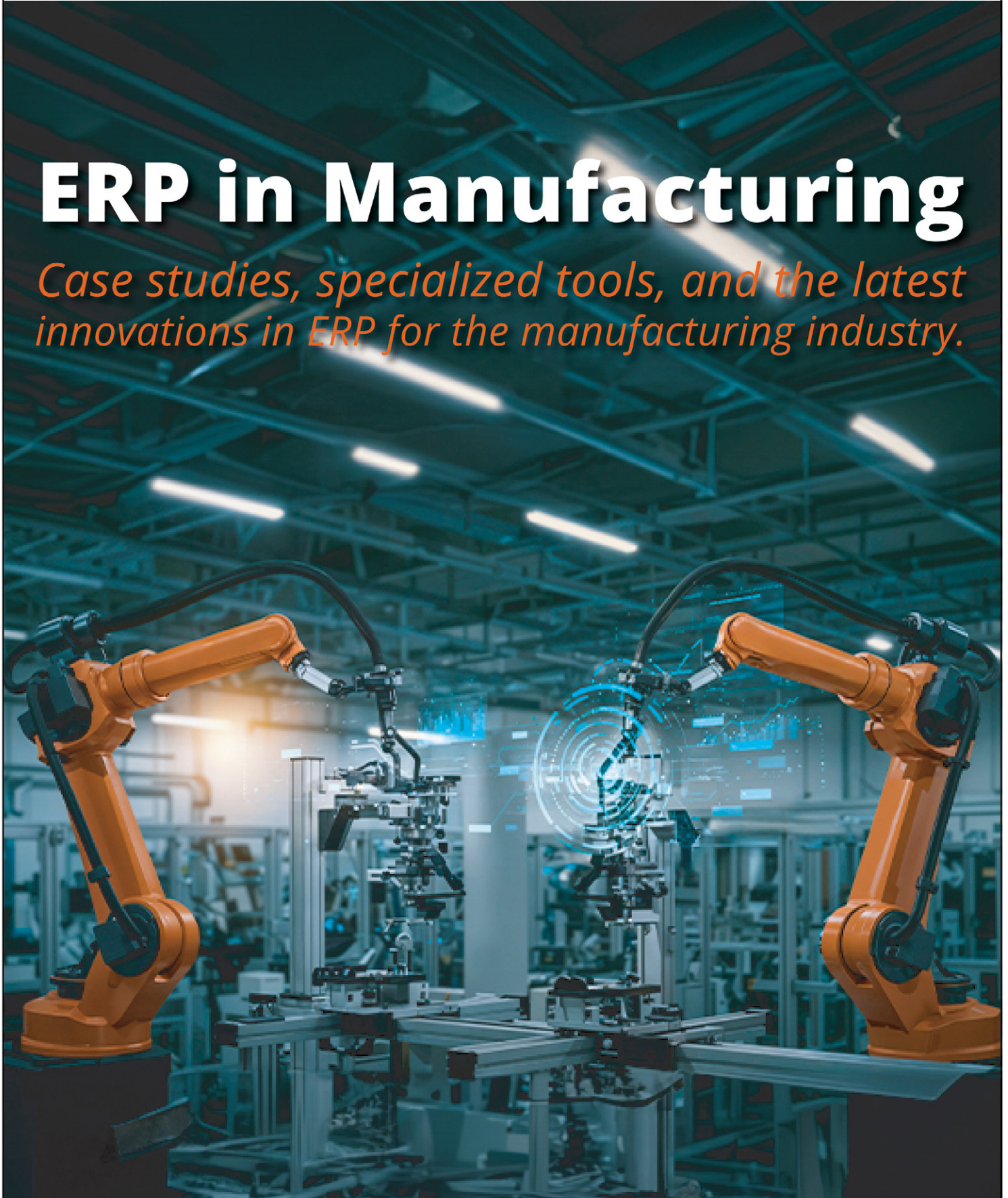


ERP in Manufacturing

Case studies, specialized tools, and the latest innovations in ERP for the manufacturing industry.



EPICOR

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the June issue of ERPNews Magazine, where we explore one of the most dynamic and evolving areas of enterprise technology—ERP in Manufacturing.

In today's rapidly changing industrial landscape, manufacturers face a complex mix of challenges and opportunities—from supply chain volatility and talent shortages to the growing demand for agility, automation, and sustainability. At the center of it all lies the need for powerful, flexible ERP systems that not only support operations but also fuel innovation.

This month, we are proud to feature two exclusive interviews that shed light on the technological and strategic shifts redefining the ERP space.

First, we sat down with Brenda Nobleza, Vice President of Americas Channel at Epicor, to discuss how strategic collaboration and partner enablement are driving real transformation across industries. Brenda shares critical insights into how Epicor's ecosystem-first mindset is creating long-term value for customers through trust, vertical specialization, and shared success.

Next, we spoke with John Miller, VP of Product Management at insightsoftware, about the integration of Spreadsheet Server with Infor M3 Cloud ERP. This interview uncovers how finance teams can maintain the speed and flexibility of Excel while gaining access to real-time data and cloud scalability—bridging the gap between legacy comfort and modern capability.

Together, these conversations reflect a larger truth: the future of manufacturing ERP isn't just about systems—it's about people, partnerships, and the power of timely information.

As always, we thank you for being a part of the ERPNews community and look forward to continuing this journey of transformation with you.



Pinar SENGUL, EDITOR

ERPNEWS

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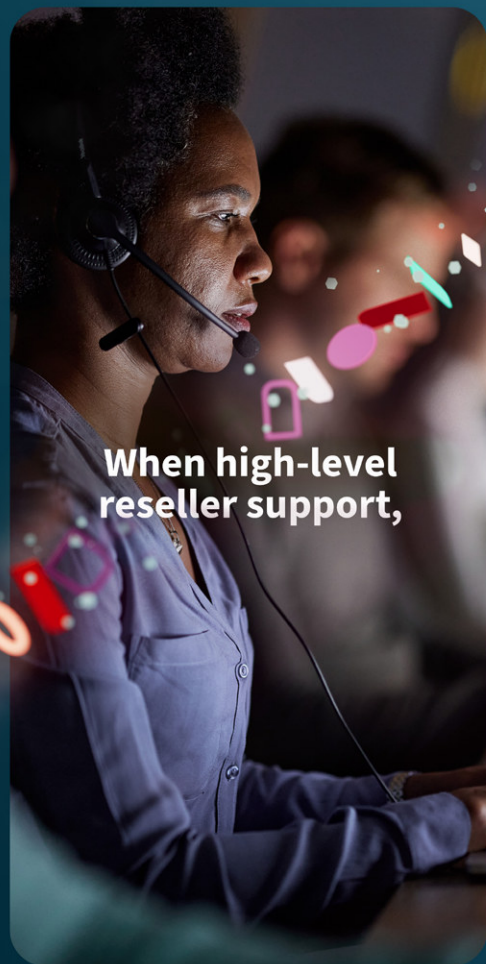
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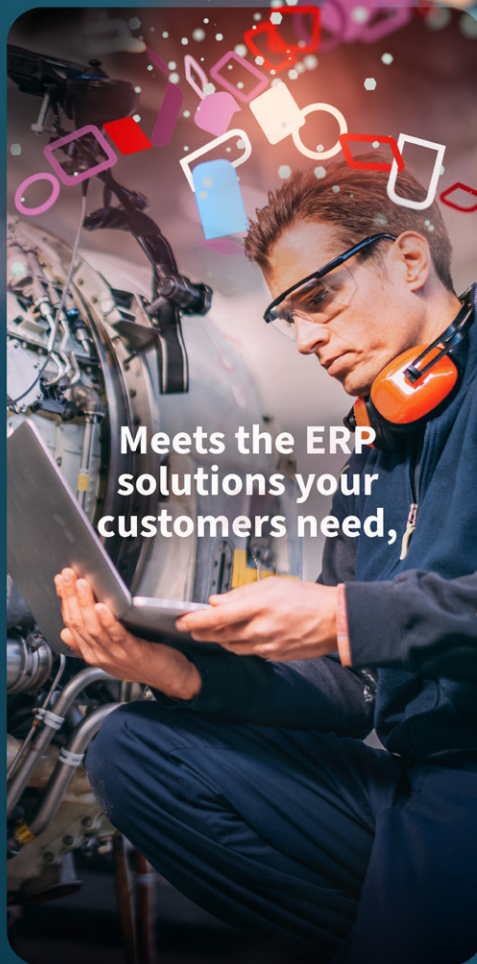
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When high-level
reseller support,



Meets the ERP
solutions your
customers need,



You're in a partner
ecosystem that has
your back.

PARTNERSHIP IS EASIER WITH
EPICOR

Empowering Partners Through Strategic Collaboration: A Conversation with Brenda Nobleza of Epicor

In today's fast-evolving ERP landscape, technology alone is no longer enough. True transformation is driven by the strength of ecosystems—those networks of partners, customers, and vendors who align not just on solutions but on vision. At the heart of Epicor's channel success is Brenda Nobleza, Vice President of Americas Channel, whose 17-year career in the partner space has been marked by a relentless focus on value creation, trust, and vertical specialization.

In this exclusive ERPNews interview, Brenda shares how [Epicor](#) is redefining what it means to be a channel-centric organization. From vertical enablement and deal protection to practical enablement and cross-functional alignment, she provides a compelling roadmap for building sustainable, high-impact partnerships in the ERP space.



Interview with
Brenda Nobleza,
Vice President, Americas Channel

EPICOR

1. With over 17 years of experience in the channel space, what key shifts have you observed in how partners engage and drive growth?

Over my career, I've witnessed several fundamental shifts in the channel ecosystem. The most significant has been the evolution from transactional relationships to strategic partnerships focused on joint value creation. Partners today are no longer just resellers – they're specialized consultants bringing deep industry expertise and customized solutions to clients.

Another major shift has been the transition from on-premise to cloud-based solutions, which has completely transformed business models. Partners now focus on lifetime customer value rather than one-time implementations, emphasizing recurring revenue streams and continuous customer success.

More recently, I've seen partners increasingly specialize in specific verticals and build their own IP on top of platforms like ours. This specialization allows them to differentiate in crowded markets and deliver extraordinary value to customers with unique requirements.

Finally, the expectation for speed of deployment and ROI has dramatically increased. Customers want immediate business impact, which has driven partners to develop pre-built solutions, accelerators, and proven implementation methodologies.

“Partners today are no longer just resellers – they’re specialized consultants bringing deep industry expertise and customized solutions to clients.”

2. Epicor emphasizes that “Easier doesn’t cut corners. Easier opens doors.” Can you elaborate on how Epicor’s partner ecosystem embodies this philosophy in practice?

At Epicor, “Easier doesn’t cut corners. Easier opens doors” isn’t just a tagline – it’s our guiding principle for partner enablement. We’ve intentionally designed our partner program to remove unnecessary complexity, streamline processes, and provide clear pathways to success.

This philosophy manifests in how we onboard new partners with structured training paths and role-based certifications that give their teams practical skills without overwhelming them. Our Partner Portal

provides a single destination for all resources, eliminating the need to navigate multiple systems.

We’ve also simplified our deal registration process to ensure partners can protect their opportunities efficiently. Our technical enablement focuses on real-world applications rather than theoretical concepts, giving partners practical tools they can immediately use with customers.

Most importantly, we make business planning and collaboration straightforward. Our channel managers work closely with partners to develop actionable growth strategies without excessive paperwork or administrative burdens. This approach opens doors by allowing partners to focus on what matters most – delivering value to customers and growing their businesses.

“At Epicor, ‘Easier doesn’t cut corners. Easier opens doors’ isn’t just a tagline – it’s our guiding principle for partner enablement.”

3. What are the critical elements that make Epicor's channel program stand out from other vendor-partner models in the ERP space?

Epicor's channel program distinguishes itself through several key differentiators. First, we take a highly personalized approach to partner relationships. Unlike vendors who manage partners primarily through portals or automated systems, we invest in understanding each partner's unique business model and growth objectives.

Second, our industry focus creates natural alignment with specialized partners. We've built our solutions for specific verticals like manufacturing, distribution, and retail, which helps partners develop deep expertise rather than spreading themselves too thin across disparate markets.

Third, we offer genuine territory protection and deal registration that partners can trust. We've created clear rules of engagement that respect partner investments in developing opportunities. Simply put, we do not compete with our partners.

Our enablement model is also distinctive. Rather than overwhelming partners with every product feature, we focus training on the capabilities most relevant to their target markets, helping them become productive more quickly.

Finally, we've structured our program to reward loyalty and performance while providing attractive margins that support sustainable partner businesses.

We believe in creating long-term partnerships rather than constantly recruiting new partners to replace churned relationships.

4. Epicor offers role-based onboarding, certifications, and ongoing support for partners. How have these structured investments translated into real-world partner success stories?

Our structured enablement approach has directly contributed to partner success across multiple dimensions. For example, one of our manufacturing partners leveraged our role-based technical certifications to develop expertise in our cloud platform, successfully transitioning from primarily implementing on-premise solutions to confidently deploying our cloud ERP for mid-market manufacturers. This transformation expanded their market opportunity and positioned them for sustainable growth.

Another success story involves a partner who utilized our sales enablement framework to build a specialized practice for wood products manufacturers. By combining our industry-specific training with their domain knowledge, they've established themselves as a trusted implementation partner in that niche, significantly growing their Epicor practice.

We've also invested in best-in-class sales enablement tools that have transformed how partners engage with prospects. These advanced platforms have helped partners decrease their sales cycles and in some cases, close deals without

requiring traditional product demonstrations – allowing them to focus on business value rather than feature demonstrations.

And our support for partner marketing has also yielded impressive results. Through our marketing concierge service, partners receive guidance in creating targeted campaigns. One distribution-focused partner used these resources to launch a series of industry-specific webinars that generated a substantial increase in qualified opportunities for their business.

These examples illustrate how our structured investments in partner enablement translate into tangible business outcomes – helping partners specialize, differentiate, and ultimately grow their Epicor practices more effectively than they could with less focused programs.

“We do not compete with our partners. We've created clear rules of engagement that respect partner investments in developing opportunities.”

5. What role does Epicor's financial structure play in incentivizing and retaining high-performing partners?

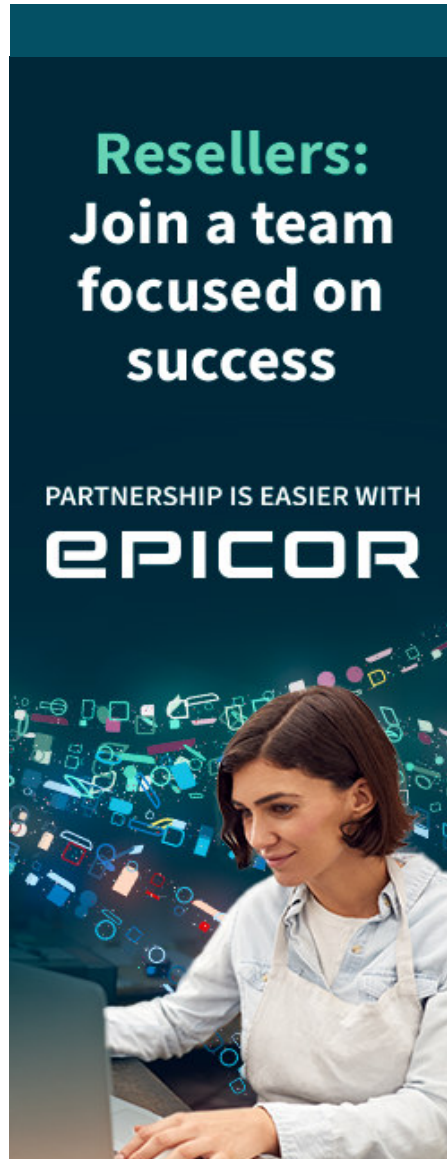
Epicor's financial structure is strategically designed to reward partner commitment and performance while supporting sustainable business growth. We start with competitive margins that recognize the value partners bring to the table. Unlike vendors who constantly squeeze partner profitability, we've maintained attractive economics that support partners' ability to invest in their Epicor practices.

We've also implemented a tiered structure that rewards increased commitment with enhanced benefits. As partners achieve higher tiers through certification, customer satisfaction, and revenue growth, they unlock additional financial incentives like improved margins, rebate opportunities, and marketing development funds.

Importantly, our program balances new customer acquisition with customer lifetime value. We provide incentives not just for new logo acquisition but also for expanding existing accounts and ensuring high renewal rates. This approach helps partners build predictable, recurring revenue streams rather than chasing one-time implementations.

We also incentivize partners' investments in their own growth through co-funded marketing initiatives and specialized solution development. When partners invest in building their Epicor practice, we match their commitment with additional resources.

This balanced approach to financial incentives has been instrumental in both attracting new partners and retaining our highest performers, many of whom have partnered with us for well over a decade.



6. You've been instrumental in expanding Epicor's channel verticals. What strategies have proven most effective in scaling both reach and revenue across diverse markets?

Drawing on my 17+ years of channel experience, I've found that building highly effective, scalable programs requires a foundation of strategic focus rather than opportunistic expansion. At Epicor, the most

effective strategy has been targeted partner recruitment focused on firms with existing vertical expertise rather than attempting to create that specialized knowledge from scratch. We look for partners who already understand the unique challenges in industries like metal fabrication, lumber, automotive aftermarket, or retail and then equip them with Epicor's purpose-built solutions.

We have fostered a dynamic and collaborative ecosystem where partners unite to deliver innovative solutions and exceptional services to our shared customers. Instead of competing, they strategically pool their expertise and resources, leveraging collective strengths to drive greater value and success for all stakeholders. This synergy allows us to enhance efficiency, accelerate innovation, and create a seamless experience that benefits both partners and customers alike.

We've also found success through enabling cross-vertical expansion for existing partners with complementary capabilities. For instance, helping manufacturing partners extend into distribution, or retail partners add service management components to their offerings.

Another powerful approach has been creating verticalized enablement resources – industry-specific demo environments, ROI calculators, and implementation accelerators – that help partners confidently enter new markets with proven tools rather than starting from scratch.

Finally, we've developed specialized marketing programs for key verticals, helping partners effectively position their Epicor offerings to specific industries through targeted messaging, content, and campaigns that resonate with each market's unique challenges and objectives.

7. How does Epicor ensure alignment between its internal teams and external partners to deliver a unified experience to customers?

Alignment between Epicor's internal teams and our partner ecosystem begins with organizational structure. We've integrated our channel organization across all functional areas — sales, marketing, product, and services — rather than treating partners as a separate silo. This ensures partner considerations are incorporated into all strategic decisions.

Clear rules of engagement provide transparency about how we manage opportunities, preventing channel conflict before it starts. These guidelines are documented, consistently communicated, and form the foundation of our operating model.

We've implemented unified systems that give partners and Epicor teams visibility into the same customer information, ensuring everyone works from a single source of truth. Our Partner Portal integrates with our internal systems to provide seamless access to resources and customer data.

Our internal incentive structures also reinforce collaboration. Epicor sales executives receive credit for partner-led deals in their territories, encouraging them to support partners rather than compete with them.

Perhaps most importantly, we foster a culture of partnership throughout the organization. From our executive leadership to frontline support representatives, we consistently reinforce that partners are an extension of Epicor and essential to our customers' success.

Through these aligned systems, processes, and cultural elements, we deliver a unified experience where customers benefit from the combined strengths of Epicor and our partners.

8. Channel relationships often depend on trust and collaboration. How do you nurture long-term partnerships and maintain strong partner engagement over time?

Building lasting partner relationships starts with consistency and transparency. Partners need to know what to expect from us, whether that's in program policies, financial terms, or communication cadence. We maintain consistent leadership in our channel organization and avoid frequent program changes that can erode trust.

Regular executive engagement demonstrates our commitment at the highest levels. Our executive team conducts quarterly business reviews with strategic partners, ensuring alignment on priorities and providing visibility into our roadmap and strategic direction.

We've also established formal feedback mechanisms through our Partner Advisory Council and QBR's. More importantly, we act on that feedback by implementing meaningful changes based on partner input.

Recognition plays a crucial role in nurturing engagement. Our partner awards program celebrates exceptional achievements, while our partner community events create opportunities for partners to share successes and build relationships not just with Epicor, but with each other.

Perhaps most fundamental is our commitment to shared success. We measure our channel team on partner satisfaction and growth metrics, ensuring our organization is incentivized to help partners achieve their business objectives. When partners succeed, we succeed — and this alignment forms the foundation of enduring relationships.

9. As technology evolves, what innovations or trends do you believe will most impact the channel ecosystem in the next few years?

AI and machine learning will fundamentally transform the channel ecosystem in several ways. For partners, these technologies will enable more predictive and personalized customer engagements while automating routine implementation tasks. This shift will allow partners to focus more on high-value consultative services rather than technical configuration.

We're also seeing increasing demand for comprehensive solutions that extend beyond traditional ERP boundaries. Partners who can integrate ERP with IoT, advanced analytics, and industry-specific applications will have a significant advantage. This creates opportunities for partners to develop their own IP and specialized offerings built on core platforms.

The acceleration of vertical cloud solutions will continue, with partners needing deeper industry specialization rather than broad technical skills. This trend favors partners who can combine technology implementation with genuine business process expertise in specific sectors.

Security and compliance requirements are becoming more complex and will require partners to develop specialized practices addressing these concerns. Those who can effectively navigate regulatory requirements like GDPR, CCPA, and industry-specific regulations will be highly valued.

Finally, we're seeing the emergence of new partnership models beyond traditional reselling and implementation. Ecosystem partnerships where multiple specialized providers collaborate to deliver comprehensive solutions will become increasingly important. Partners who can orchestrate these ecosystems will create significant value for customers and capture new revenue streams.

“When partners succeed, we succeed – and this alignment forms the foundation of enduring relationships.”

10. For potential partners considering joining the Epicor ecosystem, what message would you like to share with them about the opportunity ahead?

