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HOW TO BUILD **A DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION** ROADMAP FOR 2023

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Pinar SENGUL

EDITOR'S NOTE

Digital transformation is a bumpy road for most businesses, but if a well-structured and clear roadmap is created for their digital strategy, they can benefit from it by automating their operations and tasks and reducing the labor-intensive time. A digital roadmap should outline the steps and resources needed to deploy a company's digital strategy and achieve its goals.

In this issue of ERPNews Magazine, we have explored the digital transformation trends that help organizations keep track of the latest changes in technology and how to map out a digital transformation roadmap and its challenges.

Do not miss out on the articles written by the thought leaders of the foremost ERP vendors and check out the exclusive interview with **Ninian Wilson, CEO at Vodafone Procurement Company, and Ajay Agrawal, CEO and Co-founder at SirionLabs** in which we had the opportunity to discuss the CLM selection phase of Vodafone Procurement Company and the benefits of their new CLM software.

The latest news on the ERP industry, customer studies, and much more are also awaiting you through the following pages as always!

Sincerely,

Pinar Sengul

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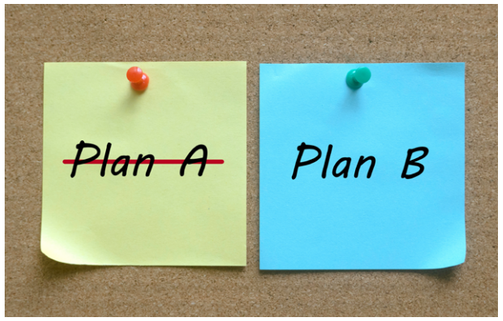

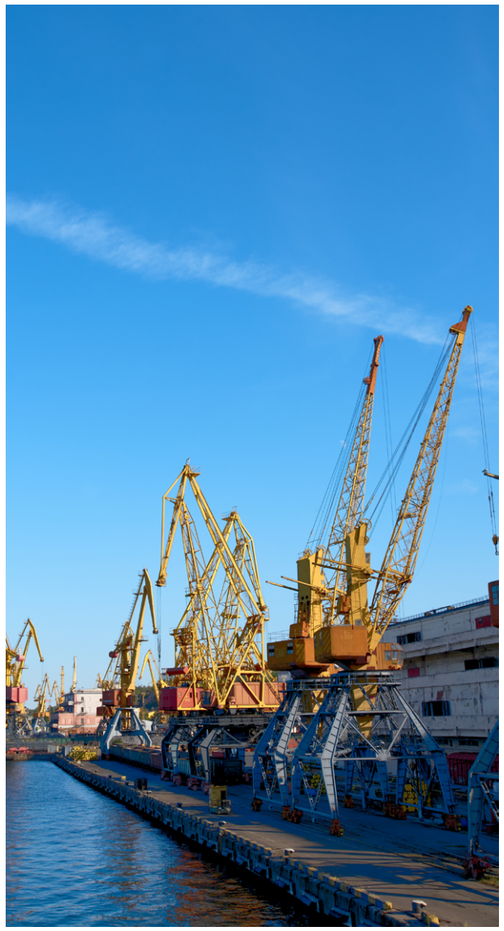

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UNCOVERING THE INTELLIGENT SPEND MANAGEMENT SECRETS OF RISE WITH SAP

*Product Review by **Gabe Mensching,***
Chief Technology Officer, NIMBL

In today's global business environment, digital transformation in procurement represents the difference between simply managing spending and managing spending intelligently.

Enterprises manage spending in countless areas, whether indirect and direct materials, travel and expenses, or external services and labor. Technology and process digitization of the procurement function within RISE with SAP brings these costs together, giving enterprises total control over their spending.

RISE with SAP coordinates enterprise spending across categories, systems, and channels. This provides enterprises with a unified view of their spending, along with real-time data, which they can use to make faster and more informed spending decisions. As a result, enterprises are able to find ways to reduce maverick spend, increase transaction accuracy, and achieve well-intentioned business outcomes.

Learn the Secrets of RISE with SAP Components

Let's look at three RISE with SAP components that enterprises can use to standardize their procurement processes, save money and time, and reduce waste and fraud.

> **RISE WITH SAP COORDINATES ENTERPRISE SPENDING ACROSS CATEGORIES, SYSTEMS, AND CHANNELS. THIS PROVIDES ENTERPRISES WITH A UNIFIED VIEW OF THEIR SPENDING, ALONG WITH REAL-TIME DATA, WHICH THEY CAN USE TO MAKE FASTER AND MORE INFORMED SPENDING DECISIONS.**

1. SAP Signavio

SAP Signavio empowers enterprises to analyze their pay-to-procure (P2P) processes and find ways to make them more efficient and cost-effective. Initially, end-users document, model, create and simulate a P2P process. Next, the user can view their "as-is" process environment and see the impact of process changes in real-time. This helps the user find ways to streamline the acquisition of materials, services, and other procurement processes.

Additionally, SAP Signavio provides insights that enterprises need to effectively manage vendor relationships and avoid compliance penalties. Enterprises can track details like the lead time between different steps in a P2P process and the average handling time for different approval stages. This helps them identify bottlenecks, maintain compliance, and ensure staff members can consistently complete their tasks with speed and precision.

SAP Signavio also supports continuous communication across an enterprise procurement team and other departments. A user can share recommendations to improve a P2P process and get multiple stakeholders to work together to optimize it.

2. SAP Ariba

SAP Ariba reinvents the procurement experience by linking together all of an enterprise's spending categories, from all over the world. As such, enterprises can use SAP Ariba to manage all of their spendings in every market in one place.

As part of the SAP Business Network Starter Pack, SAP Ariba pre-validates invoices, so any incorrect information is immediately corrected. This increases the accuracy of invoices, which then speeds up both the processing and payments.

Additionally, SAP Ariba links internal and external systems, supplier networks, and sourcing. It provides visibility across SAP and non-SAP systems both in the cloud and/or on-premise, making it simple for employees to connect to preferred suppliers.

3. SAP Business Technology Platform (BTP)

SAP BTP allows enterprises to innovate faster, more efficiently, and with more business context. This platform puts data, analytics, artificial intelligence, application development, automation, and integration into a single environment. Here, enterprises can access prebuilt industry content and use cases, utilize their preferred cloud within their existing IT landscape, and manage all of their data in real-time.

With SAP BTP, enterprises can create custom applications to optimize their business processes. The platform natively integrates with SAP applications, allowing users to utilize AI and automation to enrich user interactions and deliver personalized app experiences. On top of that, SAP BTP offers low-code and no-code environments with accessible drag-and-drop capabilities.

> **SAP BTP ALLOWS ENTERPRISES TOINNOVATE FASTER, MORE EFFICIENTLY, AND WITH MORE BUSINESS CONTEXT. THIS PLATFORM PUTS DATA, ANALYTICS, ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE, APPLICATION DEVELOPMENT, AUTOMATION, AND INTEGRATION INTO A SINGLE ENVIRONMENT.**

Get the Most Value Out of RISE with SAP

Enterprises can use RISE with SAP for intelligent spend management — and much more.

Ultimately, RISE with SAP empowers enterprises to innovate in a way that works well for them, regardless of where they're starting their innovation journey. It accounts for the fact that innovation is a journey and it allows enterprises to change at a pace that aligns with their goals. This can drive innovation that empowers an enterprise to thrive during constant change.

By strategically utilizing the tools, RISE with SAP can drive innovation for you even further and take advantage of the full capabilities. Leverage the expertise of a partner to help create a tailored solution for your specific needs.

Gabe Mensching is the Chief Technology Officer at NIMBL with more than 20 years of technology experience. He has led multiple SAP S/4HANA migration projects across industries including healthcare, manufacturing, and retail. Gabe oversees the integration of NIMBL's sales engineering and technical teams to create a more sophisticated business-advisory approach to digital transformation. As a recognized leader in SAP technical innovation and administration, Gabe has authored numerous articles on the topic and frequently speaks at industry events.

About NIMBL

NIMBL helps companies embrace the circular economy and transform into digital leaders with technological innovation. We drive business transformation by providing agile solutions that combine business advisory, technological expertise, and a passion for innovation. Through their digital evolution, our clients achieve distinct, competitive advantages, from operations to the boardroom.

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Demystifying Digital Transformation

The 'what', 'why' & 'where to start' of digital transformation

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ROADMAP TO DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION SUCCESS

*Article by **Edward Abrahamson,***
Principal Consultant, Lumenia

This article is an extract from Lumenia Consulting's latest whitepaper on Digital Transformation, 'Demystifying Digital Transformation'. The full whitepaper explains the fundamentals of a well-defined digital transformation strategy and sets out important criteria for a successful transformation programme.

There are any number of paths that can lead to digital transformation. Perhaps historic underinvestment in IT has seen your business fall behind the curve as your industry advances and technology trends evolve. Maybe you can see business opportunities to improve customer experience or competitive advantage, but you lack the IT infrastructure, agility and capability to seize them. You might have started to undertake some digital initiatives already, and find them to be disjointed or lacking control. Or perhaps you're looking to build on the success of a recent ERP implementation, extending out from that digital core to realise greater value.

No matter how you arrived at the point of initiating a digital transformation programme, confidently establishing a path forward can be difficult. As with any large programme of work, breaking it down into a logical sequence is key, starting with a strategy.

