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Looking Ahead:
ERP in 2026

Future trends, emerging technologies, and innovations expected to shape the ERP world in 2026.

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Dear Readers,

As we move into 2026, ERP is entering its most transformative phase yet.

AI-native architectures, autonomous workflows, and strengthened cybersecurity are redefining how organizations operate and compete. These shifts aren't theoretical—they are becoming operational mandates for leaders across every industry.

In this issue, we feature insights from executives who are shaping this new landscape.

Jeremy Larsen, Vice President of Product Management at Acumatica, shares how AI can be deployed with governance, transparency, and human oversight—ensuring automation scales without sacrificing control.

From Unanet's Wyatt Co-Pilot team, we explore how ERP is evolving into a proactive, conversational partner that anticipates risks and accelerates decision-making.

Juan Perez-Etchegoyen, Chief Technology Officer at Onapsis, brings a critical perspective on the escalating threat landscape and why ERP cybersecurity has become a board-level priority.

And Ben Hussey, Co-CEO of Katana, outlines how cloud-native, integration-first architectures are empowering SMBs with unprecedented agility and AI readiness.

Across all these conversations, one theme is unmistakable:

2026 will be the year ERP becomes predictive, secure, autonomous—and significantly more strategic.

Organizations that invest early in data quality, AI governance, and cybersecurity will lead. Those that wait will fall behind faster than ever before.

At ERPNews, our commitment is to equip you with the clarity and foresight needed for this next era.

Thank you for being part of our community, and wishing you a successful year ahead.

Pinar SENGUL, EDITOR

ERPNEWS

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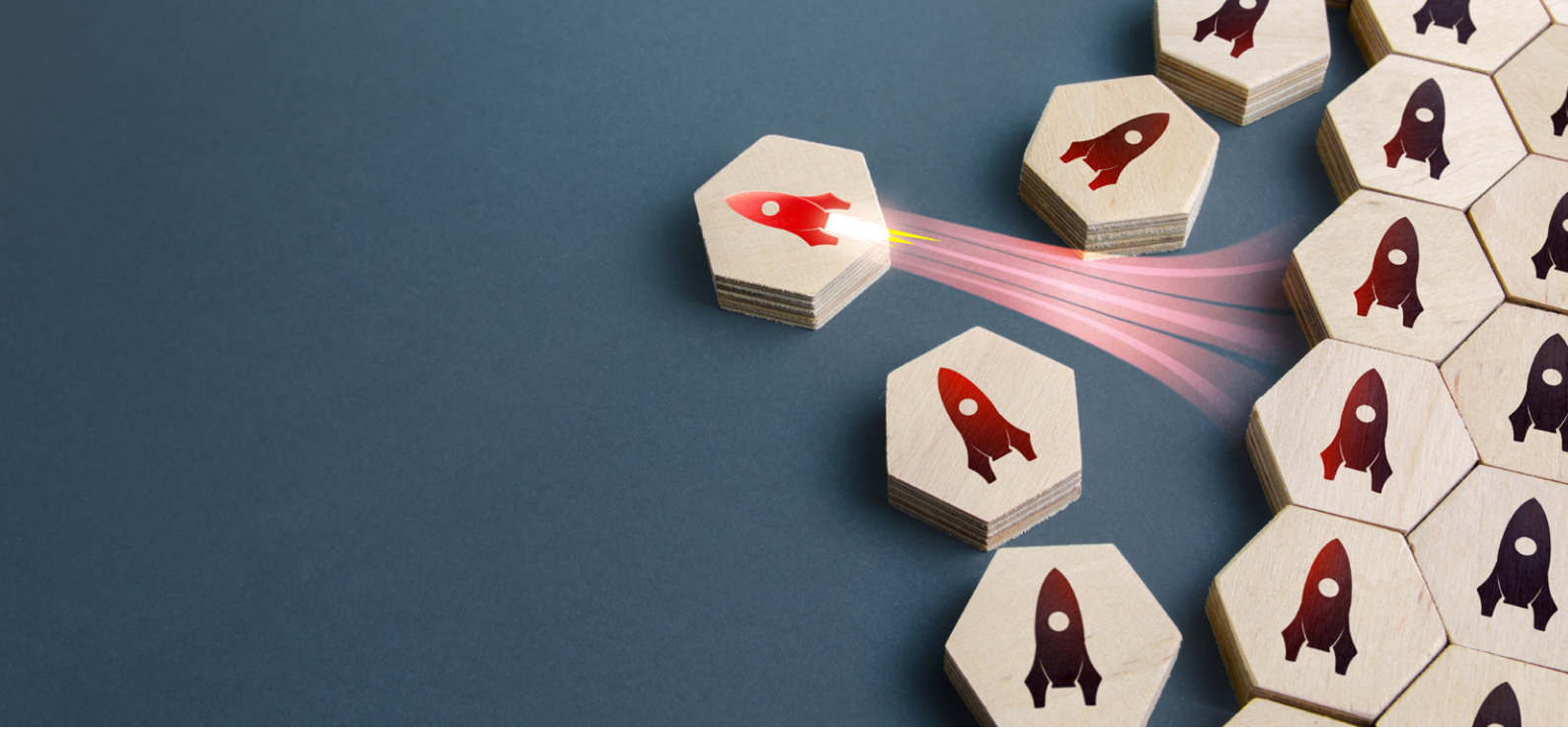

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Acumatica 2025 R2
Where AI Meets Human Control

Acumatica 2025 R2 doubles down on a critical frontier — making AI both usable and trustworthy for mid-market businesses. Rather than treating AI as an add-on, Acumatica embeds assistive intelligence into its modern UI, enabling automation anywhere without added complexity.

In this exclusive ERP News Q&A, Jeremy Larsen, VP of Product Management at Acumatica, shares how the company's AI-first, human-controlled philosophy empowers users to automate safely, evolve at their own pace, and stay compliant. From AI Studio's open architecture to Project 360 and Order Orchestration, he explains why 2025 R2 marks a decisive step toward autonomous ERP done right.

Strategy & Positioning

1. What's the single most non-obvious problem 2025 R2 solves for mid-market teams that previous versions (or competitors) did not?

The 2025 R2 release solves a core challenge facing many mid-market companies —how to make AI more accessible, meaningful, and truly usable in day-to-day workflows. Acumatica 2025 R2 does this by embedding assistive AI directly into our new, modern, and easy-to-use UI, allowing users to apply automation anywhere in the system, regardless of the product feature in use. This seamless integration into everyday practices makes automation accessible to every user, not just IT or data teams. Its "AI-first" capabilities empower businesses with the power of AI, making their ERP solution future-ready without added complexity or cost.

2. Where does Acumatica draw the line between "assistive AI" and "autonomous actions" in ERP? What's the roadmap to move that line?

Acumatica's focus is on delivering automation with control. AI serves as an assistant, helping users complete tasks, make decisions, and automate workflows, while ensuring humans remain in control. As customers become more comfortable, they can decide how much autonomy to grant AI tools. Over time, as trust and confidence grow, they can reduce

Interview with
Jeremy Larsen,
VP of Product Management,
Acumatica

Acumatica
The Cloud ERP

oversight and shift toward more autonomous operations. Acumatica's roadmap enables this gradual evolution as future releases will allow customers to delegate more tasks to AI while maintaining complete visibility, approval checkpoints, and rollback safeguards across all critical processes.

AI Studio & model governance

3. Which model(s) power AI Studio in production today (foundation, fine-tuned, or ensemble), and how do you handle model selection per task?

In the 2025 R2 release, AI Studio doesn't rely on prebuilt models. Rather, it serves as a proxy that enables users to connect to their own deployments of foundation LLM in OpenAI, Anthropic, AWS, and Azure.

4. How do you mitigate hallucinations in financial and inventory scenarios? Please walk us through guardrails, human-in-the-loop, and rollback.

Because there are no pre-built models in AI Studio and it connects to customer-selected LLMs, Acumatica provides structural safeguards rather than dictating model behavior. Guardrails include role-based access, human-in-the-loop approval steps, and complete rollback options for any AI-assisted updates. The quality of AI-generated results depends on the underlying model and prompting strategy chosen by the customer; however, Acumatica's framework ensures that all outputs remain reviewable, auditable, and reversible, keeping automation powerful while maintaining accountability – with the user always in control.

5. Can customers bring their own models or private endpoints? Any constraints around latency, cost, or data residency?

Yes, customers can bring their own large language model deployments from leading providers such as OpenAI, Anthropic, AWS, or Azure. Acumatica's AI Studio is designed as an open connector, so customers maintain complete flexibility and control over their model selection and private endpoints.

> "AI serves as an assistant, helping users complete tasks, make decisions, and automate workflows, while ensuring humans remain in control."

Data, privacy, and compliance

6. What data leaves the tenant boundary for AI inference/ training, if any? How is PII handled, and what audit artifacts can customers export?

In AI Studio, only the text or values the user includes in prompt instructions are sent externally for inference. This content is fully visible on the LLM prompt screen before submission. Starting in 2026, data masking will automatically anonymize sensitive inputs, replacing values with masked tokens that revert to their original form once a response is received. For Anomaly Detection, only numeric data/ target values with hashed identifiers are transmitted, making the data effectively anonymous.

For AP Document and Receipt Recognition, files are processed securely through Acumatica's managed Azure Form Recognizer or AWS accounts, depending on the feature. The Intelligent Text Completion feature executes entirely within the customer's Acumatica instance, ensuring no data leaves the environment.

7. For customers in the EU/Mexico/ Canada, how do you enforce regional processing (SCCs, SOC 2, ISO 27001, FedRAMP/StateRAMP equivalents if relevant)?

One of Acumatica's key priorities is to ensure all regional deployments align with data residency and compliance frameworks applicable to each geography. Data remains within regional boundaries, and no customer data used for inference or processing is stored outside the tenant's designated region. Acumatica offers a broad range of licensing options, providing customers with choices on how they want to deploy and meet local requirements for their countries or regions. We also offer private cloud options for customers in remote areas with specific compliance requirements.

> "We refined and limited the product to SaaS customers to ensure reliability, scalability, and consistent user experiences."

Measurable outcomes

8. You mention anomaly detection and automation wins—what are 3 hard KPIs (with baselines) early adopters achieved within 90 days?

While specific KPI baselines vary by customer, early adopters of Acumatica's anomaly detection and automation capabilities have reported measurable improvements in efficiency and financial performance within the first 90 days. For example, some have experienced faster collection cycles and reduced receivables, while others have achieved improved process accuracy and time savings in manual reviews. Because Acumatica's AI adapts to each customer's unique workflows, success metrics differ, allowing organizations to define and track the outcomes most meaningful to their business.

9. For AP automation and vendor payments, what was the biggest unexpected failure mode you fixed during beta?

During beta testing, we discovered some performance issues with private cloud (non-SaaS) customers. While AP automation and vendor payments were initially made available to them, the team found that certain technical and performance requirements couldn't be consistently met. As a result, the product was refined and limited to SaaS customers to ensure reliability, scalability, and consistent user experiences.

> "Project 360 eliminates lag and prevents stale or conflicting information from disrupting project decisions."

Industry editions (construction / distribution / manufacturing)

10. <u>Construction:</u> Project 360—what real-time sources feed it, and how do you prevent stale or conflicting signals (RFIs, change orders, field data)?

Project 360 is built on new technology that embeds interactive dashboards directly within data entry screens, providing users with real-time visibility without requiring them to switch contexts. It draws from data sources specifically designed to extend financial data collection and enhance analytical insight with date-sensitive information. By enabling instant data sharing between the field and the office, Project 360 eliminates lag and prevents stale or conflicting information from disrupting project decisions.

11. <u>Distribution:</u> Order Orchestration—how do you optimize across cost, SLAs, and inventory risk simultaneously? Any explainability for the warehouse choice?

How do you optimize across cost, SLAs, and inventory risk simultaneously? Any explainability for the warehouse choice?

Order Orchestration helps control costs, maximize service levels, and reduce inventory risk by allowing businesses to define fulfillment strategies that guide the automatic assignment of sales orders to warehouses. Users can configure orchestration plans to prioritize warehouses based on geographic proximity (Destination Priority) or a manually ranked list of preferred warehouses (Warehouse Priority). These strategies allow businesses to align fulfillment decisions with their operational goals.

To help control costs, users can limit the number of warehouses used to fulfill a single order, reducing the likelihood of split shipments and associated freight expenses. While Acumatica does not calculate shipping or handling costs directly, businesses can set warehouse priorities based on their own cost considerations.

To maximize service levels, the Destination Priority strategy selects warehouses based on the customer's shipping zone, helping reduce delivery times and support SLA commitments.

To reduce inventory risk, orchestration plans can enforce safety stock thresholds. Warehouses are excluded from fulfillment if fulfilling an order would result in violating the minimum inventory levels defined for that item. The system selects the best warehouse(s) based on the chosen fulfillment strategy and the rules outlined in the orchestration plan. These rules include warehouse rankings, shipping zones, safety stock settings, and optional limits on the number of warehouses per order. Once orchestration is triggered, the system automatically assigns the recommended warehouse(s) to each order line, streamlining fulfillment while respecting the configured constraints.

12. <u>Manufacturing:</u> New scheduling + lot/serial traceability—what's improved for recall readiness (speed to isolate, evidence trails, CFR 21 Part 11)?

The new scheduling and lot/serial traceability features enable faster and more targeted recalls. Lot tracking allows manufacturers to quickly isolate affected batches rather than recalling entire product lines, while serial tracking pinpoints individual defective units, turning broad recalls into precise interventions. Attributes such as production origin, inspection level, and expiration date enable manufacturers to meet stringent compliance regulations. Systems that track these attributes ensure automated documentation, reducing the risk of fines or shutdowns due to missing or inaccurate records. Compliance-driven traceability also supports faster audit responses, minimizing downtime and legal exposure.

Lot and serial attributes make it possible to trace defects back to specific suppliers, production lines, or material sources, enabling rapid root cause identification and corrective action before issues escalate. Tracking expiration dates and inspection levels enhances stock rotation, reducing spoilage and obsolete inventory. Real-time visibility into lot and serial attributes helps prevent overstocking or understocking, thereby improving operational efficiency. These capabilities ultimately strengthen customer trust and service, ensuring products meet specific quality and compliance requirements and allowing businesses to respond transparently and effectively in the event of an issue—preserving both brand reputation and loyalty.

Extensibility & upgrades

13. The modern UI enables deep personalization. How do you ensure upgrade-safe customizations and prevent "UX drift" across units and partners?

The new modern UI now available to all users in 2025 R2 is built on upgrade-safe design principles using our proprietary technology. All customizations are preserved by automating classic form migration to the Modern UI, rather than making direct code changes. This ensures upgrades don't overwrite customer or partner adaptations. We also enforce a consistent design system and UI schema, preventing UX drift across different deployments.

> "The 2025 R2 release solves a core challenge facing many mid-market companies — how to make AI more accessible, meaningful, and truly usable in day-to-day workflows."

14. What's the migration path from earlier releases—any tools to auto-refactor screens/fields/tabs? Typical effort for a mid-market org?

We've taken the steps to make sure that migration to the modern UI is customizable, flexible and gradual. Existing customers can move at their own pace—by module, user group, or workflow—without a complete overhaul. Acumatica provides migration tools to help refactor legacy customizations, screens, and fields, which have been available to partners well in advance of the release. For a typical mid-market organization, the transition effort is moderate and can be completed incrementally with minimal disruption.

Ecosystem & TCO

15. How does 2025 R2 change ISV economics in the Marketplace (APIs, events, revenue share)?

Our latest product release provides the highest value for our ISVs in the Marketplace. ISVs can now accelerate their roadmaps by bringing more products to the marketplace using the new modern UI and API-enabled AI features. We expand opportunities for ISVs by delivering a more modular and event-driven architecture that simplifies the integration and scaling of third-party applications within the platform. New APIs enable real-time data and more efficient automation across workflows. These improvements ultimately expand the addressable market and accelerate time-to-value for ISV partners.

16. What's your candid TCO story vs. NetSuite, Microsoft, and Sage Intacct for a 100–200 employee firm with light manufacturing?

Acumatica delivers a lower total cost of ownership for growing mid-market companies thanks to its modern, scalable architecture and unique consumption-based licensing model, which scales with the business without steep cost increases. Acumatica customers benefit from being "always current," minimizing upgrade and maintenance expenses. Combined with the Acumatica Customer Bill of Rights, firms can count on predictable costs and long-term savings as their operations expand.

Proof & edge cases

17. Please share two customer stories—one smooth, one messy. What broke, how did you fix it, and what did you change in the product?

Since we just released 2025 R2, there aren't customer stories at that level of detail yet. However, Acumatica proactively validates each release through programs, labs, and customer testing to ensure smooth adoption and minimize issues before general availability.

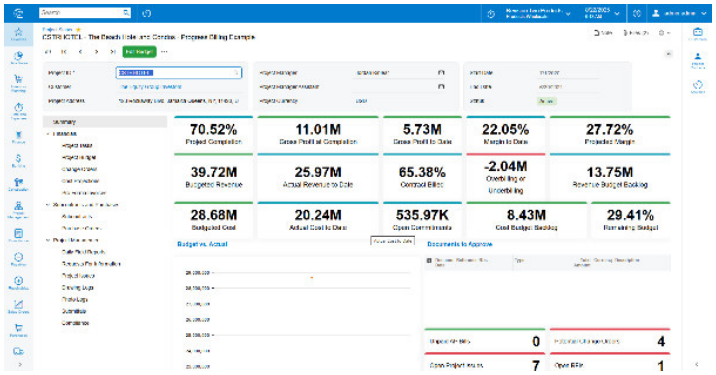
18. If a customer disables AI features entirely, what percent of the 2025 R2 value remains (UI, orchestration, reporting)? Why?

If a customer disables AI features, they still retain nearly all the core value of 2025 R2. The only impact is on AI-driven automations; those processes simply revert to manual or traditional workflows. Customers can continue to analyze their data, process transactions, and use all other capabilities, including the modern UI, orchestration, and reporting – capabilities they already benefited from prior to the AI-driven enhancements to our comprehensive ERP solution. All features of 2025 R2 remain available; AI offers additional time-saving options. Acumatica's approach is "human first"—AI enhances efficiency, but customers always have complete control over how they work.

About Jeremy Larsen

Jeremy Larsen is VP of Product Management at Acumatica, where he leads the global vision, strategy, and delivery of Acumatica's Construction and Professional Services product solutions. Jeremy has over 20 years of product management experience, leading global teams, scaling product organizations, and driving measurable results, including increased customer adoption and retention, improved delivery accuracy, and accelerated innovation. Prior to joining Acumatica, Jeremy held positions at Veriforce, Viewpoint Sage, and J. Larsen Construction.

Acumatica
The Cloud ERP



Unanet Wyatt
Turning ERP Conversations into Real-Time Business Decisions

Unanet's new Wyatt co-pilot is redefining what "intelligent ERP really means. Far beyond a reactive chatbot, Wyatt anticipates user needs, flags project and financial risks, and executes multi-step actions—all within the Unanet environment.

In this ERP News exclusive, the Unanet team explains how Wyatt transforms ERP from a static reporting tool into a dynamic, conversational experience. Built with role-based access control (RBAC) and real-time data sync, Wyatt gives project managers, finance leaders, and executives instant visibility into performance, cash flow, and utilization—without sacrificing governance or compliance. As Wyatt rolls out to Unanet AE ERP in Q1 2026, it marks a pivotal moment: every user becomes a power user, and ERP becomes a conversation.

Q: In practical terms, what can Wyatt do inside Unanet that a reactive Q&A bot cannot? One example from a PM's day, and one from Finance.

A: Q&A bots historically work with canned questions. While there might be a lot of them, they're fixed and finite. You need to choose from within the boundaries of the previously curated list.

Wyatt goes beyond simple Q&A by anticipating needs, surfacing risks, and taking safe multi-step actions while integrated with Unanet.

- ***Project Managers:*** PMs can use natural language to get instant, real-time project insight and guidance (e.g., current status), and Wyatt proactively provides status updates and flags risks, so issues are addressed sooner.
- ***Finance:*** Finance leaders get on-demand answers without reporting bottlenecks and earlier signals on cash and margin health, helping them accelerate forecasting and intervene sooner.
- ***Executives:*** Exec leaders can now get regular, real-time updates on firm performance, risk, and cash flow enabling better decision-making and frictionless access to insights.

Interview with
Unanet Product Team
(Wyatt Co-Pilot initiative)

Unanet

Wyatt can take questions asked in any form (or language) and figure out what to do with the request. Whether that's showing a widget, such as "Project Phases" or "Unsubmitted Timesheets" or building a query plan on the fly to address a more specific request. For both PMs and Finance, operating from a "what do I need" rather than "what do I know how to do" fundamentally changes the way they will access and use the information stored in their ERP.