If you're considering joining the Epicor ecosystem, you're looking at a unique opportunity to align with a company that truly values partners as integral to our collective success. We offer something increasingly rare in the enterprise software space – a genuine commitment to partner-led growth coupled with solutions purpose-built for specific industries where many of you already have deep expertise.

What sets Epicor apart is our focus on making business “easier” for both our partners and customers. We've eliminated unnecessary complexity from our partner program, providing clear paths to profitability without bureaucratic hurdles. Our industry-focused approach

means you can leverage your existing vertical expertise rather than starting from scratch with horizontal technologies.

The market opportunity is substantial. Mid-market enterprises in manufacturing, distribution, retail, and services are actively seeking modern cloud solutions from trusted advisors who understand their unique challenges. With Epicor, you gain access to proven technology specifically designed for these industries, backed by enablement resources that accelerate your time to market.

Most importantly, when you join Epicor, you become part of a community that genuinely collaborates rather than just coexists. Our partners regularly tell us that the level of engagement they experience with Epicor – from executive accessibility to responsive support – distinguishes us from other vendors they work with.

If you value true partnership, industry focus, and the opportunity to build a differentiated practice with strong margins, we would welcome a conversation about how Epicor can help you achieve your business objectives.

Closing Note:

As channel models continue to evolve, Epicor's approach—rooted in clarity, trust, and industry focus—serves as a powerful case study in long-term partner success. Under Brenda Nobleza's leadership, the company is proving that in the modern ERP landscape, it's not just about software. It's about building ecosystems that scale, sustain, and succeed—together.



Bridging Excel and Cloud ERP: How insightsoftware's Spreadsheet Server Enhances Reporting in Infor M3

As finance teams embrace cloud ERP systems to modernize operations, the need for seamless, reliable, and user-friendly reporting tools becomes increasingly critical. In this exclusive ERPNews interview, we sit down with John Miller, Vice President of Product Management for ERP Reporting & BI at insightsoftware, to discuss the integration of Spreadsheet Server with Infor M3 Cloud ERP. Miller shares how this integration is not only streamlining access to live data within Excel but also empowering finance professionals to move from reactive number crunching to proactive, insight-driven decision-making. From eliminating manual processes to paving the way for AI-supported reporting, this conversation sheds light on how insightsoftware is redefining the future of ERP reporting.

1. Can you tell us about the key motivations behind integrating Spreadsheet Server with Infor M3 Cloud ERP? What business challenges were you aiming to solve?

Our focus at insightsoftware is to make it easier to get the data to the users need it by abstracting the data layer. While knowing where the data comes from is certainly important, we want to make it as simple as possible to connect with and start using that data. This integration allows us to reduce the mental overhead

and IT hurdles, helping teams stay productive and confident as they transition to a cloud-based ERP environment.



Interview with
John Miller,
VP, Product Management,
ERP Reporting & BI

 insightsoftware

2. How does this integration transform reporting capabilities for finance teams working within Excel-based environments?

Adding capabilities to cloud-based solutions isn't a deviation from our mission with Spreadsheet Server. We're continually working to help those teams access live, trusted data right within their tools. That said, one key benefit we're hearing from customers is that these connectors are becoming essential to their migration to the cloud. Having the ability to connect to any ERP eases their concern that a migration to cloud-based ERP would negatively affect their reporting capabilities. This integration with Infor M3 Cloud ERP allows teams to continue to use their existing tools, while taking advantage of the new tools from their ERP provider more quickly.

3. Many finance teams still rely on manual processes for reporting. How does this solution address those inefficiencies, and what kind of impact can it have on productivity?

Manual processes to export and begin reporting are certainly risky, particularly as the team grows. Every handoff or manually entered number is a potential issue. Automating the connection between Excel and Infor M3 Cloud ERP removes two major areas of concern when it comes to data accuracy; version control and reconciliation against source. Teams spend less time double-checking formulas and more time delivering insights really quickly. We're even seeing customers start to gamify their end-of-month processes to see how much quicker they can close the books.

4. What are some early results or customer feedback you've received since launching the integration?

There's a bit of the "no news is good news" dynamic, where business is continuing as usual for our customers, which is exactly what we want. When we dug in, the responses have been very positive.

"Automating the connection between Excel and Infor M3 Cloud ERP removes two major areas of concern when it comes to data accuracy—version control and reconciliation against source."

5. From a broader perspective, how is insightsoftware helping finance professionals shift from reactive number crunching to proactive, strategic decision-making?

Today's finance teams need more than just access to financials—they need a complete picture across departments to support every conversation and decision. That means simplifying access to operational, sales, HR, and

other business data, not just the general ledger. In practice, this means an FP&A team member can sit in a meeting, hear a "what if we did X" question, and immediately respond with "here's the impact"—live, in Excel, with confidence.

We are focused on building tools that make that possible. By reducing the time from data to decision, surfacing the right insights, and streamlining access across systems, we help teams collaborate in real-time. It's not just about cutting tasks or saving time—it's about enabling dynamic, data-backed modeling right at the meeting table.

6. How does this move reflect the wider industry trend toward AI-driven automation and real-time insights in finance?

While there's a lot of excitement around AI in finance, most teams are taking smaller, measured steps, rather than jumping into full-scale adoption from the get-go. Features like natural language processing (NLP) for generating visualizations and reports are already accessible, and our tools support this today. We're also seeing a growing interest in translating reports across ERP schemas. While these use cases may seem modest compared to headline-grabbing AI innovations, they're incredibly meaningful to our users.

There is real potential for agentic solutions to reconcile issues, identify potential errors, surface trends, and communicate insights back out to the user, and we're excited to build and share these solutions with our user community.

7. In your view, what role does Excel continue to play in modern ERP reporting, despite the emergence of advanced BI tools?

Excel isn't going anywhere. It's still the go-to tool for finance teams because it's fast, familiar, and incredibly flexible. The capabilities that come with advanced BI solutions certainly add to the overall tools in someone's tool belt, but they complement Excel rather than replace it in the short term. In fact, we expect agentic AI capabilities will have a greater long-term impact on the day-to-day workflows than advanced BI tools.

8. Can you walk us through how the integration works technically? How easy is it for users to get started?

Spreadsheet Server works the same way it always has. Once data is made available through a Profile, users will notice little to no difference. The connection to Infor M3 Cloud is configured using Profiles, which defines how Spreadsheet Server connects to the data source. The process is consistent with how Profiles work elsewhere in our ecosystem, so anyone who has created one before will find it straightforward.

“It’s not just about cutting tasks or saving time—it’s about enabling dynamic, data-backed modeling right at the meeting table.”

9. What should organizations consider when evaluating ERP reporting tools—especially those looking to modernize finance operations?

A general posture we stand by is that making things simple and easy for your users is key and serves as the primary starting point when considering any change like this. Any tool that impacts a team's day-to-day workflow, even if it provides better access to more capabilities, is difficult to drive adoption for. So, start with your people. Then walk through their

day to day; how do they get the data? Where do they store it? How do they share it? What do they do with it once they get it? How long do they store different reports?

While those may sound like rhetorical questions, they're essential for understanding what your users need and finding ERP reporting tools that solve their problems. The resulting adoption curve is much steeper. It seems simple, but we're regularly surprised at how often the user experience is kept out of consideration for ERP reporting tools.

10. What's next for Spreadsheet Server and your broader ERP reporting & BI roadmap? Are there future integrations or features we should keep an eye on?

We're doubling down on connectivity and user experience. Expect to see more ERP integrations, tighter alignment with cloud-first environments, and deeper capabilities around automation and insight delivery. We're also investing heavily in building tools with AI at their core to support automation and insight generation. There's a ton more to come, and we can't wait to share it with you all!



Manufacturing ERP Implementation: A Complete Guide

Manufacturing is a high-stakes balancing act. Raw materials, production schedules, supply chains, and customer demands all need to move in sync, and if one piece falls out of place, the ripple effects can be costly. An enterprise resource planning (ERP) system helps manufacturers consolidate their processes, integrating disconnected tools and automating manual processes to provide up-to-the minute clarity into production, inventory, financial, and other core business data.

But choosing and implementing an ERP system requires a fundamental shift in how a manufacturer operates, involving new workflows, training, and companywide adoption. Such change comes with challenges, ranging from selecting the right system to facilitating a smooth rollout. This guide can help manufacturers make those decisions and set themselves up for long-term success.



Article by
Abby Jenkins,
Product Marketing Manager

ORACLE
NETSUITE

What Is Manufacturing ERP?

Manufacturing ERP systems

integrate key business functions, including production, inventory, orders, and finances, to remedy the headaches generated by siloed systems. Instead of having to juggle spreadsheets or chase down information across disparate platforms, manufacturers can access critical data from one place, making it easier to coordinate operations and respond to changes in real time.

Advanced ERP systems go beyond basic integration to include artificial intelligence-powered forecasting, automated compliance, and real-time analytics. AI can help manufacturers anticipate changes in demand, fine-tune supply chains, and flag inefficiencies before they turn into bigger problems. Some ERP systems also integrate with Internet of Things devices that feed live equipment data into the system to help manufacturers spot and fix issues that could otherwise hamper efficiency.

“ERP implementations have a high failure rate—estimates range from 40% to 90%.”

With the right ERP system, manufacturers can move from keeping up to getting ahead. Cloud-based systems offer even greater flexibility, allowing companies to scale operations without expensive on-premises infrastructure or major IT overhauls. As businesses grow, they can easily add users, locations, and new capabilities while maintaining real-time visibility into operations from anywhere.

Key Takeaways

- Manufacturing ERP solutions unify core business functions—production, inventory, orders, finances, etc.—in one centralized hub.
- These tools decrease reliance on manual processes and provide instant access into current businesswide data.
- The end result is smarter, leaner, and more profitable operations with less waste, fewer errors, and smoother production.
- Common ERP implementation headaches—cost overruns, deployment delays, resistance to change, integration issues, and security risks—can be costly but are preventable.
- Successful implementation requires careful planning, the right team, clear goals, thorough testing, and a continuous improvement strategy.

When Is It Worth It to Move to an ERP System?

Manufacturers often outgrow their business systems long before they realize it. When production delays, inventory issues, or accounting burdens start stacking up, it's a sign that the current setup isn't keeping pace. Manual processes slow everything down, errors creep in, and teams waste time making sense of data instead of making well-informed decisions.

“A successful manufacturing ERP implementation starts with careful planning and a clear strategy.”

Growth is another clear tipping point. Expansion of product lines, new locations, or a ballooning supplier network can expose inefficiencies in areas that once seemed manageable. A lack of real-time visibility into orders, materials, and production schedules increases the specter of potentially expensive errors. For example, if a manufacturer is relying on outdated systems and miscalculates available materials, production could stall when critical components unexpectedly run out, contributing to delayed shipments, increased rush-order costs, and frustrated customers.

Regulatory compliance is another pressure point. Manually tracking evolving laws, safety regulations, and reporting requirements can become a liability. When audits take too long or tax reporting feels like a guessing game, an ERP system can take the pressure off by automatically tracking regulatory changes, keeping accurate records, and reducing the risk of penalties.

Granted, cost is always a factor, but the bigger peril lies in letting inefficiencies stifle growth. Missed deadlines, unhappy customers, and wasted resources add up fast. When teams spend more time fixing problems than improving operations, it's a sign that an ERP system has become a necessity.

Benefits of Manufacturing ERP

Beyond organizing operations, a manufacturing ERP system can help businesses become smarter, leaner, and more profitable. The following benefits show how ERP helps manufacturers cut waste, prevent costly mistakes, and keep production running smoothly.

- **Improved stock optimization:** Stocking the right amount of inventory is a never-ending balancing act—having too much ties up cash, too little disrupts production. ERP systems use real-time data and [demand forecasting](#) to fine-tune stock levels, prevent shortages, and reduce excess inventory.
- **Fewer errors:** Mistakes in orders, invoices, or production schedules due to manual processes can result in costly delays. ERP systems cut down on human error by automating data entry, flagging inconsistencies, and integrating records across departments.
- **Reduced carrying costs:** Storing excess inventory eats into profits through warehousing fees, depreciation, and obsolescence. ERP systems help manufacturers reduce [carrying costs](#) by tracking demand patterns, automating replenishment, and making sure materials arrive just in time.

- **Increased visibility:** Decisions are only as reliable as the data behind them. ERP systems centralize real-time production, financial, and supply chain data so teams have a clear, accurate view of operations at all times.
- **Optimized resource utilization:** Idle machines, bottlenecks, and misallocated labor slow production and drive up costs. ERP systems automate scheduling, workload distribution, and capacity planning to make the most of equipment, materials, and the workforce.

Manufacturing ERP Key Features and Functions

A manufacturing ERP does far more than keep track of orders and inventory—it acts as a central hub for managing finances, production, supply chains, and customer relationships. By integrating these core functions, manufacturing ERP systems can help organizations work smarter, not harder.

The following list of key features highlights how ERP connects key business processes to create a more efficient, coordinated workflow.

- **Financial management:** An ERP system ties together accounting, budgeting, and reporting to give manufacturers instant financial insights and control over costs. This makes it easier to track profitability, manage expenses, and simplify audits.
- **Inventory management:** With live tracking and automated replenishment features, ERP systems support better inventory management by helping manufacturers maintain appropriate stock levels, minimizing costly overordering,

and ensuring that necessary materials will be available when needed.

- **Supply chain management:** By coordinating supplier, logistics, and production schedule data, ERP systems strengthen supply chain management by improving visibility. This, in turn, can avoid many delays and disruptions.
- **Quoting:** Accurate pricing starts with access to real-time cost data. ERP systems can quickly and accurately calculate quotes that incorporate several factors, such as material costs, labor, and margins. This enables businesses to establish competitive pricing without sacrificing profitability.
- **Order management:** From order entry to fulfillment ERP systems synchronize sales and production, reducing errors and keeping production aligned with customer demand.
- **Compliance:** ERP systems simplify compliance by reducing the manual work needed to stay on top of regulations. Audits, tax reporting, and changing industry standards become easier to manage, and penalties for noncompliance become less likely.
- **Customer relationship management (CRM):** Integrated CRM tools give manufacturers a full view of customer interactions. CRM tools help sales and service teams build stronger relationships, which increases customer satisfaction.
- **Manufacturing execution system (MES):** By linking shop floor operations with planning systems, ERP-driven MES capabilities can enhance

production efficiency, improve quality control, and minimize downtime.

- **Analytics:** Thanks to their built-in dashboards and reporting tools, ERP systems turn raw data into actionable insights that help manufacturers make smarter decisions.
- **Collaboration:** ERP systems centralize communication and document sharing so teams, suppliers, and partners all operate from the same page, so to speak, no matter where they are.

Step-By-Step Guide to Implementing Manufacturing ERP

[ERP implementations](#) have a high failure rate—estimates range from 40% to 90%. Many of these failures stem from faulty planning, unclear goals, or poor user adoption. A successful manufacturing ERP implementation starts with careful planning and a clear strategy. The following steps outline the entire process from system selection to full deployment—and highlight common pitfalls.

1. Gather an Implementation Team

A successful ERP rollout starts with assembling the right people. The team should include departmental representatives from leadership, IT, finance, operations, and supply chain, with an assigned project manager to steer the overall process. Key end users should also be involved to provide feedback on daily workflows.

It's important to define roles early. Who approves decisions? Who handles vendor communication? Who oversees training? Companies that skip this step often encounter delays, confusion, and resistance to change. Schedule regular check-

ins to maintain team alignment, and clearly define responsibilities so the project can move forward with few miscommunications.

Choosing internal champions—that is, team members who understand both the business and the ERP system—can help promote adoption and facilitate a smoother transition. These individuals serve as go-to resources for their teams, leading by example, reinforcing best practices, and encouraging user engagement.

“Choosing internal champions—that is, team members who understand both the business and the ERP system—can help promote adoption and facilitate a smoother transition.”

2. Identify Goals and System Requirements

Before evaluating solutions, manufacturers need to be clear about what they want from an ERP system. Are they looking to reduce production bottlenecks? Improve forecasting? Automate compliance? Or all of the above? Understanding pain points helps define must-have features, such as multilocation inventory tracking or AI-driven analytics.

The choice between cloud and on-premises solutions is another key consideration: The decision can affect scalability, security, and

maintenance needs. Companies should document their requirements in detail to help vendors provide tailored recommendations instead of generic sales pitches.

Defining specific goals helps set realistic success metrics—whether that means tracking efforts to reduce manual data entry by 50%, cut inventory holding costs, or fulfill some other purpose.

3. Assess Vendor Options

With numerous ERP providers to choose among, winnowing the selection can feel overwhelming. Consider the following four-pronged approach to vendor comparisons:

- **Industry experience:** Look for vendors with a proven track record in manufacturing ERP. Read case studies and request customer references from manufacturers in markets similar to yours to gauge real-world performance.
- **Customization and integration:** An ERP system should adapt to business needs, not the other way around. Assess customization options and check integration capabilities. If an ERP system doesn't sync well with existing tools, it can create more headaches than it solves.
- **Scalability:** Consider the system's ability to support future growth. An ERP that meets needs today should also be able to handle the addition of new locations, product lines, and increased production demands tomorrow.
- **Support and training:** Strong post-implementation support can make the difference between success and frustration. Prioritize vendors that offer comprehensive training, ongoing assistance, and responsive customer service.

Demos and free trials are also essential—usability matters just as much as functionality. If a system is clunky or counterintuitive, its adoption will likely be an uphill battle.

4. Calculate Total Cost of Ownership (TCO)

ERP costs go beyond licensing fees. Companies need to factor in expenses related to implementation, training, maintenance, and future upgrades. [Cloud-based ERP systems](#) often have lower up-front costs but also include recurring subscription fees, while on-premises systems require more IT resources and infrastructure. Hidden costs—related to data migration, custom development, or unexpected consultant fees, for example—can derail budgets if they're not anticipated.

A thorough [TCO](#) analysis should project costs over at least five years to account for both immediate ROI and long-term value. Companies that underestimate TCO risk blowing their budget or compromising on critical features.

5. Map Processes

Every manufacturer operates differently, and an ERP system should enhance those workflows, not disrupt them. Before implementation, document core processes—including order fulfillment, procurement, production tracking, and inventory management—to pinpoint inefficiencies and areas ripe for automation.

This means mapping out step-by-step workflows to identify manual tasks, bottlenecks, and gaps that an ERP can help resolve. For example, if purchase approvals currently require multiple emails, an ERP can automate approvals to save time and improve accuracy.

Well-defined process maps also make it easier to configure the system so it aligns with actual day-to-day operations. Companies that skip this step may find themselves addressing issues later, leading to costly rework, delays, and reconfigurations.

6. Module Implementation and Customization

Manufacturers don't need to roll out every ERP feature at once. A phased approach that starts with core modules, such as inventory management, production planning, and financials, can help the process remain manageable, with minimal disruptions.

Customization should be strategic. Though tailoring the system to specific needs can be useful, excessive customization can make upgrades harder and increase maintenance costs. Instead of agreeing to heavy modifications, explore built-in configuration options that adapt to business needs without requiring extensive development.

“Before evaluating solutions, manufacturers need to be clear about what they want from an ERP system. Understanding pain points helps define must-have features.”

7. Connect Third-Party Tools

An ERP system works best when it integrates seamlessly with other essential business tools. Many ERPs include built-in modules for such processes as product life cycle management (PLM), CRM, ecommerce, and supplier relationship management, but some manufacturers prefer to use third-party solutions that then need to integrate seamlessly with the ERP.

Before you begin implementation, assess whether the ERP system includes built-in connectors or requires custom APIs to link external tools. Poor integration can lead to data silos, manual workarounds, and inefficiencies. Testing integrations early prevents costly surprises later; choosing an ERP system with strong support for API capabilities ensures compatibility as business needs evolve.

8. Migrate Data

Bringing years of customer records, supplier details, and inventory data into a new system isn't as simple as copying and pasting. Data migration requires cleaning up outdated records, standardizing formats, and making sure everything maps correctly so that information transfers accurately. Failure to validate data can result in incorrect inventory counts, mismatched supplier records, or missing historical transactions—any of which could cause stockouts, procurement errors, or compliance risks. This step also presents an opportunity to eliminate duplicated, inconsistent, or obsolete data before it clutters the new system.

Testing small batches before full migration helps catch errors early. Companies that rush this step risk corrupting critical information, leading to costly operational hiccups post-launch.

9. Test Implementation

Even a well-designed ERP system can experience unexpected issues once it goes live. Running test scenarios—such as processing an order, tracking inventory, or generating financial reports—helps uncover misconfigurations, missing features, or workflow issues before they disrupt operations. Testing should involve actual end users, not just IT teams, because front-line employees are the ones who will be using the system daily. Their input will help demonstrate that the system performs reliably in real-world conditions.

10. Address Bugs

No ERP system implementation will be flawless from Day One. Bugs, glitches, and misconfigurations will surface, but a structured approach to resolving them can minimize frustrations and keep operations running smoothly. Early bug resolution can also help build confidence in the new system and encourage end-user adoption.

To manage this process, companies must have a dedicated support team—either an internal one or one supplied by the ERP vendor—ready to troubleshoot and deploy fixes quickly. Creating a clear reporting system allows users to flag issues easily, helping prevent minor issues from escalating into bigger problems.

11. User Training and Process Documentation

An ERP system is only as effective as the people using it. Companies that invest in training see higher adoption rates and fewer errors, but training should go beyond generic tutorials to focus on how the system applies to daily tasks. Hands-on sessions, role-based instruction, and on-demand resources can accommodate different learning styles, ensuring more successful training—and adoption.

Process documentation is equally as important as training. Clear standard operating procedures arm employees with a vital reference when they run into issues, and will help new hires get up to speed faster.