Digital Transformation Strategy

A good digital transformation strategy sets out a clear plan for investment in digital solutions and supporting capabilities, aligned closely with the organisation's business strategy. This should help you to:

- envision a digitally enabled future;
- identify the benefits you expect to achieve from your investment;
- define a series of initiatives intended to deliver those benefits;
- determine what is achievable over your intended transformation period;
- prioritise your spending, decide where to focus first and develop a realistic plan.

Each initiative described within your digital transformation strategy should be explicitly tied back to an established business objective or imperative, ensuring an unambiguous connection between IT investment and business needs.

Six Steps to Developing a Digital Transformation Strategy

Developing a good digital transformation strategy is not an easy task. It requires a structured approach, strong stakeholder engagement, careful analysis and sound reasoning. We have summarised Lumenia's recommended approach to this process in six steps below:

1. ***Understand the business strategy.*** Start by gathering insights into the leadership team's vision for the future by reviewing existing strategy documentation and having conversations with senior business stakeholders. These set the direction for your digital transformation. For example, business strategies to 'prioritise growth in online sales' versus 'double the number of physical branches' have different implications for IT investment.

2. ***Determine digital transformation scope.*** Consider how broad your digital transformation should be, taking into consideration the wider business context. What does 'digital' mean for your business? Do you need an all-encompassing overhaul and modernisation of your IT portfolio, or are there specific areas that the digital transformation strategy should hone in on?

> **DEVELOPING A GOOD DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION STRATEGY IS NOT AN EASY TASK. IT REQUIRES A STRUCTURED APPROACH, STRONG STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT, CAREFUL ANALYSIS AND SOUND REASONING.**

3. ***Survey your existing business capabilities and supporting digital landscape.*** Assess the current maturity of relevant business processes and supporting technology to identify strengths, weaknesses, risks, issues and gaps. This will reveal opportunities for improvement and associated benefits.

4. ***Identify and assess opportunities to improve business processes through digital enablement.*** Improvement opportunities typically include a range of people, process and technology changes. Your digital transformation strategy should specifically focus on the opportunities that can be achieved through the application of digital solutions and supporting IT capabilities. These should become initiatives for inclusion on your digital transformation roadmap. Explore each of these, considering information such as likely timescales, cost ranges, benefits, resource requirements and constraints associated with each.

5. ***Develop a roadmap of digital transformation initiatives.*** With initiatives identified, you can start to determine their optimal sequencing for your digital transformation roadmap. Be realistic about how much change the business can take on and the time required. Typically, large organisations can manage more parallel activities than smaller ones. Create a visual representation of the roadmap to highlight interdependencies, potential parallel activities and estimated timeframes. The roadmap should be accompanied by a description of each initiative with an explicit link back to business objectives.

   Not everything on the roadmap will be clear at this early stage. Early initiatives should be relatively well-defined, but later ones may be notional. As the business and IT environments evolve, and further-out elements become nearer and clearer, the roadmap itself should be refined.

6. ***Finalise the digital transformation strategy.*** Your digital transformation strategy comprises the key outputs from the previous steps. It will need to be socialised and signed off by senior stakeholders and may require multiple rounds of review and refinement. This is a critical part of building buy-in for its subsequent execution, and will be made easier by actively engaging with those stakeholders and validating your thinking during the preceding steps.

With your strategy signed off, you can prepare to embark on the first initiatives on your transformation roadmap.

> **CREATE A VISUAL REPRESENTATION OF THE ROADMAP TO HIGHLIGHT INTERDEPENDENCIES, POTENTIAL PARALLEL ACTIVITIES AND ESTIMATED TIMEFRAMES. THE ROADMAP SHOULD BE ACCOMPANIED BY A DESCRIPTION OF EACH INITIATIVE WITH AN EXPLICIT LINK BACK TO BUSINESS OBJECTIVES.**

Edward joined Lumenia in 2017 and leads Lumenia's Digital Transformation service development. He has over 15 years' experience in management and IT consulting, covering enterprise architecture and analysis, digital and IT strategy development, system selection, project management, change management and business process improvement. Edward has worked for public and private sector organisations in Ireland, the UK and New Zealand, leading, supporting and advising on the delivery of business and technology change. His experience spans the financial services, health and pharmaceuticals, research and education, not-fort-profit, justice, utilities, manufacturing and engineering sectors.

About Lumenia

Lumenia Consulting is an independent ERP and Digital consulting organisation, specialising in business transformation through the implementation of Enterprise Resource Planning, Digital and related enterprise software applications. Download the full white paper from the Lumenia Consulting website. For further information on Digital Transformation, please contact Edward Abrahamson, Principal Consultant at Lumenia.

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SirionLabs

A DATA-CENTRIC APPROACH TO AI

*Interview with **Ninian Wilson** (CEO, Vodafone Procurement Company) and **Ajay Agrawal** (CEO and Co-founder, SirionLabs)*

For large, multinational companies, digital transformation can be particularly complex with so many facets and significant investments at stake. For instance, Vodafone Procurement Company (VPC) -- which leads purchasing and supplier management for $35B telecom giant Vodafone -- needs to effectively manage thousands of supplier contracts and benefits from a central storage and automated contract management tool.

They turned to SirionLabs, which just today was announced a "Leader" in the 2022 Gartner Magic Quadrant for its AI-powered contract lifecycle management (CLM) capabilities. As a result, the company gained greater visibility into and control over its commercial contracts, automate manual processes and digitize legacy contracts to store them in one central repository. With SirionLabs, Vodafone improved compliance and avoided revenue leakage risks, which are substantial given the $24B being managed in total in contract revenue.

We talked about the CLM selection phase of Vodafone Procurement Company and the benefits of their new CLM software with Ninian Wilson, CEO at Vodafone Procurement Company and Ajay Agrawal, CEO and Co-founder at SirionLabs.

Ninian Wilson
Vodafone Procurement Company (VPC) CEO

1. Could you tell ERP News readers about yourself and your role at Vodafone?

I am CEO and Group Procurement Director of the Vodafone Procurement Company (VPC) based in Luxembourg. Vodafone is one of the leading telecommunications companies in the world, operating in 21 countries throughout Europe and Sub-Saharan Africa. I'm overall responsible for our procurement activity across technology and indirect categories of spend supporting all our 26 operating companies. We also provide procurement services to a number of partner markets and 3rd party customers.

2. How did you decide that you need CLM software?

When we first started doing procurement here in Luxembourg, we established many framework agreements and group-wide agreements, stored to support all our operating companies. With more than 50K+ supplier contracts archived in our ERP, we had limited capabilities to systematically manage compliance and revenue leakage risks, which are substantial given the $24B being managed in total in contract revenue. With such a sheer volume of contracts, we wanted to find an automated and efficient way to drive contract compliance and improve our collaboration with suppliers. Digital transformation through a contract lifecycle management system was the clear solution, with the view that easier access to contract data would also allow us to make better and faster fact-based business decisions.

> **BEYOND IN-LIFE MANAGEMENT OF CONTRACTS, WE HAVE EXPANDED SIRION INTO OUR CONTRACTING PROCESS AND MADE A DENT IN TIME- AND COST-CONSUMING THROUGH AUTOMATION. WITH SIRION, WE HAVE CREATED AN END-TO-END INTEGRATED CONTRACT LIFECYCLE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM THAT RUNS SMOOTHLY AND SUPPORTS OUR BUSINESS TO OPERATE AT PACE AND FULLY DIGITIZED.**

3. Can you tell us about your CLM software selection phase? What were your criteria?

We selected Sirion through a competitive process back in 2017, evaluating not just the software's existing capacities but also, and more importantly, the skills and capability of the partner beyond the software. Sirion provided a balance of great technology, a super roadmap and highly skilled individuals that could help us both implement and scale the contract lifecycle management system.

4. How was VPC able to achieve savings by modernizing and automating its CLM approach?

SirionLabs helped us to digitize the in-life management of our contracts and automatically identify and fix areas where value leakage, performance issues and service level deviations could negatively impact our business, thus generating significant savings.

Beyond in-life management of contracts, we have expanded Sirion into our contracting process and made a dent in time- and cost-consuming through automation. With Sirion, we have created an end-to-end integrated contract lifecycle management system that runs smoothly and supports our business to operate at pace and fully digitized.

Ajay Agrawal
SirionLabs CEO and Co-founder

1. Could you tell ERP News readers about yourself and your role at SirionLabs?

I'm the Founder and CEO of Sirion, but I'm a lawyer by training. I started my first company in 2006 – an alternative legal services provider called UnitedLex. We were trying to build software applications to automate aspects of the manual legal work. Some of those productivity apps were very successful and it inspired me to start thinking about how to achieve that level of automation on a larger scale—as a product rather than a service. My time at UnitedLex also introduced me to the struggle that companies face while managing their buyer/supplier relationships.

In 2012, Claude Marais (the ex-global head of outsourcing at General Motors) and I began to brainstorm and envision Sirion. We founded Sirion – an enterprise SaaS platform for contract management software– along with our co-founders Kanti Prabha and Aditya Gupta who are still with the company today.

We found that enterprises need AI-powered CLM to manage the risk and increase efficiency especially in the context of optimizing their procurement and sales processes.

2. Sirion , has been named a Leader in the 2022 Gartner Magic Quadrant for Contract Life Cycle Management. What does this recognition as a leader in this report mean for SirionLabs?

The Gartner recognition is a strong validation of Sirion's strategy for two important reasons:
Firstly, as contract AI exits the hype-cycle and enters its mature phase, analysts like Gartner are delving deeper into AI capabilities of CLM vendors to separate fact from claims and identify which CLM vendors have truly leveraged deep-learning technologies to improve their precision and recall scores over time. The second stems from a broader market recognition that the contracting lifecycle doesn't end with contract signature but also includes managing its performance. Let me explain how.