Q: What guardrails/approvals exist before Wyatt takes actions (e.g., reallocating resources, changing forecasts, updating records)? How are actions logged/audited?

A: Wyatt uses RBAC (Role Based Access Control) to gate all secured resources. Secured resources can be metrics (like pay cost), interface artifacts (widgets), or actions, like updating records for an employee, timesheet, or project. In addition to the "am I allowed", there are also confirmation requirements for certain actions that change data or perform other actions (email).
Q: How does Wyatt respect role-based permissions and handle sensitive/PII data across ERP/CRM? Any certifications/ compliance milestones you target?

A: Wyatt uses a RBAC permission framework to gate all secured resources at the role level. Each user is assigned one or more roles and all interactions with Wyatt (AI) are filtered by the rights granted by the roles prior to actual AI interaction. Meaning secured resources are not just redacted in the AI context, they don't exist from the AI's perspective.

Q: Which signals does Wyatt watch (cashflow, margin health, schedule slippage, utilization), and how early can it flag issues vs. your previous baseline?

A: Wyatt utilizes a real-time data sync from the customer ERP that continuously tracks various KPIs and keeps a record of both the current value as well as previous values, allowing for both threshold and trend detection.

Using a feature called "chores", users will be able to set, via natural language, the notifications they're looking for. For example, "Notify me when the total cost for project `x` reaches 70% of budget OR cost exceeds $250k. Send that via email to me and my boss."

"Operating from a 'what do I need' rather than 'what do I know how to do' fundamentally changes how users access and use information in their ERP."

Q: How does Wyatt unify data across Unanet modules and third-party tools? Any limits on context or supported objects in v1?

A: Wyatt integrates with Unanet AE ERP (Q12026 and CRM to follow) to bring answers and next steps into the flow of work. This will extend across all areas of the ERP from project accounting, billing, project management and operations. From a unification perspective, Wyatt brings hundreds of reports into a conversational environment. You can even email Wyatt and get answers directly in your inbox.

Wyatt has full view of the company ERP Data (Q1-26), limited only by the RBAC rights granted to the logged in user. Wyatt also supports the use of MCP servers. MCP allows for quick and deep integration to numerous third-parties, such as Microsoft, Google, Dropbox, etc.

Q: You've said "every user becomes a power user." What change-management playbook works best to drive firm-wide usage in AEC?

A: At the heart of Wyatt is getting back to work that drives the business. For many, time is lost either recruiting the resources to build out meaningful reports, dashboards, or workflows or getting stuck picking the right balance of colors in a chart. Much of that work can now be delegated to Wyatt and resolution will come in seconds rather than days or weeks.
Wyatt is designed to lower adoption friction through natural language interactions and an adaptive canvas ("spaces") that reflect each user's role,

projects, and priorities helping more people get value without heavy training.

Q: Wyatt is coming to Unanet AE ERP in Q1 2026, with GovCon/ Construction later in 2026. What's locked for GA and what's on the near-term roadmap?

A: Wyatt is available in Unanet AE ERP in Q1 2026 and additional Unanet products later in 2026. Feature specifics for GA/ roadmap:

- Chat – Multi-turn conversations that can answer questions, generate inline "widgets" for rich data responses, create scheduled tasks, dialogue over email.

- Spaces – Ephemeral canvases that users can build manually or with Wyatt's assistance and leverage both deterministic and ad-hoc widgets for working with system data.

- Roundups – A nightly, AI built, digest of what is most important for the user.

The field is moving fast, so while this is the core, we expect other powerful features to make it in as well.

Q: Where do you see agentic AI inside project-based ERP/CRM by end-2026 — what will feel "standard" vs. "breakthrough"?

A: From a Unanet perspective, it will be standard for project-based ERP users to get insights without clicks or queries. Natural language, proactive signals, and role-aware actions will replace static reporting, turning ERP into a daily conversation rather than a destination.

For finance, that means faster decisions with fewer bottlenecks; for executives, clearer forecasts and portfolio confidence; for project leaders, real-time guidance that helps keep every project on track.

Traditionally, users mine their system for information, assimilate that information, and then make decisions. Increasingly, users will shift to an "event-driven" model where instead of logging in and running reports, they'll ask Wyatt to "let them know" when conditions are met or notify them if Wyatt thinks it's of interest. The user interface of traditional software was first augmented with AI, much like the "lane-keep" in cars. Next is the "eyes ahead but hands on the wheel." Then it will sit in the back seat while the car takes you where you need to go.

ERP Under Siege: Onapsis CTO Juan Perez-Etchegoyen on the New Reality of SAP Cybersecurity

In 2025, ERP systems—particularly SAP—became high-value targets for sophisticated cyberattacks. Threat actors moved beyond network perimeters and credentials to exploit the very core of enterprise operations. From zero-day SAP vulnerabilities with CVSS 10.0 severity to weaponized OAuth integrations in cloud ecosystems, the threat landscape has evolved into one of real-world business disruption.

In this exclusive ERP News Q&A, Juan Perez-Etchegoyen, CTO of Onapsis, explains how attackers are escalating their tactics, why patch management and governance remain weak points, and how AI-driven automation is helping organizations stay ahead. He also outlines how regulations like EU NIS2 and U.S. SEC mandates are reshaping enterprise accountability and forcing executives to treat ERP security as a board-level priority.

1. In 2025, how have you seen the volume and sophistication of attacks on SAP applications evolve?

Business applications are under attack. In 2025, we saw an alarming shift: Attackers aren't just targeting perimeter devices and credentials anymore, but now the enterprise systems that run the business. SAP applications have gone from being a quiet target to an actively exploited gold mine.

Most notably this year, we're seeing large-scale exploitation of a *zero-day SAP vulnerability* with a CVSS score of 10.0 that is being actively exploited in the wild. The situation has evolved into real-world incidents impacting thousands of enterprises. There are a few key trends that point to why SAP applications are such attractive targets:

Interview with
Juan Perez-Etchegoyen,
Onapsis CTO
ONAPSIS

1. The exploitation of application vulnerabilities: Critical SAP vulnerabilities were made public, patched quickly and yet are still being exploited in the wild, showing that low-privilege access can escalate into a full system compromise.

2. Attacks against cloud/ CRM ecosystems: CRM and HR platforms, like *Salesforce and Workday,* became lucrative targets this year because attackers weaponized integrations, OAuth tokens and social engineering in low-friction, high-reward attacks targeting customer data.
On the bright side, we are seeing better collaboration among defenders and industry responders. Onapsis is working with incident response teams and public sources to provide assessment tools/indicators for the NetWeaver exploit chain, and national CERTS and CISA issued high-priority advisories.

In short, this year we've seen:

- Higher volume of attacks against SAP applications

- Attackers are becoming more sophisticated by combining automated tooling, supply chain compromises and human targeting – they now possess a swath of knowledge of how SAP, Oracle and other ERP applications work, and how to exploit them

- Attacks are no longer limited to just data theft – we've seen major financial disruption, outages and manipulation of transaction data

2. Which types of vulnerabilities or exploits pose the greatest risk to SAP users today?

The most dangerous threats to SAP users today stem from a combination of accelerated digital transformation, increased third-party dependencies and the rise of fast, sophisticated cyberattacks. Threat actors are exploiting unpatched vulnerabilities, weak configurations and insecure custom code, often within hours of public disclosure.

Zero-day vulnerabilities like the recent SAP NetWeaver flaw highlight how attackers can gain system-level access to SAP environments.

As organizations transition to hybrid and cloud models, externally-facing critical systems and rapid deployment cycles expand the attack surface, making continuous vulnerability management, secure development practices and threat monitoring essential for protection.

3. What three actions should SAP-using organizations prioritize immediately to strengthen their security posture?

First, treat ERP systems as the "crown jewels" they are – protecting them requires a business and security partnership. Business-critical applications are now prime targets for adversaries, so checking the box isn't enough to protect against sophisticated attacks. Success depends on collaboration across IT, security and business leaders.

Second, patch and validate. Ensure SAP Security Notes and related fixes are applied everywhere, and run an in-depth compromise assessment of potentially impacted SAP systems.

Third, assume a compromise and monitor continuously. Implement SAP-endorsed, dedicated cybersecurity controls for SAP applications.

> "Business-critical applications are now prime targets for adversaries, so checking the box isn't enough to protect against sophisticated attacks."

4. Patch management remains a challenge for large SAP estates. How does Onapsis help customers track, prioritize, and validate SAP Patch Day releases?

Onapsis automates the identification of vulnerabilities by mapping them to SAP's monthly Security Notes. We're always monitoring SAP systems for new Security Notes or vulnerabilities, sending customers real-time alerts so they can quickly take action.

Onapsis' prioritization is based on the risk levels of vulnerabilities and business impact, so security teams focus on the fixes that matter most. We then provide clear guidance on applying patches to streamline the process and minimize downtime.

We provide a Customer Portal and Partner Portal for support requests and issue tracking. This dedicated system for case management is common, but the quality of our responsiveness and integration with product tooling distinguishes us from other vendors. We offer this support Monday through Friday from 2:00 a.m. to 8 p.m. ET, covering many U.S. time zones that still go outside of "business hours" in local time.

Once patches are applied, Onapsis validates successful remediation through automated scans and reporting. This reduces patching cycles from months to days, eliminating manual work while ensuring executive stakeholders have measurable assurance that critical vulnerabilities are closed.

5. How do threats to SAP Business Technology Platform (BTP) differ from threats to traditional on-premise SAP systems?

Business Technology Platform (BTP) threats center on the complexity of its configuration and deployment settings, deployment of insecure custom code, misconfigured destinations and identity compromise – attackers don't need to exploit servers when they can weaponize SaaS connectors or OAuth tokens. In contrast, on-premise attacks are more limited since organizations have more control over access. Often target unpatched SAP vulnerabilities to gain persistence in core systems. While BTP is indispensable in digital transformation journeys, it is a high-value target for attackers because of how fast they can pivot across hybrid environments once they gain a foothold.

A compromised integration can give attackers direct access to sensitive data or connected applications. Organizations need consistent visibility into both on-premise and cloud landscapes to identify misconfigurations and monitor valuable integrations. At the same time, maintaining these controls helps enterprises keep pace with evolving compliance standards that demand stronger oversight of cloud environments.

6. Regulations such as EU NIS2 and U.S. SEC requirements are increasing. How are these changing the way enterprises approach SAP security?

Regulations such as EU NIS2 and U.S. SEC are forcing security teams (and their boards/C-suite) to address the governance gap when it comes to securing their business-critical applications.

NIS2's *guidance* raises expectations for the technology with more risk assessments, multifactor authentication and third-party oversight. The SEC demands quick material incident disclosure and for organizations to report annually about the state of their cyber defense risk management, strategy and governance.

These rules are changing how organizations think about their people, processes and technology:

- SAP Basis teams in IT and information security professionals are often misaligned when it comes to security governance. Solving this issue requires establishing a cross-functional governance team, defining shared responsibilities and conducting regular training.

- Current silos around auditing, risk and code inspection are keeping teams stuck in the same old ways. By standardizing processes and using shared platforms, organizations can streamline collaboration and act on insights faster.

- Another challenge isn't the lack of tools, but the poor adoption. Moving to S/4HANA introduces unfamiliar concepts, and improper training leads to misconfigurations and governance breakdowns. Teams must determine how to configure SAP security controls correctly and secure custom code.

7. What is the financial impact of SAP breaches, and how should organizations plan to mitigate costs, downtime, and reputational damage?

The average cost is measured in millions. Several industry analysts have estimated that a recent attack against a large global manufacturer will cost the organization $6.8 million per day, including production stoppages, lost revenue, emergency remediation and more.

Downtime is typically the most damaging consequence, stopping core business operations that rely on SAP systems. If attackers are able to exfiltrate sensitive data, the impact could be even greater, triggering regulatory penalties, legal exposure and reputational harm.

It is key for organizations to understand the real impact of a potential breach or downtime of their SAP Applications. This is an exercise that organizations can and should do to support security initiatives aimed to protect SAP environments.

Additionally, organizations should plan to proactively inventory and patch critical exposures, isolate and segment ERP apps, run tested playbooks and model financial scenarios to reduce downtime and protect customer trust.

> "Artificial intelligence is evolving SAP security from a reactive approach to a proactive one."

8. Looking ahead to 2026, what emerging SAP security trends or attack vectors should enterprises prepare for?

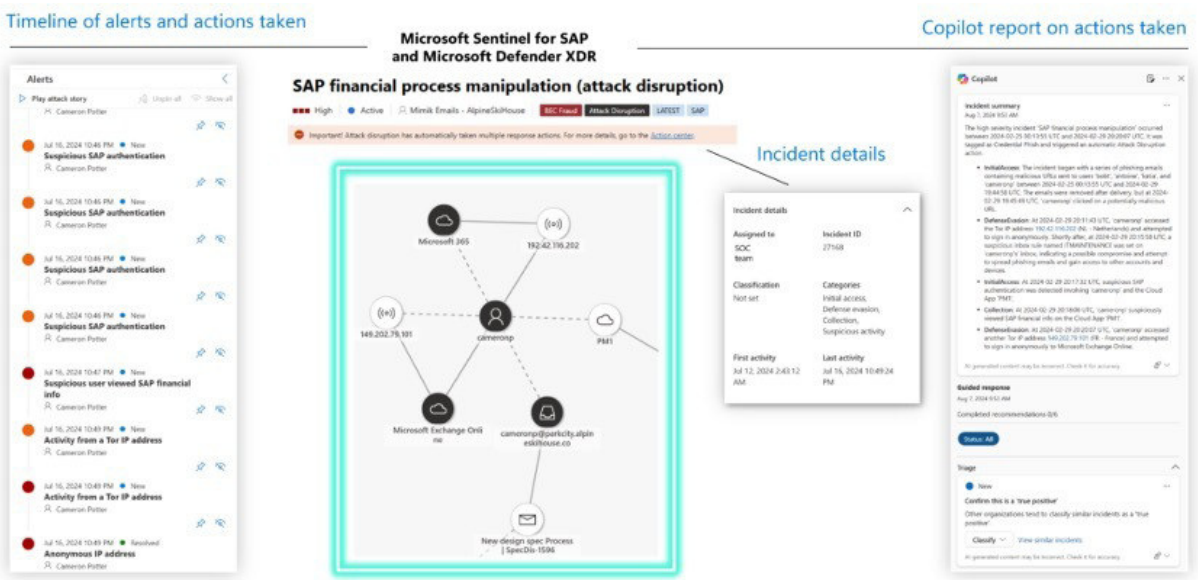
Because of the deep knowledge of ERP Applications that Threat Actors proved having, and the increase in both exploitation of vulnerabilities and patching of new critical vulnerabilities, it is expected that 2026 will bring a further increase in the threat activity targeting ERP Applications. Organizations should prepare for this escalation of ERP threats in 2026. We expect to see more commoditized exploit chains against SAP Applications, targeted abuse of third-party integrations in SaaS CRM/HR platforms and social engineering campaigns that pivot into critical applications.

9. How is AI and automation shaping the next phase of SAP security, and how does Onapsis integrate these capabilities into its platform?

Artificial intelligence (AI) is evolving SAP security from a reactive approach to a proactive one. Onapsis embeds AI directly into our *Security Advisor* platform, which constantly analyzes threat intelligence, customer measurement and patch data to help guide remediation. The system flags the highest-risk vulnerabilities and automatically correlates them with real-world exploit activity. Security Advisor then recommends actionable steps that are tailored to each environment. Customers are then able to close exposure windows before exploitation occurs, streamlining responses and ensuring SAP teams stay consistent with the evolving threat landscape.

About Juan Perez-Etchegoyen

JP leads the team that keeps Onapsis on the cutting edge of the Business-Critical Application Security market, addressing the most complex problems that organizations are facing while managing and securing their ERP landscapes. JP helps manage the development of new products and support the research that has garnered critical acclaim for the Onapsis Research Labs. JP is regularly invited to speak/host trainings at global conferences and is a founding member of the Cloud Security Alliance Cloud ERP Working Group.



Driving the Next Wave of SMB Transformation: Inside Katana's Vision with Co-CEO Ben Hussey

As small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs) navigate a world of fragmented systems, rising costs, and global supply chain shifts, Katana has emerged as a modern alternative to traditional ERP systems—cloud-native, integration-first, and AI-ready. In this exclusive interview, Ben Hussey, Co-CEO of Katana, shares how the company's latest funding extension will accelerate innovation, enhance visibility, and empower product-based SMBs to sell smarter, scale faster, and simplify operations in 2026 and beyond.

Q. Katana recently announced an extension to its Series B. What problem areas for SMBs (Small and Medium-sized Businesses) will this funding help you solve first, and how will customers notice the impact in the next 6–12 months?

This funding extension will continue to help us tackle the biggest pain points SMBs face today: fragmented systems, poor visibility, and the lack of AI-ready tools to manage inventory and production. In the next 6–12 months, customers will notice increased ability to orchestrate sales across multiple channels and have complete control over the omni channel landscape.

We're using this investment to build new features faster and grow our integrations marketplace, making it easier for small and mid-sized businesses to get powerful tools without the hassle of traditional ERP systems. Our goal is to help product-based companies sell more and work smarter with better visibility powered by AI.

Interview with
Ben Hussey,
Co-CEO, Katana

Q. Where is Katana most differentiated versus legacy ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) stacks—speed of implementation, total cost of ownership, or the integrations ecosystem? Please share one concrete metric or customer example.

Katana is most differentiated from legacy ERP stacks by its speed of implementation and composable architecture. Its modular, cloud-native design enables SMB merchants to achieve time-to-first-value in days rather than quarters, with typical onboarding completed in a few weeks. Recent platform upgrades allow new users to begin tracking and fulfilling orders immediately after signup, a process that would take months on legacy systems.

> "Katana's modular, cloud-native design enables SMB merchants to achieve time-to-first-value in days rather than quarters."

Unlike monolithic ERPs that lock customers into full-stack ecosystems, Katana was built to be integration-first by design, serving as the "system of record" within a best-of-breed tech stack. It seamlessly connects to Shopify, QuickBooks, Xero, Amazon, or 3PL and POS systems, giving merchants flexibility. A strong example is Cornbread Hemp, a Shopify-based manufacturer and wholesaler that centralized Shopify, Shipstation, and Finaloop through Katana going live in a matter of weeks and cutting streamlining operations significantly.

Q. Many SMBs struggled with tariffs and global supply shifts in 2025. What practical playbook has worked best among your customers (e.g., demand forecasting, supplier diversification, buffer stock), and how does Katana operationalize it?

We find the best approach for customers to take to help navigate tariffs and global supply chain shifts includes a combination of buffer stock, supplier diversification and particularly, demand forecasting. Software solutions that allow businesses to forecast demand and calculate the impact of rising costs can offer real-time visibility into business performance. Real-time inventory management for stock visibility can help inform pricing strategies that protect sales margins.

Katana operationalizes forecast demand by calculating the impact of increased costs to inventory based on historical data as well as predict future demand through integrated sales channels. This allows SMBs to have a real-time view of your business performance. Storing supplier data in Katana enables businesses to quickly adapt to any changes you want to make in your supply chain.

> "Real-time inventory management for stock visibility can help inform pricing strategies that protect sales margins."

Q. You've emphasized being cloud-native and "AI-ready." Which AI (Artificial Intelligence) use cases are live today (forecasting, anomaly detection, copilot features), and which are on the near-term roadmap?

Katana's AI-ready use cases include inventory forecasting, smart automations, and copilot recommendations. Inventory forecasting utilizes machine learning algorithms to analyze historical sales data, customer demand trends, and supply chain factors to predict future demand with high accuracy. This helps businesses minimize overstock and stockout situations, ultimately saving money and ensuring customer satisfaction.

Within AI-powered recommendations, Katana's customers get notified of any inventory challenges that

might cause revenue impact and require the user to take action. Preventing loss of sales or alerting on raw materials running out in time to meet customer demand is a powerful way to ensure no interruptions to revenue generation.

Q. Katana serves product-based businesses across channels. What's your integration strategy with commerce, accounting, shipping, and marketplace platforms, and which workflows are most automated end-to-end?

Our goal is to make it easy for product-based businesses to manage everything in one place. For instance, Katana connects with e-commerce platforms like Shopify and WooCommerce, as well as shipping management systems like ShipBob and ShipStation. These integrations help automate processes such as order management, inventory synchronization, and shipping logistics, allowing businesses to manage their operations more efficiently. Same is true for accounting systems, whether it's QuickBooks or Xero or something else that the SMB uses, it is seamless to sync inventory data across platforms to accounting platforms from Katana.

Q. For manufacturers, how do you handle production planning (e.g., BOM/MRP, floor-level control) alongside multi-channel inventory without adding complexity for small teams?

