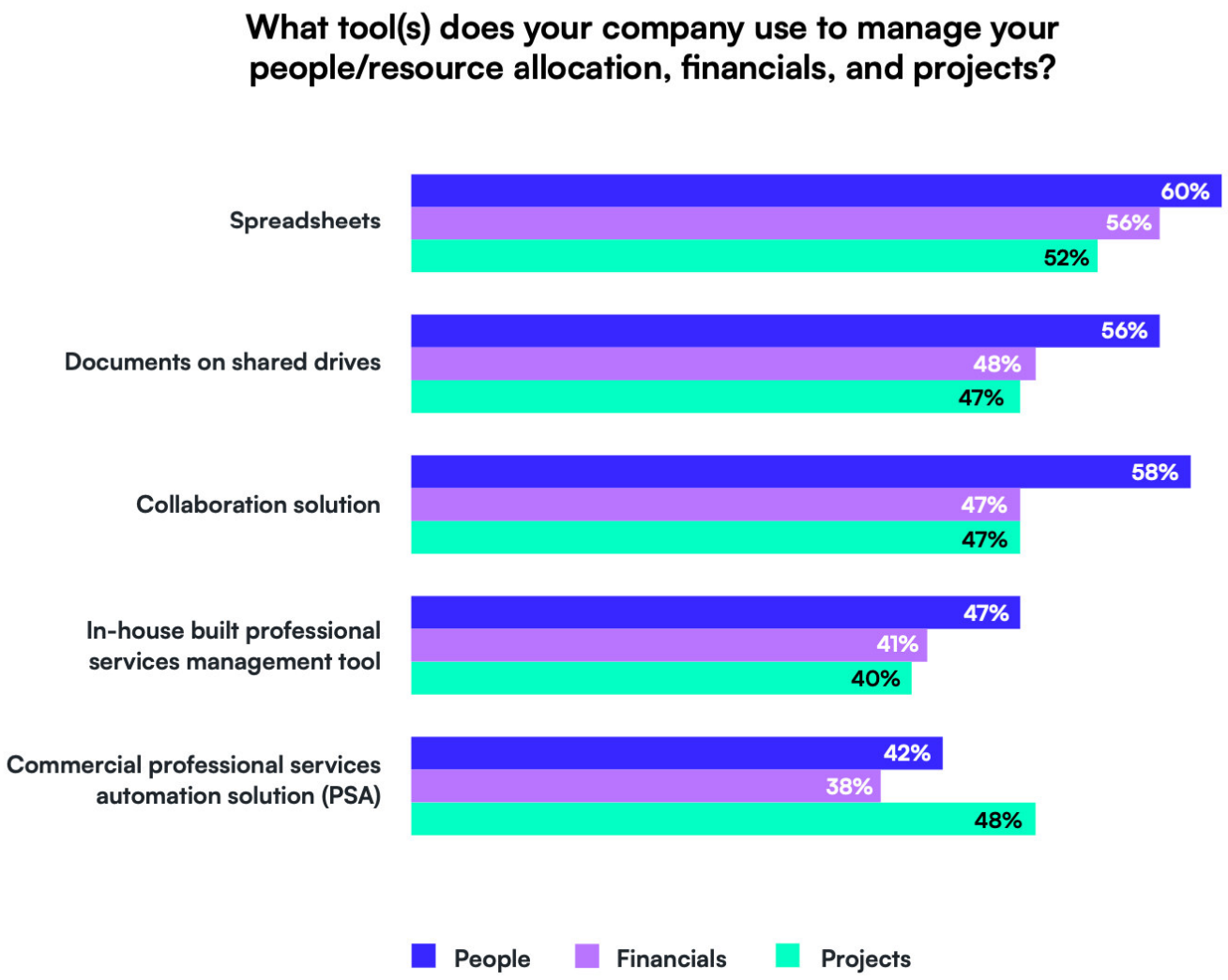
**Outdated internal procedures remain a major roadblock to efficiency**

The findings made one thing very clear – efficiency is top of mind for executives when measuring success. Yet, half of companies reported having a resource utilization rate of 66% or worse.

Highly effective teams that consistently drive profits often boast utilization rates exceeding 70%, while lower rates tend to correlate with either breaking even or delivering unprofitable results. So, where's the disconnect?

When asked what solutions were used to manage key elements of services delivery (people, projects, and profit) the dominant solution at every step of the services journey was… spreadsheets.

*Article by Greg Smith*




A reliance on disaggregated tools like spreadsheets and shared documents not only contributes to inefficiencies, but also offers limited visibility into team utilization rates.

This rings true in the data, as less than half of service organizations utilize a commercial Professional Services Automation (PSA) solution, despite the documented impacts such applications have on enhancing efficiency, profitability, workload balance, and overall employee and customer satisfaction.

AI is for efficiency, not replacement.

More than 80% of firms surveyed reported seeing AI as an avenue to increase efficiency, while less than one-third plan to use AI to reduce staff size. These organizations are focused on improving training programs, offering diverse project opportunities, and fostering avenues for personal and professional growth as a means of employee retention.

It becomes evident that harnessing AI's potential to enhance efficiency, rather than replace human teams, is key to success in the modern services economy.

Services teams positively impact business performance, as they can adapt quickly, provide needed skills throughout other areas of the organization, and influence customer satisfaction and growth. To achieve those objectives, PS leaders indicated they need to move away from an ad hoc tool approach and implement a dedicated professional service solution, and one that leverages AI for maximum returns. We're committed to partnering with PSOs everywhere as they embrace technology to propel their service operations forward. To view the full Global Service Dynamics 2024 report and its findings, visit *Certinia.com/Services-Report.*

# Hold The Phone! Someone Is Listening To Your SAP Conversations

*Enterprise applications help reduce complexity and enable large teams to collaborate, share information, and protect data. Applications like Adobe, Microsoft Dynamics, Oracle ERP Cloud, Salesforce, SAP, and Workday have become critical for efficient business and supply chain operations. These applications don't operate in silos and often share information. For this reason, it's crucial to safeguard data transfers with strong security and encryption methods.*

One of these juggernaut applications, SAP, is used by 99 of the Fortune 100 companies and has over *280 million Cloud subscribers worldwide*. However, SAP does not stand alone, and communication between this application and others is crucial; therefore, application access to SAP systems must be secured.

Without encryption of SAP data in transit, the so-called "Man-in-the-Middle" attacks can quickly occur, increasing the risk of unauthorized access and data breaches. According to the *National Institute of Standards Technology*(NIST), a Man-in-the-Middle attack is "an attack in which an attacker is positioned between two communicating parties to intercept and alter data traveling between them. In the authentication context, the attacker would be positioned between claimant and verifier, between registrant and CSP during enrollment, or between subscriber and CSP during authenticator binding."

*Article by*
Christoph Nagy
CEO, *SecurityBridge*

**Activating Built-in SAP Protocol Security**

SAP provides multiple interfaces to facilitate communication between different systems and applications. These interfaces include SOAP (Simple Object Access Protocol), File, OData (Open Data Protocol), REST (Representational State Transfer), IDOC (Intermediate Document), WebAPIs, FTP (File Transfer Protocol), and many others. Each interface serves specific purposes and caters to different integration scenarios within the SAP ecosystem.

> "Automation is one of the best ways to ensure SAP interfaces are secure. Static and dynamic testing for RFC, BAPI (Business Application Programming Interface), and web services interfaces is required."

In addition to the interfaces, two transport protocols, RFC (Remote Function Call) and HTTP (Hypertext Transfer Protocol, the open standard), are crucial for transferring data in SAP environments. RFC is the proprietary protocol between SAP systems, allowing uninterrupted data transfer and continuous functionality. Middleware solutions, like SAP PI/PO (Process Integration/ Process Orchestration), will enable non-SAP systems to access RFC.

HTTP is also widely used for web-based interfaces between SAP and non-SAP systems. It is a standard protocol for transmitting data over the Internet and allows different systems to work together. If REST, OData, WebAPIs, and other web-based protocols are used for SAP interfaces, the data transfer will depend on HTTP.

Ensuring the security of SAP interfaces is vital for protection. Therefore, secure encrypted protocols, such as HTTPS or SFTP, are wise when transmitting data between SAP and other systems or applications. In addition:

- Encrypted protocol authentication is needed; this is best achieved with secure login credentials, two-factor authentication, or other methods to ensure that the proper users access SAP interfaces.
- Role-based access controls will help keep integrity by creating an environment where users can only access the interfaces needed to perform their specific tasks.
- Logging user activity and monitoring for unusual or suspicious activity must be routine to identify and respond to potential system threats to SAP systems.
- Constant system monitoring and staying current with patches and updates is your edge for fixing known vulnerabilities.

**Monitoring and Protecting Data In Transit**

By contrast to encrypting data, transmitting information without protection makes it susceptible to interception by bad actors, and Man-in-the-Middle attacks become a significant threat. Simply put, encryption ensures that data transmitted between SAP systems and other endpoints remain unintelligible to unauthorized entities, making it imperative for safeguarding data integrity.

Automation is one of the best ways to ensure SAP interfaces are secure. Static and dynamic testing for RFC, BAPI (Business Application Programming Interface), and web services interfaces is required. Finding third-party applications that detect SQL injection, cross-site scripting (XSS), and insecure direct object references is often necessary to ensure full encryption for data in transit. The added layer of protection augments native security with applications and helps prevent attacks and exploitations by identifying these vulnerabilities.

In addition, some third-party security offerings use automated testing and include the following features that protect interfaces and keep the entire SAP system clean and secure:

- Runtime Security Monitoring - This allows tracking user activities in real-time and detecting suspicious behavior.
- SIEM Integration - Identifies potential security issues and ensures compliance with regulations and industry standards.
- Vulnerability Management - Helps identify and prioritize vulnerabilities, track remediation efforts, and ensure the SAP system remains secure over time.

**Making Sure No One Is Listening On The Other Line**

SAP comes with Secure Network Communications (SNC), but additional security software should be used to augment its shortcomings. It's all about protecting communication between the client and server components. Encryption is imperative for securing data in transit—without it, information can be obtained or changed by actors with bad intent. Protecting data within SAP's complex architecture ensures that information travels without interception.

Knowing all the potential attack vectors and the weaknesses of native security that come with ERP systems will help companies visualize the areas that need attention. The proper attention will come from third-party applications that bring encryption, automatic testing, authentication, monitoring, and patch management to ensure your organization's data is safe from interception and interference that could disrupt operations.

***About Christoph Nagy***

*Christoph Nagy has 20 years of working experience within the SAP industry. He has utilized this knowledge as a founding member and CEO at SecurityBridge–a global SAP security provider, serving many of the world's leading brands and now operating in the U.S. Through his efforts, the SecurityBridge Platform for SAP has become renowned as a strategic security solution for automated analysis of SAP security settings, and detection of cyber-attacks in real-time. Prior to SecurityBridge, Nagy applied his skills as a SAP technology consultant at Adidas and Audi.*

***About Security Bridge***

*Real-time Intrusion Detection and Vulnerability Monitoring for SAP® applications. SecurityBridge is the first and only holistic, natively integrated security platform, addressing all aspects needed to protect organizations running SAP from internal and external threats against their core business applications. SecurityBridge's unique approach to protecting SAP NetWeaver, ABAP, and S/4HANA platforms reveal exploits, and uncovers previously unknown vulnerabilities, directing and enabling remediation before any harm is done.*

*Article by Christoph Nagy*

# Navigating the Future: Lou Sassano on SYSPRO's Strategic Shift to Subscription Models

*In an exclusive interview with ERP News, Lou Sassano, VP of Channels for the Americas at SYSPRO, delves into the company's strategic transition from traditional licensing to subscription models.*

Sassano shares invaluable insights on managing this significant shift, highlighting the importance of a gradual transition, robust change management, and the critical role of customer relationships in a subscription-based ecosystem. He discusses the challenges and opportunities for Value-Added Resellers (VARs) in this evolving landscape, the necessity of continuous skill development, and the impact of hybrid ERP deployments. Sassano's expertise offers a comprehensive roadmap for navigating the future of ERP, emphasizing the importance of adaptability and customer-centric strategies in ensuring long-term success.

**1. Transition to Subscription Models: How is SYSPRO managing the transition from traditional licenses to subscription models? What strategies are proving most effective in mitigating the financial impacts of smaller, recurring deals versus large one-time payments?**

We invest significant resources into advising our partners on how they can adjust their business model and provide assistance to help them create a stronger, more profitable and ultimately, more valuable business. And there's not any magic trick to making this transition successful. It requires establishing and following a careful strategy of gradually moving from traditional licenses to a subscription model. We help our Partners understand and avoid the pitfalls of transitioning too quickly, but also the importance of ensuring their existing customer base is completely stable before embarking on a cloud-first strategy.

Funds need to be set aside to cover the transition, targets for both traditional and subscription licenses need to be set and adjusted over time, and a robust change management plan needs to be created and executed to equip everyone with the skills they need to adjust to this new model.

*Interview with*
Lou Sassano
VP of Channels, Americas,
for ERP vendor, SYSPRO

**2. Challenges for Value-Added Resellers (VARs): With the shift towards subscription-based models and hybrid deployments, what are the most significant challenges facing VARs? How should they adjust their business strategies to thrive in this changing landscape?**

A company can't just switch overnight from the traditional model of selling quarter-million dollar deals to closing $50,000 subscription-model deals. If a VAR tries to move too quickly to subscriptions, they'll feel significant financial pain. Over time, the subscription model provides more predictability, especially once the vendor achieves a critical mass of subscription customers, but the monthly or quarterly subscription fees will generally be a fraction of an up-front traditional license.

For starters, the business needs to learn how to win subscription deals, and, just as important, to incentivize salespeople to pursue subscription deals. Subscription deals must be at least as lucrative for the sales team as traditional licenses. For example, with subscription deals, retention is critically important. Therefore, compensation plans often include aspects that reward customer retention. Also, it's important to understand the market — make sure you're going after the right mix of companies to fit your strategy of transitioning gradually to subscription.

There are big advantages, though, once the transition has successfully taken place. Subscriptions provide a reliable, predictable revenue stream, which creates a stable foundation for future planning and growth. Customers don't change their ERP system without a great deal of consideration and planning, so that also provides the VAR with confidence that recurring subscription revenue isn't likely to fluctuate much.

> "It requires establishing and following a careful strategy of gradually moving from traditional licenses to a subscription model. We help our Partners understand and avoid the pitfalls of transitioning too quickly, but also the importance of ensuring their existing customer base is completely stable before embarking on a cloud-first strategy."

It's also much easier to value a company with a stable, predictable financial foundation than one whose revenue depends almost exclusively on that quarter's sales performance. And companies that are easier to value are also easier to sell. The owners of these VARS have much of their personal wealth tied up in the value of the business. And if they don't want to sell, there are plenty of advantages to merging with other channel players to gain expertise and economies of scale. Basically, the subscription model opens up more strategic paths for the business.

**3. Maintaining Customer Relationships: Under the subscription model, the importance of customer retention is more pronounced. Could you elaborate on how SYSPRO encourages its VARs to maintain and enhance customer relationships post-deployment?**

Absolutely. They can't simply move their focus to the next deal. Certainly, it's important to continue to build strong engagement with traditional license customers, but, as you note, it's even more vital to do so with customers on a subscription model. It's also important because upsells potentially become even more valuable in a subscription model because they increase the value of a recurring subscription over the lifetime of the customer. So, if your channel business has been mostly focused on winning business with a smaller emphasis on maintaining relationships over time, the organization needs to reallocate more resources towards marketing to current customers.

It's also important to note that marketing to and communicating with existing customers requires a different approach from the programs used to reach prospects. SYSPRO's campaigns-in-a-box and other marketing assets aren't just tailored to winning new business. We also help our partners market to their existing customers as well to maintain strong relationships through events, conferences, user groups, and training and education.

Vendors and VARs alike must focus on getting customers to adopt their solutions with high levels of engagement. After all,

engagement leads to customer satisfaction, which in turn leads to retention.

**4. Skill Development: As ERP systems integrate more deeply with cloud and SaaS technologies, what skills are becoming essential for VARs and consultants? How is SYSPRO supporting its partners in acquiring these skills?**

In an ongoing relationship, customers will want help with security, cloud management, complementary products and more. ERP VARs will need to ensure they have these skills — either by hiring new employees or upskilling existing personnel — and reorient operations to focus as much on retention as they do on winning new business. We can help our partners identify skills gaps and even assist them with recruiting employees who can fill them. Bottom line, in order for a VAR to become 'cloud-ready', they need to re-evaluate how they approach, sales, and technical roles to be better aligned with identifying, qualifying, closing and supporting cloud customers.

"A company can't just switch overnight from the traditional model of selling quarter-million dollar deals to closing $50,000 subscription-model deals. Over time, the subscription model provides more predictability, especially once the vendor achieves a critical mass of subscription customers."

**5. Hybrid Deployment Challenges: What are the specific challenges of hybrid ERP deployments? How does SYSPRO assist customers in managing the complexities of integrating SaaS elements with on-premises solutions?**

Hybrid environments are becoming more and more common, as certain functions and aspects of a deployment are simply better aligned to cloud, while others are more appropriately on-premises. However, this can add more complexity to the ERP deployment, and ERP is already fairly complex, as software deployments go. You've got two different environments – the cloud and on-premises — and they need to sync up while integrating with applications in both.

We've put a lot of resources into ensuring that our product is as simple to deploy and integrate with other systems and best-of-breed solutions as possible, which flattens the learning curve. But we also provide partners with technical training and resources to help ensure they can provide excellent service to customers with a hybrid solution.

**6. Future Pricing Models: How do you see ERP pricing models evolving over the next five years? What role will customer feedback and market trends play in shaping these models?**

It's clear that very soon — far sooner than five years from now – essentially all new ERP deployments will be a subscription model. Already, subscription deals take the lion's share of new deals. Certainly, there are still customers that prefer the traditional license model, but the advantages of a subscription model to customers are hard to ignore, especially since the model isn't limited to SaaS. In other words, companies who are entirely on-premises can still get regular updates and move spend from CapEx to OpEx.

**7. Impact on Implementation and Customization: With the move to SaaS and cloud-based services, how is the approach to ERP implementation and customization changing? What does this mean for traditional ERP consultancy practices?**

While I am certain that ERP pricing will move predominantly to a subscription-based model, I don't think it will move entirely to SaaS any time soon, for exactly the reasons you point out. ERP requires a great deal of customization, and many organizations find it easier to do this using a hybrid or on-premises model. In any case, ERP will need to integrate with many other systems even if it is a SaaS-based deployment – there will be plenty of work for ERP consultancies when it comes to ongoing customizations and integrations.

**8. Technological Innovations: What technological innovations are most significantly impacting ERP systems today? How is SYSPRO incorporating these innovations into its offerings?**

In the midmarket, manufacturers and distributors are just beginning to take advantage of advanced analytics, because only recently has it been embedded in the core ERP. We introduced embedded analytics last year, and the response has

been tremendous. Most of the relevant business data already lives in the ERP, and with an update that we released earlier this year, customers can easily bring in outside data sources.

SYSPRO ERP already takes advantage of predictive AI, especially when it comes to supply chain, equipment and inventory management. We use cognitive AI to automatically import and understand key documents, such as purchase orders and invoices. And, of course, we're actively developing generative AI capabilities. It's still very early, but it's clear that generative AI will have an enormous impact on the user experience with ERP. Users will be able to request information using natural language and get responses in any format they like. Just as valuable, AI will help customers not only understand what's happening in their manufacturing and distribution operations but will also anticipate and avoid problems before they even have a chance to impact the business. This is no longer science fiction.

"Upsells potentially become even more valuable in a subscription model because they increase the value of a recurring subscription over the lifetime of the customer. It's important to reallocate more resources towards marketing to current customers."

**9. Advice for New VARs: What advice would you give to new VARs entering the ERP market? What should they focus on to build a sustainable and profitable business?**

These days, specialization makes a huge difference. Determine what skills you have, decide what specialty to which you can apply them, and then double down. It could be industry expertise — maybe your company has expertise in the food manufacturing, fabricated metal or medical device industries. Or it could be technical expertise. If you've got specialized skills in generative AI, analytics or cloud, that'll definitely give you a leg up. Clearly, there is an advantage to having experience in software sales. Financial applications experience is also a common entry point into ERP.

Finally, make sure you work with a vendor who truly values and supports their partners. You need each other to survive and thrive, especially today.

**10. Customer Expectations: How have customer expectations changed with the shift to subscription models, and how should ERP vendors and VARs adjust their service offerings to meet these expectations?**

They'll expect a higher level of service, that's for certain, and when upgrades become available, their tolerance for inconvenience and hiccups will be far lower. VARs and ERPs will need to invest in keeping that ongoing relationship strong.

"ERP VARs will need to ensure they have these skills — either by hiring new employees or upskilling existing personnel — and reorient operations to focus as much on retention as they do on winning new business. We can help our partners identify skills gaps and even assist them with recruiting employees who can fill them."

***About SYSPRO***

*SYSPRO is a leading, global Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software provider specializing in key manufacturing and distribution industries. For over 40 years, SYSPRO's team of specialists have continued to address unique industry needs and enable customers to easily adapt and grow. The solution is scalable and can be deployed in the cloud, on-premise, or both, and accessed via the web on any device to provide customers with choice and flexibility. SYSPRO remains focused on the success of partners and customers. Our evolving solutions are aligned with industry trends to leverage emerging technology that will enable partners and customers in securing a digital future. With more than 15,000 licensed companies in over 60 countries across six continents –SYSPRO offers guidance and support every step of the way as a trusted advisor.*

# SecurityBridge Unveils Most Comprehensive Security Platform for SAP BTP on the Market

*SecurityBridge, a leading global provider of SAP security solutions, announced its groundbreaking SecurityBridge Platform for SAP BTP today. This innovative addition offers unparalleled security coverage for the SAP Business Technology Platform (BTP), setting a new standard for safeguarding enterprise SAP cloud environments.*

The SecurityBridge Platform for SAP BTP is designed to meet the rigorous demands of modern enterprises. It provides robust threat detection and compliance capabilities, ensuring organizations maintain the highest security standards as they transition to and operate within cloud environments.