Sirion's deep-learning algorithms leverage a truly data-centric approach to AI. This is about having to focus on getting right kind of data that can be used to build high-quality, high-performance machine learning models. This represents a major advancement in the CLM space which has been reliant on older, more primitive model-centric AI technology over the past two decades. By shifting the focus to getting high quality data for training models rather than fine-tuning the models themselves, Sirion has opened the door for global enterprises to truly operate at scale by instantly extracting thousands of data-points from millions of documents with minimal human intervention. This is exactly what the machine-learning teams Google's Document AI, Amazon's Textract and Microsoft's Syntex have been trying to accomplish over the past decade.

Over the past decade, Gartner noticed how CLM vendors were content to solve the problems associated with negotiating and storing contracts. They were attracted by Sirion's broader vision of driving collaboration between the two contracting counterparties during the post-signature phase to bring contractual promises to life. Sirion was the first CLM player to excavate and bring to life complex objects like obligations, service-levels, pricing mechanisms and use this to drive broader business value for its customers and help them realize hard dollar savings.

3. How can CLM technology help companies achieve the business objectives of managing compliance and reducing process bottlenecks?

Built on a foundation that combines machine learning with natural language processing, and that's trained on a vast array of legal documents and industry data, our platform yields huge time and resource savings in areas like importing and organizing legacy contracts, negotiations and contract review. Sirion's full spectrum of capabilities also extends into post-signature management to prevent value-leakage and enable SLA management, obligation compliance, invoice management and supplier governance capabilities. Unlike other CLM suppliers, Sirion's contract performance management generates real documented savings, typically saving our customers 25% or more in reduced contract costs as well as 100% return on investment (ROI) for our product

> **VPC NEEDED A CLM PLATFORM THAT COULD TACKLE NOT JUST DIGITIZATION OF LEGACY CONTRACTS AND AUTOMATION OF MANUAL PROCESSES, BUT THAT COULD PROVIDE GREATER CONTROL OVER ITS COMMERCIAL CONTRACTS.**

4. How is Sirion's AI-based platform, different from other CLM software in the Market?

While most CLM solutions include a repository and the ability to author, negotiate and execute contracts, Sirion is unique among CLM providers for its deep AI capabilities that address some of the thornier difficulties in contract lifecycle management. There are three paradigmatic problems which every enterprise faces today that are amenable to AI intervention. The first is shining a light on their past. Here AI reduces the manual effort needed to extract the business information contained in their legacy contracts and get a perspective on legacy risk. The second is reducing the risk in live contract negotiations by using AI to dynamically highlight the risks in counterparty redlines. The third – and possibly the most valuable – is using AI to collaboratively monitor the performance of the commitments after the contract is signed.

As customers move up the CLM maturity curve, they discover that the benefits of the second use case which involve streamlining approval workflows and saving lawyer time start to pale in comparison to the value from auto-extraction and collaborative performance management.

5. Vodafone Procurement Company (VPC) – which leads purchasing and supplier management for $35B telecom giant Vodafone – has chosen Sirion Cto effectively manage thousands of supplier contracts. What is the reason they turned to Sirion?

With more than 30,000 supplier contracts, Vodafone's procurement organization needed a digital solution for better contract management. For large, multinational companies, digital transformation can be particularly complex with so many facets and large investments at stake. VPC needed a CLM platform that could tackle not just digitization of legacy contracts and automation of manual processes, but that could provide greater control over its commercial contracts. Our platform provided the capabilities to help VPC achieve these objectives, backed by our customer support to ensure its successful implementation. Through establishing a central contract repository, streamlining its contracting processes and gaining visibility into valuable contract data, VPC has been able to improve on compliance and avoid revenue leakage to achieve significant savings.

6. Digital transformation journey is a complex and bumpy road and especially SMBs have been affected in several areas and had to embrace accelerated change over the past 12 months after the pandemic. How do you support your customers through their digital transformation journey?

CLM technology provides a robust platform for launching, propelling and sustaining digital transformation. By digitizing contracts, enterprises can harness valuable data to gain analytics, insights and the ability to optimize key performance indicators. In addition, digitizing contracts and contract management processes allows enterprises to mitigate risk and achieve improved results throughout the operation.

About SirionLabs

Bringing together category-leading innovation, unrivaled Contract Lifecycle Management expertise, and a deep commitment to customer success, SirionLabs helps the world's leading businesses contract smarter. Powered by intelligence uniquely connected across the complete contract lifecycle, SirionLabs' easy-to-use, highly configurable Smarter Contracting platform brings legal, procurement, sales, and business teams together to author stronger contracts, improve risk management and strengthen counterparty relationships. SirionLabs is trusted by over 200 of the world's most successful organizations to manage 5+ million contracts worth more than $450 billion across 70+ countries. For more information, visit www.sirionlabs.com.

WHAT ARE THE TOP 10 DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION TRENDS IN 2023?

In 2023, digital transformation will be a top priority for organizations. Here are ten trends to watch for:

1. Amid economic uncertainty, business leaders are focusing on driving organizational efficiency through automation.
2. Enterprises are prioritizing data management and breaking down data silos in their ERP systems.
3. Leaders are taking a step back from AI/ML, because it has yet to deliver immediate business value.
4. Enterprises are realizing backbone ERP systems were built for how people thought about problems 25-30 years ago – and are now pivoting to composable ERP systems.
5. A new breed of enterprise software is emerging, with a heavier emphasis on interoperability and automation.
6. Leaders are getting back to basics by right-sizing their technology stacks.
7. Companies are moving away from hyperscale services, with some opting to purchase their own private data center hardware.
8. The CTO role is gaining influence as the technology landscape becomes increasingly complex.
9. Organizations are reconfiguring software to focus more on microservices, for greater sustainability.
10. Leaders are thinking about new ways to continue accelerating digital transformation and cloud migration to boost productivity.

Claus Jepsen,
Chief Technology Officer, Unit4

UNIT4

THE TOP 10 DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION TRENDS FOR 2023 – WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

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

Global spending on digital transformation technologies is projected to reach $2.1 trillion in 2023.

While cloud computing, low-code tools, artificial intelligence, and hyper-automation were at the top of the list last year, many new technologies and trends are set to shape the business landscape in 2023 and beyond.

Spending on Global Digital Transformation Technologies (2017-2025)

Here are the top trends that are expected to play an influential role in the progression of digital transformation.

Top 10 Digital Transformation Trends to Watch in 2023

1. Multi-Cloud Investments Will Dominate

A multi-cloud architecture distributes workload and software across the organization using various private or public clouds. The multi-cloud strategy is utilized for various reasons, including data resilience, recovery, and residency requirements. The cloud has more room to grow in 2023. Multi-cloud investments will increase to manage multiple cloud environments, meet agility requirements, and achieve better results in the digital transformation journey.

2. Democratization of AI and ML

A report by PwC estimates that the impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on the global economy could be around $15 trillion by 2030. With this game-changing effect, AI and Machine Learning (ML) have significant capabilities to power intelligent digital processes and enable machines to support humans in their work. The workforce will likely leverage AI tools to predict trends, learn from past experiences, and make data-driven decisions to adopt digital transformation in 2023.

> **OVER 77% OF BUSINESSES ALREADY USE AUTOMATION, INTEGRATION, AND AI TOOLS IN THEIR BUSINESS OPERATIONS. WHILE MANY ORGANIZATIONS ALREADY LEVERAGE AUTOMATION, THE TECHNOLOGY INVESTMENT IN PROCESS AUTOMATION TOOLS IS EXPECTED TO INCREASE IN 2023.**

3. Everything as a Service (XaaS)

XaaS has become a popular business model as it provides customer software on demand. This model extends the functionality of the Software as a Service (SaaS) model that provides application access over the internet. XaaS is an advanced cloud service that provides infrastructure, processing power, and data storage from one provider. Most businesses embrace cloud services to access information wherever and whenever they need it, to achieve greater scalability, and to eliminate physical hardware costs and their associated overhead. With the increasing demand for such services, the XaaS trend is expected to expand in 2023.

4. Automation-Driven Efficiency

Automation is one of the most prominent digital transformation trends as it digitizes operations, enhances productivity, eliminates human errors, reduces cost, and drives efficient growth. Over 77% of businesses already use automation, integration, and AI tools in their business operations. While many organizations already leverage automation, the technology investment in process automation tools is expected to increase in 2023.

5. Encouragement Toward a Collaborative Ecosystem

Building a collective ecosystem of stakeholders, customers, and external partners becomes crucial as most businesses go global. The pandemic has reminded us of our interdependencies across businesses and industries. Even competitors are becoming partners to stay ahead of the curve. In 2023 and beyond, it has become increasingly important to forge new partnerships with key players such as private companies, non-profits, and the government to achieve successful digital transformation.

6. Increased Adoption of Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP)

Digital transformation is the combination of technology, people, and processes. Today, most businesses leverage digital channels to promote services, automate manual tasks, and centralize information. Instead of utilizing standalone technologies, organizations will focus more on fully integrated end-to-end solutions - integrated ERP solutions in 2023. It improves resource efficiency, streamlines business operations, reduces costs, and enhances productivity to achieve a high return on investment. Companies will focus their energies on their core competencies and trend away from being IT system integrators.