12. Go Live

The final switch to an ERP system should be planned carefully to minimize disruptions. Many manufacturers opt for a soft launch, whereby a small team starts using the system before the full rollout. This kind of trial run facilitates last-minute tweaks and helps employees adjust gradually. Having IT and vendor support standing by on the go-live date helps resolve issues quickly and prevent small hiccups from becoming major problems. The more prepared teams are, the smoother the transition will be.

13. Continuous Improvement Strategy

ERP implementation doesn't end at the go-live stage. Regular system audits, employee feedback, and new feature rollouts help businesses get the most out of their investment. As operations evolve, the ERP should adapt, whether that means refining workflows, adding automation, or integrating new technologies. Companies that treat ERP as a static tool miss opportunities for efficiency gains, while those that continually optimize are more likely to enjoy long-term success.



“Compliance: ERP systems simplify compliance by reducing the manual work needed to stay on top of regulations.”

Troubleshooting Common ERP Implementation Challenges

Even the best-planned ERP implementations run into pitfalls, ranging from budget overruns to resistance from employees. Understanding the following common challenges—and how to address them—can keep the rollout on track.

Costs

ERP implementations can get expensive fast, especially when unexpected costs, such as custom development, data migration, and extended training, start piling up. Companies that focus only on licensing fees often underestimate TCO, leading to budget overruns.

To avoid surprises, manufacturers can break down costs into four categories:

- Up-front expenses, such as implementation and licensing fees

- Ongoing maintenance, including software updates and IT support
- Long-term scalability, such as future upgrades and system expansions
- Indirect costs, such as temporary productivity loss during transition and change management efforts

Cloud-based ERP systems can spread costs over time, but they come with recurring subscription fees, while on-premises systems demand higher initial investments in infrastructure and IT support. Careful vendor negotiations, a well-defined scope, a phased rollout, and using out-of-the-box configurations as much as possible can all help control spending.

Deployment Hangups

Unexpected delays can derail an ERP project, whether due to poor planning, misaligned priorities, or technical roadblocks. Rushing into implementation without a clear road map can lead to misconfigurations and setbacks, while failing to set milestones can leave teams overwhelmed and uncertain about progress.

To keep deployments on track, establish and follow a structured implementation timeline that breaks down tasks into phases with clear deadlines and responsibilities. Assign accountability checkpoints to regularly track progress. Testing should be built into the schedule to catch potential issues early.

Assigning a dedicated project manager—whether internal or external—can align departments and avert miscommunication that could cause delays. If deployment stalls, revisiting the initial implementation plan and reprioritizing tasks can get things moving again. Vendor support is also a valuable resource for troubleshooting and assistance.

Organizational Change Resistance

ERP systems require people to change how they work, and that's not always easy. Employees often resist new systems, especially when they feel left out of the decision-making process or worry that the new system will add complexity. Without buy-in from both leadership and front-line workers, adoption slows and inefficiencies persist.

To ease the transition, companies should involve key users early and communicate how the ERP system benefits their specific roles—through reduced manual work or improved efficiency, for instance. When employees see the real impact of ERP on their day-to-day work, adoption becomes smoother. At the same time, leadership must actively reinforce the ERP system's value and align the transition with business goals. This includes a structured change management plan that involves:

- Hands-on training tailored to different roles and learning styles so employees feel confident with the system.
- Clear, two-way communication channels to address concerns directly, rather than pushing top-down directives.
- Ongoing support, such as dedicated help desks or office hours, to help reduce frustration.
- Internal champions who drive enthusiasm and help colleagues.

Integration With Legacy Systems

Manufacturers often rely on older software for critical operations, and not every ERP system integrates smoothly with legacy tools or custom-built databases. Poor compatibility can create data silos, force manual workarounds, and disrupt existing workflows, negating the benefits of an ERP upgrade.

Before implementation, companies should audit their existing tech stack to identify potential integration challenges and determine whether legacy systems can be replaced, modified, or connected to the ERP. [Choosing an ERP system](#) with strong API capabilities or built-in connectors can make integration easier, especially for businesses that depend on third-party applications. If direct integration isn't possible, middleware solutions can act as bridges between old and new systems.

A phased approach—running legacy systems alongside the ERP system for a transition period, for example—can help minimize disruptions and gives teams time to adapt gradually. Businesses should also have contingency plans in place in case integration proves more complicated than expected.

**“Analytics:
Thanks to
their built-in
dashboards and
reporting tools,
ERP systems
turn raw data
into actionable
insights
that help
manufacturers
make smarter
decisions.”**

Security

One of the key benefits of ERP systems is that they centralize vast amounts of sensitive data. However, this also makes security a top concern. Cyberattacks, data breaches, and unauthorized access can put financial records, supplier contracts, and production data at risk.

Cloud-based ERP systems rely on vendor security measures, which typically include data encryption, intrusion detection, and automated security patch updates. But businesses still must manage access controls and user authentication to prevent unauthorized entry. On-premises solutions require dedicated IT teams to handle firewalls, encryption, intrusion prevention, and disaster recovery planning.

To safeguard data, companies should implement multi-factor authentication to prevent unauthorized logins, use role-based access controls to restrict sensitive data to only those who need it, and conduct regular system audits to address potential vulnerabilities. Meanwhile, training employees on cybersecurity best practices reduces risks from phishing and social engineering attacks, and staying up to date with security patches protects against emerging threats and exploits.

Upgrade to a Leading ERP Solution With NetSuite for Manufacturing

NetSuite's cloud-based [ERP for manufacturing](#) gives companies real-time visibility and control over production, supply chains, and finances—all within a single platform. It automates production scheduling, work order management, and quality control, reducing waste and improving

efficiency. When connected with the [NetSuite Warehouse Management System](#) module, companies can use automated inventory replenishment to keep stock levels aligned with demand. By also using [NetSuite Supply Chain Management](#), manufacturers are able to integrate procurement, supplier collaboration, and logistics to keep operations running smoothly.

Because NetSuite's manufacturing ERP system is part of a unified cloud ecosystem, it seamlessly connects with NetSuite financial, CRM, and ecommerce modules to eliminate data silos and improve decision-making. What's more, built-in analytics provide instant insights into production costs, inventory trends, and profitability to help manufacturers stay agile. And given its automatic updates and scalability, NetSuite grows as companies grow, eliminating any need for costly IT infrastructure.

A manufacturing ERP system reshapes how a business operates by bringing real-time visibility, automation, and control to every stage of production. Success depends on careful planning, strong execution, and full team buy-in to ensure that the system delivers real value. For manufacturers looking to scale, reduce inefficiencies, and stay competitive, the right ERP system is a long-term advantage.

What is the ERP life cycle?

The enterprise resource planning (ERP) life cycle covers the stages a company goes through when selecting, implementing, and maintaining an ERP system. It starts with planning and selection, where companies assess needs, evaluate vendors, and determine system requirements. Next is implementation, which includes configuration, data migration,

integration, testing, and user training. Once live, the system enters the optimization and maintenance phase, where companies refine workflows, roll out updates, and continuously improve processes to maximize long-term value.

Which is the most critical phase in ERP implementation?

The planning and selection phase is the most critical because it sets the foundation for a successful ERP implementation. Poorly defined goals, unclear system requirements, or choosing the wrong vendor can lead to cost overruns, delays, and low user adoption. A well-planned approach will make sure the ERP system remains aligned with business needs, integrates with existing systems, and scales for future growth.

What is the typical timeline for ERP implementation?

ERP implementation timelines vary based on company size, system complexity, and deployment method, but most projects take six months to two years. Small businesses with standard processes may be able to implement a cloud-based ERP system in six to nine months, while larger manufacturers with complex integrations may need 12 to 24 months. Phased rollouts, data migration, and user training can extend timelines, especially if significant customization is required.

Why does an ERP implementation fail?

ERP implementations fail due to poor planning, unclear goals, and lack of user adoption. Rushing the selection process or choosing a system that doesn't align with business needs leads to costly mismatches. Inadequate training and resistance to change can cause employees to bypass the system, reducing its effectiveness.

About Abby Jenkins

Abby Jenkins is Product Marketing Manager for NetSuite supply chain products. She is responsible for driving the go-to-market messaging and positioning for NetSuite supply chain solutions, including inventory and supply chain management, production management, warehouse, order and quality management. Prior to this role, Abby served as Marketing Manager for the Strategic Initiatives team, responsible for defining the go-to-market strategy for new verticals and as Marketing Manager for NetSuite Retail products, focusing on creating awareness and demand generation activities. Prior to joining NetSuite in 2016, Abby worked in new product development for a variety of product companies, including men's haircare supplier American Crew and luxury home goods manufacturer Hunter Douglas.

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Investment Today, Saves Money Tomorrow

When companies begin their digital transformation journey (especially around ERP implementations) they're often tempted to go it alone or to select the lowest bidder. It's an understandable instinct. Budgets are tight, timelines are aggressive, and internal teams feel capable. But unfortunately, this path often leads to costly mistakes and delayed outcomes.

There is a pattern that plays out time and again – organizations that bypass the upfront investment in expert guidance frequently return within a year, looking for help with a failed or stalled implementation. By then, the damage is often already done and there has been lost time, increased spend, and diminished morale.



Article by
John Rivers,
Managing Partner and Founder



Here are a few sobering stats:

- **6 in 10 companies** that try to execute major tech initiatives on their own eventually need to bring in outside help.
- Waiting until after implementation to bring in support resources can **increase spend by 25% or more.**
- Companies that engage experienced partners report **up to 40% greater productivity.**
- Projects led internally take **twice as long** to complete—if they’re completed at all.

So why is investing in the right partner now a smarter move? Let’s break it down.

“Upfront consulting costs may seem high, but they’re nothing compared to the cost of mid-project rework or post-implementation rescue missions.”

Leverage Outside Expertise

Find a seasoned professional who has worn multiple hats and has spent years working inside complex ERP systems across industries. That kind of depth means they bring not only technical know-how, but also an understanding of how systems impact workflows, departments, and real people. With this perspective, they can tailor a solution that works for your organization, not just in theory, but in real-world operations.

Control Spending

Upfront consulting costs may seem high, but they’re nothing compared to the cost of mid-project rework or post-implementation rescue missions. With experts on your side from day one, your ERP project is more likely to stay on time and on budget. Seasoned consultants work efficiently, reducing unnecessary spend and avoiding the costly detours that can derail internal teams. Even better - engaging an experienced partner allows your internal resources to stay focused on what they do best—keeping your business running.

Increase Productivity

The right consultants don’t just get the job done—they make your team better. They streamline processes, recommend proven best practices, and help your staff understand how to get the most out of the system. That’s how you create sustainable

results. With our support, companies often see significant productivity improvements, because we help them unlock the full potential of the software from the start.

Control the Timeline

When you partner with an expert or a consultant, you’re not just buying expertise, but you’re buying a plan. Any partner you work with should come with a proven methodology, a clear project roadmap, and the ability to manage milestones with precision. Project managers leading an integration serve as the glue between stakeholders, ensuring communication is smooth and decisions are timely. They prioritize accountability and adapt quickly to change, without losing sight of the end goal.

In the end, it’s about making a smart investment today to protect your time, money, and reputation tomorrow. Technology should enable growth, not hinder it. With the right partner, your ERP journey becomes a catalyst for transformation—not a costly misstep.

About John Rivers

John Rivers brings over 25 years of experience in technology and business process improvement within the CRE industry. Before founding IMKore, he led JDR Consulting LLC and held senior consulting roles at firms like Deloitte and Grant Thornton.





Future-Proof Your Manufacturing Business With ERP

Factories have changed hugely in the past 50 years. Advances in automation, sensors, analytics, and other technologies have made significant changes in manufacturing. A modern manufacturing [ERP system](#) will make use of these technologies so that their benefits can be realized.

Two major transformational changes have occurred in manufacturing.

1. The smart factory

The smart factory represents a transformational change from traditional practices to a connected and flexible system. In [smart factories](#), physical and digital processes are integrated within the factory and across supply chains to optimize current and future supply and demand requirements. The way in which people, processes and technologies operate delivers information can to be used to improve manufacturing, maintenance, inventory tracking, and other activities across the manufacturing network.

2. Real-time data

With technologies such as the [Internet of Things \(IoT\)](#), data creation is happening at an exponential rate, meaning that manufacturing in the 21st Century isn't so much based on gut-driven decisions anymore but rather on data. A company's ability to manage the flood of data coming from the factory floor and other areas is



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becoming critical. And it's not just data within the company, but also using and sharing it across the entire business ecosystem. By doing this, manufacturers can unlock additional value and accelerate innovation. New technologies, like advanced analytics and [artificial intelligence \(AI\)](#), allow this data to be used more effectively, and are transforming the world of production.

Manufacturing ERP supports manufacturing transformation

The answer to operating a smart factory and overcoming the data deluge, and therefore enabling innovation, can be found in the adoption of a manufacturing ERP system.

For a modern manufacturer, sticking with spreadsheets, simple accounting applications, or disparate siloed systems, limits its ability to deal with the changing manufacturing environment. By integrating the organization with a manufacturing ERP system, the company can ensure it has the software solution to enable continued growth and competitive advantage.

An ERP system enables performance in areas that are key to manufacturing success.

- It improves productivity by giving production staff immediate access to the information they need to do their work.
- It enables companies to be more flexible in their production processes..
- By connecting with digital manufacturing systems, it enables greater agility because operators can adjust production activities digitally.

12 benefits of a manufacturing ERP system

1. Integrates business

An ERP application provides the solution for unifying the business under one system. Siloed departments means the business can use information to make smart decisions. With centralized financial, manufacturing, and operational data, information is available across the value chain from beginning to end and through all aspects of production. It eliminates duplicate work and ensures everyone works from the same accurate data. Management has visibility in real-time of how different business areas are working. But it's not just internal integration. The ERP system must be able to connect to external services and applications. and have connectors that easily integrate with new services.

2. Automate operations

An ERP system helps to integrate, streamline and automate daily workflows. This allows information to flow between different areas of the business automatically, without any manual data entry.

3. Manage supply chain

An automated and integrated ERP system will enable more accurate and timely procurement, inventory management, logistics and order fulfilment. Integration with supplier data means greater visibility throughout the supply chain that can help to identify bottlenecks that may impact production work and customer orders.

4. Efficient inventory management

An ERP system allows manufacturers to reduce costs and capital tied up in inventory. Integration of procurement, production and inventory means that purchase orders can be more accurately linked to what is needed for production

and what is currently in stock. With features like demand forecasting, a manufacturing ERP can accurately predict future demand and align inventory levels accordingly. This information can keep inventory levels optimized to avoid common problems of over- or under-stocking and wastage due to the holding of obsolete stock.

5. Improved production planning

Production planning helps manufacturers improve the efficiency of the production process by minimizing the lead time between the placing of an order and the completion of that order.

Production planning involves several components that together manage a production run — [Bill of Materials \(BOM\)](#), Material Requirements Plan (MRP), and Master Production Schedule (MPS). These must be coordinated in detail. Trying to do this manually using spreadsheets will become impossible in an increasingly flexible environment.

6. Manage dynamic production schedules

Manufacturers often face dynamic production schedules due to evolving customer demands and unforeseen disruptions. To thrive in such an environment, manufacturers need to optimize their shop floor operations and adapt quickly to changes. Production scheduling is the allocation of available resources to production processes. A [manufacturing operations management \(MOM\)](#) system can oversee what is happening across the production plant. A MOM handles all the different manufacturing processes and allows managers and supervisors to schedule changes depending on what machinery and resources are available.

A MOM can create a detailed and flexible production schedule which can be used for planning what work is done. This schedule includes which machines will be used, which operators will work on each machine, and how long each operation will take. MOM system monitors the production schedule regularly to ensure that everything is running smoothly, and can make adjustments to keep production on track.

**“SYSPRO
Cloud ERP
has built-in
intelligent
technologies—
AI, machine
learning and
advanced
analytics.”**

7. Ensure quality management

A manufacturing ERP system should offer comprehensive quality management capability that allows manufacturers to trace and document every aspect of their production process. From raw material inspection to testing before shipment, the ERP system provides a transparent and auditable record of traceability for compliance purposes. Additionally, a quality management module can automate compliance reporting, reducing the administrative burden on

manufacturers. This not only ensures adherence to regulations but also improves overall product quality by providing real-time data and insights into production processes.

8. Better decisions with AI

AI can make manufacturers smarter and more adaptive by:

- analyzing data from machinery to predict and prevent breakdowns, reducing downtime and maintenance costs;
- automating planning and optimizing supply chain processes;
- monitoring processes and adjusting them in real-time, maximizing productivity and reducing waste.

9. Better reporting

A manufacturing ERP system has built-in reporting tools that gather data from across the enterprise. Decision-makers can work with the most comprehensive, recent and relevant information.

10. Improved customer service

An ERP system enables different departments to share the same information. Whether dealing with a customer order or a complaint, sales or service staff can easily access sales account information to understand more about the purchase history. This means faster response times, improved order accuracy, and smoother deliveries.

11. Better cost management

Because an ERP system streamlines business processes and integrates the data from them, there is a better understanding of costs overall. This means the necessary corrective actions can be taken to reduce costs and make operations more efficient.



12. Recycling, reuse and a cleaner environment

Manufacturers are increasingly being required by customers and legislation to reclaim discarded outputs through recycling and reuse to make new products. As companies become more sustainability-conscious, they need to gather data on the full range of activities, from the original sourcing of materials through the end of the product life cycle. This allows designers and engineers to make decisions not just on product requirements, but also on material properties and the energy required to make products.

Companies that have successfully implemented a manufacturing ERP system have found:

- significant reduction in inventory levels,
- greatly improved inventory accuracy,
- more reliable production schedules,
- a higher number of on-time-in-full orders,
- more streamlined processes leading to improved productivity,
- better customer interactions,
- more effective procurement,
- improved order-to-cash process,
- faster financial reconciliation after month-end.

Be future-proof with a manufacturing ERP

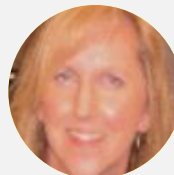
In the face of disruption and change, a [manufacturing ERP system](#) is a pivotal tool for industrial transformation and ensuring the business is future-proofed. It provides a unified platform that integrates critical business processes across the enterprise, facilitates efficient decision-making, enhances collaboration, and drives innovation



Cost-Effective Solutions: Integrate MES with ERP Systems in Manufacturing

As the manufacturing landscape continues to embrace Industry 4.0, MES-ERP integration will become an essential component for an organization to remain a competitive and sustainable operation.

In the world of manufacturing, operational efficiency, and cost management are paramount. Integrating [Manufacturing Execution Systems \(MES\)](#) software with [Manufacturing ERP software](#) offers a pathway to achieve these goals by bridging the gap between shop floor operations and enterprise-level management. This integration creates a unified flow of information that



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Editor of the DELMIA Blog

enhances decision-making, reduces costs, and optimizes resource utilization, enabling manufacturers to thrive in a competitive landscape.

How to integrate MES with ERP

Successful ERP-MES integration requires an organization to carefully plan and have a structured approach. Begin by mapping data flows between production processes and business operations to identify critical connection points. This foundational step ensures smooth communication between machines on the factory floor and management systems.

Next, establish standardized data formats and protocols for seamless information exchange. A central integration platform serves as the bridge between your [manufacturing ERP software](#) and manufacturing systems, reducing human error and enabling accurate demand forecasting.

“MES-ERP integration ensures seamless data exchange between shop floor operations and enterprise systems.”

Consider implementing a phased rollout strategy, starting with core functionalities like order processing and work center scheduling. This measured approach allows organizations to validate each integration step while maintaining product quality. Remember to provide comprehensive training to decision-makers and operators to maximize the powerful combination of these connected systems.

The role of MES and ERP software in manufacturing

MES provides a company with a detailed view of shopfloor operations, offering real-time insights into production status, machine performance, labor productivity, and material usage. This granular visibility enables manufacturers to monitor and control production activities with precision, ensuring efficiency and quality at every step.

ERP systems manage enterprise-wide functions such as finance, procurement, and supply chain management. By aligning operational data with strategic objectives, ERP systems ensure that decision-making reflects both immediate operational realities and long-term business goals.

The benefits of MES-ERP integration

Integrating MES with ERP unlocks transformative benefits that address critical manufacturing challenges:

1.Enhanced data accuracy and real-time visibility. MES-ERP integration ensures seamless data exchange between shop floor operations and enterprise systems. Real-time production data from MES feeds into ERP, enabling manufacturers to monitor progress, identify bottlenecks, and adjust

schedules dynamically. Example: A manufacturer can detect production delays on the shop floor via MES and instantly update delivery schedules in ERP to align with revised timelines.

2.Improved inventory management. MES tracks real-time material usage and inventory levels, while ERP uses this data to manage procurement and inventory planning. This synchronization prevents overstocking and shortages, optimizing working capital and reducing carrying costs. Example: By integrating MES and ERP, a global automotive company reduced inventory holding costs by 15%, aligning raw material purchases with actual production needs.

3.Optimized production scheduling. ERP-driven production plans become actionable when synchronized with MES data. MES provides the real-time feedback needed to adjust schedules and resource allocation based on actual shop floor conditions. Example: A consumer electronics firm uses MES-ERP integration to reschedule production runs when unplanned machine downtime occurs, minimizing delays and meeting customer delivery commitments.

4.Quality and compliance management. MES collects detailed quality data during production, while ERP aggregates this data for reporting and compliance purposes. This integration ensures traceability and simplifies adherence to regulatory standards. Example: A pharmaceutical manufacturer integrates MES and ERP to monitor batch quality and generate compliance reports for regulatory audits, reducing the risk of penalties.

5.Cost reduction through efficiency Gains. MES-ERP integration streamlines workflows, eliminates redundant processes and reduces

manual data entry errors. The result is improved efficiency and significant cost savings. Example: A food processing company saved \$1 million annually by automating data transfer between MES and ERP, reducing manual intervention and associated errors.