Katana simplifies production planning and management for small businesses by providing an all-in-one platform that integrates various functionalities seamlessly. For production planning and scheduling, Katana provides robust capabilities that allow users to efficiently schedule manufacturing tasks based on order backlog and available resources.

Alongside production planning, Katana integrates with popular e-commerce platforms, allowing for seamless synchronization of sales orders and inventory management across multiple channels. As orders come in, Katana allows users to intuitively adjust their production process to match the constantly evolving demand. The streamlining of operations and minimizing the risk of errors, flows all the way through to shopfloor where floor level control can be managed through Katana's Advanced Manufacturing shopfloor app to orchestrate production based on the real-time data of Katana platform.

"Katana simplifies production planning and management for small businesses by providing an all-in-one platform that integrates various functionalities seamlessly."

Q. What did you learn from tripling revenue since 2022—specifically in pricing, packaging, or onboarding—that you're carrying forward?

The biggest learning from tripling revenue since 2022 is that flexibility—not feature depth—is what wins SMB merchants. Modern product-based businesses don't want an all-in-one ERP; they want a quick and intuitive platform that adapts to their unique workflows and tech stacks without huge rollout projects. Katana's evolution toward a composable, integration-first architecture has been the key driver, allowing merchants to connect their preferred tools with a click of a button and start to operate and optimize inventory levels from day one.

Q. How do you measure success for SMB customers beyond "on-time shipments" (e.g., working capital turns, stockout rate, demand forecast accuracy)? Any benchmark you can share?

For SMBs, success is increasingly measured by agility and visibility. One particular customer example includes a manufacturer who uncovered $40,000 in forgotten inventory after implementing a real-time, data-rich platform, highlighting the need for inventory accuracy and working capital efficiency.

Companies leveraging connected forecasting and inventory tools in 2025 reduced overall inventory levels by 12% while increasing turnover 1.2x, showing improved working capital turns and reduced carrying costs. Katana sees success in selling more while holding less optimizing capital, and not just delivery schedules.

Q. As co-CEO, what are your top 2 priorities for the next year—product, go-to-market, or international expansion—and why?

Our focus and top two priorities are always the product and experience we deliver for our customers. For 2026 we are investing heavily in making continued improvements and new capabilities to be the leading choice for inventory management for SMBs. We believe that SMB's want a product that is easy to buy, easy to implement and easy to use and this is how we prioritize our efforts, because ultimately our future depends on our customers' success and happiness using Katana.

Q. What should ERPNews readers expect from Katana in 2026—new modules, deeper analytics, or partner programs?

ERPNews readers can expect continued effort and investments in addressing SMB inventory pain points. We continue to bring enterprise-grade functionality to small businesses to help them navigate the multi-channel complexity and ensure optimal inventory management in all scenarios.

We're also investing heavily in our integrations marketplace and partner ecosystem, so Katana fits even more seamlessly into each business's existing and unique workflows. We hope to give customers access to rich and valuable data to keep their businesses growing.

About Ben Hussey

Ben Hussey is a growth-focused leader with extensive experience driving business transformation through sales, product innovation, and operational excellence. He has led high-performing teams across eCommerce, inventory, and order management, and spent his career in SaaS leadership roles as a client and vendor. Ben is passionate about using the power of software to deliver customer value and transform businesses. Known as an innovative problem solver and team builder, he's a trusted partner in driving long-term success.

katana

The True Cost of Public-Sector ERP

Faced with mounting financial pressures, rising taxpayer expectations, and an urgent need to deliver more with less, government organisations across the UK are turning to ERP platforms for much-needed digital transformation. These systems – particularly when cloud based – promise streamlined operations, improved accuracy, and stronger strategic decisions, providing shared access to a single, reliable data source.

Providing real-time insight into finance, procurement, HR and more, ERP platforms enhance transparency, driving unprecedented efficiency across the board. The appeal is clear. Yet, several public-sector stories tell a more cautionary tale.

From Birmingham to Croydon, ERP programmes have failed to deliver the benefits promised – running over time and budget and contributing to severe financial crisis. These failures are rarely about the technology itself, however. Rather, they reflect a deeper flaw: fundamental underestimation of the real cost of change.

Article by
Emma O'Brien,
Founder and CEO of Embridge Consulting

Too often, ERP is treated as a mere IT procurement exercise, rather than the complex, organisation-wide transformation it truly is – demanding new ways of working, long-term leadership and deep-seated behavioural change. To deliver value, public bodies must look beyond vendor demos and licensing fees – to fully assess people, processes, data and readiness, as well.

Why traditional ERP procurement is broken

Even with the recent shift from MEAT (Most Economically Advantageous Tender) to MAT (Most Advantageous Tender) under the updated Procurement Act, most public-sector procurement decisions still place too much emphasis on upfront cost. The standard 50:40:10 weighting of quality, price and social value makes price easy to compare, but it's difficult to evaluate what's actually being bought.

Failure to see the bigger picture often leads to underestimated internal challenges, from data migration issues to staff fears – each calling for cultural investment on top of direct purchase fees. Vendors overoptimistic timelines further inflate expenditure – leaving change needs and resource strain severely misjudged based on unrealistic estimates that could never be upheld in the real world, where processes, people and organisational challenges inevitably get in the way. Of course, some suppliers aim to tackle this, factoring in more change-management aspects and offering more realistic, sustainable transformation models. These nevertheless tend to be overlooked, with expertise and sustainable change capacities disregarded in favour of low pricing, ultimately delaying projects, eroding trust and generating out-of-hand bills.

People-first transformation

If one lesson stands out, it's that technology alone doesn't drive transformation. Even the most advanced ERP will fail without considering the non-platform side of change – particularly the human factor.

Without staff understanding, engagement and buy-in, ERP tools remain underutilised, undermining outcomes and ROI. People are the true catalysts of change – ERP is merely the tool that supports them. This is why transformations are 2.6 times more likely to succeed when teams are placed at the heart of change, according to Oxford Saïd Business School and EY.

Leaders must likewise recognise that every organisation is starting from a different level of maturity and readiness. A council with shared services experience requires a different approach to a local authority running on outdated legacy systems and teams lacking in digital confidence. When procurement ignores this, the public sector pays the price – in unused investments, budget overruns, and failure to meet targets.

A more holistic approach

Shifting from price-led to people-first change may seem challenging initially – but taking the time to find the right partners to support this journey truly pays off. When transformation begins with assessing people and readiness, leaders gain a clearer understanding of what's really needed – before procurement even starts.

This visibility facilitates smarter, more sustainable decisions that support real public outcomes in turn. Including people in the plan makes it easier to secure the engagement, skills and adaptability needed to make ERP successful in practice, not just on paper. ERP procurement must therefore consider the full transformation journey beyond initial implementation, as well. This includes pre-launch training, cultural insight, behaviour change strategies and investment in ongoing support. This is what it means to understand the real cost of ERP change.

> "ERP transformation isn't about technology alone—it's about people, processes, data, and readiness."

Don't digitise a broken process

Furthermore, ERP systems are designed to support best-practice operations, not outdated ones. Without assessing readiness and redesigning processes, authorities thus risk simply replicating inefficiency at scale.

Effective programmes transform both systems and processes – aligning with compliance regulations and facilitating shared services across authority models. Without this alignment, ERP simply digitises the status quo – at high cost and negative impact on organisational growth and performance.

Article by Emma O'Brien

Data integration

Another overlooked yet critical consideration is data. ERP success relies on clean, integrated information. However, many projects under-scope this effort. Legacy records are often inconsistent and cleansing and migration require ownership, time and support from reliable experts. Left too late, poor data will derail reporting, audits and trust, undermining new system investments. APIs alone are simply not enough. Effective integration requires process awareness, system knowledge and early planning – especially when connecting to specialist platforms for grants, social care and payroll. Without this, integrations become fragile or fail entirely – again, undermining ERP's promise.

ERP as the foundation for AI

Finally, ERP decisions must also look forward. With AI rising on the public-sector agenda, organisations need the right foundations in place. AI depends on structured data, secure systems and standardised processes – all of which can be provided by ERP when the correct groundwork has been done. Without these solid foundations, AI risks becoming yet another costly experiment. Conversely, with the right ERP and change management support in place, public bodies lay the foundation for sustainable digital growth and future innovation.

Leadership – not licensing

As local government continues to evolve through devolution, shared services and structural reform, ERP must adapt across entities, processes and governance models seamlessly. This flexibility doesn't come from tech alone; it comes from the approach. ERP failure is not usually about software. It's about poor leadership, weak planning and choosing the wrong partners. Organisations must work with delivery teams that understand sector complexity, prioritise adoption and design for long-term outcomes. Short-term cost savings must never be allowed to undermine sustainable, real-world potential and success.

The cost of getting it wrong

Ultimately, ERP isn't about generic capabilities but real-world outcomes. To achieve these, leaders must ask better questions: Are our people ready? Will this system serve our future governance model? And how will we measure impact? Full consideration of the total cost of change is required if public bodies are to deliver true resilience, reform and readiness for new technologies through ERP. Choosing the right partner means selecting a team that understands complexity, challenging constructively whilst leading with empathy and expertise. Most importantly of all, this partner will recognise that successful digital transformation must always put people, processes and long-term outcomes first.

About Embridge Consulting

Embridge Consulting is a leading UK-based consultancy, specialising in people-first business transformation for mid-tier, people-centric organisations, with extensive experience in public sector.
https://embridgeconsulting.com

Struggling to Control Cloud Costs? Here's What Enterprises Need to Know.

The UK cloud computing market hit a shocking $56 billion (£41.3B) in 2025 - and that number is only going to continue upward. Yet, behind the omnipresent promise of infinite scalability and flexible environments lurks an uncomfortable truth: much of that spend is either being outright wasted or not being attributed appropriately.

In the past, cloud deployment was sold as a way to simplify life up and down the org chart, promising no more hardware procurement cycles or upfront investments. Yet, at enterprise scale, cloud costs don't just creep; they sprint. Hidden across departments, wrapped up in complex multi-cloud estates, and fluctuating with every new workload, it's safe to say that they're almost impossible to pin down. The fallout is even more concerning - think budget overruns, poor forecasting, and a growing rift between finance, IT, and engineering teams.

Article by
Eric Ethridge,
Senior Technical Account Manager,
DoiT

Article by Eric Ethridge

That's why cloud costs are no longer a back-office-only problem. The inability to control, monitor, and review costs has become a boardroom concern, prompting leaders to address the urgent question of maintaining cloud control in a dynamically expanding environment.

> "Cloud Financial Management is the answer you're looking for—a framework to bring order to the chaos."

Turning chaos into clarity

To put it simply, Cloud Financial Management (CFM) is the answer you're looking for; a framework designed to bring 'order to the chaos', if you will. Think of it as the operating model ensuring every pound and farthing spent in the cloud has a purpose. Within that framework sits FinOps, a methodology that leverages the DevOps 'spirit of collaboration' and applies it to finance, engineering, and operations.

It's helpful to see the two as complementary rather than interchangeable. Whilst CFM provides the strategic guardrails, FinOps offers the practical playbook, embedding cost awareness into daily workflows and encouraging engineers, finance teams, and product managers to speak a common language about cloud economics. When used together, they give enterprises a fighting chance at solving one of the toughest challenges growing businesses have to face: balancing growth with financial discipline.

Once implemented, the results are clear. Organisations seeing savings of 15–25% are not uncommon in the first year of a well-structured programme. Teams gain the agility to scale with confidence, knowing the financial impact of every new project. Additionally, leaders benefit from improved resilience with accurate forecasting and governance frameworks protecting against market volatility and shifting budgets. Just as significantly, friction between departments eases when teams can control ownership of cloud costs, rather than seeing it as 'someone else's problem.'

Making CFM work

It all sounds great in theory, but how can businesses actually implement adequate CFM to reach those kinds of savings?

Enterprises that succeed with this tend to follow a practical, step-by-step path rather than chasing a silver-bullet tool that will fix all of their problems. Here's what that looks like.

The first step is to ***define clear objectives***. Without measurable goals, cloud cost programmes risk becoming vague efficiency drives that quickly lose momentum. Enterprises that set targets, such as reducing variance against budget or increasing forecasting accuracy, can track progress and prove business value more readily. As a rule, cloud-native startups should prioritise unit economics and cost-per-customer metrics, while traditional enterprises will more likely benefit from focusing on budget variance reduction and cost allocation accuracy.

> "Enterprises that succeed with CFM don't chase a silver bullet—they follow a practical, step-by-step approach that brings measurable results."

Next is assigning ***cross-functional ownership.*** Cloud spend categorically cannot be managed in a silo. Finance brings budgeting discipline and context, while engineering and operations understand utilisation and performance trade-offs. Bringing these teams together builds a culture where cost awareness is embedded into decisions at every level. The benefit is not just financial discipline, but also smoother collaboration and fewer conflicts between departments.

Once roles are defined, enterprises must ***automate cost governance.*** Manual approval chains simply don't scale in a world where resources can be spun up in seconds. The chance

for error is just too high. Policies, tagging standards, and anomaly detection tools prevent runaway costs before they happen, protecting innovation without slowing it down or overtaxing human capital. This step delivers resilience by ensuring that financial guardrails are always in place, even when teams move quickly.

With governance automated, the next priority is to ***evaluate tools and integrations.*** Native cloud provider tools generally offer a good starting point, but larger organisations often need multi-cloud visibility, ERP integration, and deeper analytics. Choosing the right mix of tools is about more than just cost tracking; it's about giving leaders the real-time insights needed to make smarter trade-offs between performance, speed, and spend. The right tools foster agility through synergy by making cloud economics transparent and actionable, integrating data streams into clear visuals.

Finally, enterprises must ***track and refine metrics.*** Effective CFM isn't a 'set it and forget it' exercise; it's a continuous cycle of review, reiteration, and improvement. Regular reviews of both financial and operational KPIs ensure that strategies evolve in line with the business goals. This closing step locks in long-term savings while also building confidence that innovation can scale sustainably and reliably.

The business impact

Overall, CFM has moved from a nice-to-have to a business-critical discipline, one that directly influences organisational competitiveness and financial performance. Enterprises that invest in comprehensive cloud financial management practices today are far better positioned to leverage cloud technologies strategically and intentionally, while maintaining financial discipline. However, tools alone won't deliver results. Long-term success requires a cultural shift, cross-functional collaboration, and a mindset of continuous improvement. The most successful organizations are those where visibility, governance, and optimization are treated as ongoing practices, not one-off projects.

The rewards for getting it right are significant. Organisations achieve meaningful cost savings while gaining much more: streamlined operations, reduced friction between teams, and agility to innovate confidently at scale. In short, intentional CFM turns your cloud from a financial liability into a strategic growth engine - one that fuels innovation, strengthens resilience, and secures a competitive edge well into the future.

About Eric Ethridge

Eric Ethridge is a senior technical account manager at DoiT, where he guides customers of all sizes and industries through cloud adoption and optimization journeys. With over a decade of IT experience, including roles at AWS and the U.S. Air Force, Eric possesses a unique blend of technical expertise and strategic insight. He holds an MBA and multiple certifications in AWS and Google Cloud, focusing on helping customers economically scale their cloud-native architecture with robust cloud FinOps practices. Passionate about sharing knowledge, Eric is dedicated to empowering his customers to achieve their goals and thrive in their cloud journey.

Article by Eric Ethridge

4 Ways to Manage Supply Chain Disruptions Before They Happen

Small to mid-sized manufacturers are facing mounting pressure from unpredictable supply chain disruptions. From fluctuating customer demand to reshoring operations and diversifying suppliers, maintaining efficiency and protecting cash flow have never been more critical.

Global instability, shifting market demands, transportation delays and supplier shortages are no longer rare exceptions; they're recurring realities. For smaller manufacturers without the luxury of deep financial reserves or massive supply networks, even minor disruptions can have significant ripple effects.

To navigate these challenges, you need more than just reactive strategies. You need proactive, data-driven solutions, and that's where ERP software proves indispensable.

4 Strategies for Managinf Disruptions with ERP

To effectively respond to ongoing supply chain volatility, you must move beyond reactive firefighting and embrace strategic, ERP-enabled approaches. Here are four strategies that demonstrate how ERP can help make informed decisions quickly, maintain optimal inventory levels and ensure timely deliveries – all despite external disruptions.

1. Proactive Demand Forecasting

Accurate forecasting is critical in turbulent markets. ERP systems help by analyzing historical data, seasonal trends and market shifts to anticipate future demand. With built-in scenario planning tools, you can simulate various outcomes and prepare accordingly. This proactive stance reduces the risk of stockouts or excess inventory, stabilizing production and improving cash flow.

2. Smarter Supplier Diversification and Management

ERP supports supplier diversification by centralizing vendor data, including performance metrics like quality, cost and delivery reliability. This makes it easier to assess and compare suppliers, identify risk-prone vendors and onboard new partners quickly when disruptions strike. Automated workflows also ensure consistent communication and streamlined procurement processes, reducing delays and minimizing production downtime.

3. Strategic Reshoring with Enhanced Operational Control

ERP systems enable you to evaluate the full impact of reshoring – bringing production closer to home – by offering insights into total landed costs, lead times and compliance requirements. With visibility into domestic supply chains, your company can coordinate logistics, optimize production schedules and adapt quickly to local market changes. ERP makes the reshoring process more transparent, strategic and sustainable.

4. Dynamic Inventory Optimization

Inventory management is a balancing act, especially during supply chain disruption. ERP software tracks real-time inventory levels, usage trends and reorder thresholds, allowing maintenance of ideal stock levels without overcommitting capital. Features like ABC classification and automated replenishment help prioritize high-value items and avoid shortages, while reducing waste and holding costs.

These strategies show how ERP transforms disruption into opportunity by equipping manufacturers like you with the agility, visibility and control needed to outperform in an unpredictable world.

> "ERP transforms disruption into opportunity by equipping manufacturers with the agility, visibility, and control to outperform in an unpredictable world."

Case Study: Improved Inventory Accuracy and Reduced Lead Times

Cardinal Systems, a leading manufacturer of in-ground swimming pool components, encountered major hurdles in managing inventory and lead times as the company scaled its operations across more than 300,000 square feet of facilities. Their outdated system and fragmented Microsoft Access database created data silos separating sales and inventory management from accounting. This led to inefficiencies, delays and inaccurate stock levels. Feeling the pressure to better manage their supply chain and any disruptions on the horizon, Cardinal Systems turned to Global Shop Solutions ERP software. The investment quickly paid off and just months after implementation, they achieved:

- ***Improved inventory accuracy,*** which enabled Cardinal Systems to respond to supply chain disruptions with confidence. By eliminating manual tracking and gaining a real-time view of inventory, the company could proactively address shortages, avoid overstocking and better align inventory with fluctuating demand.
- ***Shorter lead times,*** which helped mitigate delays caused by supplier and transportation disruptions. With faster data entry and clearer insight into parts availability, Cardinal Systems could streamline scheduling, reduce production bottlenecks and accelerate order fulfillment.
- ***Enhancedoperational efficiency,*** which minimized the impact of disruptions across the production floor. Barcode-driven processes reduced costly errors, accelerated workflows and improved coordination between departments, allowing the company to adapt quickly when supply or demand shifted unexpectedly.
- ***A fully documented workflow,*** which protected institutional knowledge and ensured process continuity during times of change. With a consistent and standardized workflow in place, Cardinal Systems was better equipped to maintain stability and performance even as experienced workers retired and roles shifted.

These targeted improvements show how Cardinal Systems used ERP not just to digitize operations, but to build resilience into their supply chain – mitigating disruption, maintaining productivity and preparing for future growth. *Download the case study* to learn more.

The ERP Advantage

ERP software serves as the central nervous system of your operation. By integrating key business functions – from procurement and production to inventory and customer service – ERP provides the tools necessary to manage disruptions head-on with:

- ***End-to-end visibility:*** ERP offers a complete, transparent view of operations, enabling you to monitor every stage of the supply chain, from raw material sourcing to final product delivery. With clear insights into supplier performance, production status and inventory levels, you can identify potential issues before they escalate.
- ***Real-time tracking:*** Timing is everything. ERP continuously updates data in real time, allowing for immediate response to demand fluctuations, delivery delays and supply shortages. This quick responsiveness can help maintain optimal inventory levels and ensure timely customer fulfillment.

ERP empowers manufacturers to anticipate challenges, respond swiftly and keep operations running smoothly – even amid supply chain disruption.

Take Control of Your Supply Chain with ERP

In manufacturing, disruptions may be unavoidable, but chaos doesn't have to be. By leveraging ERP software with powerful features like end-to-end visibility and real-time tracking, you can simplify operations, reduce waste and stay resilient. Whether you're managing complex supply networks, reshoring production or navigating demand shifts, ERP gives you the clarity and control you need to protect your bottom line.

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.