7. Total Experience (TX) For Customers and Employees

Total Experience is not just another digital transformation trend but a necessity to survive in the competitive market. Over 60% of large organizations will leverage TX to enhance the experience of employees and customers, and improve their business models by 2026. Most businesses have always focused on improving the customer experience to ensure greater loyalty and revenues. However, they have now realized the importance of employee experience for business success. Improving TX will lead to superior shared experiences and drive additional business value by leveraging existing technology investments. This increases awareness of the 6:1 rule – you will spend 6 dollars to acquire a new customer or solid employee or spend one dollar to keep your existing customers or employees happy. A much-ignored "simple math."

8. Growing Focus on Sustainability and Composable Business

As the world is increasingly waking up to major environmental challenges, it becomes necessary to respond intelligently. While over 90% of technology leaders believe sustainability is important, only 60% of organizations have sustainable strategies. Looking at the digital transformation trends, businesses will increasingly consider a concrete approach in 2023 to integrate data and applications, leverage analytics and generate real-time insights to drive sustainability in their business operations.

> **INSTEAD OF UTILIZING STANDALONE TECHNOLOGIES, ORGANIZATIONS WILL FOCUS MORE ON FULLY INTEGRATED END-TO-END SOLUTIONS - INTEGRATED ERP SOLUTIONS IN 2023. IT IMPROVES RESOURCE EFFICIENCY, STREAMLINES BUSINESS OPERATIONS, REDUCES COSTS, AND ENHANCES PRODUCTIVITY TO ACHIEVE A HIGH RETURN ON INVESTMENT.**

9. Data-Driven Strategies and Decisions

Accurate real-time data is the heart of digital transformation services today. Every organization can unlock the potential of data to streamline operations and drive business revenues. The data analysis and insights can help identify customers' unmet needs, deliver personalized experiences, and more. Organizations with data-driven strategies and decisions will become serious competitors in 2023 and beyond.

10. Rigorous Cybersecurity and Data Protection Standards

Over 445 million cyberattacks were reported in 2020, and it is expected that 33 billion accounts will be breached in 2023. It can be disastrous if companies overlook cybersecurity and data protection standards while adopting digital technologies. The rigorous cybersecurity and data protection guidelines complying with regional security standards can safeguard organizations from increasing cyber-attacks, the sophistication of those attacks, and data security lapses.

Drive Your Digital Transformation with a Modern ERP Solution

2023 is set to bring significant changes in how people, processes, and technologies work. From hyper-automation, cloud computing, XaaS, and Total Experience, to AI and ML, the digital transformation trends are heading toward streamlining operations, improving efficiency, and enhancing customer experience. However, connecting the dots across critical factors such as digital transformation road mapping, defining roles of leaders and stakeholders, implementation and maintenance of disparate tools/ platforms, and integration with existing software is crucial.

Modern organizations demand an integrated ERP solution that can help them leverage the potential of digital technologies and ensure a successful digital transformation. Your success on the journey of Digital Transformation requires an overarching vision and roadmap of where you want to end up. Without this vision, you will have disparate processes, solutions, technologies, and resources.

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

About OptiPro ERP

OptiProERP is an industry leading ERP solution for manufacturing and distribution. OptiProERP delivers best-in-class industry functionality embedded into SAP Business One, the market-leading business management platform for small and midsize enterprises. Customers gain an end-to-end business management solution, including financials, accounting, sales, CRM, and industry-specific functionality that fully leverages deep industry expertise of over 20 years dedicated to serving manufacturers and distributors. OptiProERP is an eWorkplace Manufacturing solution. eWorkplace Manufacturing is SAP's strategic industry partner for manufacturing and distribution and its first OEM partner as part of SAP's global PartnerEdge Program. Serving manufacturers and distributors for over 20 years with OptiProERP and BatchMaster as its two ERP solutions, eWorkplace Manufacturing has gained the trust of over 3,000 customers globally.

MERCK KGAA, DARMSTADT, GERMANY FURTHER DRIVES ITS DIGITALIZATION – JOINT INNOVATION WITH SAP

SAP announced a strategic partnership with Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, a leading science and technology company, to jointly drive sustainable business practice innovation. The partnership will further accelerate the migration of the systems of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany to the cloud with RISE with SAP, a core element of which is SAP S/4HANA Cloud.

The pace of digitalization is accelerating. Disruptions in recent months have shown that to be successful, companies need to respond quickly to changes by adapting their business models and processes. For this reason, Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany and SAP SE announced a new strategic partnership. The aim is to further accelerate the digital transformation of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany drive sustainable innovation together, and comply with security as well as compliance standards.

"Our partnership with SAP is set to help us accelerate our innovation journey and bring us to the next level of digitalization. We are continuing to integrate the very best data and digital technologies into the heart of our organization, ultimately helping us to better serve our customers and patients," said Belén Garijo, Chair of the Executive Board and CEO of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany.

The first step of the collaboration is cloud transformation of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany. The leading science and technology company will use RISE with SAP for this purpose. At the core of RISE with SAP is SAP S/4HANA Cloud, which will help digitalize the company's business processes and make them more efficient, agile and adaptable. The cloud infrastructure management is provided by the hyperscaler AWS.

The access to the SAP Business Network that comes with RISE with SAP will enable Merck,KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany to connect with partners within its supply chains and thus optimize business processes across companies.

"We're excited to bring together the passion and innovative power of our two leading companies to drive the cloud transformation of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany," said Christian Klein, CEO and Member of the Executive Board of SAP SE. "Together, we will build on this partnership to enable a more circular and sustainable world through new industry practices and processes."

About SAP

As a market leader in enterprise software, SAP turns businesses into intelligent, sustainable enterprises. Our applications and services enable business and public customers across 25 industries globally to operate profitably and adapt continuously. With a global network of customers, partners, and employees, SAP helps the world run better and improve people's lives.

For more information, visit www.sap.com.

Microsoft

KURITA WATER INDUSTRIES ACCESSES MORE DATA TO BETTER SERVE CUSTOMERS WITH DYNAMICS 365

Kurita Water Industries provides environmentally friendly industrial waste treatment solutions to customers around the world. When its systems for customer information management proved lacking, Kurita saw an opportunity for digital transformation. Kurita used Microsoft Dynamics 365 Sales, Teams, and Power BI to put its 70 years of experience, deep relationships, and understanding at its representatives' fingertips. This is helping to catalyze more proactive solutions to problems and giving Kurita's leadership access to accurate insights related to customer needs.

"After implementing Dynamics 365, we got so many requests for data visualization from our sales division. If we ordered the development of those to a third party, it would cost a great deal of time and money." *-Yusuke Matoba: General Manager of DX Promotion Department, Digital Strategy Division, Kurita Water Industries*

A river of data

Water sustains all life, and Kurita Water Industries believes that studying and mastering the properties of water can help humans live in greater harmony with nature. That's why the company is focused on providing comprehensive, sustainable solutions for water treatment—including environmentally sound water treatment chemicals and facilities, industrial cleaning, and soil and groundwater contamination remediation.

Kurita saw an opportunity for digital transformation to expand on its mission, increase its customer base, provide more personalized customer experiences, and increase sales. Founded in 1949, the company has a long history and massive amounts of customer data to draw from to build customer relationships—if sales representatives can easily access, understand, and effectively use it. Kurita had relied on paper-based systems before switching to spreadsheet software to manage data. But even that proved untenable, imposing a massive burden on sales staff and managers, and wasting hours of time on manual data retrieval that could be better spent using insights from that data to deepen customer relationships.

In addition, Kurita's field representatives didn't have easy access to data, and as a result were not always making the best decisions for the company or for its customers. Customers and relationships with those customers are as foundational to the business as water itself. Kurita representatives make frequent in-person visits to customer sites, maintaining both the equipment and the trust customers have in Kurita. Successful relationship management often came down to the experiential knowledge and personal connections of individuals, which isn't easy to scale.

"Already, some of our staff have acquired the skill to use Power BI to create dashboards. I believe it accelerates the data utilization and DX of the management process." *-Yusuke Matoba: General Manager of DX Promotion Department, Digital Strategy Division, Kurita Water Industries*

Customized solutions

To get the best data into the hands of its representatives, Kurita chose to work with Microsoft Dynamics 365 products. The company was particularly interested in the way Context IQ embeds Microsoft Teams chat within Dynamics 365 Sales. "Every day, sales representatives communicate with back-office staff, technical, and R&D staff using Microsoft Teams, so the integration of Teams with Dynamics 365 is very convenient," says Yusuke Matoba, General Manager of DX Promotion Department, Digital Strategy Division at Kurita Water Industries. With an end-to-end view of each customer's unique journey provided by Dynamics 365 Sales

and Sales Insights, Kurita sales representatives are better able to understand and meet the specific needs customers have. "If we are able to deeply consider a customer's need using company-knowledge, we can provide better options," says Matoba.

Matoba also highlighted the possibilities for streamlined data democratization with Microsoft Power BI. "After implementing Dynamics 365, we got so many requests for data visualization from our sales division. If we ordered the development of those to a third party, it would cost a great deal of time and money," says Matoba. "Already, some of our staff have acquired the skill to use Power BI and create dashboards. I believe it accelerates the data utilization and DX of the management process." Kurita uses Microsoft Teams and Dynamics 365 in tandem to build new project profiles quickly and assign its employees to project teams.

The global availability and customer trust Microsoft has built also appealed to the team. "We are an international enterprise, and we must consider everything from that point of view. Microsoft is a multinational company and has case histories around the world. It's important to us," says Matoba. For solution implementation, Kurita followed an approach that prioritized building trust and consensus among its agents, analyzing their workflows, and communicating with them every step of the way.