Future trends examples

As manufacturing evolves, new technologies are enhancing the capabilities of MES-ERP integration:

Artificial Intelligence (AI): AI enhances MES-ERP integration by enabling advanced demand forecasting and resource planning through real-time data analysis. Virtual twin technology allows manufacturers to simulate and optimize production scenarios, improving workflows and addressing disruptions. As global supply chains grow more complex, AI-driven analytics ensure adaptive and efficient operations.

Augmented Reality (AR): AR bridges the gap between operators and advanced manufacturing systems by overlaying operator guidance for production and quality tasks onto physical environments. This enhances training, streamlines troubleshooting, reduces employee on-boarding time, reduces [quality inspection](#) time, and minimizes errors, making MES-ERP workflows

more intuitive and efficient. AR strengthens human-machine collaboration on the shop floor, reducing downtime and improving productivity.

Cloud-based solutions: Cloud platforms provide scalable, cost-effective integration for MES and ERP systems. They centralize operational data, enabling real-time collaboration and reducing reliance on costly on-premise infrastructure. Therefore, hybrid cloud models further enhance adaptability, supporting manufacturers in meeting evolving market demands and ensuring business resilience.

Industrial Internet of Things (IIoT): IIoT devices continuously feed data from machines to MES and this data can then be consolidated and categorized and sent to ERP systems, enabling predictive maintenance and real-time optimization. This connectivity minimizes downtime and improves resource efficiency. By integrating IIoT insights, manufacturers gain enhanced visibility and control over operations, fostering proactive management.

Sustainability metrics: Sustainability is a key focus of MES-ERP integration, tracking energy use, emissions, scrap & rework, and material consumption. Real-time data supports regulatory compliance and drives efficiency

while advancing circular economy principles like waste reduction and material reuse, aligning operations with environmental goals.

Virtual Twin technology: Virtual twins offer a digital mirror of manufacturing systems, enabling scenario testing and optimization without real-world disruption. These models improve resource allocation, energy efficiency, and process planning, making MES-ERP integration more innovative and more sustainable.

Conclusion

Lastly, integrating MES with ERP systems is a cost-effective solution that delivers substantial benefits to manufacturers. By enabling real-time visibility, improving inventory management, and streamlining operations, manufacturers are empowered to achieve efficiency and cost savings while maintaining quality and compliance.

As the manufacturing landscape continues to embrace Industry 4.0, MES-ERP integration will become an essential component. This helps an organization to remain a competitive and sustainable operation. Forward-thinking manufacturers who invest in this integration will not only reduce costs, but also position themselves for long-term success in a dynamic market.





How To Justify Manufacturing Technology Investment Amid Economic Uncertainty

At this point, we've all weathered a few tough economic cycles. And that can make decision-makers cautious, risk averse. So when you suggest investing in manufacturing technology, the C-suite and leaders at your organization may be reluctant. Instead, wanting to wait until the dust settles on the current volatility.

On the surface, that instinct makes sense. Economic uncertainty looms large. The latest Reuters report confirms that US manufacturing has dipped back into contraction, tariffs are still a hot topic and input costs are rising across the board. Cutting back seems logical—especially when every dollar counts.

But what if that instinct is exactly what costs your business more?

In reality, this is precisely the time to go on offense. Strategic investments in manufacturing software systems

can cut operating costs, improve productivity, reduce waste and de-risk your supply chain—without heavy upfront spending.

Plus, once the dust does settle, the scramble will start. Competitors will rush to adopt the very tools you could have already mastered. Do you want to be catching up—or setting the pace? Investing now means you're not just prepared for what's next—you're ahead of it. While others are reacting, you're already reaping the rewards of smarter systems, leaner operations and a more resilient business model.

And don't worry, you don't need to plunge in with a full suite of manufacturing systems straight out of the gate. Even taking the first step by implementing one system now will give you the stronger foundation you need to scale as turbulent times settle and your business grows.

So, no matter which software system it is you've got your eye on, if your business decision-makers are hesitating, here's how to convince them to act now instead of waiting for that mythical "perfect time."

1. Start By Showing How You'll Cut Costs Where It Counts

From your CFO to managers on the shop floor—everyone's got rising costs in their crosshairs. So instead of tightening already strict budgets, you need to look at where money is bleeding out of inefficient systems. In this way manufacturing software is a cost-cutting engine—so the easiest way to justify the initial expense is to show the immediate, measurable cost savings available. And it starts with an [enterprise resource planning \(ERP\) system for manufacturers](#).

Manufacturing ERP platforms bring together inventory, procurement, production planning and finance into one consolidated view. That means no more silos, no more duplicated efforts and no more last-minute rushes to correct data discrepancies. The result? Reduced human error, smoother operations and major time savings across departments—which all add up to lower operational costs, fewer expensive mistakes and better use of resources.

[ERP systems with artificial intelligence \(AI\)](#) capabilities also make demand forecasting more efficient than ever before. You'll get a leaner, smarter production

strategy that aligns resources with real demand—cutting excess, maximizing resource utilization and boosting throughput.

Then there's [overall equipment effectiveness \(OEE\) software](#). OEE tools track equipment performance in real time, pinpoint where your production is falling short and highlight the causes of underperformance. Think about all the micro-stoppages, slow cycles and unplanned breakdowns quietly sabotaging output. With OEE software, you get the visibility to fix these inefficiencies before they become margin killers.

And let's not overlook [product lifecycle management \(PLM\) software](#). While digital laggards wait to greenlight manufacturing technology spend, PLM systems are helping leaders [fast-track product development](#) and reduce material waste. By connecting teams and suppliers through one centralized platform, PLM eliminates redundancies and rework, ensuring that products move from concept to market faster—and with less cost. So you reduce spending while capitalizing on profit opportunities more quickly.

"The easiest way to justify the initial expense is to show the immediate, measurable cost savings available."

2. Demonstrate the Ease of Outmaneuvering Risk With Data and Compliance Tools

When disruption hits (and it always does, eventually), it's not the companies with the biggest budgets that survive. It's the ones that see what's coming. [Manufacturing software systems](#) can provide real-time insights, strategic planning capabilities and compliance tools that help you stay ahead of risk, from shifting demand and regulatory shakeups to any other [day-to-day manufacturing challenges](#). The hard truth for hesitant decision makers is that you cannot dodge what you don't see coming—and in manufacturing, ignorance is expensive.

Take manufacturing ERP, for instance, it integrates data from every function, delivering live, cross-departmental visibility. That means you can respond to raw material shortages, production delays or supplier issues as they happen, not after the damage is done. Advanced ERP systems also come with vendor portals and [electronic data interchange \(EDI\)](#) to ensure real-time collaboration with partners for smoother workflows and faster decision-making, giving you agility when unexpected strikes occur.

Now look at PLM. With packaging rules, labeling standards and sustainability mandates changing constantly, product lifecycle management systems keep your entire design-to-launch process compliant from day one. That traceability helps you avoid penalties, rework and market delays—reducing risk without adding extra admin or resource needs.

What's more, manufacturing leaders are already deploying [enterprise asset management \(EAM\) software](#) to predict failures

and schedule preventative maintenance, while others use [logistic software systems](#) to manage transportation disruptions, reroute around disruption and keep on-time fulfillment rates up. The next economic shift or supply chain nightmare isn't going to wait and neither should you. Manufacturing systems are the answer to supply chain resilience, ensuring regulatory compliance and enabling traceability—helping your business avoid nasty surprises.

3. Highlight How Eliminating Financial Blind Spots Increases Profitability

Your business leaders might think they're avoiding risk by holding off on tech investments, but what they're really doing is letting money leak through the cracks. And they don't even have the data to see it. In an environment where every dollar counts, better financial visibility isn't a nice-to-have—it's the difference between surviving and scaling. Manufacturing tech delivers real-time insights into where your margins are growing—or disappearing.

ERP systems, equipped with [business intelligence \(BI\)](#) and analytics modules, can give CFOs a real-time dashboard of financial health across plants, product lines and customer segments. Advanced ERP tools help you analyze margins and pricing structures to allow for precise cost allocation and optimized pricing strategies based on demand, customer behavior or seasonal trends. Old school spreadsheets or basic systems can't do that on the fly—and in tough economic conditions, having visibility of every penny counts.

While doing the heavy lifting in product development, PLM also helps you track product performance post-

launch, identifying what's working—and what's wasting resources. When combined with insights from the [customer relationship management \(CRM\)](#) system, you get a full view of buying behavior, helping you double down on your most profitable products or tweak ones that are underperforming. So while laggards wait for the dust to settle, you can already be reallocating spend and boosting profitability—with data to back every move.

Even a traditional cost center like logistics holds opportunity. A [complete transportation management system \(TMS\)](#) significantly improves cost transparency in shipping, automates carrier selection to secure the best rates and streamlines freight audit and pay workflows. That means fewer overpayments, faster variance resolution, removal of cost blind spots and tighter control over margins. All in all, one of the easiest ways to justify tech spend is to highlight not just the available cost savings we discussed in section one, but also make it clear how increased financial visibility will boost profitability and drive new revenue.

“While laggards wait for the dust to settle, you can already reallocate spend and boost profitability—with data to back every move.”

4. Show How Customer Retention Protects Revenue

Manufacturers that are laser-focused on balancing the books may be overlooking the more immediate risk of losing customers. In a volatile market, your customers are also under pressure and buyers can get choosy. If your deliveries are late, your product quality slips or your service is slow to respond, they won't stick around. That's why now, more than ever, manufacturing tech isn't just about operations—it's about keeping your customer base intact.

Manufacturing ERP systems with robust order management modules keep the fulfillment process smooth and predictable. When paired with a warehouse management system (WMS), manufacturers like you gain complete visibility into stock, orders and shipments—making accurate, on-time delivery the rule, not the exception. Customers don't just want a delivery estimate—they want a guarantee. Outdated system can't promise that, jeopardizing your service promises when they matter most.

And when something does go wrong? CRM steps in to track issues, prioritize responses and keep communication flowing. Whether it's resolving a complaint or following up on a service request, faster and more personal support builds trust—and drives repeat business. While late adopters are buried in emails, you can be winning loyalty through automation.

TMS and OEE add another layer of reliability. [Transportation management software](#) helps manage adherence to delivery expectations, automate last mile customer notifications and prevent costly service gaps. Meanwhile, OEE and ERP ensure standardized

production monitoring, consistent output and fewer product defects. Every touchpoint—from factory floor to front door—shapes the customer experience. So instead of waiting until you’ve already lost customers, act now to lock in long-term loyalty with smoother operations and superior service.

5. Lean Into Cloud and SaaS Models To Make Investments Easier

Some of your fellow decision-makers may be saying, “let’s hold off on big investments right now,” assuming that tech upgrades come with sky-high price tags and long payback periods. What they’re missing is that modern manufacturing software systems don’t demand the type of upfront spend they once did. Thanks to cloud deployment and Software as a Service (SaaS) delivery models, the smartest systems now come with flexible, scalable pricing—and much faster time to value.

Instead of locking your capital into expensive hardware or sprawling IT projects, SaaS lets you pay as you go. That’s especially helpful in uncertain times. If demand drops, you scale down. If you’re gearing up for a seasonal spike, you scale up. It’s simple, efficient and doesn’t tie up the cash you need to run the rest of your business. So instead of thinking of seeing returns in months or years, you could be launching pilots within weeks that deliver immediate value.

There’s also freedom in the cloud. No more struggling with outdated manufacturing software or scrambling to implement manual upgrades. Unlike on-premise manufacturing systems, cloud-based systems constantly evolve—with automatic updates, new features and access to the latest AI tools. You’re not just keeping up. You’re staying ahead. And while

competitors are bogged down with legacy tech, you’re automating more, optimizing faster and building resilience into your operation.

What’s more, cloud platforms support distributed teams, enable simple multi-site coordination and come with enterprise-grade cybersecurity and vendor-managed infrastructure. Faster deployment. Lower IT overhead. Stronger collaboration. Manufacturing technology implementations are faster and easier than ever—so you can be capturing speedy return on investment and driving growth while competitors dither waiting for economic uncertainty to blow over.

“Thanks to cloud deployment and Software as a Service (SaaS) delivery models, the smartest systems now come with flexible, scalable pricing—and much faster time to value.”

Now, While Competitors Hesitate, You Can Accelerate

Let’s face it—economic uncertainty isn’t new. But your response to it can be. In these times, many decision-makers will cling to outdated strategies, focusing on short-term cost-cutting and maintaining the status quo. Instead, manufacturing leaders play a longer game—one that’s not just about surviving uncertainty, but growing through it. They’re not waiting for the storm

to pass. They’re using this time to get ahead, locking in strategic advantages that competitors will scramble to catch up with later.

That’s the power of the right manufacturing technology: it helps you weather volatility with more control, more insight and far fewer surprises. You’ll be building the flexibility to shift gears fast, the speed to launch new products when demand spikes and the visibility to spot opportunities before others do.

But even the best tools mean little without the right partner behind them. Choosing a vendor isn’t just about software features—it’s about long-term value. You want someone who’s in it with you, through good markets and bad. That’s why more manufacturers are choosing Aptean. We don’t just provide software—we offer strategic guidance, timely support and end-to-end solutions designed to scale with your needs.

With decades of experience guiding industry leaders, we deliver a [comprehensive suite of manufacturing software](#) tailored for your segment. From ERP and PLM to CRM and TMS, systems can be rolled out when you’re ready and integrated seamlessly across your operations. If you’re not sure where to start, [manufacturing ERP](#) is often the smart first step—it gives you the core financial and operational visibility needed to guide future [digital transformation](#). And with cloud-based, AI-ready systems, we make it easy to connect the dots across functions, regions and facilities.

As Industry 5.0 charges ahead, now is not the time to lag behind—get ahead of the competition with smart systems that drive growth. We’re ready when you are. [Let’s talk about where you’re headed](#) and how we can help you get there.



From Digital Intelligence to Real-World Action: How SAP, NEURA Robotics, and NVIDIA Are Powering the Future of Physical AI

Enterprise AI has long been confined to software, whether to accelerate workflows, support decisions, or power intelligent automation. But the boundaries are expanding to the physical world. We're now entering the era where software intelligence meets robotic autonomy, and businesses can drive efficiency, safety, and adaptability not only in digital processes, but also on the warehouse floor, in logistics hubs, and across industrial operations. In this world, AI agents don't just guide work—they do the work, both digitally and physically.

At SAP, we're collaborating with NEURA Robotics and NVIDIA to bring this future to life. Our goal is to make physical AI a reality for businesses across industries. By combining SAP's business process intelligence, NEURA's cognitive robots, and NVIDIA's Omniverse Platform, we're enabling a new class of autonomous physical agents that connect enterprise systems to real-world action.



Article by
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A convergence of intelligence, simulation, and execution

This next evolution of enterprise automation requires more than just robotics or [AI](#) in isolation. It's about orchestrating data, reasoning, and motion end-to-end.

- SAP's Joule Agents, underpinned by SAP Business AI, serve as the cognitive layer, understanding enterprise context and directing workflows.
- Mega NVIDIA Omniverse Blueprint enables teams to simulate and refine agent behavior in complex, realistic operational scenarios—before deployment.
- NEURA's cognitive robots then execute these tasks in the real world, with the ability to perceive, decide, and adapt as environments shift.

This tight integration creates a loop of continuous learning where each real-world action generates feedback to retrain and improve the performance of both agents and robots.

Real use cases, real value

This isn't a future vision—it's already happening. Early adopters are applying this innovation in manufacturing, retail, and logistics, where traditional automation falls short. For example:

- Autonomous mobile robots (AMRs) can handle multi-step inventory tasks in dynamic retail environments.
- Cognitive robots can assist with equipment inspections and repairs, reducing downtime in asset-intensive industries.

- Physical agents can orchestrate movement of goods and materials in complex supply chains, all while staying connected to SAP core systems.

The result: faster execution, safer operations, and intelligent adaptation to real-world variability.

A shared vision to transform industry

Each partner in this collaboration brings a unique capability—and together, we're enabling more than any one of us could alone.

"We're now entering the era where software intelligence meets robotic autonomy, and businesses can drive efficiency, safety, and adaptability not only in digital processes, but also on the warehouse floor, in logistics hubs, and across industrial operations."

"We are proud to bring the power of our cognitive robots into the partnership with SAP and to jointly take the next step towards automating real-world tasks," said David Reger, CEO of NEURA Robotics. "Together, we are redefining what is possible and creating solutions that truly serve humans and transform industries."

"With the Mega NVIDIA Omniverse Blueprint, enterprises can test and validate mixed robot fleets at scale, bridging the gap between digital simulation and reliable physical-world implementation," said Mike Geyer, head of digital twins at NVIDIA.

This vision aligns closely with SAP's mission to help the world run better and improve people's lives—not just through better software, but by connecting data, intelligence, and physical action. The collaboration reflects a bold step forward: turning digital intelligence into autonomous execution at the edge, guided by business context and enterprise processes.

Looking ahead

The fusion of business AI, simulation technology, and cognitive robotics opens a new frontier—where enterprises can confidently extend automation beyond digital workflows into the physical world.

By shaping this new category of physical AI agents, SAP, NVIDIA, and NEURA Robotics are enabling businesses to reimagine what's possible by creating a future where AI doesn't just make decisions but also brings them to life.

About SAP

As a global leader in enterprise applications and business AI, 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.

How Manufacturers are Cutting Emissions and Creating Value – without Reinventing the Wheel

It's one thing to talk about sustainability. It's another to embed it into the way your business actually works. That's exactly what remanufacturing does. And if the word makes you think of dusty shelves, warranty parts, or "second best," it's time for a mindset shift.

At a recent IFS webinar, a panel of experts broke down the challenges, business drivers, and enabling technologies behind modern remanufacturing. Their message was clear – if you're in discrete manufacturing and not yet on this journey, you're missing out on profit, performance, and long-term advantage.

This blog is your shortcut to the insights discussed, click [here](#) to watch the full webinar.

What Remanufacturing Really Means in 2025

Remanufacturing isn't about fixing broken parts. It's an industrialized process that brings used products back to life; to a condition as good as new, and often better.

"We're not repairing. We're rebuilding to specification—using a mix of reused, repaired, and new parts—all controlled, traceable, and built for quality." — [Mikael Hultin](#), IFS

Remanufacturing is also not a new idea – it has in fact [been around since the time of the second](#) world war, when it emerged as a resource-efficient way to produce and maintain heavy machinery. But in 2025, more companies are recognizing its value; not just for sustainability, but for operational continuity and cost efficiency.

Climbing the Value Hill, Again

Imagine a product's life cycle as a hill. You start with raw materials, manufacture, distribute, and use the product. Traditionally, once it wears down, it's scrap.



Article by
Andrew Burton,
Global Industry Director -
Manufacturing, IFS



Remanufacturing changes that. It lets you “climb the hill” again, maintaining the value that was originally built into the product.

“An engine with 20 years of service can go another 20 through remanufacturing,” Hultin explained. “That’s not just reuse—it’s resilience.”

“We’re not repairing. We’re rebuilding to specification—using a mix of reused, repaired, and new parts—all controlled, traceable, and built for quality.”

Why It’s a Triple Win – Business, Customer, Planet

[Leena Kossila](#), author and expert on circular logistics, reflected on insights from her conversations with leading manufacturers:

“It’s a win for the business. A win for the customer. And a win for the environment.”

Let’s break that down:

- **Business:** In industries like tire manufacturing, raw material costs can account for up to 70% of total production expenses. Remanufacturing significantly reduces these costs by reusing existing materials.

- **Customer:** Buyers get high-performance, warranted products at a lower cost, offering value comparable to new items.
- **Planet:** Remanufacturing processes can lead to substantial energy savings and significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions over the product’s life cycle.

Why Aren’t More Manufacturers Doing It?

Based on findings from a recent industry study Kossila referenced, only around 30% of manufacturers in Sweden and Finland currently have remanufacturing operations in place.

It’s not intention—it’s complexity.

Four big hurdles stand in the way:

- **Unpredictable core returns** – You don’t always know what’s coming back, when, or in what condition.
- **Reverse logistics** – Getting products back from the field is harder than shipping them out.
- **Component mix management** – Remanufacturing means blending old and new components with care.
- **Data complexity** – You need systems that handle traceability, warranties, inspections, and more.

The Technology to Tame It

Here’s the good news, IFS Cloud is built to handle this complexity—natively, not as a bolt-on.

“It’s all embedded. That means planning, costing, execution, inventory, traceability—it’s all covered, without workarounds.”

— [Andreas Nygren](#), IFS

IFS Cloud supports:

- Disassembly and inspection workflows
- Core tracking and inventory valuation
- Component reuse prioritization (via MRP)
- Cost rollups for reused and new components
- Full shop floor integration

Whether you’re working to order or to forecast, the system plans intelligently, prioritizing reused parts and backing them up with new ones as needed.

What the Future Looks Like

Kossila believes the market will grow faster in times of turbulence—and that’s exactly where we are. Material shortages, customer demands, and regulatory pressure all make remanufacturing a smarter play.

And it’s not just engines and heavy machinery anymore. From robotics and electronics to timber beams and toner cartridges, remanufacturing is spreading across industries.

“With the right logistics, market, technology—and the right IT system—reman becomes scalable,” said Kossila. “And that’s the key.”

This blog is a short summary, designed to highlight the key takeaways from the webinar. But if you want to hear directly from the people leading the charge, watch the full 30-minute session.

About Andrew Burton

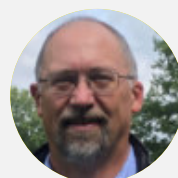
Andrew is an IFS Industry Director for Manufacturing. He has over 40 years Supply Chain Experience, mostly in Aerospace and Defence, Discrete Manufacturing and Niche Automotive. In past roles Andrew has been an IFS Super User and Independent IFS Consultant.