**Key Features of SecurityBridge Platform for SAP BTP**

- Comprehensive Threat Detection: Monitors all relevant security logs for SAP BTP, including the Audit Log of Cloud Foundry and NEO environments, BTP Global Account events, and SAP Cloud Connector Audit Log.
- Enhanced Security & Compliance: Ensures external access is limited to trusted domains, enforces the principle of least privilege, removes obsolete users, and checks BTP account settings for optimal security configurations.
- Seamless Integration: Delivers a consistent security experience across both on-premises SAP environments and the cloud, enables seamless integration into IT Service Management, and ensures cloud connector updates and proper settings.

The SecurityBridge Platform for SAP BTP extends the same high on-prem S/4HANA system protection to the

new SAP BTP cloud environment to defend against the latest threats. Additionally, the platform offers an integrated user experience, delivering a unified security framework that spans all SAP environments, simplifying security management and enhancing overall protection.

"The SecurityBridge Platform for SAP BTP sets a new standard for comprehensive security in the SAP cloud environment," said Holger Hügel, Product Management Director, SecurityBridge. "Our platform addresses the critical needs of SAP customers, whether exploring SAP BTP as part of their cloud transformation strategy or enhancing collaboration with external business partners and supply chains. This new platform will provide the transparency and control needed to secure external access effectively."

As part of SecurityBridge's ongoing commitment to innovation, the company will add Code Vulnerability Analysis for ABAP development on SAP BTP by the end of 2024.

**Availability and Pricing**

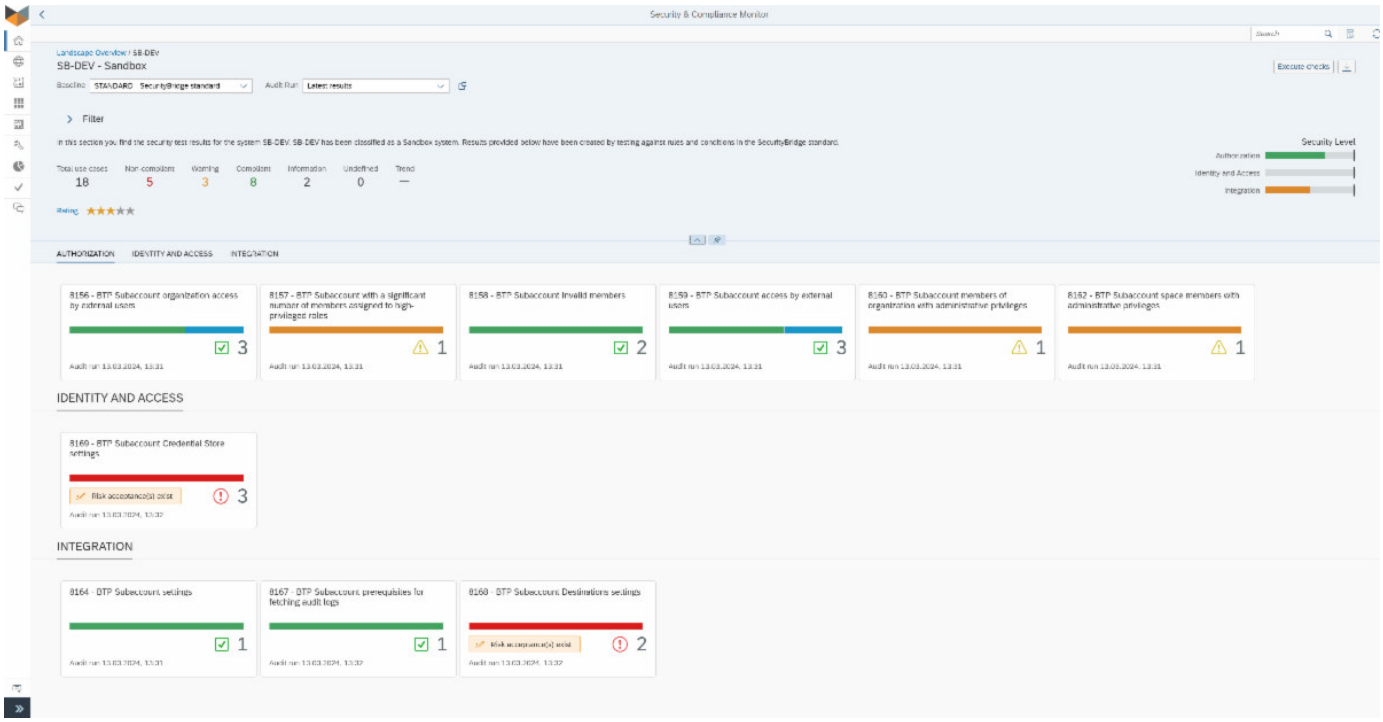
The SecurityBridge Platform for SAP BTP is available immediately. Further enhancements, including full implementation of all SAP security recommendations, are scheduled for completion by the end of 2024. Pricing is based on the number of BTP accounts, ensuring scalable solutions tailored to each organization's needs.

***About SecurityBridge, Inc.***

*SecurityBridge is a platform provider for SAP Security developing tools to extend the SAP ecosystem. The company takes a radically different approach to traditional security solutions, believing SAP applications and custom code will be infiltrated no matter how diligently security hygiene is applied. In response to this belief, SecurityBridge created its integrated real-time solution for constant monitoring. Powered by anomaly detection, the SecurityBridge platform can differentiate between accurate results and false positives so that security teams can better focus on real issues. For details, please visit securitybridge.com.*

# # #

Caption: The SecurityBridge Security & Compliance solution for BTP in action.



# insightsoftware Acquires FXLoader, Adding Automated Exchange Rate Software to its Portfolio of Solutions for the Office of the CFO

*insightsoftware is a global provider of reporting, analytics, and performance management solutions, empowering organizations to unlock business data and transform the way finance and data teams operate.*

*insightsoftware*, the most comprehensive provider of solutions for the Office of the CFO, announced it has acquired *FXLoader*, a UK-based provider of automated exchange rate loading software for enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems and financial applications. FXLoader expands insightsoftware's existing reporting and consolidation capabilities by automating critical foreign exchange rate processes in real-time for global organizations.

Founded in 1998, FXLoader has been used and trusted by major international organizations for more than 25 years. FXLoader streamlines multinational financial and tax reporting by populating the foreign exchange rates required to buy and sell goods and services internationally. By eliminating the need for self-built integrations and the manual entry of foreign exchange rates into the most popular ERP systems, it saves time, reduces errors, and easily adapts to new jurisdiction requirements.

"Every organization that conducts business internationally operates in an ever-changing multi-currency finance environment," said Lee An Schommer, Chief Product Officer and General Manager, FP&A at insightsoftware. "FXLoader enables organizations to keep pace with these changes, automating the complex calculations required for multi-currency accounting while eliminating the need to execute agreements with third-party sources and central banks. This capability bolsters insightsoftware's suite of solutions that improve financial performance with intelligent automation and data-driven insights."

FXLoader delivers flexible integrations for adding or changing the source, ERPs, rate type, and new currency without the need for individual monitoring. It integrates seamlessly with leading ERP systems such as Oracle Fusion ERP Cloud, Workday, and SAP. It automates the loading of currency exchange rates from OANDA, Xignite, Bloomberg, and 70+ other central banks. In addition, the technology monitors every new rate versus the previous rate, automatically investigating any changes greater than five percent to ensure consistency and accuracy.

"Bringing FXLoader into the insightsoftware portfolio of solutions will provide financial teams with automated access to rates directly from the source web service, accelerating and improving the accuracy of the close and consolidation process," said Peter Care, Founder and Technical Director at FXLoader. "By adding our foreign exchange rate automation within one of the industry's most comprehensive suites of financial performance solutions, insightsoftware is empowering organizations with a streamlined, consolidated platform that enables financial professionals to do more with less."

insightsoftware is a hyper-growth company dedicated to consolidating organizational data to round out one of the broadest reporting, analytics, and performance management solution sets available. The company has experienced tremendous growth with a five-year percentage growth rate of 425 percent. Headquartered in Raleigh, North Carolina, insightsoftware is a global team with offices around the world, with more than 2,400 team members, 32,000 global customers, 500,000 global users, and 1,300 partners. The company has been recognized in the *2023 Deloitte Technology Fast 500™* and the *2023 Gartner® Magic Quadrant™ for Financial Planning Software.*

***About insightsoftware***

*insightsoftware is a global provider of comprehensive solutions for the Office of the CFO. We believe an actionable business strategy begins and ends with accessible financial data. With solutions across financial planning and analysis (FP&A), accounting, and operations, we transform how teams operate, empowering leaders to make timely and informed decisions. With data at the heart of everything we do, insightsoftware enables automated processes, delivers trusted insights, boosts predictability, and increases productivity. Learn more at insightsoftware.com.*

***About FXLoader***

*FXLoader is an automated service that ensures FX rates are always up to date and accurate in ERP applications. Our SaaS solution is at the core of global companies running tier one ERPs, ensuring they are using authentic, reliable currency rates from leading providers and central banks. We are dedicated to the highest levels of support and monitoring, giving clients confidence in this crucial accounting process, to meet statutory and corporate reporting requirements. Learn more at fxloader.com.*

# Is Your ERP a Cybersecurity Risk?

*Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems have been a gamechanger for many businesses. Being able to integrate so many essential functions like finance, HR, inventory, and customer relationship management, is so integral, that the system is the backbone of many growing companies.*

*However, is having so much business and customer data simmering in the same pot a weakness for your business? With great power comes great responsibility, and for your ERP system, that responsibility must include robust cybersecurity.*

**The treasure trove of ERP systems**

When ERP systems are used to their fullest extent, they are an absolute goldmine of sensitive data. Glittering in one large treasure chest sits financial records, intellectual property, and customer information. Since data is so valuable right now, all that digital bounty could be irresistible for any talented cybercriminal. Without robust cybersecurity, your vulnerabilities could be exploited, your data stolen, or your business could be held hostage.

**The cybersecurity risks lurking in the shadows**

The promise of complete efficiency and effectiveness doesn't come without its challenges. There is usually a weakness in every system. Here are some of the cyber security risks linked to ERP systems:

***Complexity:*** ERP systems are intricate, with numerous modules, integrations, and customisations. This complexity creates more attack surfaces for hackers to exploit.

***Outdated software:*** Many businesses are still using older versions of ERP software that haven't been patched for known vulnerabilities. This leaves them wide open to cyberattacks.

***Human error:*** Employees, whether through malicious intent or simple oversight, can be the weakest link in the security chain. Phishing attacks, social engineering, and accidental data breaches are all common threats.

***Limited visibility:*** Traditional security tools may not be able to effectively monitor and protect all aspects of an ERP system, leaving blind spots for attackers to exploit.

**The consequences of a cybersecurity breach through your ERP**

Your business thrives on the data held, and activities recorded, within your ERP system. Any cyberattack on your business can be devastating. Business might face:

***Financial losses:*** From stolen data to ransom demands and operational disruptions, cyberattacks can cost businesses millions of pounds.

***Reputational damage:*** A data breach can erode customer trust and damage a company's reputation, leading to lost business and decreased future profits.

***Legal and regulatory penalties:*** Businesses that fail to adequately protect customer data can face hefty fines and legal action under data protection regulations like GDPR.

**Fortifying the defences around your data**

Cyber-pirates could be circling your treasure trove at any point. You have learned from many films, that hoarding your gold in a cave on some accessible island invites more attacks than keeping it in a well-guarded fortress. So, what can businesses do to protect their ERP systems from cyberattacks? Here are some essential steps:

***Implement a comprehensive security strategy:*** This should include regular vulnerability assessments, patch management, access controls, data encryption, and security awareness training for employees.

***Stay up to date with software updates:*** Regularly update your ERP software and other related applications to ensure you have the latest security patches.

***Implement multi-factor authentication (MFA):*** MFA adds an extra layer of security by requiring users to provide a second factor, such as a code from their phone, to log in.

***Segment your network:*** Separate your ERP system from other parts of your network to limit the potential damage in case of an attack.

***Monitor and log activity:*** Continuously monitor your ERP system for suspicious activity and keep detailed logs of user access and system events.

***Have a data breach response plan:*** In the event of a cyberattack, having a clear plan for how to respond will help minimize damage and get your business back up and running quickly.

**ERP security – an investment worth making**

Investing in robust cybersecurity for your ERP system is not just a good idea, it's essential. By taking proactive steps to secure your data and systems, you can protect your business from the growing threat of cyberattacks and ensure the continued success of your operations. Remember, in the fast-paced world of business, staying ahead of the curve also means staying ahead of the hackers.

KEBA COMPUTER SERVICES

# ERP Security in a Cybercrime World

*Modern ERP security features are evolving and improving by the day. So why are businesses feeling more exposed than ever before? In part, it's due to the rapid acceleration of digital and cloud technologies. By 2025, IDC predicts the number of IoT devices to rise to over 30 billion – and continue growing exponentially. Many of these devices are part of companies' Industrial Internet of Things (IIoT) networks – and as such, they typically feed data into a central ERP system. These days, a modern cloud ERP is mission-critical to most businesses, helping to unify all business operations under a single system. Yet, this core feature may also be a weakness when it comes to cybersecurity, making it a one-stop portal into a lot of critical information.*

**Modern ERP and software security challenges**

Traditional approaches to cybersecurity are no longer sufficient. The idea of building a secure perimeter around specific IT assets or databases, and then limiting and controlling access, is not effective in a cloud-connected ecosystem.

In a *cloud ERP* environment, organizations are recalibrating their approach to security as they share more responsibility with public cloud providers, and therefore focus less on the infrastructure and more on the application-side responsibilities they continue to own.

Ransomware and phishing attacks present a rapidly growing challenge. As ERPs are integrated across more departments, there are greater numbers of users with authorized access which – for hackers – means a richer hunting ground for phishing targets. Broader operational ERP integration also means a wider scope and range of valuable data contained within the ERP – which also raises its value as a hacking target. Additionally, with legacy ERP systems, attempts to expand ERP integration into new departments often requires bolt-ons and custom coding which can serve to increase the potential attack surface. In other words: there are more weak spots in more places. This is compounded by an increase in remote and gig workers who require external access points.

Cybercriminals can steal and extort, but they can also shut down essential systems and grind entire operations to a halt. Large organizations (particularly in sectors like finance and insurance, manufacturing, business services, and healthcare) have long been a target, however small and medium-sized business are increasingly being attacked – often due to their lack of security resources and expertise.

| Every 11s | $1.85M | 43% |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **A company was hit with ransomware in 2021** | **Average cost of recovering from a ransomware attack** | **Of all data breaches involve small and medium businesses** |

**What types of ERP data do cybercriminals target?**

Hackers steal all kinds of data for all sorts of reasons. But for the most part, corporate cybercriminals are after data, including ERP data, that can most quickly be monetized, whether by extorting the victimized company itself or by swindling – or otherwise damaging – customers or individuals named in the stolen data. This may result in attempts to directly access funds through credit card breaches or money transfers. But as financial and ERP databases tend to be some of the most well secured, hackers typically wreak havoc by accessing other types of more accessible data.

An additional layer of risk for businesses comes not only in the damage wrought on their profits, reputation, and customers – but from the risk of class action lawsuits brought by those individuals named in the stolen data. In cases where this data includes people's sensitive personal, legal, or medical information, the damage from litigation can be irreparable.

**Top 7 ERP security issues and how to fix them**

***1. Outdated software***

The best ERP providers are relentless in their battle against new and emerging security risks. Any time such a risk is identified, a security patch is developed and distributed to customers. In the past, some businesses have ignored or delayed implementation of these updates for long periods of time, leaving their systems vulnerable. This is especially true in the case of older ERPs that have undergone numerous customizations and workarounds, making patch implementation more problematic to manage.

**Fix:** Updates and security patches need to be implemented regularly – despite the risk of outages and downtime – because new threats emerge all the time. Applying patches and updates for on-premise ERP requires a risk-based approach to prioritize those with most security implications and while not an easy or non-disruptive process, is key in mitigating the risks. This is also true for those business who have a hybrid ERP landscape.

> "Corporate cybercriminals are after data, including ERP data, that can most quickly be monetized, whether by extorting the victimized company itself or by swindling – or otherwise damaging – customers or individuals named in the stolen data."

With cloud ERP software, patch distribution and implementation is a seamless process that goes on behind the scenes by the service provider without any disruption to the business. Furthermore, automated patch management that comes with a cloud ERP deployment can help to ensure adherence to ever-changing compliance and governance rules.

***2. Authorization issues***

In today's business climate, HR, IT, and other team managers are pressured to get new users up and running as quickly as possible, which can lead to a lack of stringency when handing out ERP authorizations, or even deactivating them when employees leave the company. Legacy ERP systems are often at greater risk for this situation due to outdated authentication capabilities and lack of automated workflows supporting authorization.

**Fix:** Modern ERP systems are built with risk in mind including inherent provisioning and authentication capabilities and workflow that are sophisticated yet straightforward to use. Additionally, businesses can implement more broad end-to-end security using *identity access governance tools.*

***3. Inadequate security training***

Circulating a training memo with your official phishing policy is not the same as coordinating regular, interactive learning sessions with all your teams. In fact, in a recent survey, 78% percent of organizations who felt that their training methods were sufficient to eliminate phishing risks – were surprised to find that 31% of their employees failed a basic phishing test. Weak passwords, lack of phishing savvy, and poorly understood security protocols, mean that even your most loyal

and diligent of employees can be unwittingly putting your business at risk.

**Fix:** Many employees simply lack awareness about the ways in which their innocent actions can cause risk or damage. Don't leave cybersecurity training to the wrong people, nor put it low on the agenda against other priorities. Work with a professional to perform a risk audit across your business to find out where the weakest security links may be hiding. Work with your team leaders to build regular training plans that address their particular needs. Implement automated schedules for each department, with testing dates, certificate renewals, and refresher training courses.

***4. Shortage of experienced ERP security staff***

For businesses running legacy ERP software, IT teams must fully understand their specific and myriad ERP security risks – and be able to run and implement best-in-class security practices. This includes identifying threats, conducting vulnerability scans and penetration testing, creating incident response plans, and integrating the latest cybersecurity monitoring tools into outdated systems. In today's climate, not only is it difficult to find and retain skilled professionals, it's also expensive and time-consuming to fit in the growing number of training sessions required to keep IT teams up to speed with the lightning pace of digital security developments.

**Fix:** Cloud ERP provides enormous relief for this growing concern. The heavy-duty security functions such as 24/7 monitoring and disaster recovery are all handled by the vendor – seamlessly, in the cloud. What's more, the day-to-day and more time-consuming IT tasks such as patch management, testing, and upgrades – can also be automated in the cloud and take place without any perceptible interruption.

***5. Failure to comply with security and governance standards***

As ERP systems are integrated across more and more departments, the scope of vulnerable data grows increasingly diverse, including things like secure product information, medical records, or intellectual property. The more sensitive the data (financial, medical, or legal for example) the more likely it is to have its own unique security and storage protocols. Failure to adhere to – or be aware of – these protocols, can lead not only to potential breaches of that data, but also to penalties and even legal repercussions for non-compliance.

**Fix:** Today, the best ERPs – with modern databases – can facilitate the centralized automation and control of a range of compliance protocols for a wide variety of data types. This means that IT teams can work with subject specialists across the business to initially determine the correct security standards, and then automate systems and user dashboards to ensure that the correct protocols are adhered to going forward.

***6. One-factor authentication***

One-factor (a single password or passcode) is simply not enough. While these days, most businesses are aware of this fact, more than *40% of organizations* still fail to use two-step authentication on all potential ERP entry points. In other words, it's no point protecting your most obviously crucial data with two-factor (2FA) authentication if other connected things like IoT devices or departmental applications are left vulnerable with one-step passwords.

**Fix:** It's essential for businesses of all sizes to immediately implement 2FA protocols (including security tokens or biometric scans) across all potential ERP entry points. This is a simple, low-cost fix that is extremely important.

> "Cybercrime affects us all and if businesses are to fight it, they must take a multi-pronged approach."

***7. Data export***

Despite official protocols, users like to put things into spreadsheets or save them in other formats and data export risks remain a problem for businesses.

**Fix:** Companies can control this somewhat by blocking Excel downloads or tracking user actions within the database. But at the end of the day, the best way to protect against data export, is to limit the number of people who have access to vulnerable data. With a modern ERP, department heads can easily determine and set not only who gets to see what, but which elements of a data set they may access and view. And unlike legacy systems, cloud ERPs have integrated security features that can be automated to send notifications and prevent unauthorized commands, such as downloads or data exports.

**Cyber ERP security best practices**

Many of the issues and fixes that we have discussed relate to broader security strategies for optimizing your human and technological resources in a cybercrime world. The following are some additional best practice basics to help you get the most from the services and benefits associated with cloud ERP security functions and features:

- Ensure that service level agreements are in place for business continuity, disaster recovery, and uptime capabilities. Cloud-based tools can help to integrate these agreements in one place, across global operations, and automate updates.

- Perform hyperscaler, third-party audits. These independent third-party audits are essential to ensure cross-business compliance at all stages and to support things like Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification (CMMC) and Zero Trust efforts.

- Encrypt all your data and focus on strengthening processes, protocols, and project management for all teams involved in ERP security practices. Particularly in areas of patch management, security configuration, vulnerability scanning, and threat management.

- Make the necessary consultancy investment in external, world-class cybersecurity experts to ensure that all your teams are well-versed in their roles and responsibilities in the areas of risk reduction.