Flowing forward

With the solution in place, Kurita is seeing positive change. With 70 years of case studies now at their fingertips, sales representatives can act as water consultants for customers, as well as trusted advisors. This empowers each representative to sell proactively. With all the information easily available, it's easy for Kurita to earn customer trust and build relationships of deep understanding. Sales managers can use Context IQ data from sales across the organization seamlessly, saving time and reducing frustration by allowing the team to easily view pipelines and targets.

The benefits for Kurita's customers are measurable as well: the "unique voice," as Matoba says, of each customer and problem is more clearly heard and understood. Kurita has been using trends in metrics like volume of customer communications and the amount of reduction in water and energy use the company proposes to customers to measure the success of its new connected sales system.

Going forward, Kurita is better positioned than ever for the demands of the future. As the company seeks to maintain a balance between meeting local needs and strengthening global competitiveness, effective data management will be key. With powerful tools to analyze data and put it at Kurita's representatives' fingertips, communications to customers and back-office staff flow smoothly and transparently, helping Kurita work in greater harmony internally and with its customers, as it expands its reach to support greater harmony between humanity and nature around the world.

Find out more about Kurita Water on Twitter and LinkedIn.

"After implementing Dynamics 365, we got so many requests for data visualization from our sales division. If we ordered the development of those to a third party, it would cost a great deal of time and money." *-Yusuke Matoba: General Manager of DX Promotion Department, Digital Strategy Division, Kurita Water Industries*

About Microsoft

Microsoft (Nasdaq "MSFT" @microsoft) enables digital transformation for the era of an intelligent cloud and an intelligent edge. Its mission is to empower every person and every organization on the planet to achieve more.

CO-CREATING A HIGH-CLASS CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE FOR HUNKEMÖLLER

Hunkemöller, one of the largest high-street lingerie brands in the Benelux and Germany, implements a system that consolidates all customer service agent activities into a single tool, seamlessly integrating the landscape.

Client Challenge: Hunkemöller wanted to consolidate its customer service system into a centralized tool that would ensure that agents had necessary information when it was needed.

Solution: Working with Capgemini, Hunkemöller introduced an omni-channel, cloud-based Salesforce system to bring together all relevant customer information within a single tool.

Benefits:

- Reduced average handling time on phone calls
- Increased first-time-right answering
- Optimized insights in data via reporting and dashboarding

Revamping customer experience in the new normal

The world of customer service is in constant change and Hunkemöller recognized that the need for improving the current service operation was imperative. The company needed a customer service tool that would optimize and automate processes within customer service agent workflows and ensure seamless experiences for its customers. With stores being closed due to the pandemic, customers were unable to shop in-store. This led to a massive shift towards e-commerce, which had a tremendous impact on the customer service desk.

While the Sheroes (Hunkemöller's customers) demand a seamless omni-channel experience, the employees also need to feel fully empowered. To ensure that this was the case, Hunkemöller wanted to use state-of-the-art technology to enhance operational performance and contribute to a better experience for customers and service agents alike. Moreover, helping Hunkemöller to cross- and upsell during customer service contact was also a key objective.

From a cost center to value center

Capgemini implemented an omni-channel Salesforce Service Cloud system as a fit-for-purpose solution, with a fully embedded telephony system, by providing best practices that bolstered business value. The solution enables Hunkemöller to provide all relevant information to the agents on one screen. As a result, the employees can delight the Sheroes, as they have a full overview of the customer including information such as recent orders, shipping details, and loyalty point balance.

With all contact channels combined and all relevant customer data at hand, Hunkemöller employees can provide an optimal customer experience, transforming the customer service center from a cost center to a value center.

All interactions are managed within one central user interface. Hunkëmoller and Capgemini implemented a variety of integrations to provide the right information at the right time, which not only offers support for the centralized customer service agents, but also has enabled the partners to develop a basic interface for store employees. With a newly introduced variety of channels connecting the customers to the relevant customer service agents, Hunkemöller successfully catered to the needs of its customers.

Some features of the solution include:

- Creating an integrated 360-degree view of customers
- Enabling Hunkemöller's employees to cross- and upsell by providing the right information
- Providing tools and automation to reduce manual work
- Developing real-time reports and actionable insights on KPIs
- Providing post-go-live support
- Implementation in a step-by-step approach, quickly delivering value by releasing new functionalities in manageable packages.

Business benefits for Hunkemöller

- Enabling revenue-generating opportunities through the order-on-behalf functionalities incorporated in Salesforce Service Cloud
- Reduced average handling time on phone calls
- Increased self-service (chatbot)
- Optimized knowledge management database
- Increased first-time-right answering
- Optimal support for customer service agents
- Agents can seamlessly work from any location
- Optimized insights in data via reporting and dashboarding

Collaborative Business Experience™

In an agile, collaborative way of working, Hunkemöller and Capgemini together created a roadmap for the implementation. The mindset of executing the solution together, as customer and system implementer, was one of the key success factors. The level of customization was kept to a minimum, ensuring that the application can be easily extended in the future. The first release was promptly followed up by a second release, which introduced a variety of new features.

Geared for more Having delivered the foundation of the customer service platform, Capgemini will continue to add value that will further increase the level of support Hunkemöller can provide to its customers. By gaining more insights from the employee experience, the user interface from the Service Cloud console will be enhanced. In a nutshell, the Salesforce Service Cloud implementation will be another milestone in Hunkemöller's success story as a leading omni-channel brand globally.

About Capgemini

Capgemini is a global leader in partnering with companies to transform and manage their business by harnessing the power of technology. The Group is guided everyday by its purpose of unleashing human energy through technology for an inclusive and sustainable future. It is a responsible and diverse organization of over 350,000 team members in more than 50 countries. With its strong 55-year heritage and deep industry expertise, Capgemini is trusted by its clients to address the entire breadth of their business needs, from strategy and design to operations, fueled by the fast evolving and innovative world of cloud, data, AI, connectivity, software, digital engineering and platforms. The Group reported in 2021 global revenues of €18 billion.

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DERUNGS LICHT'S ILLUMINATING JOURNEY TO A CLOUD-BASED FUTURE WITH INFOR

Derungs Licht AG is one of the world leaders for lighting systems and accessories intended for healthcare technology. Since 1999, the company has been part of the Waldmann Group. The organization combines innovative lighting techniques and a functional design to create state-of-the-art products.

Derungs Licht AG has been building its future with its solid know-how accumulated over the past 80 years. The company's motivated staff rely on this unique experience and offer solutions which have been researched down to the smallest detail to give a lighting suited to all the needs in the healthcare field.

A smooth transition in a tech-advanced world

As a leading supplier of lighting systems for medical technology in a highly competitive industry, Swiss manufacturer Derungs Licht faced a challenge in 2020: The fast-paced market required the company to constantly adapt to an evolving competitive situation. This continuous business-model churn exposed the inefficiency of internal processes. Instead of focusing exclusively on the core business, much time was spent on manual workflows and complex coordination regarding server availability and updates with Derungs' parent company, Waldmann Group. A modernisation of the digital infrastructure would remedy the situation. So, "Off to the cloud!"

"Until a few months ago, we were still doing many tasks manually and on paper. A lot of time was lost, and we could no longer meet our own demands." *-Andreas Schenkenbach, CEO, Derungs Licht*

Derungs Licht is an expert in lighting solutions for medicine and care with over 80 years of experience in the market. The lighting manufacturer is best characterised by constant innovation, Swiss quality standards, good design, and the durability and sustainability of its products. Due to constant development of the business model, the ongoing digitalisation trend, and dependence on its parent company, especially regarding its IT infrastructure, the company's internal processes were reaching their limits. The amount of work in preparing quotations and processing invoices kept increasing, and the manual processes generated a high wastepaper load. It was time to update the internal processes. A new ERP (enterprise resource planning) system would meet the technological standards of today. "The question we asked ourselves at the beginning was this: Where do we want to be in three to five years with our IT, with our business systems?" recalls Andreas Schenkenbach, CEO, Derungs Licht. "We didn't just look at the status quo, but also at what other options the cloud could offer us."

Moving to the Infor cloud

Derungs Licht had been a satisfied Infor customer on M3 (Movex) since 2006, moving to M3 CloudSuite in March 2021. "The move to the cloud was only logical for us," says Schenkenbach. "Although we were a current Infor customer on-premises, the decision to choose Infor was not clear from the beginning. We wanted a solution that not only met our current requirements but could also grow with us—and we found that with Infor."

Nevertheless, changing an IT system always requires careful consideration: "COVID was, of course, a factor in the decision-making," Schenkenbach says. "We were initially concerned about whether the changeover, as well as the training sessions, could actually take place in a pandemic-appropriate setting without affecting quality." Thanks to online workshops and support from the always supportive and competent Infor team, Derungs Licht's staff quickly learned the new system and still work closely with the Infor team to take full advantage of all the features and tools. "It went better than we initially expected, and that was mainly due to the great team that looked after us. Even though this is software, it's still about people working together."

Business challenges

Derungs Licht was mired in legacy IT systems that required lengthy effort and work with its parent company to change minor issues. As a result it faced:

- A fast-changing market with product evolution that its business processes could not keep up with.
- Reliance on paper-based processes, even with IT systems in place.
- Needed to focus on the core business and not managing processes and technology.