Navigating Disruption, Tariffs and Talent Shortages with Your QMS

Manufacturing is facing a wild ride: a perfect storm of rising trade tariffs and a serious shortage of skilled workers. These aren't just little bumps in the road; they're huge disruptions forcing manufacturers to completely rethink how they make stuff, where they get their materials, and how they deliver products to customers.

The financial impacts of these shifts require speed of execution, so the pressures are immense and cutting corners will be tempting. That said, being under stress is the most important time to remember that cutting corners can cause equally large problems in the future. Don't play whack-a-mole. Change has to be managed so risks to customer safety, product quality, and your bottom line are not compromised. This crazy time calls for being super flexible, tough, and ready to leverage technology to tackle huge problems!



Article by
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QAD



The Double Whammy: Tariffs and Not Enough Talent

Manufacturers are stuck between two big problems:

1. The Tariff Trouble: The cost of imported goods is skyrocketing, really squeezing profit margins. 55% of manufacturing pros say tariffs have cut their profits by 10-15%! Hardware costs for key components like semiconductors could jump a crazy 9% to 45%. This financial pressure, plus all the uncertainty in the supply chain, is making manufacturers totally rethink where they source materials.

2. The Worker Shortage: On top of tariffs, there's a real lack of skilled workers and a growing gap in skills compounded by experienced employees retiring or leaving, taking their valuable knowledge with them. Replacing skill is difficult, as new hires often lack the same level of expertise, slowing down production and making it tough to innovate. Worldwide, 75% of employers are struggling to fill job openings, and in the U.S., it's a significant 70% labor shortage! Almost half of manufacturers are having a tough time filling complex roles like production/operations management (48%) and planning/scheduling (46%). This double pressure means companies can't just hire more people to expand; they have to find new ways to get things done.

Navigating the Complexities of Tariffs and Labor Shortages

Macro-level challenges aren't just hanging out by themselves; they're creating a "margin squeeze moment" that demands fresh ideas, big strategic moves and require care of critical factors:

- **Change Management is Paramount:** Altering sourcing strategies and integrating automation are significant changes. Without robust change management processes, manufacturers risk negative impacts on sourcing quality, cost control, and the predictability of delivery. Proactive planning and communication are essential to minimize these risks.
- **The Pressure for Speed:** Urgency to adapt should not overshadow the need for thorough due diligence. Cutting corners in supplier selection or automation implementation can lead to costly mistakes.
- **No Substitute for Due Diligence:** Now, more than ever, a consistent approach to research, planning, and risk mitigation is crucial. Rushing into new sourcing agreements or automation projects without proper vetting can jeopardize product quality and supply chain stability.
- **Systems for Success:** Managing this evolving landscape requires robust systems. From research and planning through implementation and ongoing management, having integrated systems is vital to ensure a smooth transition and prevent disruptions that could impact customers. Moreover, providing employees with efficient and modern systems is crucial for retaining top talent, especially the next generation of workers who have grown up with technology.
- **Empowering Your Workforce:** In an era of workforce scarcity, attracting and retaining talent is critical. Employees are more likely to stay with organizations

that provide efficient systems and tools, enabling them to perform their jobs effectively and feel supported. Streamlined training features within these systems can also accelerate onboarding and upskilling, helping new employees quickly become productive and reducing the impact of attrition. Investing in modern, user-friendly technology can also enhance a manufacturer's image and make it more appealing to younger, tech-savvy workers.

- **Automation: A Tool, Not a Panacea:** While automation offers solutions to labor shortages and can enhance efficiency, it's important to recognize its limitations. Automation reduces the need for manual effort but doesn't guarantee seamless operations. Ongoing monitoring, maintenance, and skilled personnel to manage automated systems remain essential. Proper training and upskilling are still necessary to ensure that employees can effectively manage and utilize these technologies.

"That said, being under stress is the most important time to remember that cutting corners can cause equally large problems in the future."

Automation Supports Resilience

In this kind of environment, automation isn't just a nice-to-have anymore. Manufacturers are pouring money into automation mainly to be more efficient and cut costs (69%), but also to improve quality (45%) and make things safer (37%).

The benefits are clear: smart manufacturing efforts are leading to an average of 10-20% better production output and 7-20% higher employee productivity. Plus, a huge 92% of manufacturers believe smart manufacturing is the main thing that will keep them competitive over the next three years. AI, Machine Learning, and the Industrial Internet of Things (IIoT) are transforming factories, giving them awesome insights and smooth operations.

QAD EQMS: Your Go-To Partner for Automation and Cost Cutting

A strong Quality Management System (QMS) like [QAD EQMS](#) becomes a game-changer. QAD EQMS simplifies and automates crucial quality processes, helping you cut costs and boost efficiency:

- **Automated Quality Processes:** By automating document control, handling non-conformances, corrective and preventive actions (CAPA), advanced product quality planning, FMEA/Risk libraries, and managing audits, QAD EQMS reduces manual work and human mistakes. This frees skilled workers for more important jobs, and ensures quality is consistent[6]! Furthermore, QAD EQMS facilitates knowledge capture and transfer by centralizing documentation and processes, ensuring that critical information is readily available to new employees and mitigating the impact of attrition.

- **Lower Operational Costs:** A central QMS means less waste, rework, and compliance issues. By making product quality better and more consistent QAD EQMS helps manufacturers prevent expensive recalls and unhappy customers.
- **Better Supply Chain Visibility:** As manufacturers start sourcing from different regions, managing supplier quality becomes super important. QAD EQMS centralizes supplier quality management, automating supplier qualification, tracking performance, and dealing with issues to meet high quality standards and reduce risks.
- **Smart, Data-Driven Decisions:** QAD EQMS concentrates data across the enterprise, giving you real-time insights into process health, product quality, and supplier reliability. This empowers manufacturers to make smart choices, fine-tune operations, and spot areas for improvement before they become problems.

“Change has to be managed so risks to customer safety, product quality, and your bottom line are not compromised.”

Handling Change: QAD EQMS for Risk Management

Change always brings some risk with it. This is exactly where QAD EQMS steps in, giving you the perfect framework to manage that risk, making sure you get the best possible results with the lowest cost or negative impact. Think about the risks involved in these transformations:

- **New Supplier Checks:** Moving to nearshore or friendshore suppliers requires careful qualification and monitoring to ensure consistent quality and compliance.
- **Worker Adjustment:** New tech means training and upskilling your current team, which is easier said than done.
- **Following the Rules:** Operating in new regions or with new processes might mean new regulations you have to follow.

QAD EQMS gives you the system to handle these risks:

- **Document Control and Training Management:** As things change, QAD EQMS makes sure your important documents (SOPs, work instructions, quality manuals) are up-to-date and easy to find. Its training features ensure employees are properly taught how to use new equipment, follow new processes, and meet quality standards. This is critical for addressing workforce attrition. By providing a centralized platform for training and documentation, QAD EQMS helps close those “workforce skill gaps” and gets everyone ready for the “Factory of the Future”!

- **Product Planning and Risk Management:** Template-based NPI projects can be managed effectively and efficiently, including the incorporation of supply chain tasks and sub-projects. Library-based failure risk in both product and production design institutionalizes that knowledge, giving your team confidence to focus on product-specific risks.
- **Audit Management:** QAD EQMS makes internal and external audits a breeze, ensuring you're playing by the rules in new regions and meeting your own quality standards. This proactive approach helps you spot and fix risks before they blow up.
- **Non-Conformance and CAPA Management:** When problems occur, QAD EQMS gives you a clear way to find, document, investigate, and fix them through its CAPA system. This organized approach ensures issues are handled quickly and effectively, stopping them from happening again and keeping product quality high.

- **Supplier Quality Management:** QAD EQMS helps you manage the risks that come with having more diverse suppliers. It makes it easy to bring on new suppliers, constantly check their performance, and efficiently deal with any supplier issues, making sure the quality of incoming materials and parts stays top-notch, no matter where they come from.

As a vertically integrated quality and compliance solution, QAD EQMS is a manufacturer's key tool for reducing risk. It makes sure that big changes in sourcing and automation are done in a controlled, compliant, and ever-improving way, getting the most out of the transformation with the least hassle or negative impact. The [modern user interface](#), mobile accessibility, and data-driven environment also support rapid onboarding and consistent usage.

Wrapping It Up!

The manufacturing industry is at an inflection point. Tariffs and workforce shortages are pushing toward regional supply

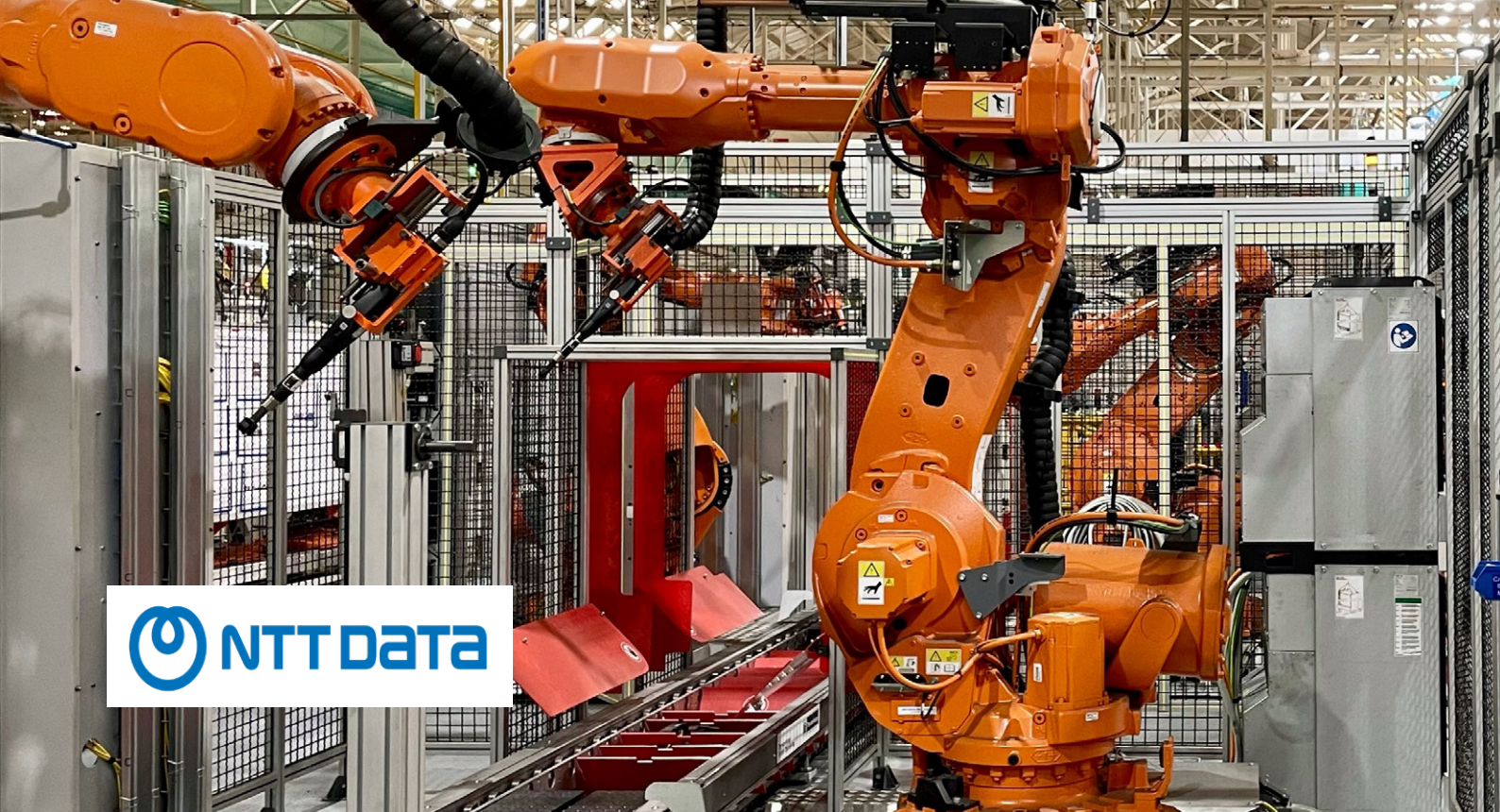
chains and advanced automation. Manufacturers need more than just quick fixes; they need strategic partners. [QAD EQMS](#) automates quality processes to make operations efficient and cut costs. It is an essential framework to manage the big risks that come with major business model changes. By using QAD EQMS, manufacturers can build the tough, flexible, and tech-savvy operations they need to really shine in the future!



About Brian Brooks

Brian is an expert in the design, development, and management of quality management systems, and has over 25 years of leadership experience in manufacturing software and technology. He joined QAD in 2012 with the goal of developing highly adopted solutions that are easy to use and have rapid time-to-value. Brian currently serves as Director of Product Management for the QAD EQMS solution. He believes that waste happens when we don't ask or understand the "why?".





How Digital Transformation is Powering the New Era in Manufacturing

By integrating digital tools with a modern ERP system, manufacturers can unify processes, optimize resources, and drive sustainable growth. Understand three key strategies behind these innovations.

How Digital Transformation is Powering the New Era in Manufacturing

Digital transformation in manufacturing is setting new benchmarks for operational excellence. Manufacturing leaders who invest in modern ERP platforms, AI-driven automation, and scalable personalization stand to unlock remarkable efficiency and redefine what's possible for their businesses. This article outlines three key strategies shaping the future of manufacturing and explains how partnering with an experienced solution provider can accelerate this process.

Building Unified Data Systems with Modern ERP

Unified data systems are the backbone of responsive, efficient manufacturing. Today, modern enterprise resource planning (ERP) platforms, such as SAP S/4HANA, have evolved from basic transaction processors to become the central hub of manufacturing operations. These sophisticated systems connect operations across

production planning, inventory management, supply chain logistics, and financial processes.

With cloud-based ERP solutions, manufacturers gain real-time visibility into business-critical information, supporting faster decision-making and seamless global collaboration. Integrated analytics and automation reduce manual entry and streamline workflows, while advanced integration platforms like SAP Business Technology Platform (BTP) enable rapid adaptation to market changes. The result? Lower operational costs, improved supply chain visibility, and faster, more accurate responses to internal and customer needs.



Article by
Brooks Noonan,
Industry Solutions Principal,
Manufacturing, NTT DATA



Capitalizing on Smart Technology for Process Excellence

Smart manufacturing technologies have moved beyond pilot tests and now drive comprehensive digitalization strategies across leading manufacturers. The combination of artificial intelligence, Internet of Things (IoT), and advanced analytics helps manufacturers to anticipate problems and continuously refine operations.

IoT-equipped machines deliver a constant stream of health and performance data, enabling predictive maintenance that reduces unplanned downtime by as much as 50%. AI-powered analytics identify process improvements and quality opportunities in real time, while robotic process automation (RPA) offloads repetitive tasks from human staff, maximizing productivity. Digital twins and advanced monitoring tools further extend equipment life and inform strategic decision-making. By deploying these smart technologies with guidance from experienced partners, manufacturers can build more agile and reliable operations.

Achieving Profitable Personalization at Scale

Personalized products are no longer a luxury in the manufacturing sector; they have become a competitive necessity. Modern customers expect offerings tailored to their specific requirements, even in small batches. This shift toward 'lot size one' production presents operational challenges that can be overcome with the right digital tools.

Adaptable production systems powered by digital technology allow rapid reconfiguration for different product specifications, supporting both custom and

standard manufacturing. Advanced configuration platforms enable customers to design products online while ensuring manufacturability, with instant synchronization to production planning. Data-driven supply chain solutions provide the flexibility needed for complex material combinations, and IoT-enabled products help manufacturers deepen customer relationships through proactive service and usage insights. Add it all together, and these capabilities turn personalization into a profit center.

“Digital transformation in manufacturing is setting new benchmarks for operational excellence.”

Unlocking Value with Expert Partnerships

Manufacturers seeking digital transformation should also consider more than just technology. Strategic partnerships with an experienced digital business and IT services leader, such as NTT DATA Business Solutions, deliver deep industry expertise, robust implementation support, and fully integrated technology landscapes that leverage the power of SAP. Such collaboration helps you accelerate the transformation process and gives you more time to focus on innovation and performance.

Investing in a modern ERP platform that provides scalable automation and flexible production capabilities is not a future imperative but a present necessity. Manufacturers who leverage these essential strategies will set new standards for efficiency and customer satisfaction.

Shaping the Future of Manufacturing

Manufacturing organizations that adopt unified data systems, deploy smart technologies, and deliver profitable personalization are best positioned to thrive as market conditions continue to change. By partnering with experts in the field, industry leaders maximize their digital investments and set a new course for sustainable growth.

For a deeper dive into this topic, [download the e-book](#).



About Brooks Noonan

As the Industry Principal for Discrete Manufacturing at NTT DATA Business Solutions, Brooks Noonan is responsible for the growth of North American discrete manufacturing clients through SAP solutions. This includes initial software selection, sales support, implementation approach and delivery, and ongoing support. He specializes in providing organizations with all-encompassing solutions that can add value. Brooks has a background in manufacturing and spent many years in multiple facets such as in manufacturing, quality management, asset maintenance, supply chain optimization, and logistics. He started his career in 2010 with NTT DATA Business Solutions and has been working in the SAP ecosystem since.



SAP Extends ERP Support Until 2033-What Does That Mean For SAP Security?

SAP has announced [an extension of support](#) for its legacy ERP systems, providing customers with additional time to transition to SAP S/4HANA. Initially, support for SAP ERP was set to end in 2027, with extended maintenance available until 2030. However, SAP has introduced a new option allowing eligible customers to run SAP ERP – private edition, with support until 2033. This additional extension is designed to accommodate organizations with complex IT environments that require more time to migrate.

Key points of the extension include:

- Mainstream support continues until 2027 (as before)
- Extended maintenance is available until 2030 for an additional cost (as before)
- Customers opting for RISE with SAP can continue running ECC until 2033 (new)
- To qualify for post-2030 support, systems must migrate to SAP ERP, private edition, or SAP HANA Database exclusively (new)

While this extension provides organizations with greater flexibility in planning their migration, it also raises security concerns that must not be overlooked.

Organizations may be tempted to delay their migration, but this decision comes with several implications, one of which is security. As outlined below, extended support means more time for cyber threats to evolve and exploit vulnerabilities in legacy SAP ECC systems. Key security risks include:

- **Exposed Legacy Vulnerabilities** Older SAP ECC systems lack some of the modern security enhancements present in S/4HANA, such as secure defaults and specific forms of encryption, making them more vulnerable to cyberattacks.
- **Compliance Challenges:** As security regulations evolve, maintaining compliance on an outdated ERP system becomes increasingly difficult.
- **Increased Attack Surface:** The longer an outdated system remains in use, the greater the opportunity for hackers to exploit its weaknesses, especially in a codebase developed over decades. On top of that, often a new S/4HANA runs alongside the old ECC system to do a PoC, increasing the attack surface even more.

If your organization is planning to stay on SAP ECC for an extended period, a proactive security approach is crucial. The following steps can help mitigate risks:

1. **Continuous Vulnerability Monitoring** – Regular security scans and audits ensure that vulnerabilities are detected and patched before they are exploited.

2. **Automated Patching & Compliance** – Keeping security patches up to date reduces exposure to known threats, as SAP will keep on releasing them for this ECC scenario until 2033.
3. **Real-Time Threat Detection** – Implementing tools that provide real-time monitoring helps identify and neutralize threats before they cause harm.
4. **Integrated Security Approach** – Security should be a core business priority, ensuring that protective measures are in place at all levels.

Organizations looking to enhance their SAP security should consider advanced security solutions that offer:

- Protection for both SAP ECC and [S/4HANA](#)
- [Real-time cyber threat detection](#)
- [Automated compliance](#) & risk management
- Continuous [monitoring](#) & [patching](#)
- And finally: Agility - with fast reaction guidance as SAP modifies the known course of its [Solution Roadmap](#), modifies its product sunset announcements, and announces changes to SAP Solution Architecture. These changes can impact your SAP cybersecurity strategy.

SAP's extension of ERP support until 2030—and for some customers, 2033—grants organizations additional time to migrate. However, it should not be seen as an opportunity to delay security improvements. Cyber threats do not operate on a migration timeline, and businesses must take the necessary steps to safeguard their SAP environments against evolving risks.

Don't let extended support become an extended risk. Take action today to secure your SAP systems and ensure compliance in an ever-changing threat landscape.



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.





ERP Software Provider Celebrates 35 Years of Leadership and Innovation under President & CEO

Global Shop Solutions, a leading provider of ERP software for manufacturers worldwide, today announced the 35th anniversary of President & CEO Dusty Alexander, which marks a significant milestone in the family company's growth and success. Under Alexander's steadfast leadership, innovation and commitment to helping manufacturers simplify their operations, Global Shop Solutions is one of the last and largest family-owned ERP companies with no debt and no outside investment.

Over the last 35 years, Alexander led the expansion of the software into several geographies including Canada, Latin America and Asia Pacific. To support this rapid international growth, he opened offices in Mexico, Singapore, Indonesia, Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. Further, he expanded the global headquarters in the Woodlands, Texas by building an onsite R&D Excellence Center and a Customer Training Center. Today, Global Shop Solutions proudly serves customers in over 25 industries in 30 countries, employs more than 320 employees and has offices in seven countries.

As the manufacturing industry became more sophisticated, so did the ERP software. With the release of new ERP products, Alexander continues to offer customers additional capabilities to work the way they need to work. These include the Advanced Planning & Scheduling, Global Application Builder (GAB) SDK, GS Mobile, Project Management, Quality Control, Shop Floor Data Collection, Dashboard Designer, Process Documentation & Training, Cloud ERP and AI-driven ERP solutions.

“As President & CEO, Dusty has consistently championed ideas that put our customers first,” said George Thuo, Director of Cloud Technology. “His leadership led to the launch of our Cloud ERP product, unlocking new opportunities for growth, scalability and long-term success for the businesses we serve. His ability to anticipate market shifts, combined with his relentless focus on listening to customer needs, exemplifies the kind of forward-thinking leadership that drives meaningful change. This has not only shaped our company’s direction but also empowered our customers to thrive. This type of vision is what sets great leaders apart.”