- Ensure that 24/7 monitoring and proactive security management have been implemented across your business to improve incident responsiveness. This includes your ERP and any systems, devices, or IoT assets from which a hacker may gain access.

- Use a domain-based ERP testing approach to provide a consistent and replicable test process to address common actor vectors across the entire attack surface.

**Next steps to better ERP security**

Cybercrime affects us all and if businesses are to fight it, they must take a multi-pronged approach. *Cloud ERP technologies* are a great place to start – giving businesses a unified base from which to coordinate and automate a powerful and effective defense.

But in the end, your cybersecurity efforts begin and end with your people. Your team leaders and employees are part of the solution but they can't be expected to figure it out on their own. A good first step on your ERP cybersecurity journey, is to build communication and training plans that involve interesting experts, hands-on learning, visual and practical lesson plans, and even some real-life examples of what can happen when it goes wrong. Specific training and certification measures are important, but it also works best to raise overall awareness and interest in the topic.

Digital security is now a major part of all of our lives, so why not make learning about cybersecurity an engaging and intriguing experience?

# Cybersecurity Through the Lens of Cloud ERP

*Cybersecurity can be one of the top concerns on a business leader's mind. Protecting data is crucial, and each day keeping it safe becomes more critical.*

There is a direct link between investing in fraud prevention and reduced costs when security is breached. According to a recent study by Price Waterhouse Coopers (PWC), 47% of companies surveyed experienced fraud in the last 24 months, but only about half of those organizations are dedicating resources to risk assessment, monitoring, and third-party management.

Protecting data is two-fold: Internally, it's important to streamline your organization's information to protect from accidental misuse and also protect sensitive data from the ill-intended employee. Externally, thwarting cyber hackers and attempts to steal personal data or cause disruption to production is crucial.

Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) solutions provide a solid security base for businesses and a secure line of defense for your company against internal threats such as fraud and misuse and exterior threats like cyberattacks and phishing scams.

By providing data security through standards-based security practices, risk and failover management, attack prevention, and processes for security advancement, ERPs alleviate businesses from providing their own in-house protection from the ground up.

**Choosing Between Cloud or On-Premises ERP**

Both cloud-based and on-premises ERP solutions provide a basic level of protection for data. The main difference is where your data is stored and who has access to it. On-premises ERP software is owned and operated by the business owner. All maintenance and updates are the responsibility of the business. At the same time, having an ERP system installed on-site gives control over the IT infrastructure, all processes, and systems from end to end. It also requires a heavy load of responsibility carried by the IT department. It requires proactive measures to ensure your business' security and data stays safe.

The benefit of an on-premises ERP solution is having complete control over your physical system, and it can easily be customized to suit the specific needs of your business. The ERP solution connects directly to your business network, so no internet is needed. If you have remote workers, you will need to provide security measures such as a VPN.

Some companies with an on-premises ERP solution have a dedicated team member to monitor and update software. A dedicated team member offers expertise in a specific industry giving the company direct access to a one-on-one resource.

With cloud-based ERP implementation, the ERP vendor hosts a business' information and stores the software in a data center owned and secured by the ERP vendor or a third-party host. Security advantages of cloud-based implementation include:

- automatic updates,
- firewalls, and
- immediate incident response.

There are data security benefits of having an ERP system in general. Both on-premises and cloud-based ERP solutions streamline data with only one entry point per client. This prevents the information from being duplicated or subjected to inconsistent updates. ERP systems also eliminate calculation errors by automating processes tied to:

- customer service,
- accounting, and
- production,

Cloud-based ERP systems offer more sophisticated protection by including built-in security measures that reduce the responsibility load of the IT department. These measures provide 24/7 monitoring of both internal and external activity. They are equipped with an immediate incident response by automatically identifying out-of-the-ordinary events and responding appropriately before they become more significant problems. Internal actions include role-based authorizations and monitoring for out-of-trend activities such as account logins from unauthorized areas. With on-premises ERP systems, all monitoring and updates are the responsibility of the business, increasing the burden of the IT department.

> "The benefit of an on-premises ERP solution is having complete control over your physical system, and it can easily be customized to suit the specific needs of your business."

Cloud-based ERP systems can also respond to denial-of-service attacks, have built-in firewalls, automatically back up data, and have distributed data centers worldwide. The best security is a partnership between the ERP vendor and your business. Servers are kept off-site and monitored by the ERP vendor. Software licensing and upgrades are all maintained by your ERP provider as well. As a security partner, it's essential to be clear about who takes responsibility for each task. Tasks that aren't clearly allocated can fall through the cracks and make your business vulnerable. A yearly review of current and any new tasks is advisable.

Cloud-based ERP implementation can also watch for fraud or asset misappropriation inside of the business. Specific controls quickly identify unauthorized employee reimbursements and violations of company policies.

Read More: *Cloud vs On-Premises: Are You Putting Your Business at Risk?*

**Choose an ERP Solution and Reduce Risk**

An ERP system can help prevent threats that come from both inside and outside of a business. Businesses wanting to improve their system management can see results by implementing an ERP solution. Immediate automated responses to trouble thwart outside attempts.

In-office ERP security risks are low because an ERP solution improves the consistency, accuracy, and security of proprietary data. It ties together different systems used in human resources, supply chain management (SCM), finance, manufacturing, management, and customer relationship management (CRM), making it easier to manage data security and permission-level access protocols. Each customer has only data entry.

The risk of monetary and data loss is minimized because these systems are now accessible in real-time and streamlined while data access is restricted to the appropriate team members. Potential issues in posted transactions and master data are quickly detected and addressed.

As more employees are working from home or using their phones and tablets to do their work,

*Article from Decision Resources, Inc.*

cybersecurity measures become even more crucial. An ERP system can protect employee identification and personal information such as home addresses and private family information.

ERP systems also have highly advanced permission controls to protect critical data and help guard against cyberattacks from hacker groups and other criminal organizations from outside the business. These groups are looking for corporate secrets or to disrupt a company's productivity and try to gain access through company firewalls.

> "A cloud-based ERP can also help a business stay in compliance with government requirements through real-time tracking of materials, inventory, and supply chains."

In the event of a security attack, the ERP system can immediately correct the problem and implement an update automatically. Strict security measures are also in place when integrating with third-party vendors, keeping ERP security risks low. ERP systems maintain an effective firewall and encrypt data and can also help monitor supplier traffic and client portals by providing security parameters.

A cloud-based ERP can also help a business stay in compliance with government requirements through real-time tracking of materials, inventory, and supply chains. Businesses can also set up alerts when a non-compliant action occurs, enabling a company to make adjustments before they become problems.

Read More: *Security Risk & Threat Management: Choosing an ERP Solution*

**Preventing Security Threats**

Preventing security threats becomes more manageable with an ERP solution. With cloud ERP, the heavy lifting is managed by your ERP vendor. Knowing that your ERP provides an extra layer of security can be comforting; however, some actions can be taken in-house to enhance security.

An ERP system provides the basis of security by helping to protect your business from security threats including unauthorized access to information on the inside and malicious threats from the outside. Working with your ERP vendor can help reduce the risk of ERP data threats even further.

Start with a company-wide self-audit by identifying, ranking, and addressing all risks. This will give great insight into where your weaknesses are and a baseline for beginning your security journey. Follow up by scheduling regular risk assessments to collect internal and external data. Regular assessments will show improvements and goals for long-term tracking. This information will continue to alert you to gaps in security and tell you where you should focus as the company grows.

Protecting your company from internal threats is just as important as external threat protection. By implementing an ERP solution, digital certificates help ensure protection by using authenticated systems. Role-based security principles of "least privilege" and "need to know" can be enforced by ERP role-based controls. Most ERP systems are set up with full access for everyone. Setting up controls that restrict access to sensitive data only to those teams who need it is in your best interest.

You can also create strong protection against cybersecurity threats and ransomware by checking often for updates and guidelines to be aware of new threats and what they look like. Share pertinent information with staff to prevent becoming susceptible to phishing scams and similar schemes. Educating staff and empowering them to be vigilant lookouts for unusual activity will further protect data.

Beyond internal risks, it's important to stay secure from external threats, too. ERP implementation can detect exploitation and fraud, ensure data integrity, and identify unauthorized access. It can also provide continuous and automated audits, detect data leaks, and centralize security monitoring, but it is still essential to have protocols in place to enhance security protection and help keep ERP data security strong.

No one likes to think about worst-case scenarios but it's important to be prepared in case the unthinkable happens. An ERP solution puts your business one step ahead with multiple layers of security designed to protect sensitive data. Multi-layer protection includes protections against targeted attacks such as distributed denial of service (DDoS), firewalls that segment critical components, and the ability

to detect unusual activity and take immediate action, often fixing the problem before it becomes a larger issue.

Read More: *How to Prevent ERP Data Security Threats*

**Keeping Your ERP Data Secure**

You now know that partnering with your ERP provider can help ensure your business data is kept safe. Keep the following items in mind to ensure your ERP system remains secure.

***Employee Training***

The most successful companies have whole company buy-in. Having everyone, including management, support the change is essential to the success of ERP implementation. Large projects are rarely implemented without some hiccups. One of the most important items to address is change management to ensure that all workers and teams understand the importance of utilizing the system's capabilities and how to use them. A strong investment in training and frequent communication will ensure success. A good plan includes sharing what information should be communicated, why, and to whom. Staff training should be regularly available to provide the inclusion of new team members and refresh information for current employees. Employees should have realistic expectations about the transition, and this requires communication throughout the entire implementation process.

***Two Factor Authentication***

Two Factor Authentication (2FA) and investing in attribute-based accessed controls can keep your company accountable for sensitive data and customer information. Scammers look for easy ways into your company's data and find it when password security is lax. Be sure to put two-factor authentication into practice and strengthen company passwords. It pays off to be vigilant.

Two-factor authentication requires secure logins by preventing password sharing and a maintained accreditation log with authorizations and checklists for new hires, promotions, and role changes. This helps keep unauthorized access to a minimum.

Role-based access to sensitive data is easy to administer. For example, give read-only access to your organization's most important information and update the status of workers who become lost through promotions or department changes.

***Remote Workforce Strategy***

Another component of your ERP management routine should include the consideration of remote work. Don't forget to establish a strong remote workforce strategy. With a cloud-based ERP system, built-in firewalls, encryption, and automated security features make security strong.

***Industry-Specific Software***

ERP solutions are industry-specific and offer capabilities custom-made for your industry. They offer the same essential features such as inventory management, human resources, and accounting. You can customize an ERP to your industry, streamlining information and giving your company the benefit of software that works intuitively with your business needs.

***Define Vendor Responsibilities***

Be clear about who does what. Clear communication with your ERP vendor will pay off by keeping your system secure. Everyone must know that responsibilities are clearly defined. A corporate-wide security audit will show gaps in your strategy.

***Set Up Non-Compliance Alerts***

Don't risk being out of compliance. An ERP solution allows you to set up alerts that enable you to make adjustments before problems arise. ERPs monitor materials and processes to ensure your organization conforms to regulatory mandates.

Read More: *How to Maintain Your ERP's Data Security*

> "One of the most important items to address is change management to ensure that all workers and teams understand the importance of utilizing the system's capabilities and how to use them."

**Common Problems to Avoid**

Although moving to a cloud-based ERP solution might seem intimidating at first, knowing the most common cloud-based ERP security challenges can prepare you for the move. Paying attention to these common issues can make the transition smoother. Each of these issues is avoidable. Creating good habits will keep your business secure.

*Article from Decision Resources, Inc.*

When a business works together with an ERP vendor to increase protection, ERP solutions become more secure than ever. A vendor that specializes in ERP data security bases its reputation on the fact that it can keep data secure, so it's in the vendor's best interest to have state-of-the-art software and security measures. Together with your ERP solution vendor, sensitive data can become almost impervious to attacks.

Businesses that face the most challenges don't exercise control over who has access to sensitive data. Information can be stolen or inadvertently mishandled when too many people have access to sensitive data and the ability to edit it. It's hard to keep up with employees who move around in a growing company, but this is one of the best ways to protect sensitive data. Most software initially gives everyone full access to all information leaving it up to the business to set role-based access to sensitive data. Be sure to take advantage of the ERP solution's ability to implement these parameters and give data access to only the teams that need it.

Businesses' IT departments are often too busy to track activity and record operations carried out on a system. An ERP solution with intelligent analytics can track behavioral patterns and flag unusual activity. In addition, it constantly monitors key security indicators such as user traffic and data volume, making it easier to identify and rectify discrepancies before they become issues.

Businesses that successfully make the move to an ERP solution have a growth strategy that includes security measures. A forward-looking growth plan provides security protection, takes data security into account, and makes sure that software doesn't become outdated, which would leave a business vulnerable to security threats. As a result, these businesses keep ahead of their competition and quickly adapt to new ideas.

Read More: *Common Cloud ERP Security Problems & How to Avoid Them*

An ERP solution can help streamline your business and protect it from unwanted loss of production time and money through data protection. Most solutions are customizable to fit your business needs. Developing a plan for implementation, working with your ERP vendor, and budgeting for security growth will ensure a secure future.

# SAP and Accenture Collaborate on Getting to Value Faster with SAP Business AI

*Generative AI is the number one driver of transformation today. While it may not be the only or final technological breakthrough, embracing generative AI requires both a multi-year change agenda and a continuous transformation program.*

And it all starts with value and elevating IT for the AI era with a strong and secure digital core. This includes emphasis on adopting ready-to-scale AI models, a modern data foundation, and a flexible AI architecture that supports the use of multiple foundation models to future-proof organizations from the evolution of technology and model changes.

According to *Accenture research*, 40% of C-suite leaders believe their organization will fully scale generative AI enterprise-wide in six to 12 months. Currently organizations are scaling generative AI in select business areas either extensively (56%) or in a limited way (nearly 30%). Only 10% say they have scaled generative AI with extensive adoption across their entire enterprise, and just 13% are "extremely confident" they have the right data strategy and core digital capabilities in place to effectively leverage generative AI.

That's why organizations are increasingly turning to SAP and its partners to help them completely transform their business, and why SAP and Accenture are working together to help their customers make SAP Business AI and data their number one competitive advantage.

*Article from SAP*

**Accenture Embraces SAP Business AI to Advance Business Outcomes**

*By Marc-Oliver Klein and Stephanie Guimbellot*

SAP and Accenture have been collaborating and working with customers on technology evolution for over 40 years, using their unique strengths to help industries transform and lead in the market.

As AI is integrated into business applications, it is unleashing new levels of productivity and creativity while forging a path to the future that is different and faster than any previous technology wave.

For many clients, 2023 was a year of experimentation with generative AI. In 2024, we're focusing on helping clients realize value at scale by going after the business potential in enterprise data with AI, strengthening digital core with embedded AI capabilities, enhancing business functions with AI insights, and accelerating revenue growth with SAP Business AI offerings like Joule, generative AI hub, SAP Datasphere, and SAP HANA Cloud vector engine.

"In partnership with SAP and its customers, we're emphasizing must-dos for the C-suite," said Lan Guan, chief AI officer at Accenture. "That includes leading with value, investing in a digital core, nurturing talent, practicing responsible AI, and committing to continuous reinvention. This is how you capitalize on AI's inflection moment strategically."

And with Joule, business process reinvention and change adoption in cloud ERP just got easier through new capabilities to boost IT and business user experiences. Accenture plans to embrace the consulting capability for Joule and ABAP code generation in compressed cloud ERP transformations and will collaborate on the consulting capability for Joule with a team of AI experts and prompt designers to facilitate relevant user responses aligned with SAP industry best practices and clean core strategies.

"Our ecosystem plays a critical role in helping our customers adopt SAP Business AI to get immediate value from these exciting new technologies and solutions," said SAP Chief AI Officer Philipp Herzig. "We very much value our long-standing partnership with Accenture. They have long been an important partner in the industry for bringing innovation to our joint customers, now also by activating SAP's embedded AI capabilities, including Joule, and building customer use cases on SAP Business Technology Platform with SAP AI Core and generative AI hub. I look forward to our continued collaboration and the outcomes that generative AI will deliver in both business transformations and operations for our customers."

> "Our ecosystem plays a critical role in helping our customers adopt SAP Business AI to get immediate value from these exciting new technologies and solutions."

Accenture is already working on various use cases that leverage SAP Business AI offerings, and the company continues to take an early leadership position in SAP Business AI.

- Accenture's *financial advisor,* an SAP 2024 Innovation award winner, uses SAP AI core and large language models (LLMs) to deliver untapped financial value in financial ledgers and transactions. It is helping Accenture business and finance leaders reduce decision-making time by 15%, reduce financial narrative efforts by 60%, and mitigate risks with real-time financial data insights, including 13,000+ user alerts per month.

- Accenture's *supply chain nerve center* uses AI models to enable intelligent, responsive, and risk-resilient supply chains to help clients manage disruptions, identify improvements, and resolve issues. The nerve center uses SAP's generative AI hub and SAP Business Technology Platform, which connects to an LLM fully integrated with SAP S/4HANA Cloud, SAP Integrated Business Planning, and SAP Intelligent Asset Management.

Accenture is also evolving its assets and platforms including GenWizard, SynOpps, and AI Navigator for Enterprise to help clients move to cloud ERP faster and achieve earlier business outcomes.

**Make Decisions Easier with SAP Business Transformation Solutions and Large Process Models**

*By Hartmut Poppinga and José Morán Moya*

SAP and Accenture are teaming on SAP Signavio and SAP LeanIX solutions to help customers with the quantitative insights they need to get alignment and buy-in on cloud ERP and the foundation to tap into the full value of generative AI.

The combined power of SAP and Accenture is helping customers examine business processes at every level of the organization, establish what works, discard what doesn't and use their own data to create a business case and measure success and value over time. SAP is helping with foundational implementation and Accenture teams are providing analysis, insights, advisory and process modeling. This collaboration is significantly reducing the time it takes clients to complete current state and gap analysis to get to value faster.

"The long-standing partnership between Accenture and SAP is characterized by delivering successful transformation outcomes to our mutual customers," said Mani Pirouz, chief business officer of SAP Signavio and LeanIX. "Through our joint offerings we help companies become agile, resilient, and intelligent enterprises. SAP Signavio plays a crucial role in transformations by providing insights, collaboration, governance, and execution capabilities for continuous process improvements. These allow companies to unlock business value above and beyond their technical road maps."

SAP and Accenture's focus is grounded in a value-led method, cloud ERP business case, and road map that takes a holistic approach to an organization's full value chain and helps customers:

- Understand the potential to reinvent the value chain and develop end-to-end capabilities powered by generative AI and new ways of working
- Be value-led in every business capability chosen to reinvent with generative AI
- Identify strategic bets where the technology creates differentiated sources of value that cannot be easily captured by competitors
- Reorient the organization from siloed functions to end-to-end business capabilities and decision-making through a unified data architecture and cross-functional teams

"Combining Accenture's deep industry expertise with SAP solutions helps clients define and realize value in a systematic way," said Caspar Borggreve, senior managing director and lead of Accenture SAP Business Group. "This is about shifting the focus from siloed use cases to a holistic look at industry value chains to prioritize investments, achieve efficiencies, benefit from generative AI, and scale competitiveness."

# Protecting Your ERP System from Cybersecurity Breaches

*Cybercrime taps into the vulnerability of business systems and can pose a real threat to a robust supply chain. A sophisticated ransomware attack recently targeted the world's largest meat processor. Following the business system breach, operations in the US and Australia were disrupted, resulting in a knock-on effect. The meat processor had no option but to shut down nine beef plants in the United States and several plants in Australia. Several truck drivers who specialize in hauling livestock also had no choice but to drive hundreds of miles to pick up cattle from an alternative supplier. For the end-consumer, the long-term impact of the cyber-attack could mean inflated meat prices.*

Unfortunately, this is not the only instance of a cyber-attack on critical business. Earlier this year, a ransomware attack on the Colonial Pipeline, that provides nearly half the United States East Coast's fuel supply, resulted in gas and jet fuel shortages in the US. In this case, the hackers demanded $4 million in ransom. While the ransom was paid on the same day, and authorities have since been able to recover around $2.3 million in bitcoin paid in the Colonial Pipeline ransom, the pipeline was only able to function again after six days.

With increased reliance on digital tools, businesses are now understanding the importance of company-wide cybersecurity strategies that take into consideration all IT systems. For manufacturers and distributors, this includes your Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) solution, as it integrates internal systems and integrates with external third-party systems.

*Article by*
JP van Loggerenberg
Chief Technology Officer, SYSPRO

ERP systems contain sensitive information ranging from supplier information on the creditor side and customer information on the debtor side. From a compliance perspective, this information needs to be carefully protected. There is no doubt that ERP is at the heart of the business and needs to be an integral part of the cybersecurity strategy of the organization.

**Your first line of defense starts with knowledge**

To safeguard against cyber-attacks, manufacturers and distributors should watch out for a number of 'social engineered ' scams that try to exploit organizational weaknesses.

Distributed denial-of-service (DDoS) attacks seem to be amongst the most prevalent amongst ERP users. Here, cybercriminals target a public-facing endpoint, where a network resource is rendered unavailable to intended users.

Phishing is another example where criminals can exploit systems by sending emails that seem to be from trusted sources or companies. For example, an ERP customer would receive an email from their ERP vendor, often promising a reward or refund, to deceitfully obtain personal information, including passwords, identity number, banking login details.

Another example is pharming. Pharming is a cyber-attack intended to redirect a website's traffic to another, a fake site that aims to steal your information and money. In a pharming attack, the criminal hacks into the website you have opened and redirects you to an imposter site. Much like a phishing scam, many of us won't notice any difference in the rogue site and will enter our username and password, or credit information as usual. The attacker then intercepts the captured information.

Across all cyber-attacks, the one common denominator is the human factor. The risk lies from within a business, so manufacturers should consider a number of steps to safeguard their ERP investment.