Global Shop SOLUTIONS

2025 Fall Product Launch: Key Enhancements

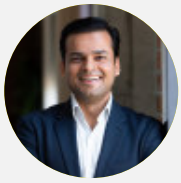
The world of manufacturing and supply chain management is changing fast — and QAD is driving that transformation forward. With the launch of its latest QAD Adaptive release, now enhanced with Champion AI, QAD is ushering in a new era of intelligent, action-first automation for modern manufacturers.

This isn't just another ERP update. It's a leap toward moving enterprise software from systems of record to systems of action — a class of solutions designed not only to analyze but to act. The result is faster decisions, smarter operations, and measurable business value in a fraction of the time.

From System of Record to System of Action

For decades, ERP systems have been built around recording and reporting. But in today's manufacturing world — where agility, precision, and responsiveness define success — that's no longer enough.

With this release, *QAD Adaptive ERP* and *QAD Redzone Connected Workforce* software includes *Champion AI* with action-first automation directly into core processes. As a result we are empowering our customers to achieve higher productivity and more accurate decisions



Article by
Amit Sharma,
President of Manufacturing ERP,
QAD

Article by Amit Sharma

across their operations. This shift from passive to proactive is central to QAD's mission: to give manufacturers the power to act on insight instantly. Champion AI takes data out of dashboards and puts it into motion.

Introducing Champion AI: Agentic Intelligence for Manufacturers

Champion AI is QAD's new Agentic AI platform, purpose-built for the unique challenges of manufacturing and supply chain management. Instead of merely providing recommendations, its AI agents take action — optimizing processes, executing adjustments, and continuously learning to improve outcomes.

The Champion AI platform includes three categories of agents, each designed to drive value across the enterprise:

- ***Implementation Agents*** that accelerate ERP deployment by automating migration and setup tasks.
- ***Productivity Agents*** that handle routine updates and eliminate manual work through prompt-driven automation.
- ***Business Optimization Agents*** that fine-tune operations in key areas like costing analysis, production scheduling, and inventory management.

Combined, they represent a new kind of ERP assistant — one that works behind the scenes to simplify, streamline, and supercharge performance.

Built for the Cloud, Powered by AWS

The latest release also deepens QAD's strategic collaboration with Amazon Web Services (AWS), ensuring that the technology foundation is as adaptive as the AI driving it. The result is a cloud-native, AI-driven ERP architecture that delivers measurable ROI in weeks, not months.

With QAD Adaptive on AWS, customers benefit from:

- ***Accelerated time-to-value*** through rapid deployment and simplified integration.
- ***Higher productivity*** as frontline workers gain access to real-time insights and automated workflows.
- ***Lower total cost of ownership (TCO)*** with reduced infrastructure costs, maintenance, and downtime.
- ***Enhanced security and reliability*** thanks to AWS's robust, scalable environment.

This alignment ensures that manufacturers can focus less on maintaining systems and more on improving performance — all while keeping data secure and operations agile.

> "This isn't just another ERP update. It's a leap toward moving enterprise software from systems of record to systems of action."

Additional Enhancements That Matter

Beyond AI innovation, QAD Adaptive continues to evolve its core functionality to meet the complex demands of manufacturing and supply chain organizations.

Key highlights include:

- Fully Embedded Warehouse Management System (WMS): Seamlessly integrated to improve warehouse efficiency, reduce errors, and increase order accuracy.
- Enhanced Production Scheduling: Enables smarter resource allocation and improved on-time delivery, directly translating to higher customer satisfaction.
- Champion Pace Rapid Implementation: A breakthrough in ERP deployment that uses AI to streamline collaboration, automate key tasks, and accelerate your implementation project — helping customers go live faster than ever before.
- Standard Integrations: Built on standard APIs and a powerful publish/subscribe mechanism, the QAD Integration Platform connects QAD Adaptive to your manufacturing ecosystem – making every system work in harmony and breaking down data silos. The Integration Platform powers the integration between QAD Applications, as well as between QAD and third party systems.

Built for Complex Manufacturing

QAD has long served the industries where precision and adaptability are non-negotiable — automotive, life sciences, food and beverage, and industrial manufacturing. This release further strengthens QAD Adaptive for those environments

with new, industry-specific capabilities.

- Catch Weight Management: Supports operations where products are ordered, shipped, and billed in different units of measure — critical for sectors like food production and chemicals. This enhancement delivers more accurate costing and flexibility.
- Unique Device Identification (UDI) Labeling: Improves traceability and compliance for life sciences manufacturers, simplifying recall management and post-market surveillance with precise product tracking.
- Pre-built OEM Packages & EDI Integration: Accelerate and de-risk the onboarding of new customers with pre-built Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) packages. These packages feature standardized formats for Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) and corresponding bar code labels.

Each enhancement reflects QAD's deep understanding of manufacturing realities — from shop floor to supply chain — and its commitment to building practical, high-impact solutions that meet customers where they are.

Go Live Rapidly

QAD's newly released Champion Pace methodology sets a new standard for rapid ERP deployment, offering clients a uniquely accelerated path to success. Unlike traditional implementation approaches, Champion Pace enables organizations to go live in as little as 90 days—achieving faster time to value through a blend of preconfigured industry best practices, proven templates, and targeted adoption programs. This structured yet flexible framework combines prescriptive implementation plans, embedded manufacturing and supply chain standards, and ERP accelerators to reduce rework and uncertainty. Supported by expert coaching and KPI alignment, Champion Pace delivers a results-driven approach that helps manufacturers go live faster, boost efficiency, and realize predictable, measurable business outcomes.

> "Champion AI takes data out of dashboards and puts it into motion."

Champion AI-powered Coaching modules drive continuous improvement after go-live. These outcome-oriented and actionable 90-day tracks are driven by Champion AI Process Intelligence focused on specific value outcomes, including inventory optimization, OTIF improvement, product costing, production efficiency & productivity, product quality, production planning & scheduling, plant maintenance, finance efficiency or supplier performance management.

Delivering Operational Excellence Through Systems of Action

QAD's ongoing product innovation is consistently aimed at helping clients achieve operational excellence and world-class productivity. We are committed to empowering manufacturers and supply chains to successfully navigate the complexities of modern business, adapt to evolving market conditions, and ultimately thrive in a competitive environment. The new release of QAD Adaptive powered by Champion AI is now available globally.

Book a demo to explore how these enhancements can empower your business for the future, or reach us at *information@qad.com*.

About Amit Sharma

Amit Sharma joined QAD as President of Manufacturing ERP. Amit joins QAD from SAP, where he served as Vice President of Product for Manufacturing Industries. Over a 20-year career spanning across 3 continents, he has been at the forefront of ERP innovation, launching and scaling modern cloud solutions for some of the world's most complex manufacturing environments.

Article by Amit Sharma

11 Key ERP Trends for 2026 and Beyond

As we move into 2026, the manufacturing industry is experiencing unprecedented transformation. Rapid technological advancements, changing consumer expectations, regulatory pressures, and global supply chain complexities are driving companies to rethink how they operate. Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems are no longer just tools for managing inventory or finances; they are evolving into strategic engines that can guide decision-making, foster agility, and ensure resilience.

Here are the 11 key ERP trends for 2026 and beyond that will redefine the way organizations plan, produce, and deliver their products.

1. Supply Chain Visibility Across the Ecosystem

Supply chains are becoming increasingly complex and global. Manufacturers are working with multi-tier suppliers, third-party logistics providers, and contract manufacturers across diverse geographies. Real-time visibility into every link of the supply chain has become critical to minimize disruptions, reduce lead times, and maintain consistent quality.

In 2026, ERP systems will need to increasingly integrate ecosystem-level connectivity, enabling companies to track raw materials, monitor shipments, and analyze supplier performance in real time. They should seamlessly capture data from IoT-enabled devices, partner portals, and logistics networks, helping organizations anticipate challenges and respond proactively rather than reactively.

2. AI-Driven Decision-Making

Data is abundant, but insights are difficult to find. Companies often struggle to translate operational data into actionable decisions. In 2026, integration of artificial intelligence and ERP systems will play a central role in transforming data into predictive and prescriptive insights.

From forecasting demand fluctuations to predicting equipment maintenance needs, ERPs in 2026 will provide intelligent recommendations and automated workflows that guide users toward optimal decisions.

3. Enhanced User Experience and Mobility

The workforce is evolving rapidly, with younger generations entering manufacturing and hybrid work models becoming standard. As a result, ERPs must focus on user experience, accessibility, and mobility.

Modern systems are evolving toward intuitive, role-specific interfaces that simplify complex tasks. Mobile access is becoming essential, allowing managers, operators, and field teams to interact with the system from anywhere, whether it's scanning inventory on the shop floor, approving production orders remotely, or monitoring KPIs on the go. ERPs should provide seamless mobile and desktop experiences that will drive adoption, reduce errors, and improve operational efficiency.

4. Sustainability and ESG Integration

Sustainability is no longer optional; it's a business imperative. Consumers, investors, and regulators expect transparency in environmental, social, and governance (ESG) practices. ERPs should evolve to embed sustainability metrics directly into operational workflows, tracking energy consumption, waste, emissions, and resource utilization at every stage of production.

By integrating ESG data with production planning and supply chain management, companies can make decisions that balance profitability with environmental responsibility. With this, sustainability will be operationalized rather than reported retrospectively in 2026.

5. Cloud-First Deployment Model

The cloud technology landscape is reshaping ERP deployment. Manufacturing companies are moving away from monolithic on-premises solutions to cloud-native architectures. Cloud ERPs provide agility, scalability, and remote accessibility, boosting performance and regulatory compliance.

This approach enables organizations to modernize incrementally without disrupting core operations. It also facilitates the integration of advanced technologies like AI, IoT, and edge computing, ensuring businesses can innovate while maintaining continuity.

> "ERP systems are no longer just tools for managing inventory or finances; they are evolving into strategic engines that can guide decision-making, foster agility, and ensure resilience."

6. Industry-Specific Solutions

Generic ERP solutions are giving way to industry-specific platforms tailored to unique workflows and compliance requirements. Manufacturers today expect ERP systems that are purpose-built for their sector's distinct processes. From recipe management in *food manufacturing* to batch control in pharmaceuticals or coating formulation in chemicals, it should automate and organize all the processes.

For instance, process manufacturers benefit from ERPs that include built-in quality control, lot traceability, formulation management, and compliance tracking for standards such as FDA, GMP, or REACH. These tailored solutions not only reduce implementation time but also enhance ROI by eliminating the need for extensive customization. In 2026, industry-specific ERPs will be in trend and dominate as manufacturers seek systems that align closely with their regulatory, production, and quality frameworks.

7. Cybersecurity as a Core Capability

As ERP solutions connect to more devices, suppliers, and cloud services, the attack surface expands. In 2026, security will become a foundational element of ERP design, not an add-on. Zero-trust architectures, end-to-end encryption, multi-factor authentication, and embedded compliance frameworks will protect critical business data.

Moreover, ERPs will support proactive risk management by identifying vulnerabilities, monitoring anomalies, and automating incident responses. Secure systems are particularly crucial for industries like pharmaceuticals, food and beverages, and chemicals, where regulatory compliance and product integrity are paramount.

Article from Batchmaster

8. Mass Customization and Agile Production

Consumer demand is shifting toward personalized products, shorter production cycles, and faster delivery. Traditional and generic ERP models struggle to keep up. Modern manufacturing ERP software will embrace mass customization workflows, allowing manufacturers to dynamically adjust formulations, packaging, and delivery schedules without compromising quality or compliance.

By managing variant production efficiently, businesses will be able to respond quickly to customer preferences while maintaining cost control and traceability. Agile production is no longer a luxury; it's a necessity to remain competitive in 2026.

9. Integration Across Technology Ecosystems

Manufacturers rely on specialized tools for analytics, quality management, warehouse automation, and more. In 2026, interoperability and ecosystem integration are central expectations.

Modern ERPs provide robust API frameworks, low-code/no-code extensions, and pre-built integrations that allow businesses to orchestrate complex workflows across multiple platforms. This enables companies to leverage best-of-breed technologies while maintaining a single source of truth for critical data.

10. Supporting Service-Based Business Models

Manufacturers are increasingly shifting from pure product-based offerings to service-oriented models, like software-as-a-service programs. ERPs are adapting by incorporating capabilities for tracking service contracts, managing warranties, and linking service outcomes to production and supply chain operations.

This trend reflects the broader evolution of manufacturing from transactional to outcome-based operations. By connecting product delivery and service performance, organizations can measure success beyond traditional metrics, focusing on customer satisfaction, efficiency, and value creation.

11. Outcome-Focused Analytics and Performance Insights

Finally, 2026 will mark a shift from reporting to outcome-focused analytics. Manufacturing companies no longer need screens that simply display data; they need insights that tie directly to business outcomes. ERPs are leveraging advanced analytics to correlate production, quality, supply chain, and financial metrics, highlighting bottlenecks, predicting trends, and enabling continuous improvement.

By connecting operational and strategic metrics, the right ERP systems will become a tool for guiding decisions, driving growth, and ensuring the manufacturers remain resilient in an unpredictable environment.

Conclusion

The ERP landscape in 2026 is being shaped by interconnected forces: technological advancement, sustainability requirements, evolving workforce expectations, and complex global operations. ERP systems are evolving into intelligent, agile, and integrated platforms that not only support operations but also guide strategy, optimize processes, and drive innovation.

For manufacturers, embracing these trends isn't just about staying current; it's about building resilience, enabling growth, and remaining competitive in a rapidly changing world. The next-generation ERP is no longer just a tool; it is the backbone of a connected, intelligent, and adaptive enterprise.

Why Top CEOs Are Prioritizing Enterprise Resource Planning Systems in 2026

In the dynamically changing global economy of 2026, the Enterprise Resource Planning systems have evolved beyond being just a back-office tool; it has become the essential digital infrastructure for gaining a competitive advantage and adopting the Industry 5.0 revolution, enhancing agility, and facilitating strategic decision-making. For today's Chief Executive Officers (CEOs), investing in modern, intelligent Enterprise Resource Planning systems is not merely about improving operational efficiency—it is a vital business necessity for safeguarding their organizations' future. This application can easily increase business efficiency up to 100% by reducing waste and costs up to 50%.

One question arises here: Why are business leaders investing in ERP systems in 2026?

Today, business leaders are adopting the power of *ERP applications* in 2026 because of several reasons: Enhanced cloud-capability, AI-powered automation, and high-end integration. The modern-day ERP system is capable of bringing profitability at every level with departmental syncing and process optimization, as these features are prioritizing Enterprise Resource Planning systems.

Here are the main factors driving top CEOs to priorities ERP modernization on their 2026 agenda:

The Importance of Powerful and Real-Time Decision-Making ERP

CEOs are navigating a landscape characterized by instability. The era of basing decisions on outdated, fragmented monthly data is behind us. Contemporary Enterprise Resource Planning systems, particularly those that are cloud-based, provide a unified source of truth, granting leaders real-time insight across all areas: finance, supply chain, operations, and human resources.

Article from Absolute ERP

Amongst the best mandates, it is found that the top ***ERP system trends*** CEOs should know in 2026, like the advancement of technology with AI capability, cloud-computing interface, etc., as these things make enterprises run in a balanced way.

Integration of AI and Machine Learning: By 2026, top ERP platforms will incorporate Artificial Intelligence (AI) into their core functionalities. It's the highly debated ERP system trends CEOs should know in 2026. This integration enables predictive analytics—anticipating demand, foreseeing inventory shortages, and identifying financial irregularities before they escalate. This transition moves businesses from reacting to issues to proactively addressing them with intelligent strategies.

Top ERP Leadership Insights You Should Know

From a targeted approach to effective data execution, ERP leadership insights empower CEOs to monitor, analyze, and optimize business processes for seamless operations. Let's explore some key insights that have helped organizations achieve sustainable growth:

- According to EY-Parthenon, over 85% of CEOs are confident about investing in emerging technologies like Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems.
- CEOs are leveraging ERP's innovative capabilities and efficient business management mechanisms to drive organizational success.
- As reported by the State of CIO survey, ERP systems have made a significant impact on workforce productivity, resulting in 18% higher operational resilience and 12% more active market initiatives.

These insights show how modern ***ERP solutions*** help businesses overcome challenges and achieve up to 100% efficiency across their manufacturing and operational ecosystems.

> "ERP systems have evolved beyond being just a back-office tool; it has become the essential digital infrastructure for gaining a competitive advantage and adopting the Industry 5.0 revolution."

Adopting Cloud-Native Solutions for Agility and Scalability

The transition from rigid, on premise ERP systems to flexible, cloud-native architectures is a significant trend these days. One of the best answers to "Why business leaders are investing in ERP systems in 2026" is AI-powered ERP software. This evolution caters directly to the CEO's requirement for adaptable, growth-oriented technology infrastructure.

Customized ERP: CEOs are shifting away from inflexible, uniform systems. Today, customized Enterprise Resource Planning systems enable organizations to construct their ideal setup using best-in-class, interoperable modules. Gaining the advantage of custom-made ERP solutions fosters speedy innovation, simpler upgrades, and the capability to scale in response to business demands without disrupting core operations.

Reduced Total Cost of Ownership (TCO): Cloud ERP effectively lowers the necessity for costly on-site hardware, IT personnel for upkeep, and expensive manual updates, leading to a clearer and more advantageous return on investment over time.

Enterprise Resource Planning systems have become a handy utility for CEO's as it provide a perfect resource to get real-time business insights.

Resilience, Risk Management, and ESG Compliance

The pandemic and ensuing worldwide supply chain disruptions highlighted the urgent need for resilience. Modern ERP solutions are critical for navigating this complexity and fulfilling evolving stakeholder expectations.

Autonomous Supply Chains: By integrating with IoT devices and utilizing AI, the ERP systems of 2026 can facilitate self-managing supply chains—detecting disruptions, rerouting logistics, and initiating corrective measures with minimal human involvement.

Integrated Risk and Compliance Measures: With the rise in global regulations (such as data privacy and AI governance), modern ERP systems include autonomous governance features that offer automated audit trails, real-time compliance oversight, and strong data protection.

Sustainability (ESG) Reporting: CEOs face increased pressure to uphold corporate social responsibility. Next-gen Enterprise Resource Planning systems feature modules designed to monitor Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) metrics, such as carbon emissions across the supply

chain, transforming sustainability into a measurable, data-oriented aspect of strategy.

Enhancing Strategic Value and Employee Productivity

For today's CEO, ERP software adoption in 2026 is making a broader appeal as modern-day ERP application transcends a simple cost, which serves as a catalyst for organizational transformation and enhanced productivity.

Integrated Business Platforms: The unification of ERP (back-office) and CRM (front-office) into cohesive platforms delivers a seamless, comprehensive perspective on the customer experience and financial impact.

Enabling the Hybrid Workforce: As remote and field operations become more prevalent, Mobile-First ERP has become essential. Employees anticipate having access to real-time dashboards and the ability to complete tasks from anywhere, enhancing field productivity and ensuring business continuity.

For CEOs, a smart, customized, and industry-ready Enterprise Resource Planning system forms the foundational platform for all future growth, efficiency improvements, and risk management strategies.