Additionally, during his tenure the company revenue multiplied nearly 10-fold, employee growth tripled and he launched the Customer Care and Continuous Improvement teams.

“Dusty is the kind of leader who gives the trust and tools to build meaningful change in our business and in the manufacturing industry,” says Mike Melzer, Vice President of Operations and Service. “He has worked his entire career to make manufacturers more efficient and his unwavering focus on our customers’ success is inspiring, pushing his employees to bring their best every single day.”

“Dusty has a rare ability to connect big-picture strategy with day-to-day customer needs,” says Trent Maynard, Director of Product & Engineering. “He sees firsthand what our customers experience, and that perspective drives his support for major initiatives like improving our tech stack. His leadership ensures we’re investing in the right technologies to deliver long-term value.”

Alexander adheres to three pillars of success – hire and retain great talent, listen closely to the customer and never stop improving the product. As he looks into the future of the business and the industry, he plans to continue developing new tools, products and services that will allow customers to focus on what they do best – making quality products. Enabling customers to tailor ERP even more to their unique business needs supports a long-standing Global Shop Solutions maxim – “deliver a quality part on time, every time.”

“I fell in love with manufacturing from my first day on the job,” says Alexander, “and it has always been the people we serve and what we do for them that keeps me revved up every day. I come to work determined to make a great product and great services that benefit our customers and their employees. My 35 years here have been an honor.”

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.





Structural Technologies Reinforces its 2030 Vision with Successful Rootstock ERP Implementation

Go-live Marks a Major Milestone in Modernizing Operations, with a Future Integration Planned with Workday Financial Management Set to Enable a Fully Connected, Data-Driven Enterprise

Rootstock Software announced that Structural Technologies, LLC (Structural Technologies), a subsidiary of Structural Group, Inc., has successfully gone live with Rootstock ERP, marking a major milestone in the company's digital transformation journey. The implementation modernizes Structural Technologies' manufacturing operations, replacing outdated manual processes with automated workflows, real-time data visibility, and seamless integration across key business systems.

[Structural Technologies](#), headquartered in Columbia, Maryland, specializes in service life management of civil infrastructure and provides solution development, product systems, and construction implementation aimed at extending the useful life of the built environment. To support its current product line and future expansion,

the company needed a robust and flexible ERP solution to modernize manufacturing operations, integrate seamlessly with existing technology, and scale efficiently for continued growth.

"Our previous ERP was over three decades old and simply couldn't support the complexity and scale of our current manufacturing needs," said [Matt Young](#), CIO of [Structural Group](#). "Rootstock was chosen for its comprehensive set of capabilities and seamless collaboration with [Salesforce Sales Cloud](#), which we've used for years. Rootstock also has a certified Workday integration, which we will leverage as we deploy Workday Financial Management to unify our solutions, ensuring smooth data flow and enhanced efficiency."

Another key component of this project was the integration of Structural Technologies' homegrown engineering system—used for 25 years—with Rootstock. This integration has significantly improved workflow by eliminating the need for manual data entry and providing real-time visibility into forecasts and procurement. With automated updates replacing manual processes, teams now have a clearer picture of production progress and inventory availability, enabling more accurate planning and faster decision-making. Additionally, work orders are fully operational in Rootstock, allowing the company to calculate labor and material costs more precisely.

"The Rootstock implementation went remarkably well," added Young. "From the outset, their team took a deep dive into our business challenges, ensuring the ERP was tailored to fit our needs. The go-live was seamless—exactly the kind of smooth transition every company hopes for. Together, we kept our teams engaged and tackled technical challenges head-on. Rootstock's expertise, responsiveness, and collaborative approach kept this project on track, and we're excited to build on this strong foundation in the next phase."

"Structural Technologies' successful go-live is a testament to how a well-executed ERP implementation can modernize manufacturing operations without major disruption," said [Rick Berger](#), CEO of [Rootstock Software](#). "Their ability to transition from a decades-old system to a cloud-first ERP—without missing a beat—demonstrates both the strength of our technology and the dedication of their team. Structural Technologies took a strategic, forward-thinking approach, building a technology stack that aligns with both their current and future needs. With this foundation in place, they are well-positioned to scale, automate, and drive efficiency across their product lines. We're honored to support their ongoing transformation and look forward to the next phase of our partnership."

Structural Technologies is now preparing for phase two of its [Rootstock ERP](#) implementation, which will expand work order capabilities, enhance overhead cost tracking, and further automate manufacturing processes. This phase will also include the integration between Rootstock ERP and [Workforce Financial Management](#), enabling seamless data flow for deeper financial insights and even greater efficiencies.

To learn more about how Rootstock ERP can help your business achieve its growth objectives, [schedule a demo](#) today or meet Rootstock at one of its [upcoming events](#).

Salesforce, Sales Cloud, and others are among the trademarks of Salesforce, Inc.



About Rootstock

[Rootstock Software](#) provides the leading [ERP for product companies](#), empowering manufacturers, wholesalers, and distributors to turbocharge their operations. Natively built on the [Salesforce Platform](#), Rootstock is a modern, future-proof ERP with a fresh user experience. Users appreciate Rootstock's focus on customer success and its AI capabilities that offer a human-first approach. IT teams value Rootstock's platform as it minimizes the need to coordinate complex customizations and third-party integrations. All of these factors add up to delighted customers. As Rootstock continues to grow, stay tuned to hear about its new [customers](#), [career opportunities](#), and [LinkedIn posts](#).





Aptean Expands DACH Manufacturing ERP Footprint Through Acquisition of VLEX

Comprehensive Cloud-Enabled ERP Solution Purpose-Built for Variant-Manufacturing Industry

Aptean Inc., a global front-runner of AI-driven ERP solutions, is pleased to announce the acquisition of Vlexgroup AG ("VLEX"), a leading provider of variant-manufacturing focused ERP solutions for SME customers in the DACH region headquartered in Kulmbach, Germany.

The acquisition of VLEX further increases Aptean's DACH footprint while also bolstering its ERP capabilities for the variant-manufacturing sector.

For over 40 years, VLEX has provided mission-critical variant-manufacturing solutions designed to manage complex, diverse, and fast-moving challenges across the SME manufacturing sector in the DACH region. With deep industry expertise, VLEX's talented team aligns with Aptean's strategic focus on the SME manufacturing industry in the DACH region, further strengthening commitment to innovation and excellence.

"VLEX has a proven track record with over four decades of experience delivering mission-critical variant-manufacturing solutions across the DACH market" said TVN Reddy, CEO of Aptean. "VLEX's product VlexPlus delivers state of the art software solutions specifically designed to manage the complex needs of the variant manufacturing industry and is backed by a team of seasoned industry experts. VLEX will be an important driver in our strategy to scale our DACH manufacturing capabilities. Welcoming the VLEX team and customers into the Aptean family marks a significant step forward in our shared commitment to innovation and success."

"We are delighted to join a global organization like Aptean, where together we can continue to develop and deliver innovative solutions to our customers. The combination of our businesses offers an exciting opportunity for VLEX's future growth given our shared commitment to innovation and customer satisfaction. Being part of Aptean presents our customers and our team with exciting opportunities for growth and development and we can't wait to get started," said Jens Pfeil-Schneider, Chairman Managing Director of VLEX.

About Aptean

Aptean is a global provider of industry-specific software that helps manufacturers and distributors effectively run and grow their businesses. Aptean's solutions and services help businesses of all sizes to be Ready for What's Next, Now®. Aptean is headquartered in Alpharetta, Georgia and has offices in North America, Europe and Asia-Pacific. To learn more about Aptean and the markets we serve, visit www.aptean.com.

About VLEX

For over 40 years, VLEX has been a reliable partner for digital transformation and automation in medium-sized manufacturing companies and wholesale businesses. At the heart of their offer is the cloud-enabled ERP software VlexPlus, which acts as a central data and process hub, mapping all processes in the Customer's value chain right down to the shop floor. Developed for the complex requirements of variant and order manufacturers, the ERP software is based on one of the most modern technology and process frameworks available today. It enables consistently networked work across system and company boundaries. To learn more visit: <https://www.vlexplus.com/>





Acumatica to be Acquired by Vista Equity Partners

Cloud ERP Leader Joins Vista's Global Ecosystem to Drive Growth, Empower Community and Advance AI-Driven Cloud ERP Solutions

[Acumatica](#), a leading provider of cloud ERP solutions for small and mid-sized businesses, announced it has signed a definitive agreement to be acquired by [Vista Equity Partners](#) ("Vista"), a global investment firm focused exclusively on enterprise software, data and technology-enabled businesses.

Acumatica's cloud-native Enterprise Resource Planning ("ERP") platform enables a range of mid-market organizations to digitally manage and automate mission-

critical processes from core financial management to payroll and Customer Relationship Management ("CRM") in a single, unified system. Built on an open, flexible architecture, the platform delivers AI-driven real-time visibility across the business, enabling users to make faster and more strategic business decisions. Acumatica offers industry-specific functionality tailored to complex sectors, including manufacturing, distribution, construction, retail and professional services.

“Our partnership with Vista not only marks a significant milestone in Acumatica’s history but also is a strong endorsement of the real-world value we deliver to the market and our customers,” said John Case, CEO of Acumatica. “Vista’s investment can help power our AI-first product strategy and further strengthen our thriving Community of partners, developers and customers, working together to find better ways to work and redefine business management software for everyone. With Vista’s support and track record of growing software companies, we believe we’re positioned to accelerate product development, deepen partner engagement and extend our impact.”

“Acumatica is an ascendant, cloud-native ERP platform that has become a leading provider of mission-critical tools that enable small and mid-sized businesses to run more efficiently and effectively,” said Monti Saroya, co-head of Vista’s Flagship Fund and senior managing director. “With its industry-leading, strong partner ecosystem and growing presence in markets embracing cloud-based business technology, we believe Acumatica is well-positioned to lead the shift toward modern, integrated ERP solutions.”

“Acumatica has established a strong market position with differentiated, flexible and industry-specific ERP solutions as well as a uniquely dedicated channel of value-added resellers,” said John Stalder, managing director at Vista. “We’re excited to partner with Acumatica and its outstanding community of partners to drive continued growth and product innovation and to deliver even greater value to customers worldwide.”

Vista will acquire Acumatica from EQT, which will no longer be an investor in the company. Terms of the transaction were not disclosed.

Moelis & Company served as financial advisor to Acumatica. Simpson Thacher & Bartlett LLP acted as legal counsel to Acumatica, and Greenberg Traurig LLP served as legal counsel to Vista.



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](https://www.linkedin.com/company/acumatica).

About Vista Equity Partners

Vista is a global technology investor that specializes in enterprise software. Vista’s private market strategies seek to deliver differentiated returns through a proprietary and systematic approach to value creation developed and refined over the course of 25 years and 600+ transactions. Today, Vista manages a diversified portfolio of software companies that provide mission-critical solutions to millions of customers around the world. As of December 31, 2024, Vista had more than \$100 billion in assets under management. Further information is available at vistaequitypartners.com.





SAP and Alibaba Group Partner to Accelerate Cloud Transformation

SAP announced that it has entered into a strategic partnership with Alibaba Group to accelerate cloud transformation.

As part of the collaboration, Alibaba Group will leverage SAP Cloud ERP Private for its enterprise infrastructure, as well as a joint go-to-market strategy aimed at delivering accelerated value for customers worldwide.

Alibaba, the Chinese multinational technology company focused on e-commerce and cloud computing, will leverage SAP Business Suite for faster maintenance, smooth upgrades and easier integration of artificial

intelligence (AI) capabilities into core business processes. Alibaba Group also plans to deploy SAP Business AI, SAP Business Technology Platform, and SAP Ariba, SAP Integrated Business Planning, SAP SuccessFactors, SAP Concur, and SAP Emarsys solutions to further optimize its technological backbone, enabling greater agility and resilience in serving its vast ecosystem of businesses and consumers.

“Our collaboration with SAP reinforces our commitment to empowering global businesses with world-class technologies,” Alibaba Group Chairman Joe Tsai said. “By combining SAP’s enterprise software with Alibaba Cloud’s robust infrastructure and AI capabilities, we can help customers build smarter, more agile operations.”

The collaboration marks the next chapter in Alibaba’s and SAP’s longstanding partnership focused on enhancing operational efficiency and accelerating innovation for joint customers. A core component of this strategic alliance is a joint go-to-market initiative.

Under the collaboration initially focused on the China market, enterprises will be able to implement SAP Integrated Business Planning and embark on the RISE with SAP and GROW with SAP journeys. It is also planned to be rolled out in Southeast Asia, the Middle East and Africa. With Alibaba Group as a certified hyperscaler for

SAP software workloads, Chinese enterprises will also be able to deploy SAP Cloud ERP and SAP Cloud ERP Private solutions, empowering them with scalable, more secure and intelligent solutions tailored to local business needs. Marking a significant step in enterprise AI integration, SAP is also exploring the integration of Alibaba’s large language model, Qwen, to the generative AI hub in SAP AI Core in China to enable enterprise users to access localized generative AI capabilities within SAP software applications and Custom AI applications. In parallel, SAP is exploring the deployment of its AI Foundation on Alibaba Cloud to bring powerful, scalable AI tools to customers operating in China. Alibaba also will be part of the latest infrastructure-as-a-service certification program to support customers running SAP’s enterprise solutions.



“Our collaboration with Alibaba Group is a testament to the power and flexibility of SAP’s cloud solutions,” SAP CEO Christian Klein said. “Our joint go-to-market strategy can unlock new opportunities for enterprises by providing them with access to a comprehensive suite of tools and services. Together, we can help our joint customers drive innovation, improve operational performance and create new competitive advantages. We look forward to working with Alibaba to shape the future of cloud-powered digital transformation.”

About SAP

As a global leader in enterprise applications and business AI, 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.





Sage Future 2025 sets a New Standard for High-Performance Finance

With new AI capabilities, a new brand mission, and industry-first partnerships, Sage unveils the solutions and insights finance teams need to lead with confidence

[Sage](#), the leader in accounting, financial, HR and payroll technology for small and mid-sized businesses (SMBs), unveiled several strategic initiatives, first-of-their-kind partnerships, and product advancements at Sage Future, its annual customer and partner conference. Held at the Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta from June 2–5, the event gathered thousands of attendees eager to explore the future of high-performance finance.

At the heart of the event was the launch of Sage’s new brand mission: High-Performance Finance Software. This bold direction recognizes the evolving role of CFOs and finance leaders, pairing AI-powered solutions with leadership development and community support for the next generation of financial decision-makers.

Announcements at Sage Future 2025 included:

- [Introducing “High-Performance Finance Software”](#)— Sage unveiled its new brand mission to empower finance leaders with AI-powered solutions, skill-building, and community support. Launching in June, the initiative includes a CPE-accredited training program for high-potential finance leaders in partnership with GrowCFO—Sage High-Performance Academy.
- [Sage and LPGA: A Partnership in High Performance](#) – Sage became the Official Finance Software Partner of the LPGA. The multi-year partnership will spotlight the business side of elite sports through a content series featuring athletes who exemplify resilience, strategy, and leadership.

- [CPA.com + Sage Copilot Collaboration](#) – In a first-of-its-kind partnership, Sage and CPA.com will integrate AICPA resources into training Sage Copilot to enhance trust, accuracy, and professional context in AI-assisted accounting workflows.
- [Unveiling the Agentic AI Vision](#) – Sage outlined a roadmap toward Agentic AI, building on the global rollout of Sage Copilot. The plan includes domain-specific models, proactive task coordination, and next-gen automation built through the Sage AI Factory.
- [Launching the AI Trust Label](#) – A new AI Trust Label will provide transparency around Sage’s AI products, covering privacy, bias mitigation, and data usage. The initiative sets a new industry benchmark for ethical AI adoption in SMBs.
- [Sage Copilot for Sage X3](#) – New capabilities extend Sage Copilot to Sage X3, bringing AI-driven insights and automation to sales, fulfillment, and AP processes for global manufacturers and distributors.
- [AI Enhancements in Sage Intacct](#) – New AI features in Sage Intacct aim to accelerate financial close, improve forecasting, and reduce manual effort with tools like the Close Workspace and predictive cash flow insights.
- [Introducing Sage Supply Chain Intelligence](#) – Formerly Anvyl, this solution delivers real-time visibility into the first mile of supply chain execution for t-scaling, product-based businesses.

Sage Future 2026 will take place in San Francisco, California from April 28–30, 2026. Future 2025 was made possible in part through the support of the partners listed below:

Titanium Sponsor:

- [AWS:](#) Amazon Web Services (AWS) is the world’s most comprehensive and broadly adopted cloud platform, offering over 240 fully featured services from data centers globally. Millions of customers—including the fastest-growing startups, largest enterprises, and leading government agencies—trust AWS to power their infrastructure, become more agile, and lower costs.

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- [Avalara:](#) Avalara helps businesses of all sizes get tax compliance right. In partnership with leading ERP, accounting, ecommerce, and other financial management system providers, Avalara delivers cloud-based compliance solutions for various transaction taxes, including sales and use, VAT, GST, excise, communications, lodging, and other indirect tax types. Headquartered in Seattle, Avalara has offices across the U.S. and around the world in Brazil, Europe, and India.
- [Baker Tilly:](#) Baker Tilly, a top Sage Intacct reseller, integrator, and solutions provider, has been named Sage Intacct Partner of the Year for 11 consecutive years. We help high-growth companies and not-for-profits modernize their finance and accounting technology stack. Our unrivaled customer experience is supported by outstanding implementation, customer support, and product

development teams. We create seamless integrations, world-class support, and game-changing analytics on the Sage Intacct platform, maximizing your investment and gaining a competitive advantage.

- [BILL:](#) BILL’s platform empowers finance leaders like you to run your business—your way. Automate AP & AR, make informed decisions backed by real-time data, and control spend with a powerful company card and expense management solution. Headquartered in San Jose, California, BILL serves nearly half a million businesses and is a trusted partner of leading US financial institutions, accounting firms, and accounting software providers. BILL is one of the largest providers of fast, affordable B2B payments, processing \$300B in payment volume (~1% of US GDP) and more than 100 million payment transactions annually.
- [Ramp:](#) Ramp is the ultimate platform for modern finance teams. Combining corporate cards with travel, expense management, bill payments, procurement, accounting automation and more, Ramp is on a mission to help customers save their most valuable resources – time and money. And it’s working; over 25,000 businesses on Ramp save an average 5% and close their books 8x faster. Founded in 2019, Ramp powers the fastest-growing corporate card and bill payment platform in America, and enables tens of billions of dollars in purchases each year.





EDETEK Engages Capgemini to Support Its Global Transformation Initiative and Accelerate AI Innovation in Clinical Development

EDETEK Inc., a global provider of leading AI-driven clinical development platforms and services, has engaged Capgemini to support its ongoing advancements in digital transformation within the life sciences industry. This engagement combines EDETEK's deep domain expertise and established platforms and services with Capgemini's advanced AI and engineering capabilities, to enable EDETEK to deliver innovative solutions aimed at optimizing clinical development, improving operational efficiency, and accelerating the time-to-market for new therapies.

A shared vision for the future of clinical R&D

By integrating advanced digital and data capabilities—including generative AI—across all phases of clinical trials, the project will support new efficiencies for pharmaceutical companies, including:

- Dramatically reduce time-to-market for new therapies.
- Enablement of self-learning, insight-driven trials for faster, more proactive decision-making.
- Streamlined data management and trial workflows, enhancing efficiency and precision.
- Significant cost reductions and boosted drug pipeline value.

“Working with Capgemini signifies our continuing efforts to expand our global capabilities towards delivering more effective and faster clinical development,” said Dr. Shakthi Kumar, Chief Strategy & Business Officer at EDETEK. “By bringing together our AI-driven platforms with Capgemini’s leading capabilities in life science and technology, we will empower life science organizations to conduct smarter, faster, and more predictive clinical trials—ultimately improving patient outcomes at scale.”

Bringing innovation to clinical development at scale

The engagement combines EDETEK’s proven technology with Capgemini’s global network and deep domain knowledge to scale AI-powered clinical innovation across the pharmaceutical industry. Together, this will help make intelligent, agile, and data-driven clinical trials accessible to more life sciences organizations worldwide. In addition, Capgemini will leverage its robust engineering capabilities to help scale EDETEK’s platforms globally and enable continued leadership in reliability, innovation, and performance.

“Our deep expertise in next-gen clinical development methodologies and advanced AI will expand EDETEK’s R&D cloud and eClinical platform, helping its clients to unlock new levels of agility, insight, and efficiency,” said Thorsten Rall, Global Industry Head, Life Sciences at Capgemini. “Together, we are committed to redefining what’s possible for the industry—delivering measurable value, accelerating innovation, and shaping the future of healthcare through smarter, more predictive clinical trials.”

About EDETEK, Inc.

Founded in 2009, EDETEK delivers high-quality AI-powered platforms and clinical services to over one hundred biopharma clients worldwide. With a presence across four continents, EDETEK is redefining the future of clinical development through intelligent technology. For more information about EDETEK, please visit www.edetek.com

About Capgemini

Capgemini is a global business and technology transformation partner, helping organizations to accelerate their dual transition to a digital and sustainable world, while creating tangible impact for enterprises and society. It is a responsible and diverse group of 340,000 team members in more than 50 countries. With its strong over 55-year heritage, Capgemini is trusted by its clients to unlock the value of technology to address the entire breadth of their business needs. It delivers end-to-end services and solutions leveraging strengths from strategy and design to engineering, all fueled by its market leading capabilities in AI, generative AI, cloud and data, combined with its deep industry expertise and partner ecosystem. The Group reported 2024 global revenues of €22.1 billion.