**Steps to guard your ERP system against possible risks**

***1. Don't delay software updates***

Security technologies are ever-evolving. What may be safe today, may not be safe tomorrow. Therefore, businesses need to protect their devices by installing the latest versions of any software – including the latest version of your ERP software. In addition to leveraging the latest features, newer software versions remove any vulnerabilities that may put a business at risk.

***2. Consider access rights***

For some, applying specific access rights across an organization is an effort. In this scenario, most employees are given full access rights. The problem with this scenario is that it opens up more opportunities for cybercriminals to access sensitive information. Organizations should instead ensure that employees are provided with specific roles and form part of groups with associated security and clearance authorizations.

***3. Choose a multi-factor authentication approach***

One-factor authentication is archaic and involves a person who matches one credential to verify himself or herself online. This poses a real risk for businesses and a real opportunity for malicious users.

Instead, businesses today need to have an extra layer of security with two-factor or multi-factor authentication. Luckily, modern technology today does offer the option of single sign-on.

**Rinse and repeat**

Ultimately, a company's cybersecurity is only as strong as its weakest link. Because the human factor can place your business at risk, a rinse and repeat approach should be taken around cybersecurity education. Staff need to be reminded not to open suspect emails, be wary of unexpected messages, and be reminded to change their passwords often. Education and awareness can strengthen this mindset and can protect your ERP solution from malicious intent.

SYSPRO™

***About SYSPRO***

*SYSPRO is a leading, global Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software provider specializing in key manufacturing and distribution industries. For over 40 years, SYSPRO's team of specialists have continued to address unique industry needs and enable customers to easily adapt and grow. The solution is scalable and can be deployed in the cloud, on-premise, or both, and accessed via the web on any device to provide customers with choice and flexibility. SYSPRO remains focused on the success of partners and customers. Our evolving solutions are aligned with industry trends to leverage emerging technology that will enable partners and customers in securing a digital future. With more than 15,000 licensed companies in over 60 countries across six continents –SYSPRO offers guidance and support every step of the way as a trusted advisor.*

*Article by JP van Loggerenberg*

# Achieving Sustainability Goals as a Manufacturer Trough Strategic Positioning and Colloboration

*The importance and urgency around the global sustainability agenda have never been greater for organizations. In fact, in a study by BCG, 62% of companies now consider sustainability as a major consideration for digital transformation investment.*

Furthermore, for the companies that do invest in sustainability, according to a recent article, being a sustainability leader unlocks growth opportunities by hitting both financial and sustainability related KPIs.

**Hitting sustainability goals requires a truly holistic approach**

While it's true that different companies are at different stages of their sustainability journey, sustainability is now very much an integral part of our everyday working lives. This is true no matter if you are a technician trying to reduce any further unnecessary travel by implementing a first-time fix, right through to a CEO, determining the strategic direction and the technology investments needed to meet sustainability goals.

*Article by*
Daniel Paterson,
Senior Product Marketing Manager, IFS

Today, leading organizations no longer look at the rapidly growing emphasis on sustainability as a hindrance; it's now a real opportunity to transform and drive significant value by embedding it across all business processes. To turn this ambition into a reality, organizations need the right solution that embeds sustainability into every process; bringing functions together through aligned goals and empowers decision making through a single, accurate data source.

**Enabling sustainability through a single technology solution**

The role that technology plays in terms of enabling sustainability can't be overstated. In fact, this recent *TechTarget article* highlights that as CIO's look across their priorities, sustainability should cut across all of them.

To truly transform, it's not enough to just have a joined-up sustainability strategy, critically any strategy also needs to be underpinned by the right solution that can tie together all your different business functions. Without this in place, it becomes exponentially more difficult to synchronize and get each part of the business working together which is why a single platform underpinned by one source of data is so crucial.

In addition, a recent article by *BCG Platinion* laid out the importance of viewing technology solutions not as "green IT", but actually by bringing together the technology and sustainability agendas. This approach, underpinned by data from the outset, enables sustainability-driven transformation to create genuine competitive advantage.

**How can IFS Cloud help?**

IFS Cloud aims to embed sustainability into processes such as *re-manufacturing to support circular operations*, while tracking emissions and improving operational performance, all of which are part of helping hit sustainability goals.

For example, the pressure on manufacturers to not only make a profit but run the business as sustainably as possible is growing rapidly. IFS Cloud helps manufacturers to not just reduce production line waste, but connect the shop floor back into the supply chain, projects, procurement, and sales functions, to name just a few. The solution enables re-manufacturing using old components and materials as part of supporting the move away from a traditional production line model to one that embraces the circular economy.

Furthermore, as organizations continue to adapt and evolve, supply chains are inevitably getting more complex and difficult to manage. *IFS Cloud seamlessly connects your supply chain and procurement processes* and provides complete transparency across your entire supply chain. Evaluate, select and manage suppliers based on the sustainability focused criteria that best aligns with your sustainability goals. Realize a reduced carbon footprint across transport and warehousing, right through to the efficient packing of goods using materials that are not only recyclable, but also facilitates a smooth returns process.

**Delivering against your sustainability goals isn't impossible**

As business leaders lay out their sustainability goals for the coming years such as net zero, it becomes critical to not just have a plan but have the right embedded solutions in place to help you get there. In fact *Deloitte* points out that it's highly likely that many of the senior executives that help set these plans won't actually still be in post to see them come to fruition. This further highlights the importance of putting the right technology solution in place upfront to ensure it not only delivers value, but is less likely to be replaced as new senior leaders join the business in the future.

***About Daniel Paterson***

*Daniel is a Senior Product Marketing Manager looking after IFS's ERP and Sustainability solutions. In addition, he also supports the Manufacturing and Construction & Engineering industries. Daniel has over 15 years of combined product marketing and product management experience, across a variety of different software and digital businesses.*

***About IFS***

*IFS develops and delivers cloud enterprise software for companies around the world who manufacture and distribute goods, build and maintain assets, and manage service-focused operations. Within our single platform, our industry specific products are innately connected to a single data model and use embedded digital innovation so that our customers can be their best when it really matters to their customers—at the Moment of Service™. The industry expertise of our people and of our growing ecosystem, together with a commitment to deliver value at every single step, has made IFS a recognized leader and the most recommended supplier in our sector. Our team of over 5,500 employees every day live our values of agility, trustworthiness and collaboration in how we support our thousands of customers. Learn more about how our enterprise software solutions can help your business today at ifs.com.*

*Article by Daniel Paterson*

# Rise of AI: What's Next for Humans?

*Ever since the era of AI, innovations have become extremely fast-paced. We see it in marketing, customer service, finance, technology, and healthcare. It's the backbone of technologies like big data, IoT, robotics, and the nascent Generative AI. Thanks to Artificial Intelligence capabilities, nothing has ever been easier than today's access to information and its timely usage.*

It's also a fact that the increase in AI use is leading to confusion and fear among people not equipped to scale up to the new AI-driven world. AI is never going to take a back seat from now. It has inevitably become an integral part of major sectors of human life. AI has been integrated with many enterprise-scale businesses for their day-to-day mundane activities that are repetitive by the power of AI automation techniques.

In such a situation, it's particularly important to know how AI can influence and change the lives of people for the betterment.

***AI in the Health Sector***

Trained LLMs and Big data analysis capabilities of AI have made it possible to analyze and accurately predict diseases as it can process numerous data at the same time and give a fast and accurate diagnosis, thereby saving time and the lives of people. It also helps in providing patients with personalized treatment plans.

***AI in Education***

The ability to identify and improve a person's learning technique is complimenting how effectively one can educate oneself through AI-driven educational games,

personalized learning platforms, chatbot assistance, and automatic grading and feedback systems. AI systems identify learning gaps by analyzing student performance data so that they can provide personalized study plans. AI will ensure inclusive learning because it has no limitation in providing support to students at any level of understanding. This signifies that there is no longer a need to wait for a mentor's time and energy to resolve skill gaps, doubts, or other challenges. AI can make education and upskilling more feasible without the need for immense trainers in the field.

***AI in Climate Prediction***

AI algorithms can evaluate data from various sources, such as weather stations, satellites, and ocean buoys. Thus, this capability of handling these big data helps in improving forecasts. By examining weather patterns, the impact of climate change on biodiversity, and risks of extreme weather events could be predicted, helping us to make informed decisions. It aids in the design of energy-efficient buildings, hence optimizing resource utilization. The AI model enhances climate simulations, which aids in long-term climate predictions. By understanding these climate change impacts, more effective climate adaptation techniques could be rolled out.

***AI in the Business Sector***

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is capable of accurately predicting where and when it is best to make decisions to improve overall business gains. It can analyze and determine the reasons for the success and failure of business models. It enables managers to make informed decisions through market research and providing corrective solutions to business challenges.

***AI in Data Privacy and Protection***

Unrestrained data use for training and modeling AI Systems increases the chances of exposing personally identifiable information (PII). AI plays a significant role in data privacy and protection. To tackle this situation, personal data could be encrypted for training purposes. A data anonymization technique called differential privacy adds noise to training data, making it difficult to re-identify specific individuals. Homomorphic encryption is another method for privacy-preserving machine learning. It allows computations on encrypted data without decryption. In federated learning methods, AI models are trained on local devices keeping the raw data private, and models are integrated centrally.

"Artificial Intelligence (AI) is capable of accurately predicting where and when it is best to make decisions to improve overall business gains."

***AI in Media***

With the introduction of Chat-GPT's AI writing capabilities, fields like journalism and even scriptwriting have reaped benefits. The two main aspects that are now being used by different content streaming services are Personalized content development and content recommendation. This will boost the business's profits. AI-modeled tools are revolutionizing the media industry. These include automated 3D animation tools and AI-powered music composition tools.

***AI in the Financial Sector***

In financial institutions, channels such as AI chatbots, automated emails, and AI voice assistants assist in clarifying customer queries, resulting in more customer satisfaction. They also provide more personalized guidance to customers for most of the common queries that are prominent. The data entry tasks in these institutions could also be performed by Robotic Process Automation, eliminating time-consuming procedures. Fraud detection, accurate prediction of market conditions, and timely audits can be done through AI. AI-powered big data analysis will assist traders in mitigating risks and investing in proper assets.

***AI in Cleaning Services***

The invention of robotic vacuum cleaners that can smartly schedule and optimize the cleaning process without the supervision of humans has become an ordinary thing. It can also make real-time adjustments as it learns data through foot traffic and usage patterns.

***AI in Manufacturing***

Adaptation of AI leads to speedier production and predictive maintenance of the equipment used. It can collaborate with other people to accomplish tasks quickly and precisely. It takes the repetitive parts and free human counterparts to focus on their creative tasks.

***AI in the Retail Sector***

AI helps retailers create and automate processes, lowering costs by automating tasks such as inventory tracking, supply chain management, and routine customer

*Article by Alfiya A*

trends. It can also sustainably channel energy usage, thus reducing wastage and minimizing environmental impacts.

Areas where AI can make a notable change are endless. At the same time, the fear of AI displacing human jobs will prevail, as AI is potentially improving its capabilities day by day.

Challenges faced by the massive use of AI include the possibility of data breaches in the data provided for AI training and model generation, the possibility of biased prediction, computer power and resource constraints, the misuse of deepfakes, automated weapons falling into the wrong hands, and so on.

One way to tackle data privacy issues in training data is the use of *Infosys Enterprise Data Privacy Suite* (iEDPS), a comprehensive privacy and data protection product. This patented Infosys product gives capabilities to diagnose, design, deliver, and defend privacy and security risks. Data masking is a key feature provided by iEDPS to encrypt data before it is taken as training data. This will help in securing highly sensitive datasets before their training and modeling phases. Many masking algorithms present in the product will help to accurately mask data based on its behavior. The discovery feature in iEDPS will discover PII using AI and NLP. Data generation is also a feature offered by iEDPS, which will help create a tremendous amount of training data sets that will mimic the real-world data, thus ensuring data privacy.

We must ensure that the training data is diverse and includes the underrepresented group. To mitigate AI biases, Collaboration among researchers, policymakers, and practitioners is required; the workforce should be able to scale up and utilize AI to do mundane tasks while humans do the critical thinking and decision-making part, as intuition and initiative are some of the soft skills that are exclusive for humans. Ultimately, considering the massive potential of AI, we must use this technology responsibly to advance human knowledge and capabilities at an accelerated pace.

***About Infosys***

*Infosys is a global leader in next-generation digital services and consulting. We enable clients in more than 50 countries to navigate their digital transformation. With over three decades of experience in managing the systems and workings of global enterprises, we expertly steer our clients through their digital journey. We do it by enabling the enterprise with an AI-powered core that helps prioritize the execution of change. We also empower the business with agile digital at scale to deliver unprecedented levels of performance and customer delight. Our always-on learning agenda drives their continuous improvement through building and transferring digital skills, expertise, and ideas from our innovation ecosystem.*

*Visit www.infosys.com to see how Infosys (NYSE: INFY) can help your enterprise navigate your next.*

# NIST Publishes Major Revision to Cybersecurity Framework (CSF): What Organizations Need to Know

**What is NIST CSF?**

The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Cybersecurity Framework (CSF) is a risk-based approach to managing cybersecurity risk across an organization. It provides organizations with leading practice guidelines to implement or enhance an effective cybersecurity program.

**What happened to NIST CSF?**

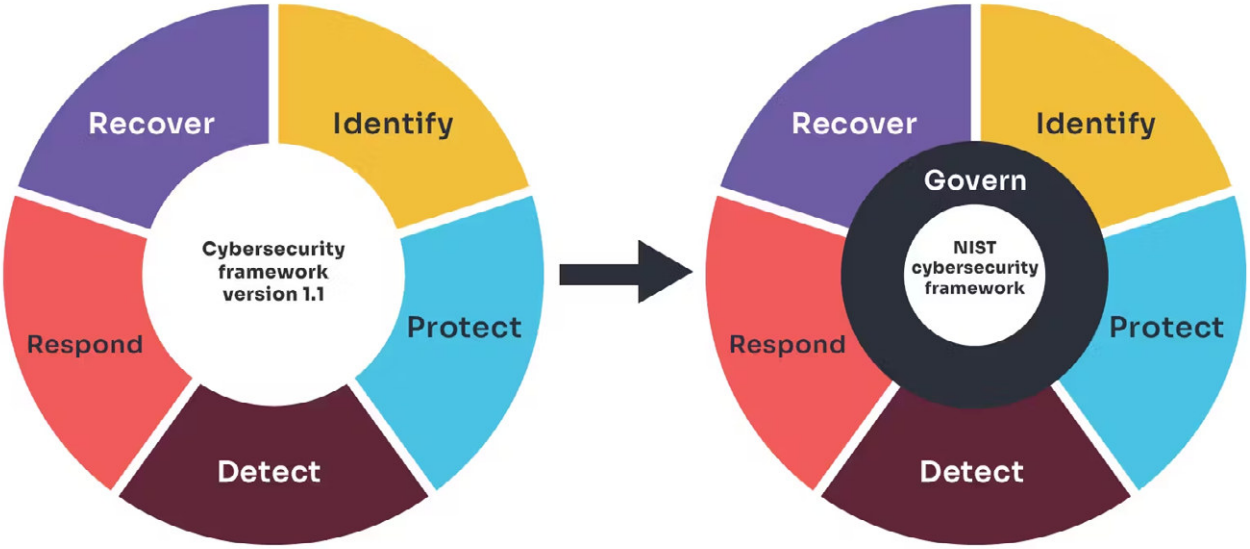
NIST CSF 1.0 was released in 2014 to help critical infrastructure organizations better protect their data and systems from cyber threats. Over the last decade, organizations in all industries and with varied missions and objectives, not just critical infrastructure organizations, adopted NIST CSF as the foundation of their cybersecurity programs. As with all NIST guidance on cybersecurity, NIST reviewed the use of CSF and solicited feedback for enhancements from the public. In 2024, NIST released a new version, NIST CSF 2.0, to address the evolving cybersecurity landscape.

**What are the major changes from 1.0 to 2.0?**

Added a fifth function (i.e., domain) to address governance

Cybersecurity is not solely an information technology issue. To that extent, NIST CSF 2.0 has put a stronger focus on governance, highlighting that cybersecurity is a significant enterprise risk, like a financial risk or reputational risk. Cybersecurity strategies and decision making should be considered alongside other strategic decisions.

*Article from Bakertilly*




**Added more details on cybersecurity supply chain risk management**

As more organizations move systems and data to vendor hosted and cloud systems, cyber risk management changes what and how protections are applied. With NIST CSF 2.0 there is an emphasis on cybersecurity supply chain risk management and secure software development. The new emphasis guides organizations to identify technology suppliers/third parties, determine the criticality and risk of those supply chain partners, and select appropriate protections for implementation.

***Added, clarified, and reorganized the categories (e.g., groupings of protections) and subcategories (e.g., protections or controls)***

See below for some key differences between NIST CSF 1.0 and 2.0.

**Changes to categories**

| NIST 2.0 Category | Description | Change |
|---|---|---|
| GV.OC – Organizational Context | The circumstances - mission, stakeholder expectations, dependencies, and legal, regulatory, and contractual requirements - surrounding the organization's cybersecurity risk management decisions are understood. | New Category for NIST 2.0 |
| GV.RM – Risk Management Strategy | The organization's priorities, constraints, risk tolerance and appetite statements, and assumptions are established, communicated, and used to support operational risk decisions. | Updated Category, formerly ID.RM |
| GV.RR – Roles, Responsibilities, and Authorities | Cybersecurity roles, responsibilities, and authorities to foster accountability, performance assessment, and continuous improvement are established and communicated. | New Category for NIST 2.0 |
| GV.PO – Policy | Organizational cybersecurity policy is established, communicated, and enforced. | New Category for NIST 2.0 |
| GV.OV - Oversight | Results of organization-wide cybersecurity risk management activities and performance are used to inform, improve, and adjust the risk management strategy. | New Category for NIST 2.0 |
| GV.SC – Cybersecurity Supply Chain Risk Management | Cyber supply chain risk management processes are identified, established, managed, monitored, and improved by organizational stakeholders. | New Category for NIST 2.0 |
| ID.IM – Improvement | Improvements to organizational cybersecurity risk management processes, procedures and activities are identified across all CSF Functions. | New Category for NIST 2.0 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| PR.AA – Identity, Management, Authentication, and Access Control | Access to physical and logical assets is limited to authorized users, services, and hardware and managed commensurate with the assessed risk of unauthorized access | Updated Category, formerly PR.AC |
| PR.PS – Platform Security | The hardware, software (e.g., firmware, operating systems, applications), and services of physical and virtual platforms are managed consistent with the organization's risk strategy to protect their confidentiality, integrity, and availability. | New Category for NIST 2.0 |
| PR.IR – Technology Infrastructure Resilience | Security architectures are managed with the organization's risk strategy to protect asset | New Category for NIST 2.0 |
| RS.MA – Incident Management | Responses to detected cybersecurity incidents are managed. | New Category for NIST 2.0 |
| RC.RP – Incident Recovery Plan Execution | Restoration activities are performed to ensure operational availability of systems and services affected by cybersecurity incidents. | New Category for NIST 2.0 |