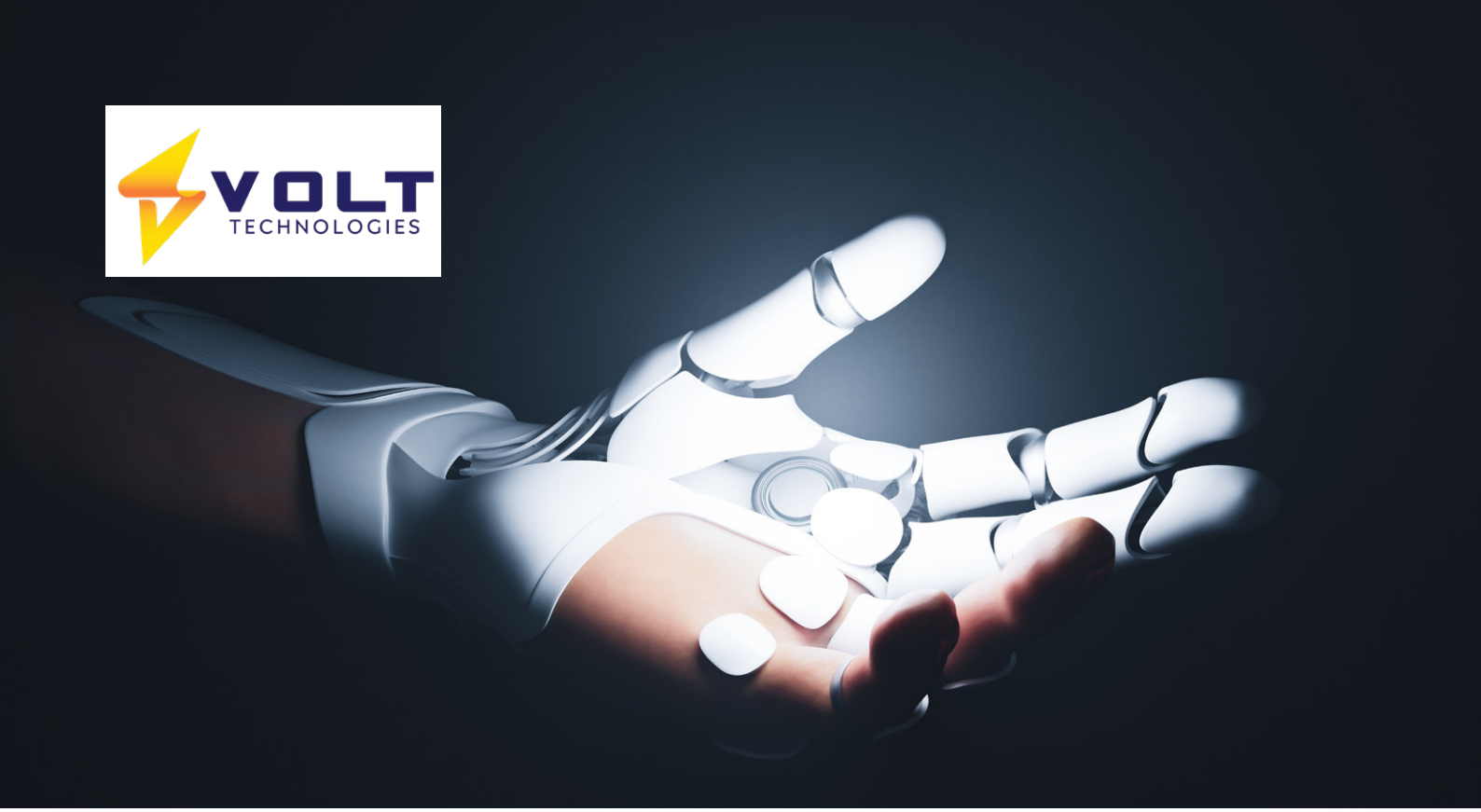
Absolute™ ERP

Empower your organization with AI-powered, cloud-based ERP software to stay ahead in 2026

Today, every CEO wants highly capable Enterprise Resource Planning systems in order to make their business super smooth and actionable. They want the Best ERP system in 2026 in order to be competitive and result-oriented.

From AI automation to cloud-based security features, everything is in huge demand by industries, as such things make the process easy in achieving new milestones through comfortable departmental collaboration and an easy syncing mechanism.

Article from Absolute ERP



Top ERP Trends in 2026: AI, Automation, and Industry Specific Clouds

Enterprise Resource Planning is entering a transformative era as businesses accelerate toward data driven operations, hyperautomation, and industry specific digital ecosystems. The ERP trends 2026 landscape shows a decisive shift away from legacy systems and toward next generation ERP 2026 models powered by artificial intelligence, predictive analytics, modular ERP solutions, and cloud native ERP deployments. Companies across all industries, especially small and mid sized businesses, are preparing for modern ERP for 2026 that offers intelligence, flexibility, automation, and scalability at a level traditional systems can no longer support.

With the rise of AI ERP trends 2026 and rapid adoption of cloud ERP trends 2026, organizations are under pressure to modernize. Outdated, siloed systems lack real time insights, automated workflows, and operational visibility. This is why many SMBs are transitioning to Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central, implemented by experienced partners like *Volt Technologies*, to unlock future ready ERP capabilities and stay competitive in 2026 and beyond.

Article by
Mason Whitaker,
President, Volt Technologies

Why ERP Innovation Matters in 2026

ERP modernization is no longer a technology upgrade, it is a strategic business requirement. Companies today face fast changing customer expectations, shrinking decision cycles, increasingly complex supply chains, and growing compliance demands. Traditional ERPs cannot keep up. They lack the automation, intelligence, and scalability required to support modern business models.

Research reinforces this urgency. Gartner's Future of ERP Insights states that seventy percent of organizations will shift from monolithic systems to composable ERP by 2026. Deloitte's Digital Transformation Report highlights that organizations using AI and automation in ERP systems experience twenty to fifty percent reductions in manual processing effort, resulting in faster operations and significantly higher accuracy.

Many challenges businesses face today originate from outdated ERP platforms. These include fragmented data trapped in disconnected systems, slow manual reporting cycles, limited transparency across departments, complex multi entity consolidation processes, and minimal automation leading to higher operational costs.
To remain competitive, organizations must adopt ERP for 2026 that delivers automation, AI intelligence, integrated data models, and cloud scalability.

The Top ERP Trends Defining 2026

Industry research from IDC, Gartner, and Forrester consistently highlights three dominant forces shaping ERP:

1. AI powered decision making
2. End to end automation
3. Industry specific cloud ERP

Gartner predicts that sixty percent of all new ERP deployments by 2026 will be cloud native, reflecting a massive shift away from legacy, on premises systems. Meanwhile, IDC forecasts that AI will automate up to forty percent of repetitive ERP tasks, transforming how companies manage operations, finance, and strategic planning.

AI Powered ERP Systems Become the Standard

Artificial intelligence has moved from being a useful add on to becoming the core engine of AI powered ERP systems. These platforms enable predictive analytics, intelligent automation, natural language interactions, and decision support that dramatically improve business performance.

Predictive Analytics and Forecasting

How AI is transforming ERP systems in 2026 is most evident in forecasting. AI driven ERPs analyze historical, real time, and external variables to improve accuracy in predicting demand, cash flow, supplier risk, production constraints, and customer behavior. McKinsey reports a fifty percent reduction in forecasting errors for organizations adopting AI.

Intelligent Process Automation

Intelligent automation strengthens traditional workflows by teaching systems to self correct and optimize operations. Functions such as automated close suggestions, journal entry creation, anomaly detection, and real time approval routing are now standard in AI and automation in ERP.

Deloitte reports that such AI infused workflows cut processing time by forty percent.

AI Augmented User Experience

AI reshapes ERP usability, enabling natural language search, conversational inputs, personalized dashboards, and proactive recommendations. This dramatically reduces the learning curve and increases adoption across organizations.

> "IDC reports that over fifty percent of enterprises will adopt vertical clouds by 2026, while Gartner forecasts that sixty percent of new ERP deployments will be industry specific."

Automation Across Every ERP Process

Automation is one of the most impactful ERP trends 2026. Paper based workflows and manual approvals can no longer support modern operations. Forrester reports that automation improves throughput by forty percent, while Deloitte highlights that seventy three percent of organizations identify automation as the top modernization priority.

Modern ERPs like Business Central, implemented by Volt Technologies, deliver advanced workflow automation across finance, supply chain, and compliance.

Article from Mason Whitaker

End to End Workflow Automation

Automation in ERP 2026 enables full business cycle automation, from AP/AR management to procurement, replenishment, logistics, and compliance reporting. These workflows reduce errors, ensure consistency, and accelerate close and reporting cycles.

Zero Touch Accounting

Zero touch accounting is among the fastest growing ERP trends for 2026. AI handles reconciliations, journal entries, exceptions, accruals, and financial close tasks. PwC reports that zero touch accounting reduces manual finance work by seventy percent.

Integration of Robotic Process Automation (RPA)

RPA extends automation beyond the ERP system, automating government submissions, legacy data migration, email/PDF extraction, and third party updates. Forrester reports twenty five percent workload reduction when RPA is integrated with ERP.

Industry Specific Cloud ERP Takes Over

Industry specific cloud ERP solutions are becoming essential as organizations require tailored compliance, workflows, and operational structures. IDC reports that over fifty percent of enterprises will adopt vertical clouds by 2026, while Gartner forecasts that sixty percent of new ERP deployments will be industry specific.

Business Central supports vertical requirements through Microsoft AppSource, allowing SMBs to activate prebuilt industry extensions instantly.

Rise of Industry Clouds

These specialized ERP platforms provide embedded regulatory compliance, sector workflows, KPIs, and best practice data models.
Examples include manufacturing cloud, distribution cloud, retail cloud, and professional services cloud.

Modular and Composable Architecture

A major aspect of composable ERP architecture 2026 is the ability to add, replace, or expand capabilities without reimplementation. Gartner confirms composable ERP reduces deployment time by thirty percent.

Verticalized Insights and Processes

Industry specific ERPs come with prebuilt KPIs, regulatory workflows, and ready made processes, reducing deployment time and increasing adoption.

> “Gartner confirms composable ERP reduces deployment time by thirty percent.”

The Rise of Cloud Native and Composable ERP Models

Cloud native ERP 2026 is becoming the global standard. Gartner reports seventy percent of new ERPs will be cloud native by 2026. IDC forecasts that composable architecture will reduce integration timelines by nearly thirty percent.

Cloud native solutions like Business Central offer continuous updates, automatic scaling, high availability, and seamless integration, eliminating the burden of infrastructure management.

Composable ERP architecture transforms ERP from a rigid suite into a dynamic ecosystem, allowing organizations to implement modular ERP solutions tailored to their needs and growth paths.

Data, Security, and Governance Become Mission Critical

With cyber threats increasing and regulations tightening, data governance is now a core requirement of ERP for 2026. Deloitte reports that forty five percent of breaches originate from outdated ERP systems. Gartner predicts seventy percent of enterprises will prioritize ERP with built in GRC tools by 2026.

Modern ERPs like Business Central deliver enterprise grade governance, risk management, and compliance capabilities.

Built In Security and Compliance

ERP systems now include automated threat detection, unified audit trails, role based security, and real time alerts. Forrester reports a thirty two percent reduction in cybersecurity incidents for organizations using cloud ERPs with native security controls.

Unified Data Models

Unified data models eliminate silos and improve decision quality. IDC reports that organizations using unified ERP data models improve decision making by forty percent.

Regulatory Ready ERP Systems

Modern ERPs are built with automated compliance workflows, certification alignment, and audit ready reporting. PwC reports a forty percent reduction in audit preparation time with cloud ERP.

How Business Central Aligns With the ERP Trends of 2026

Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central aligns naturally with next generation ERP 2026, supporting:

- AI powered automation
- Composable ERP architecture 2026
- Industry specific cloud ERP
- Cloud ERP trends 2026
- Modular ERP solutions
- Enterprise grade security and compliance

Volt Technologies implements Business Central with industry best practices, automation design, AI readiness, and scalable architecture for SMBs.

Why SMBs Should Upgrade Before 2026

IDC reports that forty eight percent of SMBs plan ERP modernization before 2026. Deloitte reveals cloud ERP reduces operating costs by twenty to thirty percent.

Upgrading early ensures:

- Faster decision making through AI
- Reduced operational risk
- Readiness for industry specific cloud ERP
- Lower compliance burden
- Better scalability for expansion

Conclusion

The convergence of AI, automation, cloud native ERP, and industry specific cloud ERP is reshaping the ERP landscape. Organizations that adopt these ERP trends 2026 early will achieve greater agility, resilience, and long term scalability.

Microsoft *Dynamics 365 Business Central*, implemented by Volt Technologies, provides a future ready ERP foundation designed to support AI, automation, modularity, and compliance.

Ready to Modernize?

Volt Technologies helps SMBs streamline operations, adopt AI powered automation, and implement Business Central with zero disruption.
Speak with a Business Central expert today and start your transformation.

Article from Mason Whitaker

Find Answers Fast — Let AI Summarize This Post for You

Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems are no longer tools of only big businesses. It has become a fundamental part of how even small businesses function on a day-to-day basis, overseeing accounting, inventory, sales, human resources, customer service, and more. With the passing of each day, ERP systems are more intelligent, user-friendly, and cost-effective.

2026 will be a special year for *small business ERP systems*. AI, automation, IoT, cloud-related systems, and other modular technologies will revolutionize how small businesses structure, manage and grow. The goal of this article is to outline these future changes in the simplest, most comprehensive manner to help small business owners foresee and prepare for the future.

Article by
Miley Johnson,
Technical Content Creator,
TechImplement

Why 2026 Is a Critical Year for ERP Evolution

2026 marks the year when several major technologies mature at the same time:

- Artificial intelligence will be routinely incorporated into workplace software
- Cloud-native ERP will be a standard and no longer an optional add-on
- Automation and RPA will be inexpensive enough for small teams to afford
- Manual data collection will be replaced with data analytics in real time
- IoT devices will be used in everyday business operations
- Non-technical users will effortlessly adopt enhanced ERP platforms

Because of the synchronized output of innovations, ERP systems will evolve at an unprecedented rate. The first small businesses to embrace the advancements will experience a heightened competitive edge in cost, speed, decision-making, and customer satisfaction.

Top ERP Software Trends for Small Businesses in 2026

The coming years will see ERP systems become smarter, more connected, and easier to use. Here are the top trends that will define the ERP landscape for small businesses.

AI & Machine Learning Embedded in ERP

AI is no longer something "extra." By 2026, it will become a built-in feature that functions in the background to facilitate daily business activities.

What this means for small businesses

- ***Intelligent Forecasts:*** ERP can predict the demand for inventories, identify the forthcoming selling patterns, and recognize risks in the supply chain.
- ***Automated Decisions:*** AI can propose how many units to reorder, inform you of possible delays, and indicate cash flow problems.
- ***Reduced manual work:*** Activities such as processing invoices, entering data, and creating reports get done automatically.
- ***Improved Accuracy:*** AI minimizes mistakes made by humans by eliminating inefficient manual tasks, particularly in monotonous, repetitive work.

> "Everything else will be driven by intent, conversation, and context with digital workers taking instruction seamlessly and executing autonomously on our behalf."

Why this matters

AI permits small groups to perform the tasks of a large corporation without the need for extra employees and complicated systems.

Low-Code / No-Code ERP Platforms

These platforms give small businesses the ability and freedom to customize their ERP without the need to hire IT professionals.

What that means

- Anyone can change workflows, forms, dashboards, or reports.
- Instead of taking weeks, changes can be made in minutes.
- Companies can configure the ERP to fit their processes.

Why that's important

Small businesses almost never function the same way. Low-code/ no-code ERP brings flexibility to SMEs so they can change and respond to new opportunities or challenges.

Cloud-Native and SaaS ERP Models

When ERP systems are fully developed in the cloud, systems are considered Cloud-Native. SaaS ERP systems are deployed in public, private, or hybrid cloud configurations. Both cloud systems offer security, system updates, and performance advantages.

Benefits for small businesses

- ***Lower cost,*** no expensive hardware or servers
- ***Upgrades*** are automatic without system interruptions
- ***Remote access*** is perfect for remote teams, off-site employees, and owners who are traveling
- ***Scalability:*** Begin with the base system and add features as the business expands

Article from Miley Johnson

Why it matters
Small businesses receive a cloud-native ERP for predictable costs and access to enterprise-class technology, which was previously only available to larger businesses.

Modular and Industry-Specific ERP Solutions

ERP is beginning to move away from the "one size fits all" approach. For the most part, businesses are selecting only the modules they actually need.

Some examples of modules are:

- Finance
- Inventory
- CRM
- HR
- Manufacturing
- Retail
- POS
- Project management

Industry Specific Versions
Specialized ERP systems tailored for:

- Retail
- Hospitality
- Manufacturing
- Construction
- Healthcare
- Logistics

"AI that does not just advise, but acts."

Why small businesses stand to benefit
- Quicker Implementation
- Less Expensive
- More Seamlessly Integrated Into Their Day-to-Day Operations
- Greater ROI from functionality that gets used

Real-Time Data, Analytics & Embedded BI

In 2026, ERP systems focus heavily on real-time information.

What Real-Time ERP Systems Can Offer
- Updated dashboard views of sales, expenses, stock, and cash flow
- Instant alerts for delays, low inventory, or unusual activity
- Automatic generation of long and short-term forecasts

Why It Matters
Small businesses are better equipped to know the complete picture of what is happening right now. More informed decisions can be made and surprises will be minimized.

Automation + Robotic Process Automation (RPA)

RPA does repetitive tasks, taking over monotonous work and streamlining processes so they run quicker and are more reliable.

What it Automates
- Entering Orders
- Invoicing
- Payroll Processing
- Updating Inventory
- Notifications to Vendors and Customers

Why it's important
RPA is an essential technology. With it, small businesses can save valuable time and improve the overall operational efficiency in their business.

When the office is closed, AI and RPA continue to work in the system. These two work together in a seamless manner to allow for continuous productivity to occur.

Enhanced Cybersecurity & Compliance

As more business data moves online, security is a priority.

Modern ERP security features
- Zero-trust access
- Multi-factor authentication
- Data encryption
- Automated compliance monitoring
- Built-in audit trails

Why this matters
Small businesses often lack full-time IT security staff.

2026 ERP systems provide enterprise-level protection automatically.

IoT Integration for Operational Visibility

IoT devices like scanners, sensors, or tracking systems connect directly with ERP.

How it helps businesses
- Observe operational performance in real-time
- Detect and analyze issues with machines
- Facilitate visibility of the supply chain
- Optimize and streamline operational delays

Why small businesses benefit
In this case, IoT plus ERP enables small to medium organizations to have seamless real-time visibility on the movement of products and processes.

AI-Assisted Development & Customization

In 2026, ERP systems will help write code or configure features more easily by using AI tools as well.

What this means

- Greater speed in customization.
- Reduction in costs needed for development.
- More straightforward generation of new plugins, modules, workflows, or other additions.

AI will serve as a digital assistant for developers as well as limited technical users.

Blockchain and Data Integrity (Emerging)

While still developing, blockchain in ERP is becoming useful for data verification and supply chain transparency.

Practical uses

- Preventing tampering of records
- Authenticating product origins
- Ensuring secure financial transactions
- Improving audit trails

Why is this important

There is a potential to develop trust with clients and partnerships in a small business with verified and transparent data.

Enhanced User Experience (UX) and Usability

Current ERPs have a focus on modern designs and user-centric systems.

What this looks like

- Simplified menus
- Mobile-friendly interfaces
- Visual dashboards instead of confusing reports
- Drag-and-drop workflows
-

Why it matters

Higher user adoption and lion frustrations change and remove frustrations of training to be on the same (lower) level as other users. More smooth training can be implemented with processes that utilize higher levels of automation.

Mobile ERP for On-the-Go SMBs

Mobile access becomes essential, not optional.

What businesses can do from mobile?

- Approve orders
- View dashboards
- Communicate with teams
- Access inventory and customer records
- Manage daily tasks on the go

Why small businesses need this

Work doesn't always happen in an office.

Mobile ERP keeps the business running smoothly from anywhere.

GREEN ERP Initiatives

Sustainability is becoming important for both regulations and brand reputation.

Green ERP features

- Track energy usage
- Reduce paper and manual processes
- Optimize transportation routes
- Monitor carbon footprint

Why this matters

Small businesses can operate more efficiently while also showing commitment to environmental responsibility.

How Small Businesses Can Get Ready for the Trends

It is easy to get your small business ready for the Future of ERP. The focus for your small business is on how to efficiently implement some actionable steps and make sure the new system really helps you achieve your goals.

1. Conduct a needs assessment

Identify which processes slow your business down or need improvement.

2. Choose vendors offering modern ERP features

Look for AI, automation, modularity, and cloud-native design.

3. Start small, scale later

Begin with essential modules, then expand when ready.

4. Invest in training and change management

Make sure your team understands how to use the new system.

5. Strengthen governance

Prepare strong policies for data security, compliance, and usage.

Conclusion

The deployment of AI, cloud-native ERP systems, automation, real-time analytics, and intuitive user interfaces will profoundly alter and enhance ERP and small business operations in 2026. These changes will greatly increase the operational and decision-making efficiency of small businesses, enabling them to compete against bigger firms.

Small businesses that prepare will benefit from accelerated growth, enhanced operational strength, and a wide competitive gap. The future of ERP and these operational systems is designed to be user-friendly, intelligent, and focused on businesses of all sizes, especially the small firms.

TECHIMPLEMENT

Article from Miley Johnson

Why AI Not Backed by Tax Expertise Can Get Sales Tax Rates Wrong

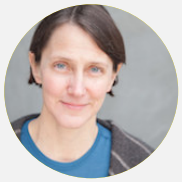
A growing number of businesses are discovering how ChatGPT and similar artificial intelligence tools can streamline innumerable tasks. But when it comes to tax compliance, it's best for businesses to rely on purpose-built tax solutions backed by human research expertise.

Key takeaways

- AI alone does not guarantee accurate sales tax rates or rules. A third-party large language model misapplied a sales tax rate because it didn't account for effective dates.
- Purpose-built tax solutions provide more accurate tax results. Avalara uses vetted tax content and expert validation to identify sales tax rates.
- Expert-backed tax solutions reduce compliance risk. Avalara Agentic Tax and Compliance™ combines AI with deep tax content and human expertise to help ensure greater accuracy.

Testing Avalara vs. Google AI on sales tax rates

When a search for a sales tax rate put Avalara AvaTax and large language model (LLM) AI chatbots like ChatGPT, Google Gemini, and Microsoft Copilot to the test, Avalara came out on top.