Finance Systems Slammed by Professional Services Firms for Wasting Time and Money

44 hours per week wasted on financial discrepancies and two days per week on year-end financials

Unit4, a leader in enterprise cloud applications for people-centric organisations, has unveiled part two of its international research study “The Back Office in 2025.” Conducted by Vanson Bourne, it highlights major difficulties for professional services firms in managing key financial systems, such as cash flow management, year-end financials and project financials. 100% of senior finance and IT decision makers experience discrepancies in year-end financials, with the majority (77%) saying they occur often. Significant resources are being wasted in investigating errors, consolidating financial information

and on manual processes. Data consolidation, back-office integration and automation are seen as key to improving performance.

Year-end discrepancies affecting morale

There is a clear human cost to financial errors, as 61% say year-end reporting negatively impacts the wellbeing of the finance team, while a further 73% say reducing workload at year-end would help prevent burnout. The top three challenges related to discrepancies are:

- Time-consuming manual processes
- Lack of integration across systems
- Difficulty consolidating financial accounts

“At a time when productivity and efficiency are bywords for every Professional Services firm, these findings reveal concerning shortcomings for organisations that want to be more competitive,” said Bryce Wolf, Strategic Growth Director, Unit4. “The firms that drive greater consolidation of financial information will be closer to gaining a single source of truth about their business performance. Combined with greater automation to aid faster decision-making, this will be critical to survival and growth in the years ahead.”

Project financials are draining resources

Project financials, as well as year-end reporting, are adding to the burden. When dealing with year-end preparations, senior finance decision makers are spending two full working days per week consolidating year-end financials, while respondents say they are wasting 25 hours a week investigating project financials and 19 hours per week on correcting or updating issues. The UK and Benelux are spending over 50 hours per week on this activity, similar to Management Consultants and smaller organisations who are wasting the most time.

The top three challenges for improving project financials are:

- High costs of new solutions
- Lack of real-time financial data insights
- Fragmented and inconsistent data

Slow and risky manual processes are to blame

A possible cause for discrepancies and wasted time could be that 84% of finance teams are spending too much time on manual processes that should be automated. In cash flow management the top three processes affected by this are payment reconciliation, approving workflows and data consolidation and integration. It is no surprise, then, that 88% say cashflow management is difficult, blaming inadequate financial reporting tools, complex approval processes and high operating costs. In turn, this is leading to increased processing times, operational costs and risk of errors.

Globally respondents see real value in automating financial processes, saying the top three benefits will be:

- Tracking and managing project expenses – 48%
- Cash monitoring and optimisation – 47%
- Creating financial forecasts – 47%

Today, though, only 46% of cash flow management processes are automated. Among the subsectors within Professional Services, Management consulting (49%) comes out top in wanting to increase automation, followed by IT and tech (48%) and Media and publishing (46%). Similarly, 92% of respondents agree that automating processes would speed up consolidation of year-end financials. Generally, there is agreement that consolidating data, greater integration of back-office systems and automating processes should be prioritised to overcome the challenges outlined in the research. Embracing AI and automating manual workflows can provide a single source of truth for financial data - something that is lacking for 73%.

Globally, respondents also say that finance systems could be improved with:

- AI-enhanced features (93%)
- Integration of financial management tools within an ERP system to improve collaboration and decision making (92%)
- Third party partnerships to optimise cash flow management processes (90%)

Respondents believe that adopting these recommendations will help to improve the accuracy of financial decision making, reduce workloads and ultimately free up teams to focus on strategic growth.

UNIT4

About Unit4

Unit4's next-generation enterprise resource planning (ERP) solutions power many of the world's mid-market organizations, bringing together the capabilities of Financials, Procurement, Project Management, HR, and FP&A to share real-time information, and deliver greater insights to help organizations become more effective. By combining our mid-market expertise with a relentless focus on people, we've built flexible solutions to meet customers' unique and changing needs. Unit4 serves more than 5,100 customers globally across a number of sectors including professional services, nonprofit and public sector, with customers including Southampton City Council, Metro Vancouver, Buro Happold, Devoteam, Save the Children International, Global Green Growth Institute and Oxfam America. For further information visit www.unit4.com.



New Survey of 600+ Main Street Accountants Reveals Steep Drop in Optimism for SMB Clients

The Avalara Accountants Confidence Report shows 64% of trusted advisors bracing clients for economic downturn, and urging cash preservation, debt reduction, and rapid intelligent technology adoption

Avalara, Inc., a leader in modern tax compliance automation, released the 2025 Avalara Accountants Confidence Report, revealing a marked decline in optimism among U.S. accountants advising small and mid-sized businesses (SMBs).

Based on a survey of 623 accounting professionals, the report offers a unique view into the economic outlook, operational pain points, and forward strategies of nearly 158,000 small and mid-sized business clients, filtered through the trusted advisors who know their finances best.

The 2025 survey highlights a significant shift from cautious optimism to heightened pessimism, driven by a host of economic pressures and policy uncertainty. Between January and April, the net sentiment among accountants swung dramatically—from a positive 19% to a negative 39%. Initially, nearly half (47%) of advisors foresaw improving conditions; by April, just 25% held this view, with a striking 64% anticipating worsening economic environments. This shift underscores growing apprehension across Main Street accounting firms serving as frontline advisors on tax, payroll, and compliance decisions.

Accountants Sound Off on Triple Threat: Inflation, Tariffs, & Tax Policy Uncertainty

The 2025 Avalara Accountants Confidence Report, produced in conjunction with [CPA Trendlines](#), is the result of a survey of trusted advisors with the clearest view into the financial health of small business clients. The survey was conducted against a backdrop of historic tariff actions, continued inflationary pressures, a looming recession, unpredictable tax and trade policies, and pressure to focus on short-term challenges at the expense of long-range planning.

Accounting advisors were decisive on the top issues impacting their clients, with 61% citing inflation, costs and pricing; 60% naming tariffs and trade impacts and uncertainty; 59% pinpointing unease around new tax legislation; 42% identifying ongoing labor supply and wage issues; and 37% citing technology and AI adoption as a priority.

“Accountants are sounding an urgent alarm,” said Rick Telberg, founder of CPA Trendlines. “They’re advising SMBs to conserve cash, curb discretionary expenses, and resist taking on unnecessary debt. Amid volatility

in tariffs, inflation, and complex tax legislation, SMBs face serious barriers to strategic growth and operational stability.”

A Troubling Outlook: The Main Barriers Facing SMBs

SMBs are under mounting pressure as economic turbulence threatens both their resilience and long-term growth. According to accountants, the most prominent challenges facing SMBs in the year ahead are hiring and retaining talent (60%), keeping pace with technology (55%), and managing rising costs (52%). The added strain of tariffs has handicapped SMBs’ adaptability and agility, which is typically their key advantage over larger competitors.

Additional challenges include adapting to disruption (35%), meeting evolving customer expectations (32%), and managing product costs (29%). With recession risks on the rise, many SMBs face a tough road ahead, though some sectors may be better positioned to weather the storm.

Recession Resilience: Which Sectors Are Most (and Least) Prepared?

As recession fears grow, SMBs are taking measures to stay productive and profitable in a slower economy. According to accountants, specialization plays a key role in determining how well an SMB client can navigate disruption.

Accountants are most confident in the professional services sector – including doctors, lawyers, and other professionals – with 60% believing this sector will thrive during a downturn. Close behind is the technology sector, where 57% of accountants express confidence driven by strong demand for digital solutions and AI

that boost operational efficiency and resilience. And the oil, energy and mining sectors show 39% of respondents optimistic due to recent spikes in supply and demand for these resources.

In contrast, farming (6%), franchising (3%), and arts & entertainment (2%) are seen as the most vulnerable sectors. These sectors depend heavily on broader economic performance, and the recent tariffs have further strained their growth and output.

Best Advice for SMBs: Cut Costs, Build Cash

The report distills hundreds of practitioner responses into clear guidance:

- “Cash is king. Protect it.”
- “Avoid taking on debt unless it’s revenue-generating.”
- “Have a plan A, B, and C.”
- “Automate wherever possible.”
- “Retain your best people—turnover is expensive.”

Firms are pushing clients to monitor burn rates, trim overhead, and resist unnecessary borrowing. AI and automation are encouraged, not as luxuries but rather survival tools in an era of labor shortages and pricing pressure.

“This year’s survey underscores a critical moment for the SMB business sector,” said Sona Akmakjian, head of global strategic accountant partnerships at Avalara. “Accountants are urging businesses to fortify themselves against ongoing economic turbulence by sharpening their operational focus, adopting intelligent technology, and carefully managing resources. Clients are, more than ever, relying on the accretive business acumen and advisory skills of their trusted advisor for guidance through historic headwinds and uncertainty.”

Read more about the 2025 Accountants Confidence Report [here](#) – use code avlr.



About the Study

The survey was fielded in waves from November 2024 through April 2025 by CPA Trendlines Research to a proprietary database of practicing tax, accounting and finance professionals, including CPAs, bookkeepers, tax professionals, and business advisors. CPA Trendlines Research collected surveys directly by email invitation and via social channels. Respondents were incentivized by offering a “topline executive summary of the results.” Overall margin of error: 3-5 points at a 90% confidence level.

About Avalara

Avalara makes tax compliance faster, easier, and more accurate, reliable, and valuable for 43,000+ business and government customers in over 75 countries. Tax compliance automation software solutions from Avalara leverage 1,400+ signed partner integrations across leading ecommerce, ERP, and other billing systems to power tax calculations, document management, tax return filing, and tax content access. Visit avalara.com to improve your compliance journey.

About CPA Trendlines

CPA Trendlines delivers data-driven, actionable business intelligence to professional tax, accounting, and finance professionals to help build their firms, enhance their careers, and better serve their clients.

Rimini Street Announces the Extension of Support for All SAP ECC 6.0 and S/4HANA Releases Through 2040

All SAP software licensees can now easily extend the useful life and maximize the full value of their current, proven and stable mission-critical systems and enjoy total maintenance savings of up to 90% without the requirement of a costly and risky migration to S/4HANA on RISE

[Rimini Street, Inc.](#), a global provider of end-to-end enterprise software support, management and innovation solutions, and the leading third-party support provider for Oracle, SAP and VMware software, announced it has extended full support coverage for all SAP ECC 6.0 and S/4HANA releases through 2040, without any need to complete a migration to S/4HANA on RISE as required by SAP for clients who want to remain on SAP's Annual Support and receive full support.

Rimini Street SAP Clients Gain Long-Term Savings to Self-Fund Innovation

Current Rimini Support™ for SAP clients are not impacted by SAP's end-of-maintenance dates. With unmatched support, service and guidance from Rimini Street as a single, trusted partner – clients can keep systems running smoothly, stay in full tax and legal compliance and re-allocate IT budget savings to self-fund innovation.

Rimini Street launched Rimini Support for SAP over fifteen years ago and currently supports hundreds of SAP ECC 6.0 and S/4HANA clients. This announcement extending SAP ECC 6.0 and S/4HANA support for another fifteen years applies to both current and new clients who are seeking to drive maximum ROI out of their SAP software investment and enjoy total annual maintenance savings of up to 90% and avoid the cost and risks of a low-value migration to S/4HANA on RISE.

“Rimini Street’s announcement that it will support all SAP releases until 2040 is most welcome news to SAP ECC customers such as ourselves,” said Nobuo Norisue, president of AUTOBACS Digital Initiative Co., the group IT infrastructure of AUTOBACS, Japanese retailer of automotive parts and accessories. “As a very satisfied client of Rimini Support™ for SAP since 2016, having the option to stay on our ECC system until 2040 with the support of Rimini Street opens up many new doors for us, especially at a time when we are designing our next-generation IT foundation and architecture while balancing budgets and delivery timeline. Rimini Street’s continued support provides us with more time, funds and options for a smart path forward.”

“According to industry analysts, an estimated 20,000 SAP ECC licensees have not even licensed S/4HANA, and many of those who have licensed S/4HANA still have not completed an S/4HANA or S/4HANA on RISE migration,” said Seth Ravin, CEO of Rimini Street. “The SAP ECC 6.0 and older S/4HANA releases can deliver excellent and stable operations for 15 or more years with Rimini Street’s proven, ultra-responsive support for SAP. There is no need for SAP licensees to undergo major costs, risks and disruption to their operations for

a software migration that many believe is unnecessary and low value, compared to the value of investing in new technologies like enterprise AI, workflow and task automation – that can bring immediate value to the organization.”

Rimini Street Extends the Useful Life of All SAP ECC 6.0 and S/4HANA Releases

SAP’s Mainstream Maintenance for ECC 6.0 is scheduled to end by 2027, but for those on enhancement packs 0-5, the end date is December 31, 2025. Similarly, SAP S/4HANA has several releases where Mainstream Maintenance has already ended or will end in 2025, 2026, or 2027, depending on the version. SAP’s Extended Maintenance is available for some versions of ECC 6.0 and S/4HANA, but not all, and at a significant cost increase. The full list of maintenance end dates can be found [here](#).

Rimini Street clients can avoid the endless cycles and risks of vendor-mandated upgrades, migrations and replatforming, benefitting from:

- Immediate savings of up to 50% off SAP annual support fees, with savings of up to 90% on total support costs
- A named, dedicated Primary Support Engineer (PSE), backed by a deep bench of SAP experts across the globe, and Rimini Street’s patented and proprietary AI tools and processes for fast, accurate issue resolution
- Comprehensive support that covers customizations at no additional charge, helping to lower daily IT operating costs and preserve processes of competitive differentiation
- Guaranteed SLAs of ten-minute response time for critical cases, averaging less than two-minute response times for both Priority 1 and 2 cases in 2024

“We predict the future of ERP will forever be changed in the next five to ten years, with ERP software replaced by new, faster and more flexible agentic ERP processes that we are already deploying for clients,” said Ravin. “Already, Rimini Street clients have saved \$9 billion dollars in IT operating costs and are self-funding innovation to propel them forward without being slowed down with unnecessary, costly and risky upgrades, migrations and replatforming. Rimini Street clients are disruptors, not the disrupted.”

Learn about a SMARTER and FASTER path to innovation [here](#).

Rimini Street

About Rimini Street, Inc.

Rimini Street, Inc., a Russell 2000® Company, is a global provider of end-to-end enterprise software support and innovation solutions and the leading third-party support provider for Oracle, SAP and VMware software. The Company offers a comprehensive portfolio of unified solutions to run, manage, support, customize, configure, connect, protect, monitor, and optimize enterprise application, database, and technology software. The Company has signed thousands of contracts with Fortune Global 100, Fortune 500, midmarket, public sector and government organizations who selected Rimini Street as their trusted, proven mission-critical enterprise software solutions provider and achieved better operational outcomes, realized billions of US dollars in savings and funded AI and other innovation investments.



How This Managed Print Service Company Embraced the Ever-Evolving Nature of the Workplace and Introduced Alternative Revenue Streams

Since implementing e-automate, Printanista, MobileTech and KnowledgeSync, Active8 has experienced smooth running, simplified systems as well as staff's time being freed up to prioritise clients services and value adding activity.

OVERVIEW

Active8
www.a8mt.co.uk
Newark, UK

INDUSTRY

Managed
Technologies

SOLUTIONS

e-automate
Printanista
MobileTech
KnowledgeSync

The Challenges

The managed technology industry is changing and no one knows exactly where the market is headed. Reductions in print volumes and the rising uptake of remote working has caused the sector to shift, and as such, customer requirements are changing.

To maintain stability and meet the ever-evolving needs of their clients, Active8 has sought to introduce new revenue streams and cut unnecessary costs. To successfully leverage new opportunities, and provide a high level of service for its clients, Active8 needed an industry-specific software solution to simplify business operations, drive efficiencies and support future growth.

Impact

Prioritising the customer

Prioritising the customer Using systems that can talk to each other has driven efficiency across the business,

improving both internal processes and customer service. Certain tasks will always require a human, but by automating those processes that don't need high levels of human interaction, staff are freed up to focus on better serving customers.

Gaining a more accurate overview

With an enterprise resource planning (ERP) and customer relationship management (CRM) system in place, all key data is accessible via a single data-led dashboard, allowing for more detailed and accurate analysis of business performance.

Easy implementation

Full product demonstrations and attentive specialist support teams ensure seamless implementation and company wide roll-out meaning that from day one the team has been in a position to make the most of the technology.

Who is Active8?

Celebrating its 10th anniversary this year, Active8 Managed Technologies has been a trusted supplier of quality end-user business services for organisations across the UK since 2013 - providing three core services: Managed Print Services (MPS), IT Services and Hosted Telephony.

Although its predominant offering for a decade, Active8's ambitions have always looked beyond providing print services alone, to become long-term business partners for its customers, helping them to adapt and thrive in the ever-changing environment.

With its customer's needs at the very core of everything it does, Active8's ethos is simple - the company looks to provide access to high-quality products and technical support services, helping its partnered customers augment their business and aid growth.

The Challenges

The managed technologies industry is experiencing a volatile trading environment, with recent socio-economic factors, such as COVID-19, acting as a catalyst for reduced print volumes and remote working practices. As such, Active8 recognised the importance of being proactive and adaptable to embrace the shift.

With a focus on diversifying services to meet the evolving needs of clients, and maintaining stability in an unstable market, Active8 has looked to introduce new revenue streams, while reducing any superfluous costs.

As every print or copier device has an IP address and sits within a network, the MPS industry is well positioned for diversification within

the technology sector. For example, IT services and VoIP phones are highly relevant and viable options for expansion. As a leading MPS provider, Active8 understood that refocusing on new opportunities and embracing alternative earnings would be crucial steps towards future growth.

Looking to simplify the journey and drive efficiencies across all aspects of the business, the correct industry-specific software would be able to withstand the rapid growth of Active8's diverse customer base, while facilitating the compilation of data-driven reports.

“With ten years experience operating in the Managed Print Services (MPS), IT Services, and Hosted Telephony industry, Active8 Managed Technologies prides itself on supporting its customers and the needs of the modern workplace.”

The Solution

Having enjoyed a period of rapid growth, Active8 approached ECI in 2020, looking for a fully integrated management solution. ECI e-automate, Printanista, MobileTech and KnowledgeSync were implemented shortly after.

Prioritising scalability whilst searching for the ideal ERP system, Active8 understood that its ambitious growth plans should not be hindered or held back by back-end systems. Alongside this, specific features such as robust financial packages and extensive integration options drew Active8 towards ECI and its portfolio of specialised products.

Underpinning all product selection decisions was the desire to streamline and simplify operations by consolidating all data into a single source, enabling Active8 to make data-driven decisions while effectively managing multiple new ventures in an ever-changing market.

The Impact

The introduction of e-automate, Printanista, MobileTech and KnowledgeSync, has transformed how Active8 manages its MPS offering. Nick Swindin, service ops director at Active8, discusses the drive behind implementing ECI's software solutions, “customers are our number one priority and we're determined to provide organisations of all sizes with access to high-quality products and technical support services. Our aim is to be more than a service provider, building long-term business partnerships that can help our customers to evolve and prosper.”

Having previously relied on multiple, disparate business management systems, Active8 found that attempts at gaining an accurate business overview was near impossible, as well as a significant drain on staff time.

“Now, with our ERP and CRM systems connected with a single dashboard, pulling quick and impromptu updates is easy. We can analyse business performance over time and immediately identify any concerning trends, allowing us to deliver for our customers. Data extraction from ECI is significantly more advanced than previous systems I’ve experienced over my 30 years in the office technology sector.”

With accounts managed in the same central location, hours of staff’s time is saved each month that would have previously been spent collating spreadsheets and manually inputting data. “ECI’s e-automate software has enabled us to boost contract profitability. Since deploying the e-automate software, we have also introduced Printanista - enabling us to more accurately monitor machines from a distance, and remotely capture important data around metre readings, toner alerts and service calls. ”

Managing market fluctuations is a common challenge for any business, of any size. Nick explains how implementing the right software can help companies thrive, “in the past three years, the market has fluctuated significantly. The adoption of hybrid and remote working, as well as businesses looking to cut costs due to unstable economic environments, has made managing supply and demand a real challenge. To survive, you have to ride the tidal wave and embrace the shift.”

“We can’t predict exactly where the MPS market is heading, but with diversification playing such an integral role in ensuring businesses stay buoyant, there’s no point investing in systems that are unable to keep up. Combining live, real-time data with a vast number of complementary products, features and third-party integrations, our staff are well equipped with highly intelligent systems to manage demand fluctuations, no matter which way they turn.”



Investing in new software can be daunting, with many businesses concerned by the potential disruption caused during the implementation phase. Nick recalls working closely with the ECI solution consultants team to specify aims and determine goals before exploring product options, ‘I know the customer service reps are always on-hand whenever we need them, sharing expert knowledge and a true understanding of how we can achieve the most from our investment.’

“Following a full demonstration of e-automate, Acsellerate and KnowledgeSync, the whole team could immediately visualise how a fully integrated, cloud-based approach would transform the business and their day-to-day roles.”

Investing in success

Summarising the benefits, Nick said, “Ultimately, every business will view the purpose of their business management software in a slightly different way. For us, our ERP system is a powerful contract database that feeds numerous additional features, delivering efficiency across different aspects of our business.”

“Partnering with ECI was driven by our pursuit of scalability and future preparedness - as an aggressive business with aggressive growth bands. Offering vast possibilities for automation, ECI’s specialised software solutions allow us to run everything under one roof, from one database, creating a cohesion across Active8 like we’ve never experienced before.”

“With a single, consolidated ERP system with lots of integrations and ‘bolt on’ features - data-led decision making is easy.”



Grocery Wholesale Group Vital Transforms with SAP S/4HANA



Vital is in the midst of a digital transformation focused on moving to SAP S/4HANA. The biggest grocery wholesale group in Argentina is developing a clean core strategy and using analytics to drive the business while democratizing data access throughout the company.