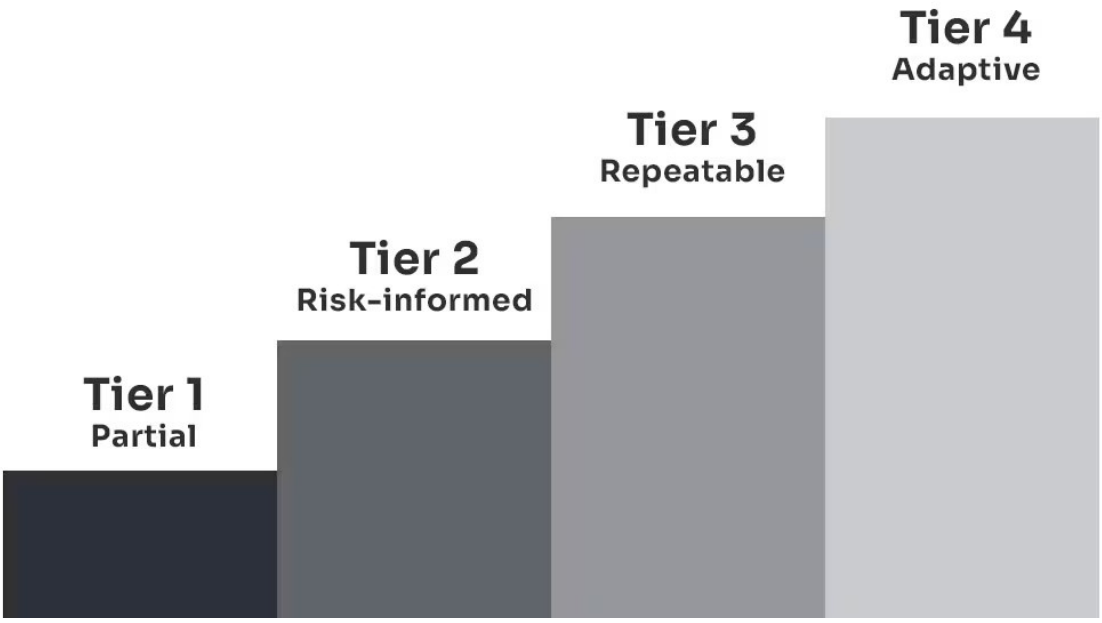
**Changes to subcategories**

| NIST 2.0 Category | Description | Change |
|---|---|---|
| **Organizational Context (GV.OC)** | | |
| GV.OC-02 | Internal and external stakeholders are understood, and their needs and expectations regarding cybersecurity risk management are understood and considered. | New Subcategory for NIST 2.0 |
| **Risk Management Strategy (GV.RM)** | | |
| GV.RM-05 | Lines of communication across the organization are established for cybersecurity risks, including risks from suppliers and other third parties. | New Subcategory for NIST 2.0 |
| GV.RM-06 | A standardized method for calculating, documenting, categorizing, and prioritizing cybersecurity risks is established and communicated. | New Subcategory for NIST 2.0 |
| GV.RM-07 | Strategic opportunities (i.e., positive risks) are characterized and are included in organizational cybersecurity risk discussions. | New Subcategory for NIST 2.0 |
| **Roles, Responsibilities, and Authorities (GV.RR)** | | |
| GV.RR-01 | Organizational leadership is responsible and accountable for cybersecurity risk and fosters a culture that is risk-aware, ethical, and continually improving. | Updated Subcategory, formerly PR.AT-4 |
| **Policy (GV.PO)** | | |
| GV.PO-02 | Policy for managing cybersecurity risks is reviewed, updated, communicated, and enforced to reflect changes in requirements, threats, technology, and organizational mission. | Updated Subcategory, formerly ID.GV-1 |
| **Oversight (GV.OV)** | | |
| GV.OV-01 | Cybersecurity risk management strategy outcomes are reviewed to inform and adjust strategy and direction. | New Subcategory for NIST 2.0 |
| GV.OV-02 | The cybersecurity risk management strategy is reviewed and adjusted to ensure coverage of organizational requirements and risks. | New Subcategory for NIST 2.0 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Cybersecurity Supply Chain Risk Management (GV.SC)** | | |
| GV.SC-04 | Suppliers are known and prioritized by criticality. | Updated Subcategory, formerly ID.SC-2 |
| GV.SC-06 | Planning and due diligence are performed to reduce risks before entering into formal supplier or other third-party relationships | New Subcategory for NIST 2.0 |
| GV.SC-09 | Supply chain security practices are integrated into cybersecurity and enterprise risk management programs, and their performance is monitored throughout the technology product and service life cycle. | New Subcategory for NIST 2.0 |
| GV.SC-10 | Cybersecurity supply chain risk management plans include provisions for activities that occur after the conclusion of a partnership or service agreement. | New Subcategory for NIST 2.0 |
| **Asset Management (ID.AM)** | | |
| ID.AM-07 | Inventories of data and corresponding metadata for designated data types are maintained. | New Subcategory for NIST 2.0 |
| ID.AM-08 | Systems, hardware, software, services, and data are managed throughout their life cycles. | Updated Subcategory, formerly PR.DS-3 |
| **Risk Assessment (ID.RA)** | | |
| ID.RA-07 | Changes and exceptions are managed, assessed for risk impact, recorded, and tracked. | Updated Subcategory, formerly PR.IP-3 |
| ID.RA-10 | Critical suppliers are assessed prior to acquisition. | New Subcategory for NIST 2.0 |
| **Incident Recovery Plan Execution (RC.RP)** | | |
| RC.RP-02 | Recovery actions are selected, scoped, prioritized, and performed. | New Subcategory for NIST 2.0 |
| RC.RP-03 | The integrity of backups and other restoration assets is verified before using them for restoration. | New Subcategory for NIST 2.0 |
| RC.RP-04 | Critical mission functions and cybersecurity risk management are considered to establish post-incident operational norms. | New Subcategory for NIST 2.0 |
| RC.RP-05 | The integrity of restored assets is verified, systems and services are restored, and normal operating status is confirmed. | New Subcategory for NIST 2.0 |
| RC.RP-06 | The end of incident recovery is declared based on criteria, and incident-related documentation is completed. | New Subcategory for NIST 2.0 |

**What is the first step to take if my organization doesn't use NIST CSF?**

Organizations can use the NIST CSF Tiers to help guide their implementation of cybersecurity risk management practices. Using the tiers helps set short and long-term goals for managing cyber risks by implementing the NIST CSF protections over time as you can deploy resources effectively. Also using the tiers allows the organization to demonstrate continuous improvement within their cybersecurity control environment, which is immensely helpful when reporting to organization leadership and governance boards.




**What steps should my organization take if we already use NIST CSF 1.0?**

Organizations should perform a gap assessment between 1.0 and 2.0. Then, develop an approach for routine analysis of the cybersecurity control environment (e.g., semi-annual assessments, periodic tabletop exercises, third-party independent audits) to continue enhancing the maturity of their cybersecurity risk management practices.

# Deloitte and Onapsis Form Strategic Alliance to Help Shared Clients Secure SAP S/4HANA Cloud®, RISE with SAP® and Cloud ERP Digital Transformations

*Onapsis, a leading provider of enterprise resource planning (ERP) cybersecurity and compliance solutions, and Deloitte, a global leader in security consulting services, are proud to announce their new strategic alliance to help their shared clients transform and secure their SAP digital transformation projects.*

The alliance combines Deloitte's SAP cyber risk management capabilities with Onapsis' market-leading platform focused on securing clients' ERP systems.

"We look forward to offering Deloitte and Onapsis' shared clients a path to adopting SAP's latest enhanced capabilities such as RISE with SAP and SAP S/4HANA Cloud securely by design," says Mariano Nunez, CEO and co-founder at Onapsis. "By helping our clients safeguard their critical SAP systems, we can also help them continue to prioritize their cybersecurity and regulatory compliance programs while being operationally efficient."

> "We look forward to offering Deloitte and Onapsis' shared clients a path to adopting SAP's latest enhanced capabilities such as RISE with SAP and SAP S/4HANA Cloud securely by design"

Sachin Singh, a Deloitte Risk & Financial Advisory managing director in cyber and strategic risk, Deloitte & Touche LLP adds, "While most organizations continue to pioneer their digital transformations, Deloitte offers our clients ways to transform securely and in compliance with each organization's specific regulatory and organizational needs. Offering Onapsis capabilities fully embedded within our SAP methodology is another demonstration of Deloitte's continued investment in the growing cybersecurity ecosystem."

Deloitte and Onapsis have jointly developed solutions that Deloitte will provide to the organizations' shared clients including:

- ***Vulnerability Management (VM):*** Deloitte's VM offering for SAP encompasses cyber assessment, strategy, design, configuration, and integration services that align to leading standards and SAP recommended guidelines. The offering will now expand for shared clients to also leverage the Onapsis Assess® platform to establish a secure-by-design framework for SAP implementations. By establishing a safeguarded SAP environment at the outset, clients can be able to significantly reduce the cost of rework to remediate vulnerabilities post go-live and bridge the gap between cyber security and IT ERP teams.

- ***Secure Software Development:*** Deloitte's Secure Software Development and DevSecOps offering will now add the Onapsis Assess® and Onapsis Control® platforms into every stage of clients' development processes in SAP to build in security, compliance, and quality checks. By automatically scanning code in development, examining transports during release and continuous monitoring in production, clients can achieve a strong agile foundation for continuous improvement throughout the development lifecycle.

- ***Threat Detection & Monitoring:*** Deloitte's Threat Detection & Monitoring offering leverages the Onapsis Defend® platform, combining Deloitte's SAP-specific library of security use cases and research from Onapsis Research Labs®. This provides clients' security teams with the visibility and context needed to speed response to threats targeting ERP applications. Further, clients can efficiently integrate with existing security operations center technologies such as security information and event management (SIEM), which offers the flexibility to incorporate enterprise resource planning (ERP) incidents, root cause analysis, and mitigation guidance into broader security management and incident response processes.

"By incorporating vulnerability management and secure coding as standard services, we offer our clients services and solutions that can help them mitigate cybersecurity threats and safeguard their digital assets—while utilizing broad SAP security approaches. Together, Deloitte and Onapsis can help our clients achieve their ERP transformation goals in a secure and resilient manner," said Kevin Heckel, Deloitte Risk & Financial Advisory application security solution leader and managing director, Deloitte & Touche LLP.

command of technology, and strategic technology alliances to advise our clients across industries as they build their future. Deloitte is proud to be part of the largest global professional services network serving our clients in the markets that are most important to them. Bringing more than 175 years of service, our network of member firms spans more than 150 countries and territories. Learn how Deloitte's approximately 457,000 people worldwide connect for impact at www.deloitte.com

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# Pioneering Digital Solutions for Complex Manufacturing: LTIMindtree's Strategic Partnership with SAP

*Combining the collective power of SAP Business Technology Platform (SAP BTP) and GROW with SAP to innovate for engineer-to-order and project-centric manufacturing businesses*

LTIMindtree, a global technology consulting and digital solutions company, has expanded its partnership with SAP, a leading provider of enterprise application software, to deliver innovations for complex manufacturing industries. The collaboration aims to tackle the unique challenges of this sector, offering streamlined solutions that enhance efficiency, reduce costs, and ensure seamless upgrades.

Today, manufacturers are building increasingly complex products, often tailored to their customers' unique functional requirements, while competing in an increasingly fast-paced economic environment. The alliance focuses on utilizing SAP's advanced technologies, including SAP BTP and SAP Business AI, integrated with GROW with SAP solution. These tools are designed to provide a foundation that simplifies upgrades, like

> “By focusing on simplifying core business processes and transforming with SAP BTP extensions and AI solutions, we are setting a new standard in the industry. Our extensive experience with complex manufacturing processes positions us uniquely to create purpose-built impactful solutions for our clients.”

moving to SAP S/4HANA Cloud, while also offering pre-built extensions for complex manufacturing processes.

Vineet Moroney, SVP and Global Head of Enterprise Applications, LTIMindtree emphasized the strategic nature of the partnership, “By focusing on simplifying core business processes and transforming with SAP BTP extensions and AI solutions, we are setting a new standard in the industry. Our extensive experience with complex manufacturing processes positions us uniquely to create purpose-built impactful solutions for our clients.”

Reflecting on the collaboration, Jan Gilg, President and Chief Product Officer, Cloud ERP, SAP stated, “LTIMindtree is one of our strategic SAP Cloud ERP partners who has a proven track record in delivering customer-focused solutions globally. They bring the business process extension to SAP Cloud ERP with the depth of their business knowledge and experiences for our customers that drive complex engineer-to-order and project-driven manufacturing processes.”

***About LTIMindtree***

*LTIMindtree is a global technology consulting and digital solutions company that enables enterprises across industries to reimagine business models, accelerate innovation, and maximize growth by harnessing digital technologies. As a digital transformation partner to more than 700 clients, LTIMindtree brings extensive domain and technology expertise to help drive superior competitive differentiation, customer experiences, and business outcomes in a converging world. Powered by 81,000+ talented and entrepreneurial professionals across more than 30 countries, LTIMindtree — a Larsen & Toubro Group company — combines the industry-acclaimed strengths of erstwhile Larsen and Toubro Infotech and Mindtree in solving the most complex business challenges and delivering transformation at scale. For more information, please visit https://www.ltimindtree.com/.*

# Tricentis Accelerates Customer Adoption of SAP S/4HANA Cloud with Enhanced Integration and AI Capabilities

*Growing partnership underscores Tricentis' commitment to supporting SAP's mission of enabling enterprises to accelerate their transformation to SAP cloud solutions*

*Tricentis*, a global leader in continuous testing and quality engineering, today announced new integrations and AI capabilities that help support customer adoption of SAP S/4HANA Cloud. Tricentis is a premier sponsor at the *SAP Sapphire & ASUG Annual Conference* taking place in Orlando, FL June 3-5 (Booth #500) and in Barcelona June 11-13 (Booth #7.102).

As a distinguished SAP partner in the SAP Cloud ALM space, Tricentis continues to strengthen its position in the SAP ecosystem with Tricentis solutions now being adopted for several key SAP frameworks and tools, including the RISE with SAP adoption framework, SAP Activate, and SAP Cloud ALM.

Further new integrations and AI capabilities for customers include:

- ***Tricentis is now a part of the RISE With SAP adoption framework. The framework is designed to support customers and partners with*** prescriptive methodology and precise tool selection to effectively deploy SAP cloud software. By including Tricentis in the RISE with SAP adoption framework, customers receive detailed guidelines on leveraging Tricentis solutions to help expedite and reduce the risk of their RISE with SAP transformation. This helps ensure efficient and lower risk deployment of SAP cloud ERP.

- ***Tricentis' capabilities are integrated with SAP Cloud ALM,*** enhancing the customer experience by providing a streamlined journey for the activities in the application lifecycle powered by the Tricentis test automation solution. With SAP Cloud ALM and Tricentis' capabilities, a unified and streamlined approach to managing the entire application lifecycle is available for customers, helping to ensure higher quality and faster delivery of SAP applications.

- ***Tricentis is demoing AI capabilities to auto-generate test cases from SAP Cloud ALM***. This innovative feature is built on SAP Business Technology Platform (SAP BTP) AI and infrastructure services and leverages Tricentis expertise in both test management and SAP business processes to generate comprehensive test scenarios for SAP Cloud ALM. This significantly helps reduce the time and effort required for digital transformation. This advancement not only accelerates the QA processes but also enhances accuracy and coverage, which can lead to more robust and reliable SAP deployments.

2023 marked a record year for Tricentis in its SAP partnership, with 46% increase in YoY revenue growth and 40% YoY growth in new customers onboarded globally.

***Darryl Gray, Global Vice President, Software Partner Success at SAP, commented:*** "This is our fourth year with Tricentis as an SAP Solution Extensions partner since 2020 when it launched its first SAP Solution Extension for SAP Solution Manager. To see its growth with AI, RISE with SAP, and SAP Cloud ALM– it's truly an exciting time for our partnership. We look forward to seeing Tricentis continue to help our joint customers accelerate transformation journeys and gain efficiencies while they move to the cloud."

**VJ Kumar, SVP and General Manager, Strategic Partnerships at Tricentis, commented:** "Tricentis began its partnership with SAP back in 2020 as an SAP Solution Extensions partner and in the years since we have been fortunate enough to deepen our relationship to such an extent that we are driving true impact for SAP transformation journey. As businesses strive for seamless digital transformations, Tricentis aims to be a critical technology provider in the process, offering advanced quality assurance solutions that help accelerate, de-risk, and optimize the implementations, upgrades, and transformations of customer's SAP applications."

**Hear Tricentis speakers and customer success stories**

*AI-powered innovations in SAP Cloud ALM with Tricentis solutions*

- What: This session explores the powerful synergy between the SAP Cloud ALM and the Tricentis QA Solutions, focusing on how this strategic partnership is allowing SAP Customers to unlock efficiencies and increase rate of innovation, while capitalizing on the unique opportunity offered by AI-based technologies.
- Speakers: Marc Thier, SVP, Head of Customer Experience & Solutions for SAP and Patrik Fiegl, VP, Global Head Strategic Product Partnerships for Tricentis
- When: Tuesday, June 4 at 2:00 p.m. ET
- Where: Theater 21

*Using Tricentis at Flowers Foods to speed transformation with SAP S/4HANA*

- What: Using Tricentis at Flowers Foods to speed transformation with SAP S/4HANA
- Speaker: Sundar Iyer, Senior Director of QA and Release for Flowers Foods and Brad Purcell, Senior Director, Business Development & Strategic Alliances for Tricentis
- When: Wednesday, June 5 at 1:00 p.m. ET
- Where: Theater 16

***About Tricentis***

*Tricentis is a global leader in continuous testing and quality engineering. The Tricentis AI-based, continuous testing portfolio of products provide a new and fundamentally different way to perform software testing. An approach that's totally automated, fully codeless, and intelligently driven by AI. It addresses both agile development and complex enterprise apps, enabling enterprises to accelerate their digital transformation by dramatically increasing software release speed, reducing costs, and improving software quality. Widely credited for reinventing software testing for DevOps, cloud, and enterprise applications, Tricentis has been recognized as a leader by all major industry analysts, including Forrester, Gartner, and IDC. Tricentis has more than 3,000 customers, including the largest brands in the world, such as McKesson, Allianz, Telstra, Dolby, and Vodafone. To learn more, visit https://www.tricentis.com. SAP and other SAP products and services mentioned herein as well as their respective logos are trademarks or registered trademarks of SAP SE in Germany and other countries. Please see https://www.sap.com/copyright for additional trademark information and notices*

# Sunway Group Selects Rimini Street's Software Support and Managed Services to Fund and Staff AI and CX Projects

*With significant cost savings and optimization of IT resources, Malaysian conglomerate reallocates people, time and money towards digital transformation initiatives*

*Rimini Street, Inc.*, a global provider of end-to-end enterprise software support, products and services, the leading third-party support provider for Oracle and SAP software, and a Salesforce and AWS partner, today announced that Sunway Group, Malaysia's leading conglomerate, has selected *Rimini ONE™*, Rimini Street's powerful combination of Rimini Support™ and Rimini Manage™ services, to improve software support and capabilities, optimize IT spending, and reallocate resources towards strategic digital transformation projects.

> "The people that we have doing the upgrade, we could have found better use for them. There are many digital initiatives the group would like to embrace. However, because of the resources that were stuck in the upgrade process, these projects were constantly pushed behind."

Kevin Khoo, chief information officer of Sunway, shared, "Rimini Street has enabled our acceleration in digital adoption journey by providing cost savings which we reinvested back into technology initiatives, has given us peace of mind with our system support needs, and confidence in our ability to explore new opportunities because we know Rimini Street will always be able to support us."

**Sunway Finds a Trusted IT Partner and Growth Enabler in Rimini Street**

In early 2000, Sunway selected JD Edwards as its core ERP system, adopting it across all 13 businesses of the conglomerate which includes construction, property, healthcare, leisure, hospitality, REITs and more.

"JD Edwards made it so easy for us to customize to meet our business needs. We put in our best practices into the system, and created a center of excellence that can do a lot of JD Edwards implementation customization by ourselves," said Khoo. "But when we had to do a software upgrade, the process cost a lot, not only the dollar value, but also the downtime associated with the upgrades and the people that we have to put into the project, which includes implementation, testing and support after the upgrade."

He adds, "The people that we have doing the upgrade, we could have found better use for them. There are many digital initiatives the group would like to embrace. However, because of the resources that were stuck in the upgrade process, these projects were constantly pushed behind."

Another challenge for Khoo and team were the hurdles it took to get support from Oracle when critical issues arose. Khoo recalled, "Here we are fighting fire, and all we can do is wait. Oracle typically does not support customizations, and will begin to ask questions such as 'Is this part of their work, or is this something that we have to address ourselves?'"

After speaking with many Rimini Street clients and receiving "nothing short of amazing comments," according to Khoo, he began his engagement by first selecting Rimini Support, then adding Rimini Manage following the success and value derived from the former.

Since choosing Rimini Street as their trusted IT partner, Sunway continues to benefit from:

- Direct access to a named, dedicated Primary Support Engineer (PSE) backed by the expertise and knowledge of hundreds of engineers across the globe
- Expert support and management of its software including support for customizations at no extra charge
- Guaranteed 15 additional years of stable, reliable and compliant ERP investment
- Savings of 50% on annual support fees and up to 90% on total support costs

"The cost savings from Rimini Street have given us the opportunity to invest in innovation, especially AI. Every dollar we've saved has been reinvested to strategic technology adoption that aligns with our key business goals," said Khoo. "Without Rimini, a ton of our projects would still be stuck at the proposal stage. Instead, they've allowed us to start executing AI projects and other major tech initiatives that will be fundamental to competing and providing an excellent customer experience going forward."

Learn more about Sunway Group's story of innovation in partnership with Rimini Street here.

*Explore the full Rimini Street portfolio* of ultra-responsive, trusted and proven support, managed services, security, integration, observability, professional services and Rimini ONE™ end-to-end outsourcing solutions for SAP, Oracle and Salesforce applications to support competitive advantage, profitability and growth.

***About Rimini Street, Inc.***

*Rimini Street, Inc. (Nasdaq: RMNI), a Russell 2000® Company, is a global provider of end-to-end enterprise software support, products and services, the leading third-party support provider for Oracle and SAP software and a Salesforce and AWS partner. The Company has operations globally and offers a comprehensive family of unified solutions to run, manage, support, customize, configure, connect, protect, monitor, and optimize enterprise application, database, and technology software, and enables clients to achieve better business outcomes, significantly reduce costs and reallocate resources for innovation. To date, over 5,500 Fortune 500, Fortune Global 100, midmarket, public sector, and other organizations from a broad range of industries have relied on Rimini Street as their trusted enterprise software solutions provider. To learn more, please visit riministreet.com.*

# SAP Enters into Agreement to Acquire WalkMe, Driving Business Transformation by Enhancing the Customer Experience and Enriching SAP Business AI Offerings

*SAP and WalkMe Ltd. announced that the companies have entered into a definitive agreement under which SAP will acquire WalkMe, a leader in digital adoption platforms (DAPs).*

WalkMe's solutions help organizations navigate constant technology change by providing users with advanced guidance and automation features that enable them to execute workflows seamlessly across any number of applications. This results in higher adoption of the underlying application and as such drives value realization.

The Executive and Supervisory Boards of SAP SE and the board of directors of WalkMe have approved the transaction for US $14.00 per share in an all-cash transaction, representing an equity value of approximately US $1.5 billion. The offer price represents a 45% premium to WalkMe's closing share price on June 4, 2024.

The envisioned combination complements SAP's Business Transformation Management portfolio around SAP Signavio and SAP LeanIX solutions to help customers on their transformation journeys.

"Applications, processes, data and people are the four key elements of a successful business transformation," said Christian Klein, CEO and member of the Executive Board of SAP SE. "By acquiring WalkMe, we are doubling down on the support we provide our end users, helping them to quickly adopt new solutions and features to get the maximum value out of their IT investments."

**WalkMe: Focus on Analyzing Adoption and Business Transformation**

"We are thrilled to join forces with SAP. This acquisition marks a significant milestone in our journey, providing us with the resources and customer base necessary to enhance our product offerings and expand our market reach," said Dan Adika, CEO of WalkMe. "By leveraging SAP's extensive ecosystem, we are poised to unlock substantial growth opportunities and deliver even greater value to our customers. Together, we look forward to a future filled with innovation and exceptional service."

WalkMe helps organizations boost enterprise productivity and lower risk by enabling consistent, effective and efficient use of software and the workflows it enables. Its DAP works on top of an organization's application landscape, detects where people encounter friction and provides the tailored support and automation they need to complete the job to be done, right in the flow of work, across any application. Importantly, WalkMe will continue to fully support non-SAP applications.