Article by
Gail Cole,
Author, Avalara

In October 2025, a third party AI chatbot told a user the *combined sales tax rate in Bellevue,* Washington, was 10.3%. According to Avalara AvaTax, the combined sales tax rate for Bellevue in October 2025 was 10.2%.

Which tool was right?

Avalara AvaTax gave the correct rate. The sales tax rate for Bellevue was 10.2% in October 2025. The rate will increase to *10.3%,* but not until January 1, 2026.

Why the LLM AI chatbot got the tax rate wrong

David Lingerfelt, Senior Director of Indirect Tax at Avalara, explains the discrepancy: "In July 2025, King County, Washington, passed an ordinance to impose an additional 0.1% sales tax to fund safety. However, the tax doesn't take effect until January 1, 2026. The LLM chatbot was unable to distinguish between the *ordinance* enactment date and the effective date of the tax."

Lingerfelt says his team has observed similar issues with other LLMs.

What sets Avalara apart: Expert-backed AI

Avalara AvaTax is an AI-powered compliance platform. What makes Avalara stand apart from more generic LLMs is that it's built on more than 20 years of vetted tax content and it's supported by human expertise.

"What happened with the Bellevue sales tax rate is a good example of why Avalara customers trust our research expertise and products," observes Vsu Subramanian, SVP of Engineering at Avalara. "AI can misinterpret information confidently sometimes. That's why we have experts review and refine AI-generated outputs to ensure accuracy and reliability."

Vsu adds that *Avalara Tax Research* can answer complex tax questions backed by our tax expertise and technology. "Avalara Tax Research is trusted by leading Fortune 500 companies and accounting firms for trusted and accurate tax answers," he says.

> "AI alone does not guarantee accurate sales tax rates or rules."

With the launch of Avalara Agentic Tax and Compliance™, which embeds AI agents directly into compliance systems, tools, and workflows, Avalara provides a new level of efficiency and expertise. Our comprehensive, continually updated tax content stands behind the agent, ensuring every action is expert-verified.

Ready to trust your tax rates to a purpose-built tax solution using expert-backed AI? *Discover the benefits of Avalara Agentic Tax and Compliance™.*

FAQ

Why can general purpose LLMs like Google AI, ChatGPT etc. get sales tax rates wrong?

LLMs that aren't purpose-built tax solutions can misread tax laws or miss effective dates. Without expert validation, they may apply outdated or future rates incorrectly. Tax rules and applicability can be quite complicated too.

How did Avalara outperform an AI chatbot in sales tax accuracy?

In a real scenario, Avalara identified the correct 10.2% Bellevue sales tax rate for October 2025, while a leading LLM based chatbot used the upcoming 2026 rate. The expert-backed tax content provided by Avalara AvaTax supported accurate results.

What is Avalara Agentic Tax and Compliance™?

Avalara Agentic Tax and Compliance™ combines AI-driven automation with verified tax content and human expertise to help ensure accurate and compliant results.

Avalara

About Gail Cole
Gail Cole is Lead Writer and Content Developer at Avalara. She's been on a mission to uncover unusual tax facts and make complex compliance requirements more digestible for accounting professionals and taxpayers since joining the company in 2012.

Context Engineering: From ERP to AI and the Future of Work

Large language and generative AI foundation models have been improving by between 30% and 100% every eight months, depending on the metric, with notable gains across comprehension of domain data, reliability, planning, workflow generation, and analytical reasoning.

In the workplace today, work is increasingly being offloaded to these models.

So far, this has mostly been informal, with prompts like “write me a response” or “pull the requests from this email,” but it is now being embedded directly into enterprise applications. Examples include extracting key steps from project specifications, summarizing service reports, and suggesting next actions from maintenance logs.

Article by
Matt Ely,
Field CTO IFS.ai

Together, these represent the creation and enrichment of vital business data from semi-structured inputs, making AI a direct participant in enterprise workflows rather than just an assistant outside them.

Increasingly, the reasoning faculty of foundation models is being used to stretch AI application to wider tasks. You ask a model to solve a business problem, check its reasoning, and let it use tools to carry out the plan it creates.

This goal-oriented, tool-using software is known as an agent. Nearly every enterprise technology company is developing them, though their levels of autonomy and reasoning differ. Given that these systems underpin manufacturing, logistics, finance, and customer operations, it is natural that automation is the next step.

The next 20 years will re-define the relationships between people, assets, data, processes and the enterprise systems which coordinate them entirely.

> "Together, these represent the creation and enrichment of vital business data from semi-structured inputs, making AI a direct participant in enterprise workflows rather than just an assistant outside them."

Enterprise software will stop just being the place where work is done and increasingly become the thing doing the work, reasoning and executing. And why wouldn't it? Large-scale data centers are already approaching the electricity consumption of small countries, with global demand expected to reach nearly 1,000 TWh by 2030, around three times the UK's usage in 2023. It's inevitable that some of that intelligence will be directed toward enterprise work. The real question is how we prepare for it, and how we decide what thinking belongs to people and what can safely be delegated to software.

The Shift Starts with Context Engineering

A lot of what we call digital transformation has been about connecting systems. What comes next is about connecting context.

Context engineering is the practice of designing systems so that data, applications, and AI models can understand and act on the same reality, the same underlying data. It is what allows information to flow with meaning. It is what lets one agent's action inform another, what allows AI agents to reason across boundaries, and what ensures humans can stay in the loop when it matters most.

Key elements include:

- Data accessibility
- Semantic alignment
- Security boundaries
- Relevance optimization
- Human oversight
- Feedback loops

A lack of context engineering, or poor implementation, can severely limit agents. Knowing which tool to use means little if they can't identify the right data, understand its relationships, or act on it correctly. Add in security, technical, or legal restrictions, and you risk agents that fail or worse, act unpredictably.

Much of what we are already doing at IFS supports this goal. We have moved to an API-first architecture, using RESTful APIs and OData for integrations, interfaces, and data exposure. Alongside this, our Model Context Protocol (MCP) servers provide context with data, making enterprise applications orchestra table. Together, these steps create accessible data for users, partners, internal teams, and agents, making systems connected, connectable, and ready for the next generation of Industrial AI. They engineer the context.

From Interfaces to Interactions

A clear sign of the shift towards letting systems do some of the reasoning and orchestration on our behalf is the slow erosion of the traditional user interface. The UI is an artefact of how we used to work with software. Many of our preferred systems start with an instruction or search bar which we fill with natural language to start a process, saving clicks.

> "Enterprise software will stop just being the place where work is done and increasingly become the thing doing the work, reasoning and executing."

Article by Matt Ely

Our digital workers, our agents, reduce the need for UI even further. They communicate through MCP and act as orchestration nodes in an event-driven architecture. They would much rather call well documented APIs than remember the 15 clicks required to get something done with UI-loadtime slowing them down.

From an onboarding and change management perspective, learning a UI has become an unnecessary burden in most change projects. If we can replace it with natural, human interaction, systems we can talk to, guide, and collaborate with, we make technology simpler and much more effective.

When agents can handle enough goals, tools, and context, will we still need a UI at all?

Industrial AI vs Commodity AI

Not all AI carries the same level of risk. In consumer or low-stakes business contexts, getting it mostly right can still be acceptable. In industrial operations, that is not good enough. Industrial AI is high risk by nature because decisions affect assets, safety, productivity, and sometimes lives.

Whilst we will need to see improvement in areas beyond context, consistency and predictability being two, this is another reason why context matters.

Industrial AI must be grounded in system-of-record logic, shaped by industry domain, asset type, geography, and regulation. An agent managing maintenance schedules or dispatching field crews operates inside a world of compliance and consequence. Context engineering ensures that world stays consistent, traceable, and explainable. It is the difference between useful autonomy and unacceptable risk.

> "It bridges the gap between the system of record and the system of action, between data and decision, between today's ERP and tomorrow's autonomous enterprise."

The Human and AI Balance

Over the next decade, industrial companies will be run by AI and humans, but always led by people. Digital workers will take on structured, repeatable, and time-sensitive tasks, while humans focus on creativity, ethics, and innovation, the things that make us human: teaching, persuading, leading, designing, and storytelling.

Give it another five to ten years and even the environments we work in will change. The only enduring reason for a screen may be to talk to someone who is not sitting next to you. Everything else will be driven by intent, conversation, and context with digital workers taking instruction seamlessly and executing autonomously on our behalf. Offices will return to being places of discussion and creativity, not rows of people clicking through applications.

IFS and the Path Ahead

(This is the only ad in this article, I promise.)

IFS is already moving toward that horizon. Through IFS.ai and its family of digital workers, our users are seeing what context-aware agentic AI looks like in practice. AI that does not just advise, but acts. These digital workers perform real operational tasks within trusted guardrails, explain their reasoning, and hand decisions back to humans where context, ethics, or simple pragmatism demand it.

The Next Era: Context Engineering as the Bridge

We began by building systems to record what happens, the first digital ledgers of business. Then came systems to plan what should happen, coordinating resources and processes at scale. Over time, those systems grew dense with features, integrations, and custom code, powerful but often rigid and hard to change. Each generation brought more capability, but also more complexity. The next generation of ERP will make things happen, autonomously completing work based on live data, events, and policy.

In industries like manufacturing, construction, aerospace, and energy, this shift will redefine how work, value, and resources interact. Factories will adjust production based on AI-managed energy availability. Projects will reschedule around materials and weather. Predictive maintenance will become coordination between digital workers, robots, and engineers. Aircraft will plan maintenance around performance and demand. Energy grids will balance for cost and carbon. Every process will form part of a system that senses, decides, and acts as if guided by a

set of musicians, each aware of the others' rhythm.

This is the payback from context engineering: the connective tissue that allows intelligence to move safely and meaningfully through and between enterprises. It bridges the gap between the system of record and the system of action, between data and decision, between today's ERP and tomorrow's autonomous enterprise.

The One Big Takeaway

The biggest advantage any industrial organization can take right now is to start investing in context engineering, making systems and data connected and connectable so intelligence can flow where it is needed. Strengthen data foundations. Prepare systems for event-based interaction. Pilot digital workers. Build trust within workforces by showing these technologies are explainable and well governed.

This is the groundwork for high-impact Industrial AI. The choices made today will decide how confidently we step into the next era of human and digital collaboration.

As digital workers evolve and AI starts to handle more of the structured work, the relationship between people and enterprise systems is changing fast.

Let's build the future together and prepare for the next era of Industrial AI.

About Matt Ely

I'm a technologist focused on bringing Industrial AI to life inside complex organizations, helping businesses transform how work gets done in the AI era. I'm particularly interested in how applied data science can scale safely and sustainably to solve real-world problems. Much of my work centers on enabling human-AI collaboration, building systems that think alongside people rather than just for them. At IFS, I help organizations adopt and operationalize Industrial AI, turning ideas into measurable value. If you're exploring how AI can reshape your enterprise systems or reimagine the future of work, let's connect.

PROCare achieves 300% order capacity increase and 99% picking accuracy with Forterro's ERP solution, Orderwise

PROCare, a leading UK manufacturer of accessible wet rooms, bathrooms and adaptive kitchens, has significantly expanded its operational capacity and warehouse efficiency after implementing Forterro's ERP and WMS solution Orderwise.

The business increased the number of daily orders it can process from 50 to 200+, boosted picking accuracy to 99%, and scaled its warehouse operations to 75,000 sq. ft. as demand continues to grow nationwide.

Founded in 2001 as a supplier of shower trays, PROCare now supplies adapted bathrooms and wet-room solutions to housing associations, local authorities and contractors across the UK. As its product range and customer base expanded, the company's manual processes and legacy systems lacked the visibility and control required for sustained growth.

"Before Orderwise, processing 50 orders in a day was time-consuming. Now we're regularly doing 200+ and handling far more products, all thanks to Orderwise making us more efficient," said Adam Balmer, IT Manager, PROCare. "Orderwise just works - the prompts, the accuracy, the flexibility. It means we can keep growing without adding more people."

Manual order entry and paper-based picking meant warehouse teams previously relied on memory to locate and select items. Today, every bathroom order is picked, labelled, and tracked individually using handheld scanners and guided walk routes, a transformation that has drastically reduced errors and driven improved customer satisfaction.

"Our picking errors are so low that even ISO auditors don't believe us, we're at around a 99% success rate," Balmer continued. "Having that level of confidence across the warehouse is game-changing, especially when you're supplying complex, high-value bathroom components."

Since adopting Orderwise, PROCare has achieved:

- 300%+ increase in daily orders processed (from 50 to 200+)
- 99% pick accuracy across warehouse operations
- Significant growth in online self-service orders through its trade portal
- Seamless scaling of warehouse capacity to 75,000 sq. ft.

Tom Price, Director at Forterro, said:

"PROCare is a strong example of how a modern, scalable ERP and WMS can unlock sustainable growth. By replacing manual processes and legacy systems with Orderwise, they've gained the accuracy, speed and control needed to support their expanding national footprint. As the company grows it has everything in place to scale with it."

Built on decades of ERP expertise working with distributors, manufacturers and retailers, Orderwise helps thousands of organisations simplify complexity, connect operations and scale confidently.

About Forterro®

Founded in 2012, Forterro has grown to become a category leader in industrial software – with strongholds in Europe's top production economies, as well as regional service hubs and development centres around the world. From more than 40 office locations, its 2,500+ employees provide and support software for more than 25,000 industrial businesses. Its products are deeply rooted in the demands of their local geography and each is designed to strengthen and accelerate customers' ability to operate efficiently and compete effectively.

FORTERRO

Aptean Launches AppCentral 2.0: The AI Platform Purpose-Built for Industries

Aptean, a global leader in AI-powered enterprise software for industrial sectors, is proud to announce the launch of AppCentral 2.0, the AI platform purpose-built for industries.

AppCentral 2.0 combines deep Vertical AI with an extensive range of industry-specific applications – from ERP to supply chain solutions such as asset management, transportation management, warehouse management, and more – to transform how work gets done. Built for the people who keep industry moving, it senses, learns, and acts in real time – helping teams make smarter decisions, move faster, and operate with greater agility from the factory floor to the supply chain. The launch marks a pivotal moment in Aptean's evolution into a Vertical AI platform leader.

"AppCentral is more than software, it's a teammate," said TVN Reddy, CEO of Aptean. "True partnership means delivering practical AI solutions that make every day easier, more productive, and more profitable. AppCentral 2.0 brings AI out of the lab and into day-to-day operations where it drives measurable impact."

AppCentral 2.0 changes how teams operate by providing:

- Instant Answers: Ask questions like: "What was my top selling product last month?" or "What are our top five products in inventory?" and get immediate answers – no complex dashboards or reports required.

- Intelligent Workflows: Fully or partially automate tasks – such as generating purchase orders or rerouting shipments – with AppCentral's AI agents. The possibilities are endless.

- Role-Based AI Workspaces: Tailor AI dashboards to each role – from CFOs tracking overdue invoices to planners using AI agents to prepare for S&OP meetings. These workspaces help every employee work smarter and faster, and with greater focus.

- Predictive Insights: Spot risks like hurricanes or tariff changes before they impact operations. Vertical AI identifies threats and opportunities early, enabling companies to anticipate, act, and focus on what's coming, instead of what's happened.

The possibilities extend far beyond Aptean's solution set. AppCentral 2.0 customers can deploy AI agents and workflows to drive intelligent automation across all functions and processes, ranging from employee onboarding and supplier collaboration to task automation.

Trusted by Thousands. Evaluated in the Real World. Built for Industrial Teams.

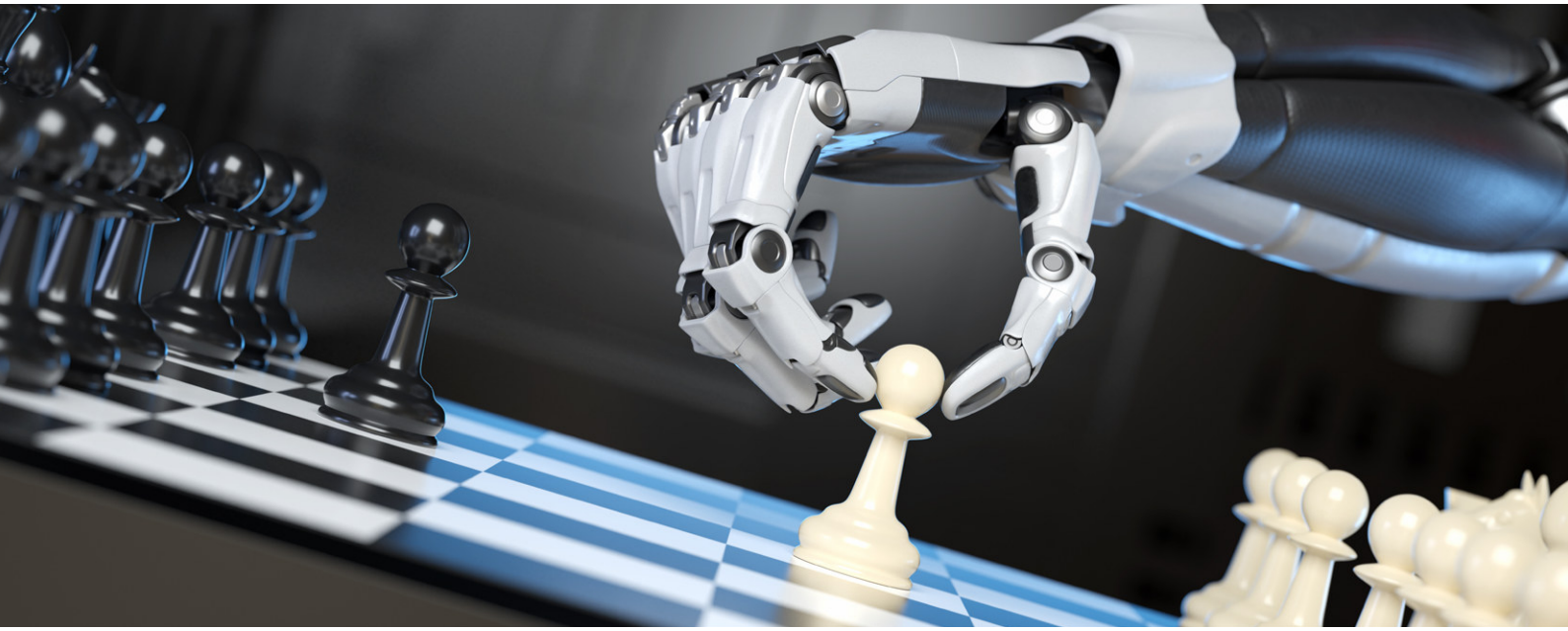
AppCentral is trusted by thousands of companies worldwide. AppCentral 2.0 represents a game-changing evolution and is already deployed across real-world industrial environments through Aptean's internal operations and early access programs.

Customer feedback points to significant gains in decision speed, operational agility, and team productivity. More than just delivering a platform, Aptean partners with customers to help them integrate, adopt, and scale AppCentral 2.0 across their operations, ensuring they unlock its full potential. This co-development approach ensures AppCentral 2.0 is grounded in the realities of the industries Aptean serves.

AppCentral 2.0 is available now. To learn more or request a demo, visit our *website.*

About Aptean

Aptean is an AI platform leader that combines Vertical AI with an extensive range of industry-specific applications – from ERP to supply chain solutions such as asset management, transportation management, warehouse management, and more – to help businesses become more agile, productive, and profitable. With a focus on practical innovation and a passion for customer success, Aptean helps companies in manufacturing, distribution, apparel, food and beverage, and many other sectors redefine what's possible.



QAD | Redzone and AWS Bring Agentic AI to Mid-Market Manufacturing with Launch of Champion AI

Collaboration combines QAD | Redzone's manufacturing expertise and AWS's advanced capabilities to make AI practical, scalable, and secure for mid-market manufacturers

QAD Inc., the company transforming manufacturing and supply chains with intelligent, adaptive solutions, and Amazon Web Services (AWS), the world's most broadly adopted cloud provider, announced an expanded strategic collaboration. Together, the companies are bringing Agentic AI to the mid-market manufacturing sector through *QAD Champion AI*, a breakthrough platform built on AWS cloud infrastructure and AI capabilities.

QAD | Redzone and AWS will help manufacturers modernize faster, increase productivity, and reduce total cost of ownership, while ensuring the security and scalability required for industrial operations.

Agentic AI for the Frontline

Until now, mid-market manufacturers have struggled to capture the benefits of enterprise AI due to legacy systems, cyber risk, and unclear ROI. Champion AI changes that — democratizing access to Agentic AI that works with frontline manufacturing teams, not around them.

Built on AWS and leveraging AI and analytics capabilities, including Amazon Bedrock AgentCore and Amazon SageMaker, Champion AI delivers intelligent automation, predictive insights, and real-time decision support directly into manufacturing workflows — enabling measurable productivity gains, reduced downtime, and accelerated time-to-value.