One of the goals of implementing a new system was to reduce paper consumption and take the first step towards a paperless office. In addition, the digitalisation of quotation and invoicing processes should improve workflows, which automatically increases efficiency. The cloud solution also offers the advantage that master data can be archived, and regulatory requirements and changes can be implemented quickly. Infor M3 CloudSuite is a flexible solution that delivers a platform with industry-specific functionality and flexible deployment options. It is highly scalable, rapidly adapts to business growth, and enables companies to respond to industry trends.

"We want to focus on our core business," explains Schenkenbach as one of his reasons for moving to the cloud. "We do need software for this, but just 'as a service' that is used by us and not as another construction site in the company."

This was different before the switch to M3 CloudSuite, as M3 was being maintained through a connection to the parent company. That meant it was not possible to act quickly and efficiently in the event of problems, new business needs, or short-term actions. By switching to the cloud, the company no longer needs its own IT landscape; it benefits from Infor's SaaS approach which allows the company to react more quickly to external disruptions and new requirements and strategies through increased flexibility. And cybersecurity is no longer an issue for Schenkenbach and his team, as the responsibility for this lies with Infor and Amazon Web Services (AWS).

Already seeing operational improvements

M3 CloudSuite went live at Derungs Licht on March 22, 2021. The organisation rapidly saw improvements in its day-to-day operations. Until a few months ago invoices were printed, pre-assigned, and then given to the accounting department, where they then had to be assigned within the system. Now, the purchasing department can do the account assignment directly in the system, and the accounting department only releases the invoice. Since invoices in the three-digit range pass through this loop every week, the time saved is enormous. Schenkenbach has not regretted moving to the Infor cloud: "Even though there are always a few stumbling blocks with such a large project, we were confident at all times that we would get it right. This was mainly due to our very competent contact persons at Infor, who supported us on our way to the cloud in a very committed manner, and enabled us to get off to a smooth start in a new, technologically more advanced world."

Business results Derungs

Licht found an efficient solution in the cloud to its various processes issues and is well set for the future with:

- More time to focus on core business issues and customer needs.
- Automated manual and paper processes resulting in a 50% increase in efficiency in the accounting area.
- No need to worry about cybersecurity or other tech issues.

"Switching from on-premises to the cloud did involve some costs, but it allows us to increase efficiency by about 50% in the accounting area." *-Andreas Schenkenbach, CEO, Derungs Licht*

About Infor

Infor is a global leader in business cloud software specialized by industry. We develop complete solutions for our focus industries. Infor's mission-critical enterprise applications and services are designed to deliver sustainable operational advantages with security and faster time to value. Over 60,000 organizations in more than 175 countries rely on Infor's 17,000 employees to help achieve their business goals. As a Koch company, our financial strength, ownership structure, and long-term view empower us to foster enduring, mutually beneficial relationships with our customers. Visit www.infor.com.

ABAS

ANTON DEBATIN GMBH RELIES ON A CONTINUOUS PROCESS CHAIN – SUPPORTED BY ABAS ERP

The now almost 100-year history of Anton Debatin GmbH began in 1923. Originally specialized in processing paper, the company switched to plastic film processing in the 1950s and has already achieved important milestones in this field: Including the development of the red document bag in cooperation with Deutsche Bahn, where packing slips find their home on parcels all over the world. Since then, DEBATIN has continued to write their success story and are now considered among the TOP 100 most innovative midmarket companies in Germany. The third generation family business based in Bruchsal, Germany is a market leader in secure packaging, shipping and transport solutions for sensitive goods and their products set standards in the industry. Since their previous ERP system could no longer keep up with the company's growth, DEBATIN decided in early 2001 to change the software and introduce the ERP system from abas Software GmbH. The flexibility, adaptability and release compatibility of abas ERP were essential in their decision. The next upgrade is being prepared.

abas ERP scores with greater flexibility

The implementation of the software went smoothly, such that DEBATIN didn't have to record a single day of downtime in production, shipping, or goods receipt. The ERP system, which is now used in almost all areas of the company, started operation at the beginning of 2002. In addition to the departments already mentioned, abas ERP supports, among other things, production data capture, warehouse management, material valuation, and fixed asset and financial accounting and enables them to be linked to a consistent, stable and efficient process chain.

The plastic film processor experiences the particular strengths of abas ERP and enjoys significant added value in production and in the mapping of the processes there. Furthermore, the software scores points with its high level of flexibility: "The flexibility that convinced us in the decisionmaking process has been confirmed again and again over the past 20 years," says Thomas Rose, Managing Director of Anton Debatin GmbH.

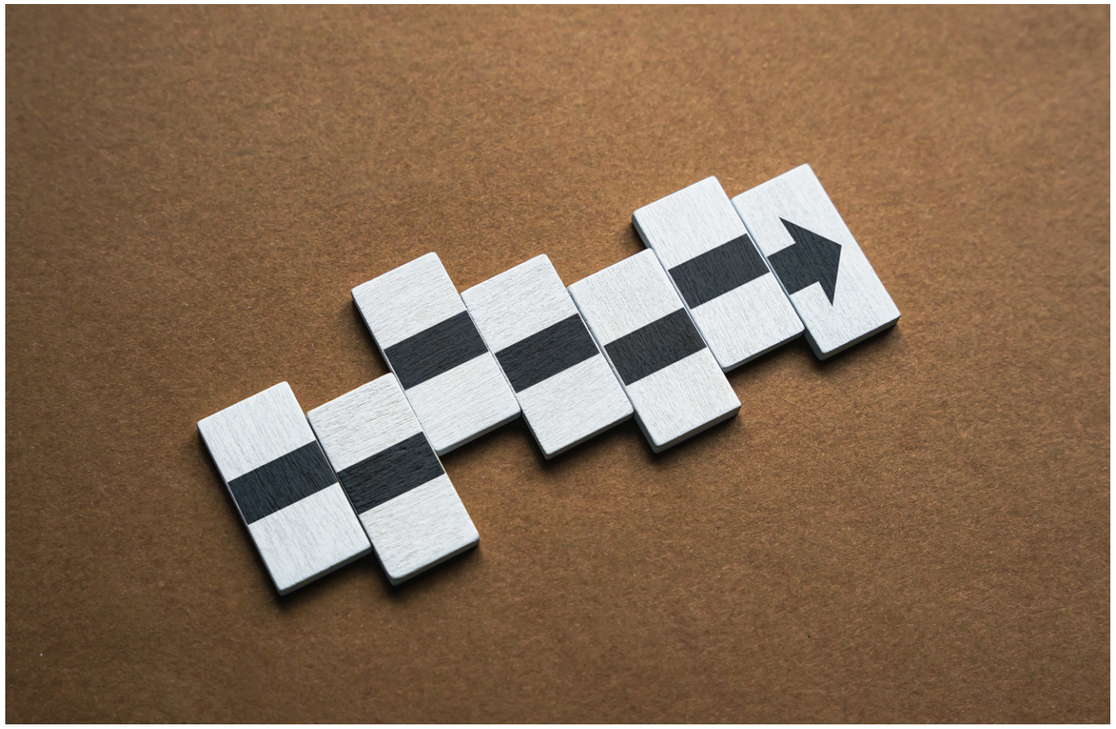
The company is always able to respond to the individual requirements of products and customer orders and can work out the best possible solution for each case. Last but not least, the continuously expanded scope of abas ERP features further contributes to this. Enabling DEBATIN to gradually fold many of their customizations back into the standard release. "We are optimistic that we will continue to benefit from the abas developments in the future and that we will be able to make the most of the standard release," adds Rose.

"The flexibility that convinced us in the decision-making process has been confirmed again and again over the past 20 years." *-Thomas Rose, Managing Director of Anton Debatin GmbH*

Fit and sustainable for the future

In addition to the main location in Bruchsal, DEBATIN has two French subsidiaries, Debatin SARL in Hoenheim near Strasbourg and L.E.S.S. France SAS in Chelles not far from Paris. Furthermore, the plastic film processor is a founding member of the DERIBA Group, which is one of the 15 leading companies in Europe in the field of flexible packaging and with DERIBA CYCLE® has created its own recycling cycle for plastic film products. Sustainability is a top priority at Anton Debatin GmbH and the entire company has been climate-neutral since 2017.

Moreover, DEBATIN is committed to numerous social and environmental projects through the purchase of climate certificates. A special passion is their support for a climate protection project in Togo, West Africa, which part of the DEBATIN team has already accompanied personally on site in order to improve water and energy supply, health care, and education and work opportunities. abas ERP is also used at the Hoenheim branch, but was initially implemented separately from the headquarters in Bruchsal. That's set to change in the future: Not least because, in the interest of further promoting process reliability, DEBATIN is currently preparing the next release change, which is scheduled for the beginning of next year. In order to benefit from synergies between the two locations, a connection via Multisite is planned. In addition, DEBATIN is planning to gradually relocate their of L.E.S.S. France SAS branch to Hoenheim in order to consolidate the processes at a common location in France. As part of this project, the ERP utilization will be expanded to include the L.E.S.S France SAS subsidiary, where abas is not currently used.



About abas ERP

Founded in 1980, abas is a leading provider of flexible next generation ERP and eBusiness solutions. abas serves mid-market manufacturers and distributors focusing on discrete, Engineer-to-order, Make-to-Order, Assemble-to-Order, and Job Shop Manufacturing environments. With unparalleled flexibility, abas provides the ideal solution to energize your business processes and be a part of your company's strategic activities. A worldwide network, state of the art technology, ease of use and industry expertise allow abas to provide the business logic layer for your success. abas is also uniquely qualified to successfully implement international ERP projects. No other company has the combination of a unified partner network, strategic orientation, globally enabled software, and a rapid implementation methodology that defines the roadmap to success. abas provides quick ROI because it is easy to learn, use, customize and upgrade. More than 3000 customers have chosen abas as their long term ERP provider and work successfully with the internationally applicable ERP-Software. abas provides a wide range of services including implementation, customization, hardware, network support, on-site support and ensures short reaction times and high service quality.