Soon, WalkMe will launch the WalkMeX copilot, which will use WalkMe's contextual awareness and AI to suggest the best next step for any workflow, anywhere. WalkMeX has the capability to always be on, serving as an overlay to any application, including copilots from different vendors that companies use in their landscapes. Integrating the strength of WalkMe's adoption capabilities with SAP's copilot Joule will boost AI assistant and productivity gains for all SAP customers. Additionally, integrating distinctive e-learning features in the SAP Enable Now solution with WalkMe will form the center of SAP's people-centric transformation approach going forward.

The acquisition is subject to customary closing conditions, including the receipt of WalkMe shareholder approval and necessary regulatory clearances, and is expected to close in the third quarter of 2024. The impact of the transaction on SAP's non-IFRS earnings per share for fiscal 2024 is expected to be immaterial.

Visit the *SAP News Center*. Follow SAP at *@SAPNews.*

***About WalkMe***

*WalkMe (NASDAQ: WKME), headquartered in Tel Aviv, Israel, pioneered DAP innovations and solutions so companies can effectively navigate the constant change brought on by technology. With WalkMe, organizations drive enterprise productivity and reduce risk by ensuring consistent, responsible, and efficient adoption of software and the workflows it powers. Our AI-driven platform sits on top of an organization's tech stack, identifies where people experience friction, and delivers the personalized guidance and automation needed to get the job done, right in the flow of work. Customers like IBM, Nestle, ThermoFisher Scientific, and the U.S. Dept. of Defense trust WalkMe to create the people-centric experiences required to boost the effectiveness of their workflows and maximize software ROI.*

***About SAP***

*As a global leader in enterprise applications and business AI, SAP (NYSE:SAP) stands at the nexus of business and technology. For over 50 years, organizations have trusted SAP to bring out their best by uniting business-critical operations spanning finance, procurement, HR, supply chain, and customer experience. For more information, visit www.sap.com.*

# Research Finds 90% of Manufacturers Are Utilizing AI But Many Still Feel Behind in Meaningful AI Use Cases

*Rootstock's annual survey finds that manufacturers with a Signal Chain are further ahead in digital transformation and better able to navigate today's market*

Rootstock Software, a recognized leader in the Manufacturing Cloud ERP space, today announced results from its 2*024 State of Manufacturing Technology Survey*. This study assessed how manufacturers view their digital transformation journeys, where they are currently making tech investments, and where they see opportunities for emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI). Despite 90% of manufacturers utilizing some form of AI in their operations, the survey revealed there is a level of imposter syndrome when it comes to AI implementation and progress, with 38% reporting they feel behind their peers.

Compiled based on a survey of 508 manufacturers across countries in North America, Europe, and Asia, Rootstock's State of Manufacturing Technology Survey is a follow-on to the company's inaugural *2023 report*, designed to uncover how manufacturers are progressing in digital transformation year-over-year. The 2023 report found that the top two barriers to digital transformation were a lack of cross-departmental collaboration / coordination (37%) and limited access to data (34%). Comparatively, this year's report uncovered a clear shift to constraints surrounding budget/resources (31%) and time (27%), which emerged as the new top obstacles to digital transformation initiatives in 2024.

"Today's economic climate is driving an urgent need for manufacturers to do more with less," said *Raj Badarinath*, Chief Product & Marketing Officer at Rootstock Software. "To navigate the volatile micro and macro trends occurring at a local and global scale, manufacturers are recalibrating technology investments and resetting what ERP means in the age of AI. In years past, they've hobbled along on incremental benefits from legacy solutions. But now they're seeing the benefits of a modern, cloud-first, AI-ready platform approach. Acquiring these capabilities will deliver the benefits that matter most to manufacturers, namely precise control over their resources, the ability to adapt to ever-changing conditions, and more time to focus on initiatives that truly deliver value."

Additional key findings from the 2024 Manufacturing Technology Report include:

- ***Manufacturers are optimistic about digital transformation progress.*** According to survey data, manufacturers show a positive outlook on digital transformation (63%), with the majority feeling they're at least on par with peers (39%) or slightly ahead (24%).
- ***Manufacturers anticipate significant negative impacts from current economic conditions.*** The top concerns were unreliable suppliers (39%) and decreased demand (36%).
- ***Investments in enterprise software are critical to growth.*** Over half (51%) of manufacturers are planning to increase spending in this area (such as ERP, CRM, HCM, SCM, finance), underscoring the importance of these digital tools for future growth.
- ***Cloud ERP is bringing manufacturers significant benefits.*** Manufacturers leveraging Cloud ERP reported reduced overall costs (56%), improved IT security (46%) and enhanced business agility and resiliency (46%).
- ***The adoption of a Manufacturing Signal Chain translates to digital transformation success.*** Manufacturers who have deployed a Signal Chain strategy are farther ahead in their digital transformation journeys (76%) than those that have not (8%).

"The Manufacturing Signal Chain has become a powerful paradigm for manufacturers seeking to optimize their digital transformation initiatives and bring to bear an AI-driven decisioning platform," added Rootstock's Vice President of Product Marketing, *Stu Johnson.* "Our survey demonstrates the effectiveness of this approach, and we expect to see early Signal Chain adopters thrive in the years ahead, armed with the data needed to make better decisions that drive growth."

For complete survey findings and details, check out Rootstock's study findings here: *https://clouderp.rootstock.com/rootstock-state-of-manufacturing-survey.*

***About Rootstock***

*Rootstock Software provides the leading Manufacturing Cloud ERP, which empowers hundreds of manufacturers to turbocharge their operations in today's dynamic, post-pandemic world. Natively built on the Salesforce Platform, Rootstock delivers a future-proof solution. With it, manufacturers gain the agility to continually transform their business to meet evolving customer needs, navigate emerging challenges, and accelerate success. In addition, the "connectability" of Rootstock Cloud ERP gives manufacturers 360° visibility to collaborate with suppliers, trading partners, and the broader value chain. As Rootstock continues to grow, stay tuned to the company's latest customers, career opportunities, and LinkedIn posts.*

# Sage Announces New Native-Cloud Innovations in Sage Estimating

*Sage Estimating further streamlines the estimating process with cloud-enabled collaboration and advanced bid analysis capabilities*

*Sage*, the trusted software provider for small and mid-sized businesses (SMBs) in the construction industry, today announces the addition of new native-cloud innovations for bid leveling, collaboration, and insight in *Sage Estimating*, the most widely used cost estimating solution in the industry. Sage Estimating streamlines the estimating process, increases accuracy, and helps construction businesses win more jobs at the right price.

Sage Estimating's new Sage BidMatrix native-cloud platform enables estimating teams to level bids, collaborate, and gain insights. The solution helps estimators effectively manage the chaotic nature of the subcontractor selection process. Sage BidMatrix makes it easy to compare subcontractor bids, evaluate project risks, and optimize bid strategies for greater success.

In addition, a new modern, easy-to-use web interface with powerful slice-and-dice capabilities, as well as the ability to leverage industry standard BI tools like Power BI, enables customers to analyze and gain insight from having all their estimating data centralized in the cloud.

"To win more work and ensure the profitability of every project, construction professionals must build estimates with greater speed and precision than ever before," says Julie Adams, Senior Vice President, Construction and Real Estate, Sage. "For over 30 years, top construction companies have trusted Sage Estimating. With the addition of real-time collaboration, deep bid analysis capabilities, and robust reporting and analytics on a scalable native-cloud platform, we are poised to deliver more innovations that take Sage Estimating customers into the future."

Doran Contractors, a general contracting and construction management company, has projects with upwards of 100 different numbers coming in from subcontractors, making analysis and closing a bid daunting. They have attributed some of their big wins to Sage Estimating's strength during the closing.

"There is nothing out there like Sage Estimating with Sage BidMatrix. This solution gives us the confidence we need to tackle any project head-on, providing reliable solutions that other software simply can't match," says Jason Hyland, Estimator at Doran Contractors. "Excel is great, but there is a lot that can go wrong. I looked for something similar to Sage Estimating for a few years, and in my opinion, there is nothing close to it."

Sage Estimating's new native cloud innovations, along with all of Sage's industry-leading solutions, are available now from authorized Sage resellers, the largest and most experienced partner network in the industry. Learn more about Sage Estimating *here*. For more information about Sage construction solutions, visit *SageCRE.com.*

***About Sage***

*Sage exists to knock down barriers so everyone can thrive, starting with the millions of small- and mid-sized businesses served by us, our partners, and accountants. Customers trust our finance, HR, and payroll software to help business flow. By digitizing business processes and relationships with customers, suppliers, employees, banks and governments, our digital network connects SMBs, removing friction and delivering insights. Knocking down barriers also means we use our time, technology, and experience to tackle digital inequality, economic inequality, and the climate crisis. Learn more at www.sage.com/en-us/.*

# Deportivo Toluca FC Scores Financial Goals With NetSuite

*10-time Liga MX champion signed NetSuite to improve efficiency, enhance decision-making, and better support its growing fanbase*

Deportivo Toluca Futbol Club (FC), a 10-time *Liga MX* champion, is working with *Oracle NetSuite* to support team success and a rapidly growing fanbase. With NetSuite, Deportivo Toluca FC has been able to take advantage of an integrated business suite to automate financial processes, increase efficiency, and improve decision-making as it scales its operations on and off the field.

Founded in Toluca, Mexico in 1917, Deportivo Toluca FC is Mexico's third most successful football team with 10 league titles, two domestic cups, and two CONCACAF Champions Cup titles. To support its rapidly growing fanbase and expanding operations, Deportivo Toluca FC needed to replace its long-standing financial management software with a more flexible solution that could connect finance, football operations, and fan experience on a single integrated suite. After careful evaluation, Deportivo Toluca FC selected NetSuite as its new *enterprise resource planning (ERP) system*.

"In professional sport, there are hundreds of suppliers that need to be managed to control costs while ensuring a great fan experience," said Javier Zermeño, director of innovation and technology, Deportivo Toluca FC. "With NetSuite, we have greater business visibility into our financial performance and can better forecast and control expenses. This results in faster, better decisions that improve the efficiency of football operations and enhance the fan experience."

With NetSuite, Deportivo Toluca FC has optimized its financial processes and overall operations by integrating and automating finance, supply chain, and customer experience workflows. For example, the financial management capabilities in NetSuite enable Deportivo Toluca FC to automate invoicing and payment processes to improve the speed and accuracy of insights and enhance financial forecasting. In addition, NetSuite is helping the Deportivo Toluca FC finance team simplify the management of more than 300 suppliers to better control costs. To further improve fan insights and loyalty, Deportivo Toluca FC plans to integrate its parking, ticketing, merchandise sales, e-commerce, and a new loyalty system into NetSuite.

"We work with a broad range of organizations, including iconic professional sports teams, to help them successfully grow," said Gustavo Moussalli, vice president of Latin America, Oracle NetSuite. "With NetSuite, Deportivo Toluca FC has a winning platform to increase efficiency, reduce costs, expand insights, and enhance the fan experience."

ORACLE NETSUITE

***About Oracle NetSuite***

*For more than 25 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 37,000 customers in 219 countries and dependent territories.*

***About Deportivo Toluca FC***

*It is a Liga MX club, with 107 years of existence, 71 of them, uninterruptedly in the First Division of Mexican soccer. It is the third most winning team in the history of national football.*

# "Build Better with Acumatica and CFMA" Program Empowers Construction Firms with Leading Cloud ERP and Financial Benchmarking Tools

*Participating Acumatica Customers Receive One-Year CFMA Membership*

*Acumatica*, an industry-leading business solutions provider, and the *Construction Financial Management Association* (CFMA), announced a program to provide a free one-year CFMA membership to Acumatica construction customers. The "Build Better with Acumatica and CFMA" Program is designed to provide emerging mid-sized construction companies with the resources CFMA offers alongside award-winning cloud ERP functionality tailored to their specific construction needs.

Acumatica construction customers can submit their data to CFMA's *Financial Benchmarker* through Acumatica's *Construction Edition*. The Financial Benchmarker helps construction financial professionals evaluate their company's performance and report on how it compares with the industry regarding key ratios and interpretive commentary on liquidity, profitability, leverage and efficiency. Participating customers will be able to compare their companies' financial performance with peer results in composite and access educational materials available through CFMA.

"We understand the transformative shift the construction industry faces, fueled by rapid technological advancement and evolving workforce demographics," said Joel Hoffman, director of product management, construction, at Acumatica. "Intelligent business management systems like Acumatica are crucial to overcoming these challenges. Our participation in the CFMA conference and 'Build Better Program' showcases how our solution can enhance efficiency, ensure compliance and attract tech-savvy talent for construction firms while highlighting the benefits of CFMA membership, including valuable resources, expertise and networking opportunities."

Construction firms interested in the program and Acumatica's business management solution can demo the technology at CFMA's 2024 Annual Conference & Exhibition. The event will take place from May 18-22 at the Gaylord Texan Resort & Convention Center in Grapevine, Texas. Acumatica is set to showcase its Construction Edition, highlighting the transformative impact of its product on enabling construction companies to navigate industry challenges, including complex project portfolios, stringent compliance requirements and talent acquisition and retention.

Acumatica Construction Edition is built to equip construction businesses with a fully connected, integrated, automated system resting on a secure, intelligent platform accessible from any device. The product meets the front office, back office and job site needs of residential and commercial construction professionals, providing them with a single source of truth with comprehensive business data and project management capabilities.

"We're thrilled to welcome Acumatica to CFMA's 2024 Annual Conference & Exhibition and to partner with them in the 'Build Better Program'," said Neil Shah, president and CEO of CFMA. "Acumatica's commitment to empowering mid-market construction firms aligns with our mission to equip construction financial professionals with the tools they need to achieve financial excellence and operational efficiency."

To learn more about Acumatica Construction Edition, stop by booth 121 or visit *acumatica.com/cfma*. To learn more about the Construction Financial Benchmarker or CFMA, visit *cfma.org.*

Acumatica
The Cloud ERP

***About Acumatica***

*Acumatica Cloud ERP is a comprehensive business management solution that was born in the cloud and built for more connected, collaborative ways of working. Designed explicitly to enable small and mid-market companies to thrive in today's digital economy, Acumatica's flexible solution, customer-friendly business practices and industry-specific functionality help growing businesses adapt to fast-moving markets and take control of their future. For more information, visit acumatica.com or follow us on LinkedIn.*

***About CFMA***

*The Construction Financial Management Association (CFMA) is the only nonprofit organization dedicated to serving the needs of today's construction financial professionals. CFMA provides essential resources, education, and a supportive community for individuals across various sectors within the construction industry. CFMA's Certified Construction Industry Financial Professional (CCIFP) designation has been the recognized standard of excellence for competent and ethical construction financial management for 20 years. For more information about CFMA, visit www.cfma.org.*

# ECI Connect Customer Conference 2024: SMBs, Executives, Industry Experts Come Together to Discuss Software Optimization, Business Management, AI and More

*ECI Software Solutions, a global provider of cloud-based business management software and services, today announced Jesse Itzler, a top-rated global speaker, as the keynote speaker for its ECI Connect Customer Conference 2024. Drawing nearly 1,000 small- to medium-sized business (SMB) owners across manufacturing, residential construction, service management, building supply, office technology and wholesale/retail distribution industries, the conference is scheduled for November 11-13, 2024, at the Gaylord Texan Resort & Convention Center in Grapevine, Texas. Registration is now open.*

Jesse Itzler is an Emmy award-winning artist, New York Times bestselling author, part owner of the Atlanta Hawks, ultramarathon runner, husband, father and businessman who has mastered the art of success by taking an unconventional approach. Itzler will pull from his deep entrepreneurial experience to offer proven strategies, share lessons learned and inspire ECI's SMB audience. Itzler will also cover the importance of a strong network and getting creative with the resources at hand to find business success.

Hosted every two years, the ECI Connect Customer Conference is a unique, in-person event that offers intensive training on business management best practices,

industry-focused product workshops and networking opportunities for ECI customers. With access to dedicated experts and customer service representatives from each of ECI's vertical focus areas, attendees will receive tailored tips for leveraging the full scope of their software solutions, covering over 200 product and industry-specific breakout sessions. Attendees will also benefit from more than 20 business resource sessions focused on the topics top-of-mind to business leaders like change management, AI, security and leadership.

"The ECI Connect Customer Conference is incredibly important for our customers, partners, service teams and leadership. We are not just creating a forum for our customers and partners to work directly with our experts and learn the newest, cutting-edge, industry-focused best practices, but we're also fostering open communication. This allows us at ECI to listen, learn and improve, too," said Trevor Gruenewald, CEO of ECI Software Solutions. "Our aim for the conference is to deliver an experience that's inspiring, collaborative and empowering to our ECI community. We want every attendee to leave with new ideas, fresh perspectives and actionable insights."

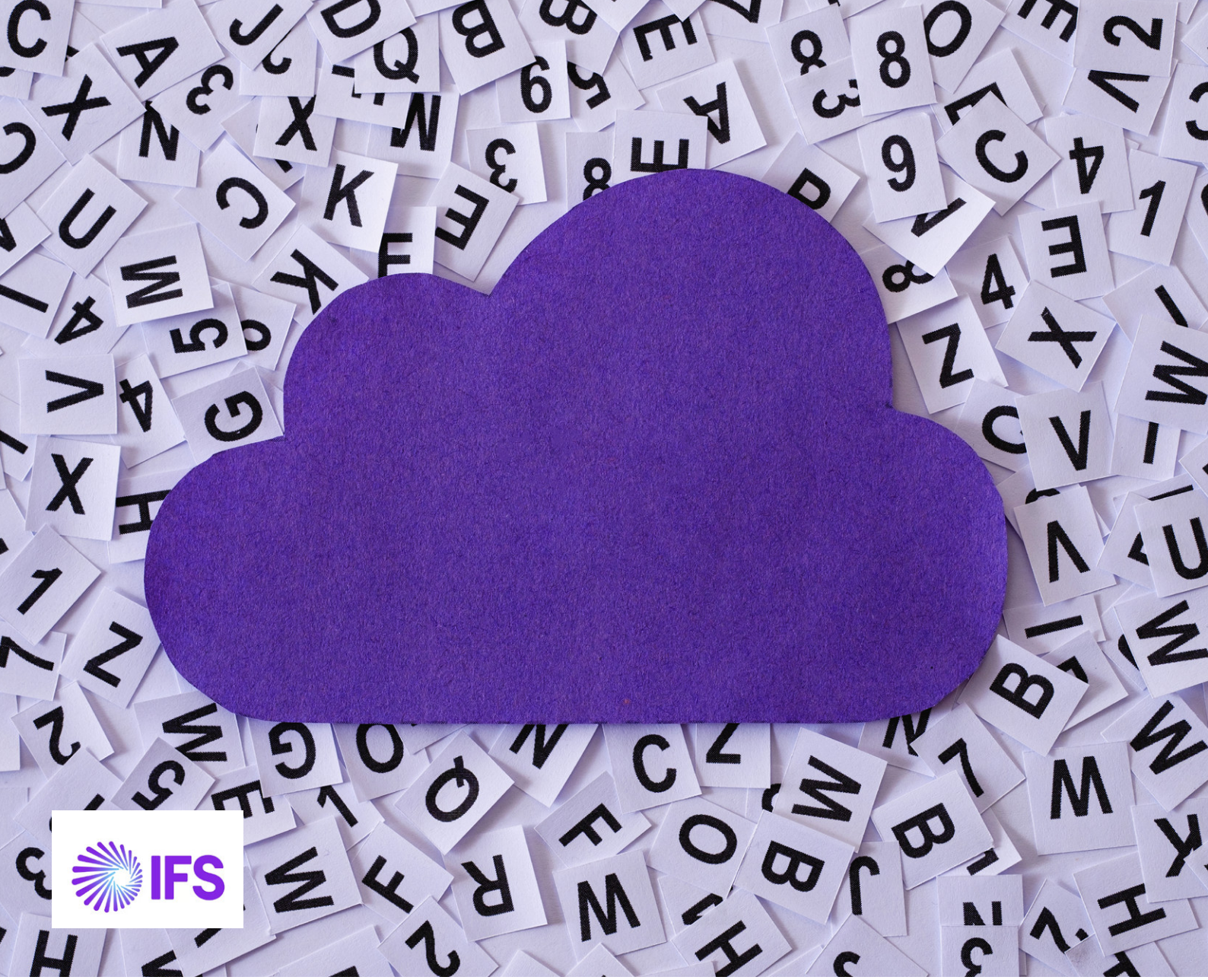
Two customer-focused ECI awards programs will also announce winners at ECI Connect Conference. ECI's *Everyday Hero* award recognizes ECI customers who give back to their communities, making a difference in the lives of others. ECI's Customer Excellence Awards honors businesses that have successfully deployed ECI solutions and are achieving excellence in business efficiency, customer experience and overall performance.

To register for this event, visit the *ECI Connect Conference 2024* page.

To learn more about ECI news, products and industry-focused technology solutions, visit the *website*.

***About ECI***

*ECI Software Solutions provides cloud-based business software for running small and mid-sized businesses end to end. Built by experts in manufacturing, residential construction, field service, building supply, office technology, and wholesale/retail distribution industries, ECI's industry-specific software connects businesses and customers, improving visibility, operational efficiency, and profitability. With ECI, businesses seamlessly integrate sales and marketing, business intelligence, CRM, data and analytics, ecommerce, mobile apps, and payment processing. With more than 30 years of industry leadership, ECI is trusted by 24,000 customers in more than 80 countries globally. Headquartered in Westlake, Texas, it has offices in the U.S., Canada, Mexico, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, and Australia. For more information, visit www.ECIsolutions.com.*




# Bucher Emhart Glass embraces servitization with IFS Cloud

*Machine supplier upgrades to latest version of IFS software to drive efficiency and service delivery across 13 international sites*

IFS, the leading technology provider of enterprise cloud and industrial AI software, today announced that Bucher Emhart Glass, the world's leading international supplier of glass container manufacturing solutions, is upgrading to IFS Cloud to accelerate its adoption of a servitized business model and enhance customer experience.