Accelerating Innovation through Cloud Modernization

As part of this collaboration, QAD | Redzone is transitioning its global IT workloads and internal platforms to AWS. This migration will create a modern, cloud-native foundation for QAD's manufacturing platform, enabling faster delivery of new features, improved reliability, and seamless scalability for customers worldwide.

"The real breakthrough in manufacturing AI isn't technology — it's accessibility," said Sanjay Brahmawar, CEO of QAD | Redzone. "With AWS, we're making Agentic AI practical for every manufacturer, not just the largest ones. Champion AI helps the mid-market move faster, increase productivity, and lower total cost of ownership — all while empowering people on the frontline."

Industrial Impact You Can Measure

Through this collaboration, manufacturers gain:

- Accelerated Time to Value — Deploy AI-driven solutions in weeks, not months
- Higher Productivity — Empower frontline workers with real-time insights and automation
- Lower TCO — Optimize infrastructure and reduce maintenance overhead
- Improved Cyber Resilience — Eliminate vulnerabilities from legacy systems
- Continuous Innovation — Access evolving Manufacturing Smart Layers powered by AWS

A Blueprint for AI Readiness

Manufacturers can begin their modernization journey through the *QAD Champion Benchmark* — a rapid assessment that evaluates AI readiness, benchmarks performance against peers, and identifies productivity opportunities. Qualified participants may also access the QAD-AWS AI Modernization Incentive, designed to minimize risk while accelerating ROI.

"The key to moving agentic AI from proof of concept to production is the ability to incorporate your unique data into workflows," said Matt Garman, CEO of AWS. "Our partnership with QAD makes this a reality by enabling agentic AI that mid-market manufacturers can securely integrate with their data. Using AWS and Champion AI, our mutual customers can drive productivity gains, innovate faster, and compete globally."

About AWS

Since 2006, Amazon Web Services has been the world's most comprehensive and broadly adopted cloud platform. With over 240 services across compute, storage, databases, analytics, AI, and IoT, AWS enables millions of customers—including the largest enterprises and fastest-growing startups—to innovate faster and operate more securely at scale. Learn more at aws.amazon.com.

About QAD | Redzone

QAD | Redzone is redefining manufacturing and supply chains through its intelligent, adaptive platform that connects people, processes, and data into a single System of Action. With three core pillars — Redzone (frontline empowerment), Adaptive Applications (the intelligent backbone), and Champion AI (Agentic AI for manufacturing) — QAD helps manufacturers operate with Champion Pace, achieving measurable productivity, resilience, and growth in just 90 days. For more information, visit www.qad.com or call +1 805-566-6100. Find us on LinkedIn, X, Facebook and Instagram.

Rootstock Software Acquires Praxis Solutions and Appoints Praxis Head Ohad Idan as Vice President of Product

Acquisition deepens Rootstock's Salesforce ecosystem expertise to accelerate agentic capabilities, extend professional services capacity, and strengthen ERP product leadership

Rootstock Software ("Rootstock" or "the Company"), a recognized leader in cloud ERP for product-based companies, announced its acquisition of *Praxis Solutions, LLC* ("Praxis"), a Salesforce consulting and implementation firm with a long-standing partnership with Rootstock. Rootstock is backed by Gryphon Investors, a leading middle-market private investment firm.

As part of the acquisition, *Ohad Idan*, Founder and CEO of Praxis, will join Rootstock as its new Vice President of Product, adding his proven leadership and vision to the company's next phase of growth. Coupled with expanded professional services capabilities, the acquisition will enable Rootstock to deliver its Salesforce-native ERP solution to a broader base of product companies worldwide.

"Both the acquisition of Praxis and Ohad's appointment mark major steps in Rootstock's long-term strategy to lead a new era of ERP innovation," said R*ick Berger*, CEO of Rootstock. "Praxis has been a trusted partner for many years, and integrating their team's expertise across the Salesforce ecosystem and Rootstock ERP will strengthen our innovation engine and accelerate our ability to deliver measurable value to customers. With Ohad leading our product strategy, we are poised to redefine ERP, making it more intelligent, connected, and adaptable for product companies of the future."

Mr. Idan is a *Salesforce MVP Hall of Famer* and *winner of the 2025 Dreamforce Hackathon*. With more than 20 years of experience across manufacturing, logistics, and enterprise technology, he has helped many companies modernize their operations and implement scalable digital solutions. At Praxis, Mr. Idan led numerous digital transformation initiatives using Salesforce and Rootstock solutions and built a reputation for customer partnerships grounded in trust, transparency, and measurable results. Previously, he held operational and technical leadership roles at I.D. Systems, Elcom Technologies, and Titan Tool, where he spearheaded large-scale ERP and CRM initiatives.

"I'm thrilled to join Rootstock at such a pivotal time in the Company's trajectory," said Mr. Idan. "The integration of Praxis into Rootstock is an exciting milestone in our mission to empower manufacturers and distributors with AI-enabled ERP solutions that drive efficiency, agility, and growth. Product companies are demanding a flexible, forward-looking ERP, but as these businesses define their AI strategies, they also need a partner to help them achieve agentic maturity. We're setting a course to deliver the agentic innovations that foster resilience, performance, and long-term success."

The Praxis consulting team will be integrated into Rootstock's *Global Professional Services* organization, led by *Caroline (Santander) Marty*, SVP of Global Professional Services & Enablement.

"Our organizations have a shared culture focused on customer success," said Ms. Marty. "This means Praxis customers can expect the same high level of service, but now with the added benefit of Rootstock's expanded resources and global support infrastructure. And because their consultants already know our platform, technology, and many of our customers, they can immediately hit the ground running, contributing to our projects. Finally, the addition of the Praxis team expands our delivery capacity and accelerates our ability to offer additional services."

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About Praxis Solutions

Praxis Solutions is a Salesforce consulting and implementation firm with in-depth expertise in the Salesforce ecosystem and Rootstock ERP. As a long-standing Rootstock partner, Praxis has helped manufacturers and distributors streamline operations through tailored ERP implementations, integrations, and system enhancements. The company's Managed Services offering extends its commitment to customer success by providing ongoing optimization, administration, and support after go-live. Known for its technical excellence and customer-first approach, Praxis empowers organizations to get the most out of their Salesforce and Rootstock investments.

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.

About Gryphon Investors

Gryphon Investors is a leading middle-market private investment firm focused on profitably growing, competitively advantaged companies in the Business Services, Consumer, Healthcare, Industrial Growth, Software, and Technology Solutions & Services sectors. With more than $10 billion of assets under management, Gryphon prioritizes investments in which it can form strong partnerships with founders, owners, and executives to accelerate the building of leading companies and generate enduring value through its integrated deal and operations business model. Gryphon's highly differentiated model integrates its well-proven Operations Resources Group, which is led by full-time, Gryphon senior operating executives with general management, human capital acquisition and development, treasury, finance, and accounting expertise. Gryphon's three core investment strategies include its Flagship, Heritage, and Junior Capital strategies, each with dedicated funds of capital. The Flagship and Heritage strategies target equity investments of $50 million to $500 million per portfolio company. The Junior Capital strategy targets investments of $10 million to $25 million in junior securities of credit facilities, arranged by leading middle-market lenders, in both Gryphon-controlled companies, as well as in other private equity-backed companies operating in Gryphon's targeted investment sectors.

Sage Intacct Delivers New Capabilities That Transform How Finance Teams Close, Consolidate, and Connect Data Across Their Business

With intelligent close automation and advanced ownership consolidation to help high-performing finance teams close faster, work smarter, and make better decisions at scale

Sage Intacct expands capabilities with a new AI-powered Agent, built-in transparency through the AI Trust Label, and Sage Expense Management to simplify spend control and deliver greater confidence across connected finance workflows

Sage, the leader in accounting, financial, HR, and payroll technology for small and mid-sized businesses, unveiled new functionality in Sage Intacct designed to help finance teams move from managing data to driving performance. These new features simplify operations, accelerate reporting, and empower finance teams to lead with accuracy, agility, and confidence.

With finance leaders under pressure to move faster and deliver more value, Edelman DXI research for Sage shows that 84% want to close the books faster, and 87% are seeking greater automation across AP and reconciliation workflows. The latest Sage Intacct updates address these needs with AI-powered intelligence that helps teams work smarter and make confident, data-led decisions.

Alongside these innovations, Sage is taking steps to make AI more transparent and accountable. The Sage AI Trust Label, now live in Sage Intacct in the US and UK, gives customers clear insight into how AI is developed and applied, including how data is used, the safeguards in place to prevent bias, and the measures taken to ensure accuracy and compliance.

"This release is about giving finance teams more automation and insight powered by AI" said Dan Miller, EVP, Financials & ERP Division, Sage. "We've embedded AI into the close and announced the Finance Intelligence Agent. We're helping customers anticipate issues and act faster. By orchestrating data and responses from multiple AI Agents within Intacct, finance teams can

go from question to answer in seconds — no reports, no manual analysis. These innovations reflect Sage's commitment to building practical, connected AI that delivers measurable outcomes for every finance leader."

Driving the Next Era of High-Performance Finance

From AI-driven variance analysis and real-time reconciliation to automated consolidations, connected insurance data, and a growing network of intelligent Agents, Sage Intacct continues to deliver on its vision for High-Performance Finance, helping customers simplify complexity, improve control, and accelerate growth.

These Agents - including Close, AP, Time, Assurance, and the newly announced Finance Intelligence Agent - work together to automate repetitive tasks, surface insights in context, and provide finance leaders with continuous visibility across their operations. Together, they represent a significant step toward autonomous finance, where insights and actions flow seamlessly across the business.

As Sage advances this vision, partners and customers are already seeing how these innovations bring new levels of visibility and confidence to financial operations.

"Sage continues to raise the bar for what finance teams can achieve with intelligent automation," said Matt Rowley, Partner – Service Line Leader, Wipfli. "With innovations like AI-powered Close Automation and Sage's expanding network of AI Agents, customers are gaining faster insights, greater accuracy, and the freedom to focus on high-value work."

What's New in Sage Intacct R4 2025

- ***Close Automation with Sage Ai***

Close Automation with Sage Ai is now generally available for all customers in the US and UK, bringing together the full suite of intelligent close capabilities - Close Workspace, Close Assistant, Subledger Reconciliation Assistant, and Variance Analysis – all in one connected, Sage Copilot-guided experience. The solution provides visibility across teams, tasks, and entities, helping finance leaders identify issues early, shorten close cycles, and improve accuracy and auditability.

Available to customers in the US and UK

- ***Finance Intelligence Agent***

The *Finance Intelligence Agent* is the newest addition to Sage Intacct's growing network of AI Agents, delivering autonomous insights alongside existing Close, Accounts Payable, Time, and Assurance Agents. It allows finance teams to ask questions in natural language through Sage Copilot and receive instant, actionable answers – transforming how they access, analyse, and act on data.

Early Access available to customers in the US and UK from December

- ***Equity Method for Advanced Ownership Consolidation***

The new Equity Method for Advanced Ownership Consolidation automates equity accounting for complex, multi-level ownership structures, including partial ownership and multi-parent rollups. By automatically generating and recording equity entries during consolidation, finance leaders gain transparency, precision, and flexibility with affiliate-level reporting across multiple entities

Available to customers in the US, UK, Australia, Canada, and South Africa

- ***Sage Intacct PolicyConnect***

Sage Intacct PolicyConnect seamlessly integrates policy administration systems with the general ledger, giving insurance organizations a unified view of operational and financial data. This connection enables deeper analysis of profitability, exposure and performance, delivering real-time policy level data to accelerate reporting and provides actionable insights to stakeholders.

Available to customers in the US

- ***AI Trust Label Now Live in Sage Intacct***

The *Sage AI Trust Label* is now live in Sage Intacct in the US and UK, giving customers greater transparency and confidence in how AI is developed and used. It provides clear, accessible information on Sage's responsible AI practices, including compliance, data use, safeguards against bias, and accuracy monitoring — helping businesses build trust and confidence in AI-powered finance.

Now available to Sage Intacct customers in the US and UK

- ***Sage Expense Management***

Sage Expense Management, formerly Fyle, simplifies and automates expense workflows with real-time spend notifications and AI-powered receipt capture and matching. The card-agnostic solution lets organizations retain existing credit-card programmes while gaining instant visibility into spend, helping finance teams control costs, improve accuracy, and close faster.

Available to Sage Intacct customers in the US

Nearly 70% of Marketing Leaders Agree Agentic AI Will Be Transformative, Yet Effectiveness Remains Elusive

CMOs are constrained by ineffectiveness, with only 15% of marketing leaders strongly agreeing that their set up today allows them to do high value work

7 in 10 organizations now use generative AI (Gen AI) in marketing, yet just 7% of marketers strongly agree that AI has boosted marketing effectiveness

Only 18% of marketing leaders strongly believe they are successfully personalizing customer interactions using AI/GenAI to boost engagement and outcomes

With less than 40% of CMOs controlling martech budgets, CIO-CMO collaboration is critical for AI-driven marketing outcomes

The Capgemini Research Institute's CMO Playbook, *"From complexity to clarity: How CMOs can reclaim marketing to build competitive edge",* finds that the role of the Chief Marketing Officer (CMO) is at a crossroads, calling for a fundamental reimagining of the function. While expectations of CMOs are at an all-time high, they face a plethora of challenges such as tightening budgets, declining strategic influence, limited ownership of martech budget and integration of AI. Despite high optimism around the impact of generative and agentic AI, more than half (55%) of marketing leaders say these initiatives are currently funded by IT, with limited marketing control.

Nearly 70% of CMOs face rising expectations, yet their strategic influence is waning

While CMOs' responsibilities are expanding, budgets are shrinking. The report finds that marketing budgets have tightened over the past two years to an average of just 5% of company revenue. At the same time, the percentage of CMOs involved in critical decision-making has dropped from 70% to 55% in just two years. Despite Gen AI gaining traction across marketing – now being used for content creation, customer segmentation, and digital campaigns – only 15% of marketing leaders say that low-value tasks

are automated within their function. Most teams still remain focused on manual tasks, limiting their time for brand building, innovation, and customer connection.

The report also finds that current martech and data strategies fail to leverage real-time data for seamless customer experiences. Just 18% of marketers strongly agree that they are successfully personalizing customer interactions to boost engagement and outcomes. This highlights the need for stronger collaboration between marketing and technology leadership, combining CIO expertise in tech with CMO insight into customer strategy, to fully harness AI for greater business value.

"CMOs today are expected to drive growth and meet sales targets, whilst also being experts in data and AI – they must now market to both humans and agents. But many lack the resources, control or clarity to manage these growing demands. AI tools offer great potential but often fail to deliver results as budgets, strategy and technology aren't fully aligned," said Gagandeep Gadri, Managing Director frog, part of Capgemini. "This is a pivotal moment for marketers to rethink their function's core purpose and reposition it not just as a support department but as a driver of customer experience and enterprise growth to create real business value."

AI is considered a growth driver, yet its real impact on marketing falls short

Nearly seven in ten large organizations now use Gen AI in marketing, either extensively or to a limited extent. Its share of martech investment has risen from 64% in 2023 to 79% in 2025. Yet, impact remains limited: only 7% of marketers strongly agree that AI has boosted marketing effectiveness and many report challenges in scaling AI pilots.

In addition, optimism for agentic AI is high but most organizations remain cautious. Nearly 70% agree that autonomous or multi-agent AI could be applied to various marketing use cases, but few are currently testing, experimenting or using any form of agentic AI in marketing. The report cites the lack of the right skills, data privacy challenges, security risks and ethical concerns, as well as low trust in autonomous AI-generated decisions, as the key challenges in fully leveraging AI's potential in marketing.

Integrating AI across the value chain and rethinking models is key to reclaiming marketing

Integrating sales and go-to-market strategies is a top priority for 61% of marketers, yet less than a quarter report having shared KPIs, leading to fragmented execution and suboptimal customer experiences. Similarly, tighter collaboration between CMOs and CIOs is emerging as a key driver of influence, ensuring that data, systems, and teams are aligned so that AI can deliver measurable business value. Capability gaps also remain a challenge, as seven in ten (68%) marketing leaders believe their teams must upskill in AI, ethics, and business strategy to stay competitive.

To reclaim marketing in an AI-led future, the report suggests that CMOs should redesign their operating models and integrate AI across the entire marketing value chain. There is a need for CMOs to build marketing that is human-centric, optimized and future-ready, repositioning themselves as drivers of customer experience and engagement, contributing to business growth. Strengthening collaboration with CIOs, removing silos across the organization, investing in the right AI skills and enabling human-AI chemistry[1] will be at the heart of this, in order to align technology and data with strategic priorities.

Report Methodology

The Capgemini Research Institute conducted an extensive survey in July 2025, engaging 1,500 executives at director level and above, overseeing marketing strategies within diverse organizations across 15 countries worldwide. These organizations each have annual revenues of $1 billion and over. To complement this research, the Capgemini Research Institute interviewed ~30 CMOs and marketing leaders. 'Strongly agree' reflects respondents who have selected 5 on a scale of 1-5. Please read the full report for more information.

About Capgemini

Capgemini is an AI-powered global business and technology transformation partner, delivering tangible business value. We imagine the future of organizations and make it real with AI, technology and people. With our strong heritage of nearly 60 years, we are a responsible and diverse group of 420,000 team members in more than 50 countries. We deliver end-to-end services and solutions with our deep industry expertise and strong partner ecosystem, leveraging our capabilities across strategy, technology, design, engineering and business operations. The Group reported 2024 global revenues of €22.1 billion.

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Appficiency Announces Strategic Investment in AskCipher: A Next Generation Universal AI Interface Layer for Enterprise Software

AskCipher Operates as an Intelligent Business Operations Partner to Simplify Complex Software Environments

Appficiency, a leading consulting company for building and implementing NetSuite solutions, announced their strategic investment in AskCipher, the first AI-powered interface layer designed to simplify how teams work across enterprise software systems like NetSuite, Salesforce, and Quickbase.

AskCipher acts as an intelligent business operations partner, not just a chatbot, that learns and adapts over time, eliminating the need for users to learn multiple complex software environments. For ERP implementations specifically, AskCipher replaces generic, one-size-fits-all ERP implementations with personalized solutions tailored to each business's unique needs and industry processes.

AskCipher enables Appficiency to shorten ERP implementation cycles, reduce manual configuration and documentation work, and eliminates the need for separate middleware integrations across platforms.

"This launch is a significant milestone in our company's journey to address customer demands and the unique needs facing many industries," said Johnny Than, Chief Executive Officer of Appficiency. "For decades, software has forced users to compromise—specialized apps couldn't integrate, and big platforms required endless tailoring. Now, AI often adds even more tools without true personalization. With AskCipher, we set out to fix that with a universal layer that adapts to every user, every workflow, and every system, at a global scale."

By embedding AI-driven automation, analytics, and personalization directly into NetSuite environments, AskCipher makes NetSuite implementations 20% faster and cheaper, increasing savings as it gets smarter. AskCipher marks a strategic shift for Appficiency towards AI-augmented implementations, bringing predictive and adaptive intelligence into ERP environments without adding new tools or storing customer data outside the client's systems. It offers enterprise-grade AI without data-storage risks, maintains permissions and audit trails, and delivers 90% accuracy in requirements documentation.

AskCipher also supports implementation, training, customer service, workflow automation, and cross-app insights—all through simple and natural language prompts. AskCipher's persistent memory system stores organizational policies, user preferences, and process optimizations, ensuring the platform gets smarter with every use.

Appficiency is currently working to extend AskCipher's capabilities with more advancements, including support for additional enterprise platforms, advanced multi-system orchestration, and deeper, continuous learning within each client deployment.