Acumatica

ACUMATICA CRM FUELS 90% GROWTH AND MARKET EXPANSION FOR RELIGIOUS BOOK DISTRIBUTOR COMCENTER

OVERWIEW

For years, ComCenter distributed educational materials to Catholic schools and churches in a shrinking market using legacy technology to support its operation. The sales team used Act! for CRM and marketing automation to manually reach out to customers via standard mail, email, and phone calls to existing customers at most once or twice per year. ComCenter deployed Acumatica CRM, enhancing customer relationships by tracking communication and automatically distributing relevant sales information. Sales soared with an 8-fold jump in school sales and a 90 percent increase in sales over five years.

KEY RESULTS

- Implemented a single, connected platform with integrated CRM, facilitating an increase in sales by more than 90 percent from five years ago
- Increased school sales 8-fold, boosting company outlook and employee morale
- Gained real-time data visibility and reporting, revealing accurate data for top and most profitable customers
- Optimized customer communication and outreach with integrated CRM and Microsoft Outlook, improving customer experience
- Duplicated and refined sales process, automating sales and marketing communications
- Obtained insight into inventory, improving material forecasting and planning
- Full integration with ComCenter's website, speeding up and streamlining the order process

CHALLENGES

LaSalle Co., which operates as Communication Center (ComCenter), distributes religious education books, bibles, and other devotional materials from 100 publishers to schools and churches. The company started distributing devotional materials in 1970 and expanded into educational curriculum in the 1980s. ComCenter launched limited eCommerce operations in 2003 but the business struggled due to declining religious affiliation across the United States.

In 2016, ComCenter decided to overhaul every internal system except warehouse management. "At that time, there was a recognition that revenue was declining, and things were headed downhill," says David Salmon, director of information services. "We were running off a UNISYS mainframe acquired nearly forty years ago. The previous system was functional but could not feasibly supply the information we needed. Our CRM and sales efforts badly needed to change."

Repeat sales comprise 70 to 80 percent of ComCenter's revenues but the aging CRM Act! could not effectively nurture customer relationships. Rather, the sales team used Act! to send customers their past order history.

Inability to Access Real-Time Data

"The real issue was all of the customer relationship information was in Act!, but the sales data was in the mainframe," Salmon says. "There was no way to connect the two sources, so people weren't using it. They were not getting fresh data out of Act! The data just lived in the system. It wasn't effective."

After physically mailing past order history to existing customers, the sales team emailed and called them when

they had time. "I'm not sure that every repeat customer got contacted annually. Our turnover rate on prospects was once every few years, and we may have only reached a quarter every year," Salmon says.

ComCenter also used a warehouse management system designed for much larger companies but was affordable. "We are their smallest customer and it's far more than we need, but it does things we like so we've stuck with it over time," Salmon says.

SOLUTION

Acumatica: Flexible, Customizable

Realizing they needed to unlock customer information to drive revenues, ComCenter began looking for an ERP system. The company wanted an easy-to-use solution that was flexible, could connect to third-party applications including its WMS, and offered integrated CRM. They evaluated Oracle NetSuite and Microsoft Dynamics but not Sage. "We looked briefly at them but weren't impressed with the product at the time," Salmon says.

They also reviewed Acumatica, Distribution One, and SYSPRO ERP. "Dynamics was expensive compared to Acumatica, and SAP and NetSuite didn't understand what a small business could spend," Salmon says.

ComCenter chose Acumatica because of its embedded CRM solution, its easy-to-modify reports and dashboards, and its ability to connect to its WMS and its web commerce platform.

"We also loved that we could personalize Acumatica on our own," Salmon says. Acumatica was so easy to use that anyone could access data, filter it, and create dashboards without having to ask the IT team to do it.

"I also liked the fact that pricing wasn't based on the number of users because, during our busy season from June to October, we scale and we didn't want to have to pay (annually) for someone who only uses it for three months," Salmon says. "For a small business like ours, that pricing makes a difference."

Having a single platform for data, including customer data, housed in one place, provided a big selling point. As part of the implementation process, Salmon and the IT team worked closely with the sales team to define its current sales approach, refine it as needed, and map the resulting processes in Acumatica.

"The sales team had some effective ideas about what worked for communicating with customers, and we could build all of those processes into Acumatica and pull in marketing automation," Salmon explains. "Essentially, customers want to know what they bought before, and extracting that data was slow and tedious before Acumatica."

BENEFITS

Effective Outreach Increases Revenues

The sales team saw results almost instantaneously. "It was hugely helpful to use the capabilities of Acumatica to get in touch with a lot more schools and churches, automating sales processes from what was once a very manual process," Salmon says.

"Now, every school in the country gets at least three sales calls, plus regular emails throughout the year," he says. "We've really turned up the volume of our contact. We're projecting an 8fold growth in the school segment of our business from when we first adopted Acumatica. Much of that growth has come from having a better CRM in place to manage our customer opportunities and touchpoints."

Acumatica automated many tasks, activities, and email campaigns. Sales teams work primarily in Outlook which is integrated into the CRM. Now all customer interactions are copied to Acumatica in a single click, giving ComCenter a full 360-degree view of its customer behavior, including order and communication contact historical data.

"Since almost everything is recorded in Acumatica, we can easily drill down into the information we need," Salmon says. "For example, our salespeople can see which of their big customers bought in July last year or in the last two years and act on that information. Before Acumatica, it was challenging for them to know which account they should contact, and further which contact at that account they should work with out of a list of 100 contacts. Now, using Acumatica, they no longer ask, 'Are you the person we should talk to?''

Tracking 'No' Converts to an Increase in Sales

ComCenter easily set up a task process in Acumatica to track prospect outreach and the outcome of every interaction. This led to an interesting insight into prospects who say 'No' outright and later place an order during the year. "We generate as much revenue from schools who say "No" as we did in total sales to schools at the time we started using Acumatica," Salmon says. "The sales and marketing workflows in Acumatica have made our sales outreach more effective, and we believe it's a major force driving this increase in our revenue."

ComCenter executives used data insights generated by Acumatica to identify potentially stalled sales and other missed opportunities to understand when a salesperson could benefit from targeted coaching. "That's helpful for the sales manager and overall sales," Salmon says. "The president, who personally tracks high dollar accounts, now teaches sales team members how to pursue those accounts more effectively."

Increased Workflow Visibility

Previously, ComCenter managers struggled to recognize when an account rep may need additional help because they lacked access to sales opportunity progress information. "Sales managers now have dashboards to see what's happening across the board in real-time which is key, since sales opportunities are often fluid," Salmon says. "They can easily pull-out key data via generic inquiries that help determine who is top of mind to contact today, empowering sales performance."

ComCenter's operational manager leveraged newly available historical and real-time data to create an Acumatica dashboard that presented several years of weekly results. She also created a report for warehouse staff that showed the shipments and containers processed. "The warehouse staff were stunned," Salmon says. "They had been hearing from others how sales were growing, and the business was getting better, but they never had a way to visualize it in a way that was meaningful to their role. They learned that they processed 25 percent more containers than just one year earlier."

Eliminated Manual Entries, Saving Time

ComCenter previously dedicated 40 hours a week to accounts payable. Now AP takes 10 hours or less to complete thanks to the automated document recognition and approval processes. "There is no paper involved until we are to the point where we issue a check," Salmon says. "Everything is digital and lives in Acumatica."

ComCenter also shaved 75 percent off the time needed to review online orders for accuracy. Previously, employees spent four hours a day reviewing orders based on established review criteria. "We had a meeting with the operations team and refined the criteria and the approval map, which decreased the time to one hour," Salmon says.

Modern Platform Attractive to New Hires

Several ComCenter staff have retired in the past five years. Having a modern, easy-to-use platform that can be accessed from the cloud has helped the company attract employees in what remains a challenging hiring market. "Previously, as we looked at retirements, we wondered how we would bring someone onto the mainframe, which is intimidating," Salmon says. "We have hired more than a dozen new fulltime or part-time employees since we started with Acumatica, and after some initial training on Acumatica, we were able to tell them to dive into it and explore the application because it's so user-friendly."

Improved Material Resource Planning

Acumatica also helped ComCenter navigate supply chain challenges. Executives struggled to ensure they had enough textbooks to meet the schools' needs during their busy season. They wondered if a surge in early-season orders qualified as net new orders or orders placed by proactive schools, hoping to avoid supply chain shortages.

"With Acumatica, we could see how many of those orders came from new customers rather than customers who were just ordering earlier than previous years," Salmon says. "We quickly had a visual in the hands of decision-makers and provided analysis to make that strategic business decision, which would have been impossible before."

The data further revealed that they received the same number of early orders they previously had, and their inventory levels were right on track. "We were getting more business from repeat customers than before, so our sales were being driven by repeat customers buying more, which was encouraging," he says.

"The ability to have data to drive decisions like that has been a huge benefit."

Remote Access to Real-Time Data

Remote sales staff now have access to timely data since the cloud-based solution and mobile capabilities provide anytime anywhere access. "When we had salespeople who worked remotely, it was always a big deal to keep them up-to-date," Salmon says. "We went so far as to have a person in IT schedule a yearly trip to go on-site, in person to see our salesperson in Virginia so we could update his computer and connection. One other salesperson didn't have a connection to the old system and was forced to work offline, so we didn't know what he was working on until he sent us the information."