Bucher Emhart Glass expects that the upgrade to IFS Cloud will enhance the consistent flow of information within its international business processes and strengthen transparency and processes relating to data across the organization. IFS Cloud capabilities will directly support the company's ambitious servitization plan that aims to streamline operations for greater flexibility and assurance across the processes.

The importance of having a composable, cloud-based solution to achieve its goals was key to the decision to adopt IFS Cloud. By utilizing the added functionality of IFS Cloud Service Management, the company will also integrate process automation and predictive maintenance to increase productivity on its shop floor, enabling it to optimize the maintenance of its assets by identifying faults before they occur.

Reto Semadeni, CFO at Bucher Emhart Glass, said: "The decision to upgrade to IFS Cloud is a pivotal step in our ongoing pursuit of operational excellence and customer satisfaction. This transition is more than an upgrade; it's a reinvention of how we manage our processes, maintain our assets, and engage with our customers. With IFS Cloud, we are not just keeping pace with technological advancements; we are staying ahead of the curve, ensuring that Bucher Emhart Glass remains a leader in the industry through innovation and superior service delivery."

Bucher Emhart Glass will also be able to standardize its maintenance services with IFS Cloud, delivering maximal efficiency and driving predictably in its delivery of services to improve the customer experience.

Another motivation for upgrading was the ability to remain evergreen with IFS Cloud. This approach will create value for the company's transformation, with immediate access to continuous software innovations and improved visibility and control as it identifies new business opportunities surfaced by data-led insights.

Frank Beerlage, MD DACH & Benelux at IFS said: "We are thrilled to see Bucher Emhart Glass leverage the full potential of IFS Cloud. This move not only marks a significant milestone in their shift to servitization but also underscores our commitment to supporting our clients on this very important journey. Bucher Emhart Glass are currently undergoing rapid growth and as such are experiencing increasing demand. IFS Cloud will revolutionize their operational efficiency, helping them to meet their customers' needs now and into the future."

Bucher Emhart Glass has also purchased IFS Customer Engagement, which will empower support staff to deliver rapid service and provide a smoother installed base customer journey for orders, spare parts, and invoicing.

The scale of deployment will include 1,000 full users across 13 sites, with Arcwide supporting the implementation. Arcwide is a joint venture between BearingPoint and IFS that combines BearingPoint's world-class expertise in business technology consulting with IFS cloud technology and innovation.

***About Bucher Emhart Glass***

*Bucher Emhart Glass, headquartered in Steinhausen, Switzerland, is the global market leader in advanced technologies for the manufacture and inspection of glass containers. The product range includes glass forming and inspection machines, systems, components and spare parts as well as consulting and service for the glass container industry. Bucher Emhart Glass' high level of innovation makes glass the perfect packaging material for food, beverages, cosmetics and pharmaceutical products. The company is a division of Bucher Industries AG. Further information: www.bucheremhartglass.com*

***About IFS***

*IFS develops and delivers cloud enterprise software for companies around the world who manufacture and distribute goods, build and maintain assets, and manage service-focused operations. Within our single platform, our industry specific products are innately connected to a single data model and use embedded digital innovation so that our customers can be their best when it really matters to their customers—at the Moment of Service™. The industry expertise of our people and of our growing ecosystem, together with a commitment to deliver value at every single step, has made IFS a recognized leader and the most recommended supplier in our sector. Our team of over 5,500 employees every day live our values of agility, trustworthiness and collaboration in how we support our thousands of customers. Learn more about how our enterprise software solutions can help your business today at ifs.com.*

# Infosys Collaborates with Nihon Chouzai to Expand Healthcare Access in Japan

*Develops mobile app, NiCOMS, to help patients access remote consultations and online payments with responsive, user-friendly interface*

*Infosys*, a global leader in next-generation digital services and consulting, announced its collaboration with *Nihon Chouzai (TSE)*, Japan's leading dispensing pharmacy chain, to expand healthcare access in Japan with enhanced online medication guidance services and payment solutions. As part of this collaboration, Infosys has developed a mobile application, NiCOMS, a pioneering telemedicine service that enables patients to receive remote medication guidance from registered pharmacists, eliminating the need for pharmacy visits.

Nihon Chouzai in collaboration with Infosys launched the web version of NiCOMS in September 2020. With an existing registered userbase of over 1,800,000, the mobile application will now integrate with *OkusuriTechoPlus*, Nihon Chouzai's digital medication notebook, by merging the account and authentication processes. Infosys adopted an agile approach to develop the NiCOMS mobile app, allowing the company to nimbly adapt to evolving requirements driven by deregulation and COVID-19. The online medication guidance service on

NiCOMS allows patients across Japan to receive medication instructions, consultations, and make payments during video calls with pharmacists. The responsive user interface enhances compatibility across a wide range of terminals, operating systems, and browsers, ensuring accessibility for all users and a smooth experience across devices.

***Kunihiko Kurihara, Executive Officer, General Manager of IT Department, NIHON CHOUZAI CO., LTD.***, said, "Our collaboration with Infosys complements our best-in-class solution and gives it a new scale with the pioneering NiCOMS platform and its ability to bring positive experiences to our customers. What started a few years ago with the web version is now further strengthened by Infosys' agility and expertise in digital transformation, which has helped us realize our vision for a one-of-a-kind telemedicine service."

***Hideyuki Aoki, Vice President, Country Head – Japan, Infosys***, said, "Together with Nihon Chouzai, we are forging the future of digital healthcare in Japan through innovative solutions. This alliance will offer enhanced online medical services and increase access to quality pharmaceutical interventions, with an aim towards making significant impact at scale."

***About Nihon Chouzai***

*Nihon Chouzai is one of the Japan's leading dispensing pharmacy operators with dispensing pharmacies in all prefectures in Japan and approximately 4,000 pharmacists. Since its establishment in 1980, the company has consistently pursued the "Separation of Drug Prescribing and Dispensing Services" to achieve its ideal function and role as a dispensing pharmacy that supports the Japan's health insurance system, and has aggressively developed its dispensing pharmacy business. In addition to its efforts to promote the use of generic drugs and home medical care, the company has been actively investing in ICT from early on, and is committed to providing high-quality, innovative medical services needed in a hyper-aged society.*

*Visit https://www.nicho.co.jp/en/ for more information.*

***About Infosys***

*Infosys is a global leader in next-generation digital services and consulting. Over 300,000 of our people work to amplify human potential and create the next opportunity for people, businesses and communities. We enable clients in more than 56 countries to navigate their digital transformation. With over four decades of experience in managing the systems and workings of global enterprises, we expertly steer clients, as they navigate their digital transformation powered by cloud and AI. We enable them with an AI-first core, empower the business with agile digital at scale and drive continuous improvement with always-on learning through the transfer of digital skills, expertise, and ideas from our innovation ecosystem. We are deeply committed to being a well-governed, environmentally sustainable organization where diverse talent thrives in an inclusive workplace.*

*Visit www.infosys.com to see how Infosys (NSE, BSE, NYSE: INFY) can help your enterprise navigate your next.*

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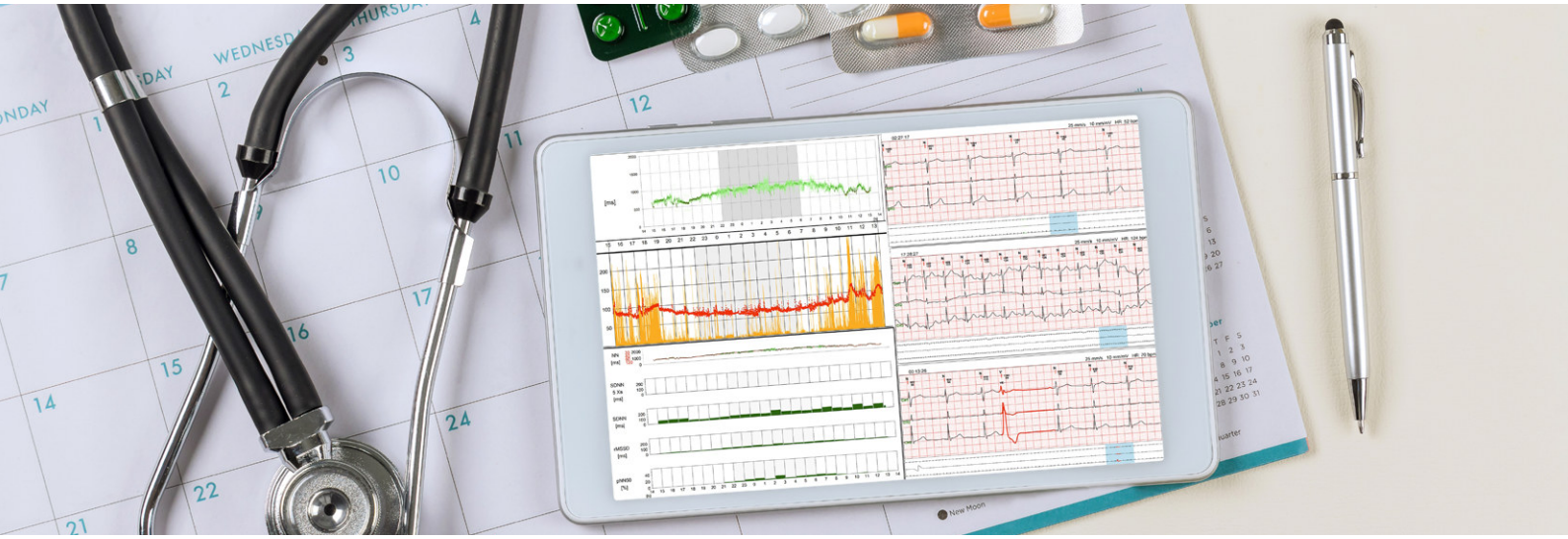


# NTT DATA agrees to acquire a majority share of GHL Systems Berhad for further expansion of payment business among ASEAN countries

*GHL Systems Berhad's strength in terminals and rich customer base significantly expands NTT DATA's payment business in ASEAN countries*

*NTT DATA*, a global digital business and IT services leader, announced that NTTDATA agreed to acquire 58.7% of shares of GHL Systems Berhad (a leading payment service provider which has strength in various services through payment terminals, is headquartered in Malaysia and, listed in BURSA MALAYSIA, hereinafter referred to as "GHL Systems") from its major shareholders. NTT DATA plans to propose a tender offer to its other shareholders as well.

Along with acquiring GHL Systems which has installed over 480,000 payment terminals and provided various payment services in ASEAN countries such as Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand, NTT DATA continues to realize a more convenient and secure cashless society for consumers in countries by combining NTT DATA's own payment services and know-how. And in Malaysia, in collaboration with iPay88 Malaysia which has strength in e-commerce payment service, NTT DATA will strengthen Omni channel payment services for both in-store shopping and e-commerce.

**Backgrounds and overviews**

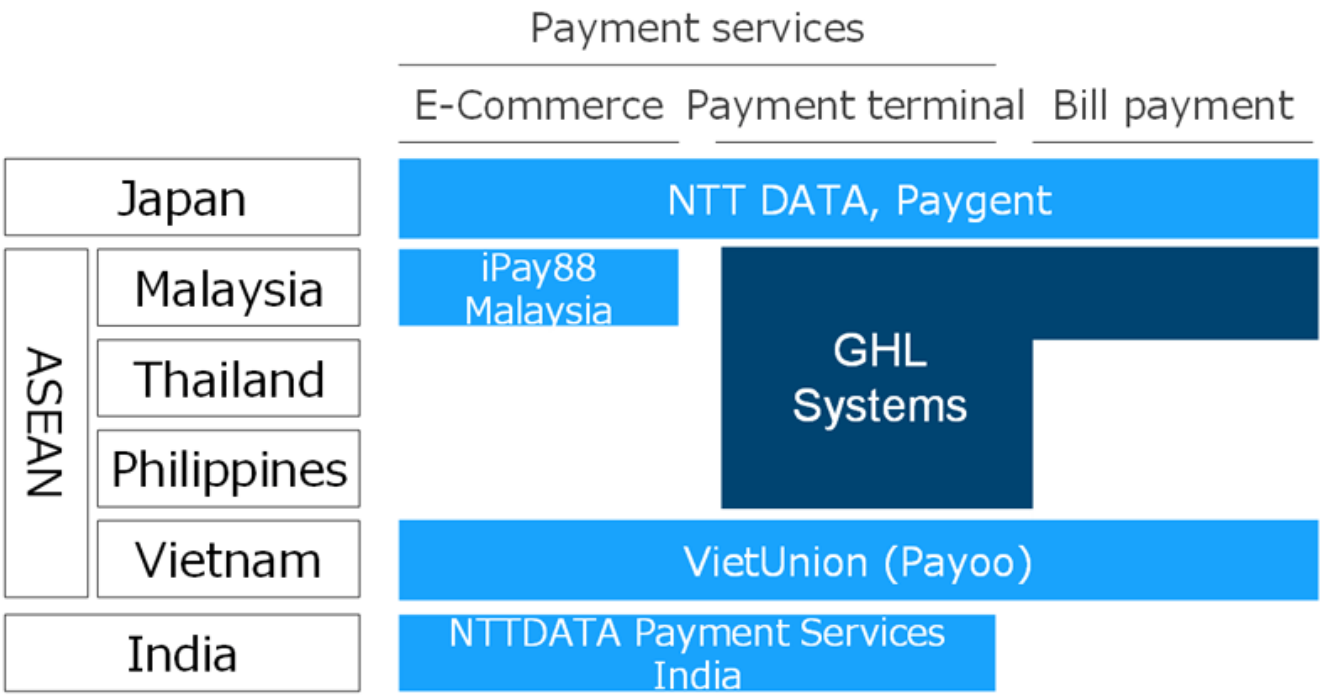
To realize a more convenient and smooth cashless society, NTT DATA has operated a payment platform CAFIS® for 40 years and has contributed to merchants and financial institutions with CAFIS Arch®, a payment terminal, and full series of value-added services in Japan.

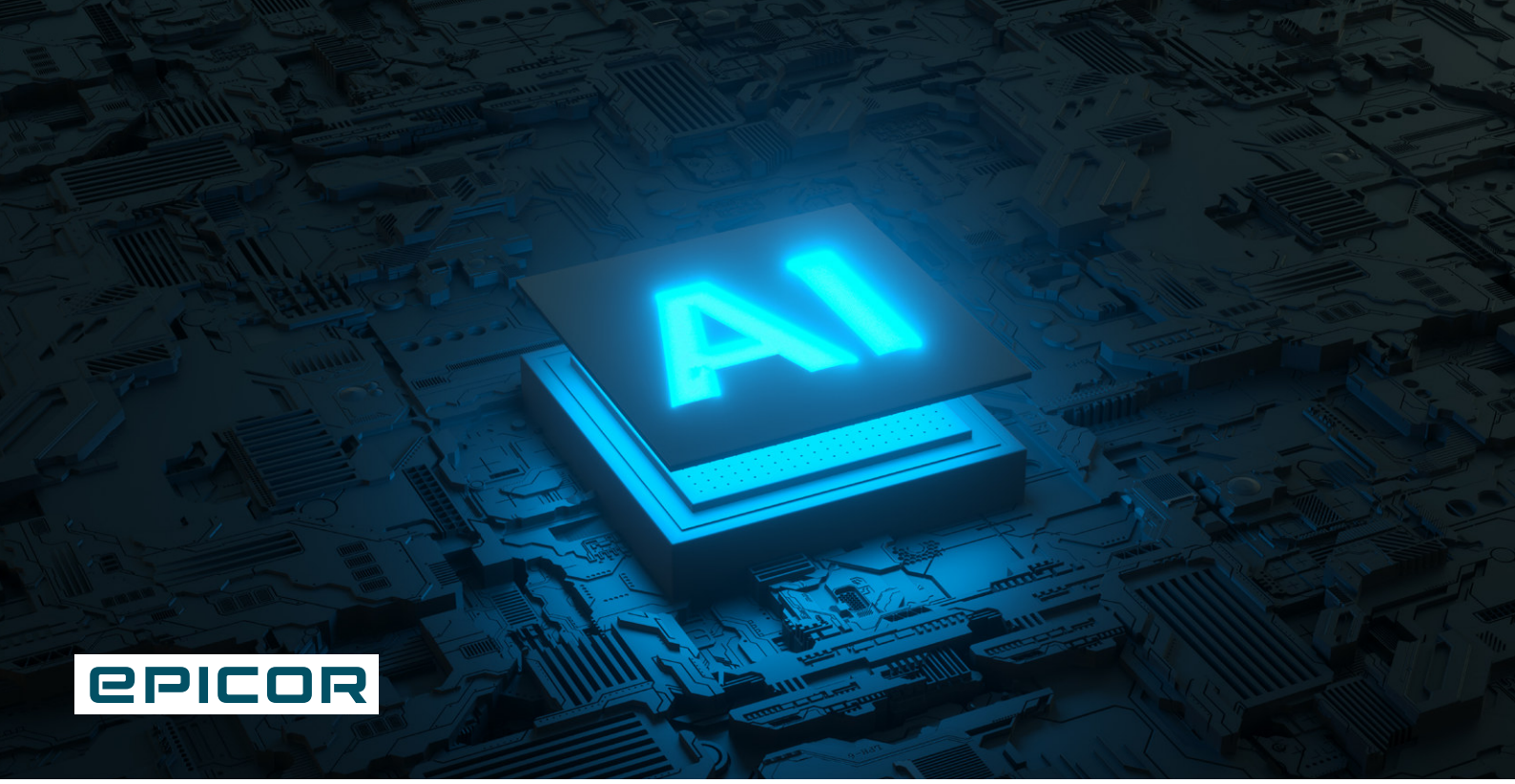
In addition, NTT DATA operates payment businesses through group companies in Asia, such as VietUnion Online Services (Payoo) in Vietnam, iPay88 in Malaysia and NTT DATA Payment Services India to contribute to the local societies of each country which have been growing continuously.

GHL systems is a Malaysian leading payment service provider, established in 1994 and has market advantages especially in cashless services with a full line-up of local payment methods and bill payment services for utilities etc. through its over 480,000 payment terminals. In addition, GHL systems operates businesses in ASEAN countries such as the Philippines and Thailand with the same service model as in Malaysia.

At this time, NTT DATA has agreed to acquire a majority share of GHL Systemsfrom its major shareholders aiming to expand assets including services and know-how in the payment business and strengthen business foundations in the ASEAN region. NTT DATA also plans to propose a tender offer to its other shareholders following the rules at BURSA MALAYSIA, a stock exchange market in Malaysia.

With this acquisition, NTT DATA expands into the payment business through payment terminals in Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand. By combining payment services, know-how, and the customer bases of NTT DATA and GHL systems, NTT DATA will contribute to the development of a cashless society in each country through attractive payment services. Also in collaboration with iPay88 Malaysia which has strength in e-commerce payment services, NTT DATA will provide one-stop payment services for in-store shopping and e-commerce in Malaysia and will enhance its Omni channel services.






# Epicor Unveils Integrated Portfolio of AI and Data Management Capabilities Built Specifically for the Supply Chain Industries

*Epicor, a global leader of industry-specific enterprise software to promote business growth, today unveiled its new Epicor Grow portfolio, an integrated set of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Business Intelligence (BI) capabilities powered by an industry-focused data platform tuned specifically for the requirements of the make, move, and sell industries.*

The new portfolio, introduced at the *Epicor Insights 2024 user conference* held this week in Nashville, reimagines how AI-powered ERP software can and should serve the supply chain industries and their workers. Guided by *the company's cognitive ERP vision* to transform traditional ERP from a system of record to a system of action, the Epicor Grow portfolio leverages many types of AI — generative, machine learning, natural language processing, predictive analytics and more — to deliver more than 200 highly specific industry use cases that adapt to workers in their contextual environment or workflow, giving them the insights and efficiencies they need to drive more value.

"We know the keys to realizing the full power of AI revolve around two important things: applying AI to a well-defined, practical business issue, and leveraging high quality data," said Epicor Chief Product & Technology Officer Vaibhav Vohra. "Our new Epicor Grow portfolio delivers on both fronts, putting workers at the center of the intelligence ecosystem. We're delivering deep AI integration across real-world industry workflows – unlike 'one size fits all' industry-agnostic ERPs – to surface actionable insights and drive efficiencies. And we're empowering users with a rich, industry-centric data platform and no-code tools to create purpose-built data pipelines to help solve specific challenges."

By design, ERP technology sits at the core of an organization, coordinating and managing mission-critical processes across business functions. At Epicor, we see incredible opportunity for the supply chain industries to tap into the vast ERP data sets at the hearts of their businesses to leverage AI not just to automate tasks but enable systems to think, learn, and empower workers with the right intelligence to make decisions in ways that were previously unimaginable.

The Epicor Grow portfolio is built to take advantage of these opportunities, unlocking new levels of efficiency, innovation, and competitiveness for companies across the supply chain. This helps workers reduce the complexity and friction in how they have traditionally extracted and used intelligence from their financial and operational data, machines, and external supplier communities.

Core elements of the integrated portfolio include:

***Epicor Prism™ -*** Epicor Prism is a patent-pending generative AI service embedded across the Epicor Industry ERP Cloud that empowers workers to access the right insights, in the right context, at the right time to make smarter decisions. Epicor Prism is specifically fine-tuned to the Epicor data structure, which has been developed over decades of experience innovating across the manufacturing, distribution, and retail industries. Users engage with Epicor Prism in the context of their native Epicor ERP platform, while behind the scenes task-specific agents collaborate to surface insights or execute actions as prompted.