AskCipher was officially released in October 2025, and will expand beyond beta in February 2026. Organizations interested in early access can join the waitlist at: *https://www.app.askcipher.com/waitlist.*

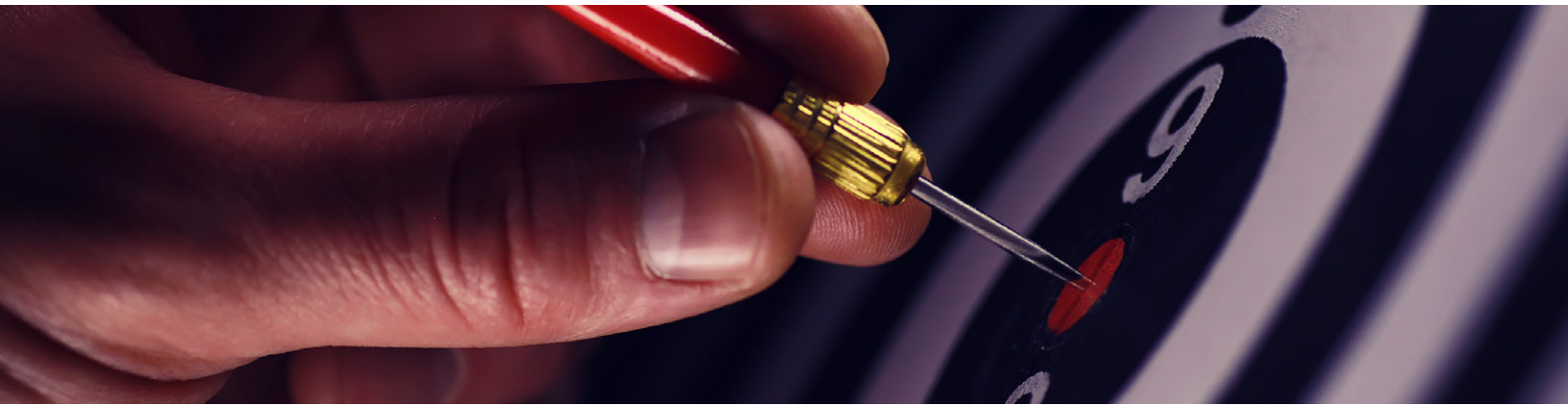
appficiency

About AskCipher

AskCipher is an independent AI company developing universal interface layers for enterprise software. Originally spun off from Appficiency, AskCipher builds AI-powered solutions that eliminate the complexity of working across multiple business applications, enabling teams to interact with their entire software stack through natural language. AskCipher's technology adapts to users, workflows, and systems at a global scale without storing customer data outside existing platforms. For more information, visit www.askcipher.com.

About Appficiency

Established in Toronto in 2014, Appficiency is a provider of IT consulting services focusing on leading ERP solutions in North America and around the world. Appficiency is committed to serving our clients by helping them respond to complex business issues and evolving service needs and opportunities with innovative technologies. Over the past few years, Appficiency has grown to be market makers that have redefined industry solutions with complex software adaptations in markets like warehouse distribution, advertising, media, professional services, transportation and logistics, and construction. To learn more about Appficiency, please visit us at appficiency.com.



Auditoria Named in Top 50 Financial Technology Companies by The Financial Technology Report

Award honors Auditoria's leadership in Fintech AI and the future of autonomous finance

Auditoria.AI, the leader in agentic artificial intelligence for the Office of the CFO, today announced that it has been named to The Financial Technology Report's "Top 50 Financial Technology Companies of 2025," recognized for its leadership in AI-driven finance automation. The recognition reflects Auditoria's impact on modern finance teams through its intelligent automation platform, which streamlines critical workflows, accelerates cash performance, and improves visibility across the enterprise.

The award acknowledges the growing importance of AI in reshaping the finance function. Finance leaders are under pressure to deliver faster insight, manage rising operational complexity, and strengthen control in an environment where traditional manual processes cannot keep pace with business demands. Auditoria's platform addresses these challenges by combining intelligent agents, real-time automation, and machine learning, enabling finance teams to operate with greater accuracy, speed, and precision.

"Operational intelligence now sits at the center of how finance teams work and make decisions," said Rohit Gupta, CEO and Founder of Auditoria.AI. "Being recognized in the Fintech AI category reinforces the work we are doing to help organizations modernize the back office with systems that think, learn, and act in real time. This award is a testament to our customers, who continue to push the boundaries of what intelligent automation can deliver for finance."

Transforming finance operations with practical, trusted AI

Auditoria's mission is to make organizations more efficient and competitive by accelerating key finance processes and improving compliance through AI. The company's SmartCustomer and SmartVendor applications eliminate heavy manual workload across accounts receivable and accounts payable, helping teams reduce cycle times and operate with better financial predictability. Auditoria Guardian reinforces these capabilities by delivering enterprise-grade data isolation and encryption, enabling organizations to adopt AI with confidence while maintaining strict security and privacy standards.

The company's momentum is driven by measurable customer impact. Enterprises using Auditoria report significant reductions in manual workload, shorter AR and AP cycles, improved cash flow visibility, and stronger financial resilience. By integrating directly with systems of record, Auditoria's AI SmartBots automate transactional tasks, manage communication flows, extract and validate data, and deliver continuous insight that supports better decision-making. As organizations accelerate their adoption of AI, Auditoria is helping finance and accounting teams shift their time away from repetitive work and toward higher-value analysis and strategic contributions.

About the Top 50 Financial Technology Companies Awards

The Financial Technology Report's Top 50 Financial Technology Companies of 2025 celebrates the organizations shaping the future of global finance. This year's honorees reflect the continued growth and sophistication of financial technology across capital markets, digital insurance, embedded financial infrastructure, intelligent risk automation, and AI-driven analytics. The list includes companies achieving notable milestones in structured finance, securing major investment rounds, delivering advances in private market access, and preparing for public listings as the sector enters a new phase of maturity.

The awards highlight the technology providers driving efficiency, intelligence, and automation across the financial ecosystem. Auditoria's placement in the Fintech AI category underscores its leadership in developing agentic systems that help finance organizations operate with greater speed, accuracy, and control.

About Auditoria.AI

Auditoria.AI is the leader in intelligent applications for corporate finance, helping finance teams automate business processes in AP, AR, GL, and FP&A to accelerate cash performance. Auditoria's AI TeamMates, including SmartBots and SmartResearch, integrate with systems of record and financial data feeds to streamline collections, optimize spend management, digitize documentation, and deliver real-time financial insight. Finance teams at leading enterprises—including Blackbaud, Bring IT, Brown and Brown, Secureworks, Denny's, Freshworks, and UserTesting—use Auditoria to accelerate business value while minimizing IT involvement, improving resilience, and enhancing insight.

EU Launches Antitrust Probe Into SAP's Maintenance and Support Services – SAP Says Policies Comply With Competition Rules

The European Commission has launched its first formal antitrust investigation into SAP, focusing on the company's maintenance and support services for on-premises software. Regulators allege SAP may have restricted competition and imposed unfair conditions, while SAP insists its policies comply with competition rules and reflect long-standing industry standards.

The European Commission has opened a formal antitrust investigation into SAP, one of Europe's largest technology companies, focusing on its maintenance and support services for on-premises software. Regulators say they are concerned SAP may have restricted competition in this market segment, leaving customers with fewer choices and higher costs.

EU's Concerns: Restricted Competition and Unfair Conditions

Brussels regulators stated the probe is aimed at SAP's practices in the "after-market" of maintenance and support services for its software. The Commission is examining whether some of SAP's policies amount to "exploitative conduct" or unfair trading conditions.

Announcing the investigation on Thursday, EU competition chief Teresa Ribera said:

"We are concerned that SAP may have restricted competition in this crucial after-market, by making it harder for rivals to compete, leaving European customers with fewer choices and higher costs."

The probe marks the European Commission's first formal antitrust investigation into SAP, although it has been scrutinizing the company's business practices since at least 2022. That year, Brussels asked customers whether they found it easy or difficult to switch their support contracts from SAP or Oracle to alternative vendors, and whether they could freely choose and renew support services.

Allegations: Exclusive Support and Lock-In Practices

The Commission alleges SAP has:

- Required customers to buy maintenance and support exclusively from SAP;
- Prevented customers from mixing or switching providers;
- Automatically extended initial license terms to lock in support payments;
- Blocked the termination of support for unused licenses; and
- Imposed hefty reinstatement fees on customers wishing to return after a break.

SAP's Response: Compliance and Industry Standards

Shares in SAP fell almost 2% after the investigation was disclosed. However, SAP strongly defended its position, stating:
"Our policies and actions are fully in line with competition rules. We apply long-standing standards that are common across the global software sector."

The company pledged to work closely with Brussels to resolve the issues raised, adding it does not expect the discussions with the European Commission to have a material effect on its financial performance.

Background: SAP's Position in the Market

- Headquartered in Walldorf, southwest Germany, SAP is one of Europe's few big tech groups, with a market capitalization of about €275 billion.
- The company is strategically shifting from selling on-premises software licenses toward more lucrative cloud service contracts.
- Despite this, SAP continues to generate substantial revenue from its traditional on-premise software, including its legacy ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) systems. In 2024, SAP's revenues from software support reached €11.3 billion, compared with overall revenue of €34.2 billion.
- Alongside its US rival Oracle, SAP is one of the two largest providers of ERP software globally, which is used to run companies' core processes including finance, operations, HR and supply chains.

Why This Matters

This investigation underscores the EU's broader push to ensure fair competition in digital and technology markets. For SAP, it signals intensified regulatory scrutiny over its high-margin support services at a time when the company is undergoing a strategic transformation toward cloud-based solutions.

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.

Fueling Growth Through Integration: EKU Power Drives' Journey with Odoo

From Stuttgart (Germany) to Spring (Texas), *EKU Power Drives* has built a reputation for helping industries optimise their use and generation of energy. With Odoo at the center of its operations, the company has achieved seamless integration across production, purchasing, and inventory, boosting efficiency by 33% and freeing its teams to focus on innovation rather than administration.

Founded in 2015, EKU Power Drives emerged from an ambitious university project. Its three founders, alumni of the University of Stuttgart, were part of the Green Team: a student group that designs and builds high-performance electric race cars. What began as a passion for clean energy and engineering excellence evolved into a business with a bold mission: to make energy use smarter and cleaner across industries.

Today, EKU Power Drives designs and manufactures energy control systems used across oil and gas, construction, and mining sectors. The company helps clients reduce emissions, improve energy efficiency, and operate more sustainably in challenging environments, from the oil fields of Texas to remote Australian mining sites.

Smart Energy Systems for Every Industry

In the oil and gas sector, EKU Power Drives focuses on engine control systems that efficiently start and stop large industrial motors, significantly cutting CO_2 emissions. The company also offers on-site power generation solutions, allowing clients to produce their own energy from gas sources.

In construction, EKU Power Drives enables remote job sites to run off-grid through solar-powered systems. Modular site offices and heavy machinery can now operate independently, drawing energy from panels integrated directly into the workspace design.

And in mining, their technology helps capture and reuse kinetic energy from massive transport trucks:

> "When the truck goes downhill, it moves in neutral. We store that energy in a battery and reuse it when it goes up. It only gives 1 or 2 km/h more speed, but that's enough for one extra trip per day, and that makes a difference worth millions."
>
> -Oscar Beltrán,
> IT and Digitalization
> Manager at EKU

Before adopting Odoo, EKU Power Drives faced growing complexity as its teams expanded across Germany and the United States. The company initially relied heavily on an internal project management tool, using it not only for task coordination but also to handle inventory, sales, and purchasing, functions far beyond its original purpose.

> "We were using a single project management tool for almost everything. It worked at first, but we needed to specialize the processes by orchestrating inventory, purchases, and sales more efficiently."
>
> -Oscar Beltrán,
> IT and Digitalization
> Manager at EKU

While initially adequate, EKU soon outgrew the tool. Managing custom and series-based production created purchasing challenges: series products followed predictable procurement cycles, while customized projects demanded precise timing and coordination between production and suppliers.

The lack of specialization and integration between systems made it difficult to maintain control over stock and cash flow, especially with operations spanning Stuttgart and Spring, Texas (The Woodlands region). EKU Power Drives also faced accounting complexities due to differing financial regulations in Germany and the U.S.

When EKU Power Drives began exploring enterprise solutions, it was drawn to Odoo's European origin and open-source culture, a natural fit for a company rooted in Germany's engineering ecosystem.

> "We've known Odoo since version 9. We liked that it was configurable, and aligned with the open-source culture we value."
>
> -Oscar Beltrán,
> IT and Digitalization
> Manager at EKU

The flexibility of Odoo allowed EKU Power Drives to tailor its digital operations without compromising structure or control. The company has been using Odoo for more than six years, steadily expanding its use of modules as its global presence grew.

Across its two main hubs, EKU Power Drives runs nearly all its operations on Odoo. In the United States, the company manages *inventory*, *purchasing*, *sales*, *accounting*, and *manufacturing*, through the platform. Meanwhile, the team in Germany relies on Odoo for *inventory*, *purchasing*, *sales*, *manufacturing*, *PLM* (Product Lifecycle Management), *Approvals*, and *Sign*. Together, these modules cover most of the company's operational needs, ensuring consistency and transparency across continents.

Customizable Efficiency

One of the most impactful tools for EKU Power Drives has been Odoo Studio. This module allows their teams to adapt processes to evolving industry requirements without depending on external developers or long implementation cycles. Beltrán highlights a recent example involving new U.S. import regulations:

> "We needed to track the percentage of metal content from each country of origin for every component. In another ERP, that would have been a huge project. In Odoo, it was simple: we built the model in Studio, tested it, and moved to implementation quickly."
>
> -Oscar Beltrán,
> IT and Digitalization
> Manager at EKU

That agility has allowed EKU Power Drives to respond rapidly to compliance changes and client requests. The team is now finalizing reporting templates to automatically display material composition for every shipment to the United States.

Quantitatively, Odoo has delivered measurable gains: "Before, we needed three people for purchasing. Now we do it with two, and with the same level of control," Beltrán explains. That represents a 33% improvement in efficiency just in procurement. Similar gains have been observed across inventory and sales coordination, as automation reduces manual work and ensures real-time visibility across sites.

> "Even though we're split between two databases for now, Odoo has helped standardize our accounting and operational processes. It's made the business more transparent and easier to manage."
>
> -Oscar Beltrán,
> IT and Digitalization
> Manager at EKU

Streamlined Collaboration Across Continents: With Odoo, both EKU's German and U.S. teams operate within aligned workflows despite their geographic and accounting separation. The platform ensures unified processes, consistent data, and smoother collaboration.

After stabilizing operations and strengthening internal processes, EKU Power Drives is now focused on long-term sustainability and growth. The company now counts over 100 team members and continues to expand strategically in its key sectors.

> "Growth for us now means long-term sustainability. Our size gives us the agility to adapt quickly to the changes shaping our industry."
>
> -Oscar Beltrán,
> IT and Digitalization
> Manager at EKU

"Looking ahead, the next major milestone is to implement accounting in Germany using Odoo, unifying both entities under one fully integrated system. Our goal is also to expand Odoo across additional applications and further embed it within our core processes," Beltrán explains. "This deeper integration will make our operations even more efficient and cohesive."

By combining Odoo's integrated suite with the company's engineering expertise, EKU continues to lead the way in sustainable energy solutions for oil and gas, construction, and mining. For growing companies in any industry, especially those operating internationally or managing complex production cycles, this story is proof that Odoo can transform challenges into opportunities for efficiency, agility, and long-term growth.

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Leveraging agentic AI to empower green efforts among younger generations with UNICEF

Capgemini's Global Data Science Challenge 2025, which was supported by AWS and Mistral AI technologies, brought together innovators to design an agentic AI assistant that helps young people explore green learning and career pathways

Partner:
UNICEF

Region:
Global

Industry:
Public sector

Challenge: Young people in Brazil share a general concern about the effects of climate change and want to take action, but struggle to find the right educational and professional opportunities

Solution: Through Global Data Science Challenge 2025, Capgemini teams leveraged AWS and Mistral AI technologies to design an agentic AI assistant that connects young people to sustainability learning resources and career opportunities.

Climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time and young people are eager to act. Through the Global Data Science Challenge (GDSC) 2025 – Green Agents of Change, Capgemini supported UNICEF and proved that technology can turn ambition into action. The winning solution, powered by agentic AI, provides a blueprint for guiding young people toward green learning and career pathways, which will help them build brighter futures.

"Young people are going to be creating the solutions of the future. If we're going to solve this climate challenge, it's going to be young people in the driver's seat," said Kevin Frey, CEO of Generation Unlimited, Public-Private-Youth Partnership at UNICEF. "They have the most to gain and the most to lose because of the climate crisis. We have to empower these young people with green skills and opportunities, both for jobs and entrepreneurship."

Turning sustainability interest into action

Young people want to act on climate, but many lack the tools to do so. According to the *Youth perspectives on climate: Preparing for a sustainable future* report by the Capgemini Research Institute and UNICEF's Generation Unlimited, 67% of youth are concerned about climate change, but only 44% feel equipped with the skills to make an impact.

UNICEF's Green Rising initiative, supported by Capgemini since its launch in 2023, addresses this gap by aiming to mobilize millions of young people between the ages of 16 and 24, providing them with opportunities to lead climate action and build sustainable futures. The research also highlights regional and socio-economic divides in access to green skills, reinforcing the need for inclusive solutions that empower youth everywhere.

"Young people have the ideas, the drive, and the urgency. What they need are the tools," said Nadi Albino, Deputy Director of Partnerships at UNICEF. "Through this challenge, we're co-creating with youth, giving them agentic AI as a lever to act, innovate, and lead the green transition."

Agentic AI emerged as the most effective approach to fulfill this ambition. The GDSC, an annual hackathon dedicated to building solutions for a sustainable future, provided the perfect platform to turn this vision into reality.

"Our commitment to sustainability has to extend beyond our own operations if we are going to make a real impact," said Sarika Naik, Group Chief Corporate Responsibility Officer, Capgemini. "With the GDSC, we've repeatedly brought people together from around the world to develop unique solutions that support sustainable efforts.The 2025 version continued that legacy by applying agentic AI to expand the availability of green learning and work to young people. This forms a critical part of our partnership with UNICEF on this topic"

Crowdsourcing AI innovation

The GDSC 2025 brought together Capgemini talent worldwide to design solutions that empower youth to take climate action. Participants worked with curated datasets of green job listings and training programs, supported by AWS cloud infrastructure and Mistral AI's advanced language models, which provided the technical backbone for innovation.

AWS powered the challenge with secure, scalable cloud services and AI tools, including Amazon Bedrock AgentCore, the Strands Agents SDK, and Amazon SageMaker AI, enabling participants to develop and test solutions with speed and reliability. Meanwhile, Mistral AI contributed cutting-edge language models that allowed teams to build assistants capable of natural, context-rich dialogue and adaptive reasoning, which was critical for creating a solution that connected authentically with users. Together, these contributions accelerated innovation during the hackathon and laid the groundwork for future advancements in sustainable AI.

After a six-week development and judging period, Green Career Assistant created by Team oCaptainMyCaptainPlanet from Germany was selected as the winning solution. It draws upon large language models to enable transparent decision-making while maintaining natural, adaptive dialogue with users and performing flexible information extraction. The resulting Gen AI solution provides users with guided, explainable recommendations based on available learnings and professional opportunities.

The solution integrates four key components:

1. Data wrangling and analysis: the solution cleans and organizes raw data from diverse sources to map skills, jobs, and learning paths.

2. User understanding and interaction: multiple AWS AI services alongside Mistral AI's LLMs and agentic workflows interpret user intent through empathetic dialogue and adapt recommendations to each user's context.

3. Knowledge graph construction: links skills, jobs, and training opportunities are provided in a structured, verifiable way to avoid hallucinations.

4. Human-in-the-loop: human review ensures transparency, fairness, and continuous expert oversight aligned with UNICEF's ethical AI principles.

One of Green Career Assistant's key differentiators is an eco-friendly design that helps monitor token consumption and carbon emissions to minimize environmental impact. The result is an AI assistant that provides guided, explainable recommendations for education and career opportunities, helping young people turn climate ambition into action.

> "We have to empower these young people with green skills and opportunities, both for jobs and entrepreneurship."

"As impactful as the hackathon is, we've always viewed the GDSC as more than that," Niraj Parihar, CEO of Insights and Data Global Business Line at Capgemini explained. "It's a global platform for sustainability innovation powered by tech collaboration. AWS and Mistral AI were essential in enabling this breakthrough. Thanks to their support and the creativity of our participants, the Green Career Assistant shows how agentic AI can bridge the gap between youth ambition and the resources they need to act on climate change."

Enabling the future of green efforts

Following the winning solution's selection, UNICEF now has access to the blueprint and source code for an AI assistant designed to support its vision. By leveraging global sustainability data, the Green Career Assistant can guide young people toward education and job opportunities that align with climate action goals.

As UNICEF's Green Rising initiative continues, this solution will offer a practical way to connect growing youth interest in climate change with the resources and pathways needed to make an impact. In addition, the Green Career Assistant can be scaled further to support a broader range of youth with an interest in sustainability.

"Agentic AI is an incredible tool. It helps young people understand career pathways, analyze information, create solutions, and build online communities," explained Nadi Albino. "It links youth to education, jobs, upskilling, and social impact opportunities. Especially in the digital and green sectors, agentic AI is exceptionally useful."

The Green Career Assistant will first be implemented in Brazil, providing scalable foundations for youth empowerment through technologyaligning education, skills, and opportunities for a sustainable future. Going forward, UNICEF will collaborate with both governments and private sector partners to evaluate the possibility of funding and expanding a youth-driven movement to combat climate change. In an era that demands agility and innovation, Capgemini's support of UNICEF is providing one more tool to help young people turn ambition into action and shape a better world.

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