In addition to groceries and food, the group sells electronics services and has around 400,000 customers, along with 80,000 business clients and more than 1,800 suppliers, according to Vital CIO and CTO Alexander Gonzalez.

Gonzalez is part of a new executive committee that is leading with the purpose of seeking to expand company reach, improve efficiency, and strengthen its market position.

“It all started in 2018, when we decided to have an analytics system and a clean core SAP system to make all the data available to all the different parts of the company so they can make real-time decisions on purchasing and pricing for our customers,” he said.

“It’s important for us to have that information readily available because Argentina is a highly inflationary country, where prices change really quickly ... during the COVID-19 pandemic Vital sometimes had to change 20,000 product prices in less than a day, so we have to do all of that analysis really fast.”

Gonzalez explained that this is particularly important in a nation like Argentina because prices are extremely volatile. “It’s important for us to have that information readily available because Argentina is a highly inflationary country, where prices change really quickly,” he said. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic Vital sometimes had to change 20,000 product prices in less than a day, “so we have to do all of that analysis really fast.”

Vital was a long-time SAP customer, but when it came to choosing a digital transformation technology partner, the company did its due diligence.

“One of the main reasons we chose SAP [S/4HANA] is we were used to using SAP,” says Gonzalez. “But we did do our homework. We analyzed our business and processes for a year, then we took six months to talk with a lot of suppliers, SAP included, and another three.”



Ultimately, he said Vital decided on SAP S/4HANA because it offered the potential to integrate a customer activity repository with its basic financial and core systems.

It took Vital 18 months to implement, but Gonzalez said the system “integrated with our providers on the first day and we had all this real-time data within a week of going live. So that was great for us.”

As a result, analytics that used to take three to four days can now be done in two hours and Vital can have a new pricing structure implemented in less than three hours. Instead of employees wrangling Excel spreadsheets, Gonzalez said decisions are now based on real-time data and “are not influenced by what a person wants, but by what the data is telling them to do.”

Because all the company’s data — including customer data and POS data — are stored in a centralized customer activity repository, Vital now has complete visibility into that data and can use algorithms to predict sales and set prices and distribution priorities. “We can change our pricing policy based on reception of goods and new purchase orders and adopt new pricing in real time,” said Gonzalez.

Over the last year, he says, Vital saved around \$35 million on perishables after the system warned managers that they would not be able to sell products on time. “We negotiated with our suppliers; we made offers and made predictions of how it would work out and it turned into a real savings — that’s what technology is doing for our company.”

Just as importantly, Gonzalez said Vital now works with one version of the truth. “In all of the applications every user sees the same data,

be it clustered by store or by department. The result is the same for everyone. There's no difference in what the financial department sees, what operations see, what our buying department sees, or what our pricing department sees. All the data is clustered in one huge data center."

"Instead of employees wrangling Excel spreadsheets, ... decisions are now based on real-time data and 'are not influenced by what a person wants, but by what the data is telling them to do."

"The technology has really advanced how our users in the company experience data and decision making," Gonzalez added. Instead of spending time pouring over spreadsheets and reports, much of the analytical work is now done by the system, enabling users to make decisions in real time, for example, while they are negotiating with a supplier.

Now Vital is in the process of migrating all its applications, including its ERP, to the cloud. "All our applications are cloud-ready, and we maintain a clean core, so we can upgrade really fast," said Gonzalez, who expects to be ready to make that the move by the end of the year.

The Vital CIO and CTO is also looking to [AI](#) to help the company's employees make even better purchase and pricing decisions. "We don't see AI as replacing our personnel or people in the industry," he said. "We see it at enhancement, we see it as turbocharging our system and making the data more reliable and useful."

Gonzalez believes that other companies can learn from Vital's experience democratizing access to data.

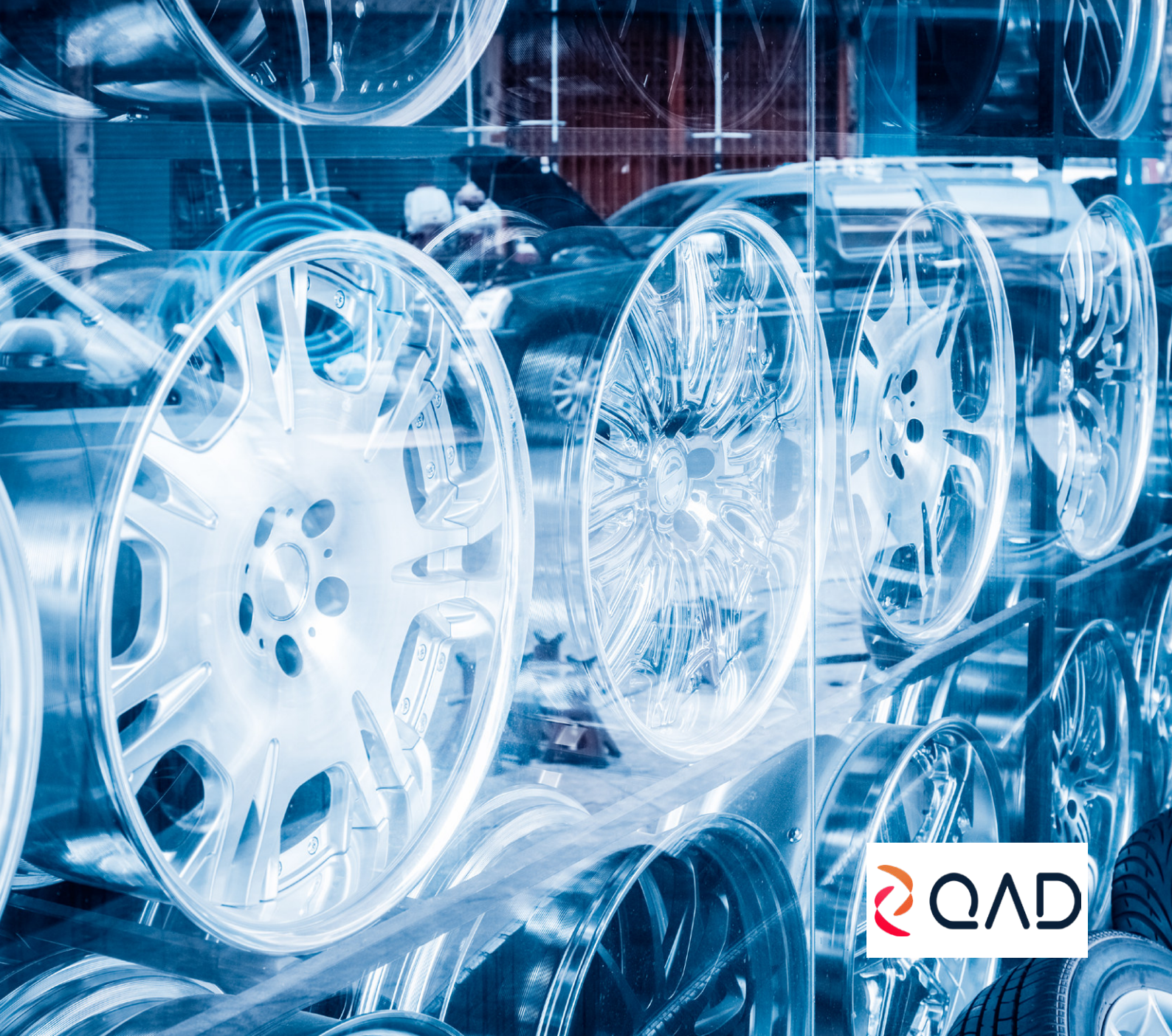
"A lot of companies regard their data as really private and don't share it with everyone in the company," he noted. "We are open with the data. We tell everyone— from our people in the stores to our managers and our directors — that they have all the same data. This has really opened us up to be a really integrated and group-friendly company."



About SAP

As a global leader in enterprise applications and business AI, 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.





Autokiniton Drives Quality Standardization and Automotive Excellence with QAD EQMS



Autokiniton, headquartered in New Boston, Michigan, is the second-largest Body-In-White and vehicle-frame supplier in North America. It has more than 8.3 million square feet of manufacturing floor space across facilities in Michigan, Tennessee, Illinois, Mississippi, Indiana, Ohio, South Carolina and Kentucky, as well as Brazil, Mexico and India.

Autokiniton's mission is to provide value-driven, sustainable automotive components and assembly solutions for its customers, which include leading automakers like Ford, Toyota, General Motors, Nissan, Honda, BMW, Volkswagen and Stellantis, to name a few.

In the high-stakes world of [automotive manufacturing](#), delivering consistent quality at scale isn't just a competitive differentiator—it's a necessity. With a customer base that includes the biggest names in the automotive industry, from Ford and General Motors to Rivian and Tesla, Autokiniton understands that precision, safety and regulatory compliance are non-negotiable.

Autokiniton is the second-largest Body-in-White and vehicle-frame supplier in North America and a vertically integrated powerhouse. With more than 8.3 million square feet of manufacturing floor space and operations across the U.S., Brazil, Mexico and India, the company needed a cohesive, standardized approach to quality management to support its rapid growth and evolving customer expectations.

To meet these demands, Autokiniton turned to [QAD EQMS \(Enterprise Quality Management System\)](#), a solution it's trusted for over two decades, to streamline its quality processes, reinforce compliance and enable enterprise-wide visibility.

Growth, Regulations and the Rising Need for Standardization

Autokiniton has long been a pioneer in adopting automotive quality standards like QS9000, ISO 9001, TS-16949 and IATF 16949. But over time, growth through strategic acquisitions of [Tier 1 suppliers](#)—such as L&W Engineering and Tower International—brought new complexities. Each acquired facility had its own processes for managing quality, which created inconsistency and inefficiencies.

Meanwhile, major customers began issuing more stringent mandates, requiring suppliers to link control plans to [Failure Mode and Effects](#)

[Analysis \(FMEA\)](#) documentation and base those on foundational process knowledge. That left Autokiniton with a clear mandate: unify its quality practices, create a shared knowledge base and scale its systems to meet new requirements across a global operation.

"Customers came out and said, 'Hey, this is no longer an option. It's a requirement,'" explained Andrew Amstutz, Vice President of IT at Autokiniton.



Key Challenges Faced by Autokiniton

- Growth through M&A introduced diverse, disconnected quality processes across facilities.
- Increasingly complex customer-specific requirements (CSR) necessitated tighter control and documentation.
- Manual or inconsistent FMEA development slowed down product launches and increased risk.
- Lack of standardized libraries created inefficiencies and knowledge silos.
- Regulatory compliance and customer audits became more difficult without centralized visibility.

A Foundation for the Future with QAD EQMS

Autokiniton wasn't new to QAD EQMS. In fact, it had implemented EQMS in 2001. The manufacturer had also been a [longstanding QAD ERP customer](#) since the 1990s and moved its ERP operations from on-premise to the QAD Cloud in 2014. So when the time came to evolve its quality systems, it didn't start from scratch—it built upon a trusted foundation.

By leveraging QAD EQMS capabilities, Autokiniton embarked on a strategic initiative to standardize process libraries for both FMEAs and control plans. This allowed the company to unify its global operations, ensure compliance with increasingly strict automotive requirements and accelerate time-to-quality for new programs.

"Library standards give us a definition across the organization.

For example, if we define how to control a spot welding process, we can use that definition across the organization in a very standard way, regardless of what product we're producing," said Amstutz.

Autokiniton also took advantage of the flexible app extensions within QAD EQMS to tailor approval workflows—such as requiring engineering and quality manager signoffs—without compromising upgrade paths or adding technical debt.

Standardization as a Strategic Advantage

In the automotive industry, precision matters. A single defect can impact thousands of vehicles. That's why Autokiniton took a proactive approach by building comprehensive foundational FMEAs and control plans to minimize the risk of defects and [*build quality from the start*](#).

"If you do the same thing over and over again, eventually you miss something. Foundational libraries ensure that the knowledge we have for all our processes is utilized on every single product we implement," explained Andrew Amstutz.

This approach also helps Autokiniton protect institutional knowledge as experienced employees retire or transition. By formalizing their process expertise within QAD EQMS, Autokiniton ensures that future teams have access to the same knowledge and best practices.

A Partnership Built on Innovation and Trust

Autokiniton's long-standing relationship with QAD EQMS has grown stronger over the years. The company actively collaborates with the QAD product management

team to shape the future of the platform, recently helping prioritize the introduction of a tree view for FMEAs—an innovation that makes it easier to visualize and manage complex risk structures.

"If you do the same thing over and over and over again, eventually you miss something. Foundational libraries ensure that the knowledge we have for all our processes is utilized on every single product we implement."

"The ability to understand that within a tree view and how things are related together really helps our team understand how to not only use the software, but also the data it provides," said Amstutz.

With an eye on the future, Autokiniton remains confident in the ability of QAD EQMS to support its evolving needs, drive digital transformation and maintain its leadership in the automotive supply space: "I'm very confident that QAD EQMS is going to help us meet future industry standards," said Amstutz.

Benefits: How QAD EQMS Drove Strategic and Operational Gains for Autokiniton

By standardizing its quality processes and leveraging QAD EQMS across a growing, global footprint, Autokiniton realized significant operational and strategic advantages:

- Enterprise-wide standardization of FMEAs and control plans enabled alignment across facilities and newly acquired companies.
- Increased efficiency through the use of foundational libraries that reduced duplication and manual effort.
- Reduced analysis fatigue by using a foundational library that includes all known risks, allowing the team to focus only on the aspects of the FMEA that differ from the established knowledge.
- Faster onboarding of new sites and teams using centralized, proven quality templates.
- Improved compliance with customer-specific requirements, including mandates from Ford and other major OEMs.
- Preservation of institutional knowledge via process libraries that capture and retain critical quality insights.
- Greater risk mitigation through proactive quality control embedded in standardized workflows.
- Seamless integration with QAD ERP, enabling a unified system of record for items, customers and suppliers.

- Enhanced visibility and usability of quality data, including tree-view functionality for navigating FMEA relationships.
- Flexibility and scalability with app extensions that allow tailored workflows without compromising core functionality.
- Strong partnership with QAD, including collaborative product development and ongoing alignment on future functionality.

Accelerating Toward a Standardized, Quality-Driven Future

Autokiniton's story is proof that in today's dynamic automotive landscape, success isn't just about scale—it's about consistency, foresight and the ability to respond quickly to change. With QAD EQMS, Autokiniton isn't just keeping pace with customer and regulatory demands—it's setting the standard for what quality can and should look like in the automotive sector.

If your organization is facing similar challenges—whether it's standardization across facilities, meeting complex compliance requirements or preserving process knowledge—[*choosing the right EQMS*](#) is essential, and QAD EQMS can help you shift from reactive to proactive quality management.

Learn more about how Autokiniton and other leading manufacturers are using QAD EQMS to build better products, faster. Read the [*full Autokiniton EQMS customer success story*](#) to learn more, and check out our customer success video with Autokiniton [*here*](#).



About QAD

[*QAD Inc.*](#) is a leading provider of next-generation manufacturing and supply chain solutions in the cloud. To succeed in a turbulent world, facing disruptions in supply and fluctuations in demand, manufacturers and supply chains must rapidly respond to change and seamlessly optimize agility, efficiency, and resilience for effective customer service. QAD delivers Adaptive Applications to enable these Adaptive Enterprises. Founded in Santa Barbara, California, QAD has customers in 84 countries around the world. Thousands of companies have deployed QAD enterprise solutions including enterprise resource planning ([*ERP*](#)), digital commerce ([*DC*](#)), supplier relationship management ([*SRM*](#)), digital supply chain planning ([*DSCP*](#)), global trade and transportation execution ([*GTTE*](#)) and enterprise quality management system ([*EQMS*](#)). To learn more, visit [*www.qad.com*](http://www.qad.com) or call +1 805-566-6100. Find us on [*LinkedIn*](#), [*Twitter*](#), [*Facebook*](#) and [*Instagram*](#).





The role of modern MRO in performance excellence at China Airlines

With a proven implementation plan and the support of a committed vendor in IFS along with an internal team of champions, China Airlines is achieving and exceeding its business performance objectives, helping it remain agile and top of mind in today's highly competitive aviation market.

Safety first—always

For China Airlines, the promise of safety is the fundamental factor in delivering the best possible customer service. As Taiwan's largest air carrier operating in the highly dynamic and competitive Asia Pacific market, strengthening China Airlines' reputation as an industry leader in this area is a business imperative. Mr. Sun Jia-Min, Senior Vice

President, Engineering & Maintenance Organization, China Airlines, says, "We have integrated safety awareness into our operations, system, design, and organization to ensure that all our employees are committed to it. We continuously evaluate and monitor the training and certification of our maintenance personnel to ensure ongoing compliance with regulations."

One single solution – the value of integrated maintenance software

The airline had a network of legacy mainframe systems that often failed to deliver the critical data insights required to evolve the business and introduce new efficiencies. The systems were mostly siloed from one another and operated with various sets of processes. China Airlines had difficulties accessing and sharing timely maintenance information across the organization. “In our highly competitive marketplace, we knew that success would hinge solely on factors that could be controlled - for example, driving greater operational efficiencies,” says Mr. Sun, adding that aggressive growth plans and an expanding fleet meant that retaining the status quo was no longer viable. The company integrated the entire Engineering & Maintenance Organization (EMO), strengthened configuration control and record-keeping, while minimizing in-house customizations. “In addition to generating substantial cost savings,

we wanted to drive stronger visibility into our operations, both ‘day of’ and historical. This would not only simplify compliance with regulatory standards but would also help us better understand why things happen and how we could best minimize the risk of it happening again in the future through preventive maintenance.”

A decade of collaboration

China Airlines engaged in a thorough market search to assess the solutions on offer, eventually opting for IFS. Mr. Sun says, “We chose IFS as our system of record for maintaining and engineering our fleet of Boeing and Airbus airplanes, as well aircraft from our growing third-party maintenance services.” IFS offers a full end-to-end suite, including functionality for maintenance program management; configuration management; engineering; planning; materials management; and line, heavy, and shop maintenance. “After a decade

of using IFS, our objectives for this system are being met. IFS has allowed us to improve business efficiency in multiple areas. Engineering provides the core of our compliance efforts, ensuring that planning, execution, and materials are always working within the regulatory objectives while minimizing cost and effort”. Using IFS, China Airlines has been able to provide immediate traceability for tasks, tools and parts, automatic scheduling of tasks, clear and comprehensive planning, and scope and execution support throughout the maintenance cycle. The value of an integrated, aviation-centric solution is evident throughout the business. “The integration between materials and maintenance has allowed China Airlines to have a real-time understanding of the part demands. Shortages can be identified immediately and rectified with minimal impact to maintenance and operations,” says Mr. Sun.



“IFS has allowed us to improve business efficiency while exceeding safety and reliability standards. China Airlines values their partnership with IFS and looks forward to another decade of a productive relationship.”

-Mr. Shih Ching-Kai,
Assistant Vice President,
Maintenance Division,
China Airlines

Moment of Service™

“Expanding third-party MRO services for global customers like United Airlines, FedEx, Korean Air and Japan Airlines is of significant benefit to the growth areas of our business,” says Mr. Sun. IFS also extends into such specialty areas as materials management. For instance, China Airlines currently uses a warehousing system called ASAR, or Automatic Storage Automatic Retrieval. ASAR is quite robust, capable of retrieving information on more than 120,000 parts and materials within just 50 seconds of inquiry. “To capitalize on this power, we integrated the system with IFS,” Mr. Sun explains. “This enables a

completely seamless ‘Just in Time’ supply model, helping us cost-effectively execute timely parts requests and fulfillment in line with increasingly competitive serviceability targets.



Optimization and efficiency key gains

Optimizing the way line and A checks are performed, coupled with the significant reduction in layover times, mean that aircraft are spending more time in revenue-generation mode, and less time in the hangar. “Collectively, the positive results we have experienced to date cannot be undersold,” says Mr. Sun, “Factoring in the cost reductions achieved to date, we are positioning ourselves for stronger financial performance.” Within two years of site activation, China Airlines saw its EMO operating costs go down by U.S. \$3.5 million—a significant achievement considering how the market’s increasingly competitive nature is forcing operators to deliver greater services with fewer resources. Moving forward, the real-time logistical support and complete cost analysis afforded by IFS will help China Airlines to further increase its maintenance cost control and drive continuing improvements in repair quality and efficiency. The airline firmly believes that optimizing its EMO will go a long way to maintaining a positive customer experience and driving greater brand loyalty. Most importantly, according to Mr. Sun, “It supports our unending commitment to delivering the safest and most reliable passenger and cargo service in the industry.”

Benefits

- 65 percent reduction of multi crew job card waiting time in heavy maintenance
- 10 percent increase in line management process efficiencies
- 10 percent increase in heavy maintenance manpower efficiencies

- 3 percent increase in A Checks delivery efficiencies
- Average addition of 30 revenue days per year through a reduction in scheduled aircraft maintenance
- Average addition of 25 revenue days per year through a reduction in unscheduled aircraft maintenance
- Average addition of 14 revenue days per year through a reduction in heavy maintenance without an increase in labour costs



“Collectively, the positive results we have experienced to date cannot be undersold. Factoring in the cost reductions achieved to date, we are setting ourselves up well for stronger financial performance.”

-Mr. Sun Jia-Min,
Senior Vice President,
Engineering & Maintenance
Organization, China Airlines

About China Airlines

Founded in 1959, China Airlines is the largest airline in Taiwan and a SkyTeam airline alliance member since September 2011. As of 2023 the airline operates a fleet of 91 aircraft with an average age of 9.9 years, including A350-900, A330-300, A321NEO, 777-300ER, 777F, 737-800, 747-400, 747-400F (cargo), 787-900 (delivered by 2025). With its hub in Taipei, it serves 151 destinations in 29 countries. China Airlines has 10,815 employees worldwide. Subsidiaries include Mandarin Airlines and Tigerair Taiwan. Revenue in 2022 amounted to TWD 151 billion. www.china-airlines.com



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