For example, users can leverage Epicor Prism as a code assistant to create automated business processes more quickly, or use conversational ERP to access production and purchasing insights without the need to know where files are located. Epicor Prism can also automate supplier communications to speed purchasing, enabling users to automatically send RFQs to their supplier network and parse and translate quotes to determine the best price and fastest delivery.

***Epicor Grow AI-*** Epicor Grow AI transforms the ERP experience with AI that is easy-to-use, practical, and outcomes-focused. Epicor Grow AI surfaces insights with high speed and accuracy to solve industry-focused challenges in the familiar context of a customer's Epicor solutions. Example capabilities and workflows include:

- AI-driven predictive analytics to help generate, analyze, and act on multiple forecasts related to inventory, demand, and sales.
- AI-generated sales orders created from natural language email inquiries, speeding fulfillment and reducing customer service effort while increasing conversion and customer satisfaction.
- Personalized, AI-generated product suggestions based on past order history to help optimize inventory levels, reduce costs, and drive greater revenue.
- AI-powered predictive maintenance suggestions and notifications for fleet vehicles, reducing unscheduled vehicle downtime, delivery delays, and maintenance costs.
- Accelerated access and knowledge sharing across the Epicor library of product and support resources, giving users fast, accurate answers to their questions with curated, AI-driven responses.

***Epicor Grow Inventory Forecasting*** – From ***Epicor's recent acquisition of Smart Software***, users can leverage predictive analytics and model "what-if" scenarios to better manage inventories with embedded, purpose-built, machine-learning forecasting engines.

***Epicor FP&A*** – Deeply embedded Financial Planning and Analysis capabilities for easy, accurate, and thorough financial reporting.

***Epicor Grow BI*** – Easy-to-use no-code technology joins and transforms data with elegant visuals, metrics, and dashboards. Users can get alerts and even externalize data blueprints to pair with other BI tools for maximum flexibility. In addition, Epicor recently expanded data center availability for Epicor Grow BI in AWS U.K., supporting international organizations.

***Epicor Grow Data Platform*** - A powerful way to manage enterprise data in one place with a full-stack, no-code data platform that delivers fast time to insight with deeper visibility. The platform allows users to bring their data to one central location to feed Epicor AI and BI applications, and uniquely includes a no-code, interactive Pipeline Canvas to move or modify prebuilt data pipelines or enable users to build their own. This lets users selectively combine, clean, normalize, and analyze only the data they need, saving time, cost, and delivering a higher quality, more accurate output.

During Epicor Insights 2024, attendees can see live demonstrations and learn more about the Epicor Grow portfolio at the "Drive to AI" center in the Solutions Pavilion.

For more information, please visit our ***website.***

# Royale Union Saint-Gilloise extends partnership with IT supplier Comarch for 2024/2025 season

*RUSG has secured its new official partner for the 2024/2025 football season: IT solutions provider Comarch. This marks an exciting new chapter in the relationship between Comarch and RUSG, underlining a shared commitment to excellence, community and ambition.*

RUSG has recently celebrated significant achievements, securing the title of Vice-champion of the Belgian League and winning the Belgian Cup. These accomplishments have positioned the club as a formidable force in Belgian football, with high hopes of qualifying for the Champions League in the upcoming season. Comarch is thrilled to support RUSG in these endeavors, reinforcing its dedication to fostering sports talent and community spirit.

By renewing this sponsorship, Comarch aims to further its cooperation with RUSG, enhancing the visibility and reputation of both organizations in Belgium and beyond. As the largest Polish investor in Belgium, Comarch continues to strengthen its presence in the Benelux region, a strategic market for the company. This partnership goes beyond brand promotion, focusing on celebrating shared values and a mutual drive for success.

RUSG, with its rich history and a passionate fan base spanning Flemish and French-speaking regions, embodies the spirit of perseverance and excellence. The club's supporters are known for their unwavering loyalty and enthusiasm, making RUSG a beacon of community pride.

Comarch has a longstanding tradition of supporting sports teams, both in Poland and internationally. Since 2002, the company has been the main sponsor of MKS Krakow's football and ice hockey teams. Previous partnerships have included renowned clubs like Lille OSC or TSV 1860 Munich. Through its history of sports sponsorship, Comarch demonstrates its belief in the power of sport to inspire and unite communities.

"We are proud to extend our cooperation as an official sponsor for next year as a loyal partner of Royale Union Saint-Gilloise," said Wojciech Pawlus, Managing Director of Comarch Benelux. "We share similar values and we are excited to observe RUSG growing as a successful football challenger on the European scene, similarly to Comarch in IT software."

Victor Pensis, Commercial Director of RUSG, expressed his enthusiasm about the continued partnership: "We are delighted to announce the extension of our partnership with Comarch. Their continued support is a sign of trust and a fruitful collaboration. Comarch shares our vision of innovation and excellence, and together we will continue to deliver unforgettable experiences to our supporters while strengthening our position in Belgian football. We look forward to seeing what the future holds through this renewed collaboration."

As the 2024/2025 season approaches, Comarch and RUSG are gearing up for another year of thrilling football and shared successes. Fans and supporters are encouraged to stay tuned for more exciting news, as additional developments will be announced soon.

This partnership not only strengthens Comarch's brand presence but also contributes to the growth and success of RUSG. Together, they look forward to a season filled with remarkable achievements and memorable moments.

# Managing Risk in the Cloud: Global Apparel Manufacturer Gains Visibility and Threat Intelligence for SAP HEC

**Challenge**

Gain visibility into SAP HEC operational environment to understand security threats, manage risk, protect supply chain integrity and avoid disruptions to business operations.

**Solution**

The Onapsis Platform assesses and monitors SAP environments, including those operating in the cloud, for vulnerabilities, misconfigurations and threats. With this insight, the manufacturer can understand risk to their business operations and verify that their supply chain is adequately protected, even when it is being hosted by a third-party.

**Background**

A large international apparel manufacturer running multiple independent, in-house SAP systems around the world wanted to implement an additional system to cover new geographical regions, but this time running on the SAP HANA Enterprise Cloud (HEC). The business relies on these systems to run their supply chain and manufacturing processes, so ensuring performance, availability and security of the new system was critical.

While moving to SAP HEC would bring processing, analytics and performance improvements, having an SAP instance outside of their data centers for the first time, along with the shared security nature of cloud implementations, raised major concerns for the project. In order for the implementation to succeed, the manufacturer needed visibility into the SAP HEC operating environment so they could manage risk and verify that their new system was secured in line with their existing standards.

**Solution Requirements**

- Visibility into the SAP HEC operational environment and configurations
- A way to verify that the SAP HEC environment running their SAP instance was operating in line with the manufacturer's security baselines
- Ability to continuously monitor their new cloud SAP instance for security vulnerabilities, missing patches, misconfigurations, threats, etc.

**Solution**

The apparel manufacturer found their ideal solution in Onapsis, including them as a mandatory security control for the SAP HEC implementation. Onapsis provided visibility into the cloud operational environment, continuous vulnerability assessment and threat monitoring, empowering the organization to understand and manage risks for their business-critical supply chain. With direct insight into the cloud environment, the manufacturer is now able to verify that their instance is being secured according to contractual obligations and their security baselines. Given this was their first cloud implementation—the first time they were no longer responsible for operating, maintaining and securing SAP themselves—this "trust, but verify" approach was an essential element to the project, powered by the data and insights provided by Onapsis.

"We knew moving our sap instance to a cloud environment would introduce new risks and we needed a solution to support the shared security model. Only onapsis provides visibility into the sap hec operational environment so we can 'trust, but verify' that our system is secured to our standards. We can now continually monitor risk, ensure the integrity and security of our supply chain and protect our business."

*CISO, Apparel Manufacturer*

**Result**

- Visibility into cloud environment: Onapsis assesses and monitors the SAP HEC environment for system vulnerabilities, misconfigurations, threats and more so the organization can verify the security posture of their cloud instance
- Threat intelligence: Onapsis not only finds security issues, but also provides essential context so the manufacturer can understand business impact and risk
- Proactive risk monitoring: The organization now has operational insights in the event that something goes wrong with their instance—they can be proactive versus having to wait to be notified by SAP
- Reduce business disruptions: Protecting the security and integrity of their supply chain minimizes risk to system availability and business operations to help ensure strong brand reputation

# Maximizing Reliability of Pharmaceutical Services Through Technology

FFF Enterprises is the nation's leading supplier of critical-care biopharmaceuticals, plasma products, and vaccines. Their passion for patient safety and product efficacy drives their mission of Helping Healthcare Care®.

**80%**

**SAP Performance Improvement**

> "Migrating our SAP hosting service with Google Cloud and Protera has been a game changer. It maximizes the reliability of our IT systems and puts us on a path toward advancing our digital transformation."
>
> *Jon Hahn,_CIO*

**The Opportunity**

FFF Enterprises experienced outages and other issues while running SAP on legacy infrastructure, which put its business and the patients and healthcare providers who rely on it at risk. In response,

FFF Enterprises looked to align with a technology provider that offered more reliable, scalable services and could support a broader digital transformation.

**The Protera Solution**

FFF Enterprises, Inc. has been a trusted name in wholesale pharmaceutical distribution for decades thanks to its commitment to consistency, transparency, and timely order fulfillment. The wholesaler understands its vital role in the health of the patients who rely on the products it distributes.

"If our supply chain is negatively impacted, people's lives are on the line, so we take our responsibility very seriously," says Jon Hahn, Chief Information Officer at FFF Enterprises. "From the technology side, we have to ensure that our infrastructure, business apps, and tools are functioning at all times, 365 days a year."

After encountering issues such as core switch outage, server outages, MPLS edge router outages, and running SAP on a legacy infrastructure and hosting provider, FFF Enterprises recognized the need for a change. It enlisted the help of Google Cloud and Google Cloud Partner Managecore - a Protera company, to migrate its systems.

Protera performed the migration to Google Cloud Platform (GCP) and provided the architectural overhauls necessary to improve the availability and reliability of SAP apps. FFF Enterprises now runs critical SAP S/4 HANA apps, including BusinessObjects, Sales and Distribution, Material Management, FICO, Warehouse Management, and more on GCP. GCP offered a higher performance, more robust and dependable infrastructure than FFF Enterprises' legacy systems at a comparable or lower cost. The move to GCP for FFF Enterprises was further enhanced by the customer-centric approach Google Cloud takes, as well as the robust Google Cloud partner network.

"Since our founding in 1988, we've worked diligently each and every day to fulfill our mission of Helping Healthcare Care® because we know that there's always a patient waiting at the end of every transaction. Our passion for product safety, patient health and outstanding customer service continues to drive us to expand our programs, products, and services in order to identify future opportunities where we can advocate for the advancement of patient and product safety," says Hahn. "The Google Cloud team stays engaged with us and proved their commitment to us; that hands-on approach, as well as the availability of strong partners to help us with deployments and migrations, makes all the difference."

FFF Enterprises is now exploring more ways to innovate and improve operations using GCP solutions, including BigQuery, Tensorflow, IoT Core, and others.

"Google Cloud Platform and the Google Cloud Partner network offer us avenues to address a more comprehensive digital transformation now, and in the future," says Hahn. "We're looking to not just utilize innovative technologies from Google, but also to find new ways of advancing our business and emulate some of its approaches to progress and growth."

**Google Cloud Results for FFF Enterprises**

- Improves SAP performance by 80% while lowering costs
- Overcomes challenges associated with SAP hosting infrastructure outages and downtime
- Frees up IT team to focus on innovation and support
- Enhances business intelligence performance with more advanced hardware
- Gives peace of mind through reliable, responsive customer service
- Paves way for further digital transformation, including advanced analytics and IoT

# Cloud Migration: Microservices to The Max

NTT DATA takes charge of the migration of the current architecture of microservices of a German automobile manufacturer making use of Amazon Web Services (AWS). In this way the DevOps experts improve the scalability and flexibility at the same noticeably reducing operational costs.

**The challenge**

An internationally operating German car company so far runs its microservices architecture on its own servers, i.e. "On-Premises". The environment based on Kubernetes has offered a stable solution. But the constant creation of new applications and a growing architecture require the continual growth and maintenance of the IT infrastructure. Managing it locally drives up operational costs, slows down the scalability of microservices and prevents flexible adaptation of the necessary resources according to usage. An alternative solution is needed that reduces costs by making it possible to pay only for the server capacity required at the time. Additionally, the new solution should have greater scalability.

> "Through our ample experience in the cloud and services we have brought this driver of innovation in mobility much closer to its goal of digital transformation."
>
> *Chetan Deshpand_*
> *Project director at NTT DATA DACH*

**The solution**

NTT DATA experts conducted a thorough review of the enterprise and application architecture in close collaboration with the customer. Based on the results, the project team as a whole decided to use the Amazon Web Services (AWS) cloud platform from now on. NTT DATA's DevOps specialists then select the required AWS cloud technologies, define the migration roadmap, implement the infrastructure (e.g., cluster and databases), adapt the applications for connection to the AWS resources via SQS and S3, and define the CI/CD processes. In addition, the team will install important supervision and alarm features through CloudWatch and Lambda.

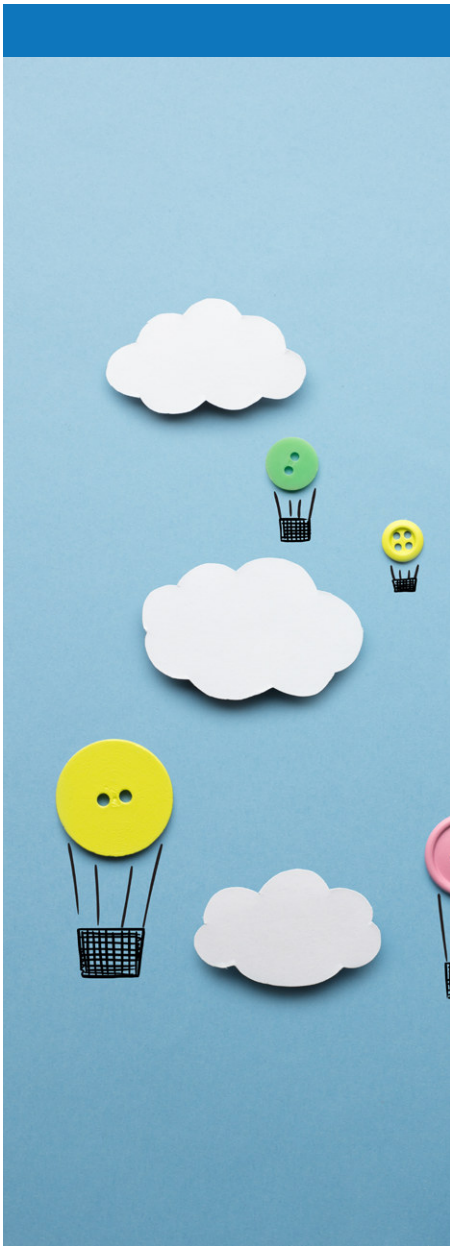
**The benefits**

By moving to the AWS Cloud and commissioning NTT DATA's Managed Services, the primary goal of reducing operating costs for servers, storage space and more is quickly achieved. In this way, the automotive manufacturer can reduce costs in this area in total by approximately 55% compared to the local environments before migration. Additionally, costs are also reduced though the development and more rapid implementation of features. At the same time, the new environment enables the rapid scaling and even dynamic autoscaling thanks to ECS Fargate. All this with a multiplication of the computational resources that were available in the On-Premises environment

> "Thanks to NTT DATA and the AWS cloud, applications have a noticeably more reliable availability and better scalability. As well as this, we are already saving at least half of operating costs."
>
> *Project Director for the automotive customer de NTT DATA*

***About NT Data***

*NTT DATA – part of NTT Group – a Trusted Global Innovator of IT solutions and businesses with its head office in Tokyo. We support our customers in their transformation through consulting, industry solutions, Business Process Services, IT modernization and Managed Services. With NTT DATA, customers and society in general can advance with confidence towards the digital future. We work towards the long-term success of our customers and combine our international presence with advising local customers in more than 50 countries. More information at nttdata.com*



# Hyatt International Corporation

Around the world, Hyatt is one of the most recognizable names in hotel and resort management and development. There are 210 Hyatt locations worldwide. Hyatt International Corporation operates, manage or franchise 90 hotels and resorts in 39 countries, with an additional 23 hotels under development. Hyatt Corporation operates, manage, franchise, or lease 122 hotels and resorts in the U.S., Canada, and the Caribbean.

With its vast cultural and geographic diversity, Hyatt International must manage property management systems (PMS), point of sale (POS) information, along with financial data from its multi-national locations. For nearly two decades, Hyatt International utilized in-house, proprietary front and back office systems at the majority of its properties. As the company expanded, the legacy systems could not adapt to the company's changing needs, and Hyatt International was faced with the choice of updating its current system or moving to an outside vendor.

"We needed a solution that could provide robust financial management functionality along with the ability to function in multi-language environments and in more than 30 currencies," said Gebhard Rainer, vice president of hotel finance and technology for Hyatt International. "We chose Epicor iScala Hospitality for its flexibility, platform, multilingual, and multi-company capabilities, and because of the company's strong global presence, we knew they would be able to support us effectively."

**Working toward a centralized system**

After a successful beta test of Epicor iScala Hospitality at the Hyatt Regency Almaty in Kazakhstan, Hyatt deployed the solution at four properties throughout Germany

providing centralized, fully-integrated back office management software with real-time access to the financial and operational data among all four of the hotels.

"After seeing the success at the sites in Germany, we negotiated a global corporate agreement to have Epicor iScala Hospitality rolled out to a number of properties in Europe and the Middle East," said Rainer. "Epicor iScala Hospitality is now the only recommended back office system for Hyatt International Hotels and Resorts."

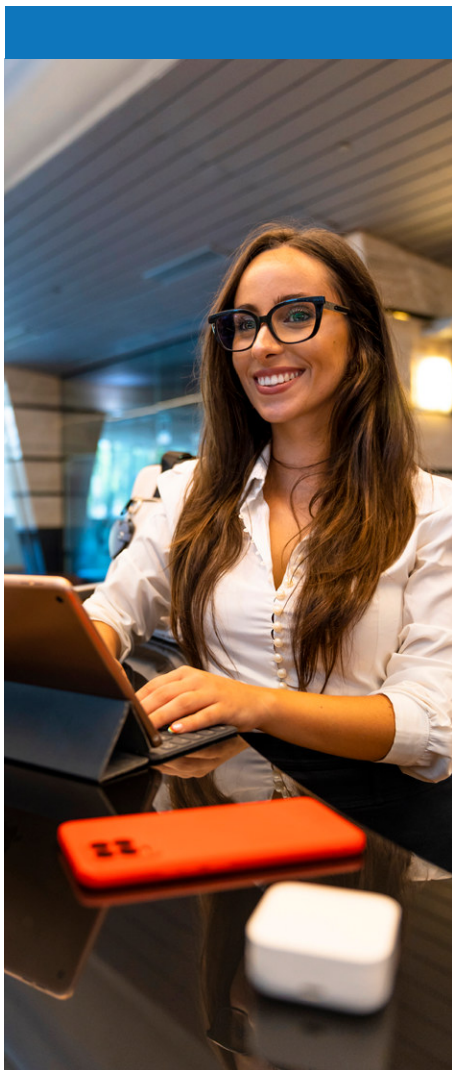
Hyatt is currently utilizing Epicor iScala Hospitality, part of the Epicor for Hospitality and Entertainment solution, at 43 Hyatt International locations. The remaining sites are scheduled to be rolled out by the middle to end of 2006, enabling consistency of product and platform across its properties. The solution provides Hyatt with the necessary global localization, traditional and commissary inventory management, analysis of product mix and food costing, requisitioning and standard hospitality reporting capabilities.

Epicor iScala Hospitality provides consistent and streamlined financial and operational processes and has enabled tighter controls and audit-ability to better-manage costs, as well as easier and timelier access to data within each property.

**Connecting information across continents**

Epicor iScala Hospitality can be rolled out within each property location or in a centralized shared services model. Hyatt International's locations in Germany, France, Italy, Switzerland, Belgium, Australia, New Zealand, and India benefit from the use of a centralized back office solution. Within the centralized environment, regional offices are able to run online, customized and comparative reports between the different regions and hotels.

Epicor iScala Hospitality is equipped to handle complex localized tax structures and multi-languages allowing local staff to deal with the back office in their own language with flexible account structures to meet the local requirements.



Utilizing user-friendly interfaces, Epicor iScala Hospitality seamlessly integrates Property Management Systems (PMS), point of sale (POS), and financial accounting systems, eliminating time-consuming double and manual entry functions. "With the integration between Epicor iScala Hospitality and our on-property systems, we have witnessed a complete re-engineering of our processes which has streamlined operations," said Rainer. "In addition, we have gained greater buying power and increased our efficiency and productivity."

In addition, Hyatt International now has the ability to generate up-to-the-minute reports through Epicor iScala Hospitality including daily profit and loss statements while also having immediate access to inventory through the solution's stock management processes. "The ability to run daily PNL (profit and loss) statements has enabled our managers to be proactive in managing their expenses proactively," said Rainer.

**Improving and measuring business processes**

With Epicor iScala Hospitality as the standardized back office solution for its operations worldwide, Hyatt International is looking at leveraging the solution to connect other elements of its business and further improve business processes. Based on the strategic goals of the company and standard industry measures, Hyatt International has a set of measurements that enable management to be more pro-active in reacting to market and business changes. The company leverages the real-time reporting capabilities in Epicor iScala Hospitality to harvest data to view the performance of the properties and to view forecasts and budgets to benchmark against the set measurements.

"The ability to access performance analysis reports and supporting market information to all hotels and business units provides a much more solid base to define strategic goals and business objectives tailored to the individual markets and environments we operate in," said Rainer. "This, in turn, has increased reliability and accuracy of budgeting and forecasting throughout the company."

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