In addition to connecting to its WMS through Acumatica's API, ComCenter has connected the ERP solution with other third-party applications including its online store, Velixo, Microsoft Power BI, and Mail Chimp. The most important connection is to the company's website, which provides the majority of ComCenter's sales.

"The flow of information with Acumatica is really nice," Salmon says. "Like other small businesses, we get more and more orders online rather than over the phone, and the website is connected to pull data out of Acumatica to keep inventory up to date."

Orders flow from the website to Acumatica. ComCenter then uses Acumatica to track abandoned shopping carts for sales lead follow-up activity. "That's a huge shift to have that option to tap into to further boost sales. Our sales teams can view web orders and abandoned carts with Acumatica data in context, which leads to better decision-making about which opportunities to prioritize." Salmon says.

Increased Morale; Poised for Growth

ComCenter executives expect revenues to continue climbing despite market conditions. "We're projecting a consistent increase in sales over five years," Salmon says. "Acumatica has been a huge success."

"We've reached a point where we have the tools and technology in place to go as far as we want to go. Acumatica has been instrumental in helping us create sales, marketing, and customer relationship management processes. We have seen success and morale improvements across our employee base thanks to that."

ComCenter has a brighter outlook now that everyone has access to a modern platform and data that makes their jobs easier.

"Without this information, one may have the perception that we were in a dying industry with an outlook that was not very good. That is no longer the case," Salmon says.

"Acumatica gave us what we needed to have a much more hopeful outlook, which has been a blessing to everyone working here. Everyone is working as hard as ever, but it's when things are growing that you have optimism that carries you into the future. Our president often talks about our mission, which is to help others teach children about God, and that comes through in everything we do. Our ability to serve others has increased ten-fold, and that's been made possible by going live with Acumatica."

About Acumatica

Acumatica Cloud ERP provides the best business management solution for transforming your company to thrive in the new digital economy. Built on a future-proof platform with open architecture for rapid integrations, scalability, and ease of use, Acumatica delivers unparalleled value to small and midmarket organizations. Connected Business. Delivered. For more information, visit www.acumatica.com.

ORACLE NETSUITE

WORLD OF BEER BAR & KITCHEN TO LIFT CUSTOMER SPIRITS ONE GLASS AT A TIME WITH NETSUITE

NetSuite to help tavern chain consolidate and automate financial operations for greater business efficiency

World of Beer Bar & Kitchen, a purveyor of the craft beer experience, has selected Oracle NetSuite to help it scale to meet soaring customer demand for its hundreds of unique beers and rotating taps. With NetSuite, World of Beer Bar & Kitchen will be able to take advantage of an integrated business system to manage its financial operations and help quickly and easily adapt as it grows its global presence.

As one of craft beer's original bottle shops, World of Beer Bar & Kitchen was founded in 2007 by two best friends in Tampa, Florida. It has since grown to be a gathering place for beer explorers and food lovers alike and now operates 50 locations across the United States and China. As World of Beer Bar & Kitchen expanded its business, its accounting and operations processes became complex to manage. For instance, bank reconciliation created a bottleneck in accounting processes, resulting in lost efficiency and additional fees. In addition, there were issues logging into financial systems across corporate and franchise locations, resulting in errors and lost team productivity. After evaluating several systems including Microsoft Dynamics, World of Beer Bar & Kitchen replaced its existing software with Oracle NetSuite to help improve visibility into its business and accelerate decision-making.

"Given our strong growth, we could not afford to have members of our team focused on entering data, connecting with banks, monitoring transactions from various systems, and manually processing payments," said Marc Viglio, vice president of finance, World of Beer Bar & Kitchen. "The inefficiencies in our financial systems distracted us from our core mission of creating a premier place where people share and appreciate beer. With NetSuite, we now have a single business system that will give us new insights and help us maintain healthy cash flow as we expand."

With NetSuite, World of Beer Bar & Kitchen will be able to unify and manage its operations on a single cloud business system. By automating key finance functions, NetSuite will help World of Beer Bar & Kitchen to create more efficient accounting processes, including accounts payable, accounts receivable, lease amortization, and inventory management. In addition, NetSuite will help World of Beer Bar & Kitchen streamline operations, reducing the time spent managing financials across corporate and franchisees, and alleviate banking discrepancies across its locations. As World of Beer Bar & Kitchen continues to expand its operations, NetSuite will also help ensure the accuracy and timeliness of month- and year-end close as well as audit costs. With the flexibility and scalability NetSuite provides, World of Beer Bar & Kitchen is well-positioned to execute on its plans while continuing to drive efficiencies across its business.

"A core part of every growth story is staying focused on the things that drive your business forward," said Sam Levy, SVP of Sales, Oracle NetSuite. "With NetSuite, World of Beer Bar & Kitchen has a single business system to automate key operations as it scales and increase efficiencies across its financial processes. As a result, World of Beer Bar & Kitchen will be able to drive operational excellence and maintain its commitment to providing a premier location for people to share and appreciate beer."

About WOB Bar & Kitchen

WOB Bar & Kitchen was founded in 2007 by two best friends in Tampa, Fla. who wanted to create a welcoming place where friends could gather, drink, eat and explore. WOB, the original craft beer bar, boasts hundreds of beers and rotating taps at each location along with signature food menus specifically designed to enhance the flavor of beers. WOB has grown to a global franchise with 50+ locations in the United States and China. For more information, visit www.worldofbeer.com.

About Oracle Netsuite

For more than 20 years, Oracle NetSuite has helped organizations grow, scale and adapt to change. NetSuite provides an integrated system that includes financials / Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), inventory management, HR, professional services automation and omnichannel commerce, used by more than 27,000 customers in 215 countries and dependent territories. Learn more at https://www.netsuite.com. Like us on Facebook, and follow us on LinkedIn, Instagram, and Twitter.

CUEROS VÉLEZ OPTIMIZES LOGISTIC OPERATIONS WITH INFOR WMS

Retail and fashion company in Latin America increases productivity 150% in classification and height picking operations

Infor®, the industry cloud company, announced that Cueros Velez, a Colombian company with presence in Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Panamá and Perú, is achieving extraordinary results after implementing Infor WMS to manage warehouse operations. The solution was sold and implemented by Cerca Technology, Infor´s channel partner.

Cueros Velez was founded more than 35 years ago and is dedicated to the manufacturing of leather goods. It has six production plants with end-to-end processes from receiving raw materials to delivery to stores and customers through multi-channel sales. In 2016, it opened a new leather plant in Colombia considered one of the most modern in Latin America with a capacity of producing more than 30,000 leather products per month in sustainable processes.

Cueros Velez's strategy was to redesign its supply model, and one of the main activities was to implement a modern warehouse management solution. The company selected Infor WMS as part of its digital transformation.

"Infor WMS is a very intuitive solution that enables us to get real-time visibility for better decision making. From the very beginning, Cerca Technology supported our business and our needs," states Paula Cardenas, supply chain manager at Cueros Vélez.

Cueros Vélez announces these results after implementing Infor WMS:

- More than 150% increase in productivity in height picking
- More than 150% increase in productivity in classification process

- More than 20% increase in reception productivity
- 3% improvement in level of services
- 100% inventory visibility
- 20% more customer satisfaction
- 100% better decision making
- 100% improvement in administrative processes

"Infor WMS is a very flexible solution that applies perfectly to our business needs and to the different sales channels. One of the advantages considered by our IT team is that it is implemented in a multi-tenant cloud, which enables us to easily move to the cloud," states Carlos Abello, logistic director at Cueros Vélez.

As regards the implementation process, Cueros Vélez uses a training methodology based on real scenarios, enabling key users and staff to be part of the process and help in the implementation success. The process takes place with an internal strategy called "Velez University," a training space created for employees.

"One of the great challenges was to have the solution implemented before high season 2021, and this was possible thanks to Cerca Technology. This was a great step for Cueros Veles in our digital transformation process with different solutions such as WMS, ERP, WCS and TMS now integrated. Currently, operation leaders can manage operations and measure productivity with different tools," Abello said.

Cueros Vélez deployed the project in two stages. The first was to implement and consolidate Infor WMS. Once it was live and indicators improved, the second stage was to integrate WMS with other existing solutions.

"One of the main challenges that Infor WMS helped with is order processing, resulting in great optimization for Cueros Velez that is already experiencing great performance indicators," states Julian Lasso, professional services manager at Cerca Technology.

"The multi-tenant cloud architecture of Infor's warehouse management solutions helps companies like Cueros Velez seamlessly grow and scale their capacity. In any situation, increasing order volume, product range expansion and increasing number of stores, the solution will work stably and reliably, meeting all the requirements of the business and increasing customer satisfaction," states Adriana Gutierrez, Infor Latin America channel director.

Learn more about Infor WMS.

About Cueros Velez

Cueros Velez is a Colombian company founded 35 years ago with presence in Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Panamá and Perú, and with deep experience in the design and manufacture of leather clothes and articles. It has six production plants with a vertical integration including manufacture at the tannery, cuts and production delivering to the stores and customers through various channels. In 2016, it opened a leather plant, considered one the most modern in Latin America with a capacity to produce 30,000 items with eco-friendly processes. More information: www.velez.com.co/

About Infor

Infor is a global leader in business cloud software specialized by industry. We develop complete solutions for our focus industries. Infor's mission-critical enterprise applications and services are designed to deliver sustainable operational advantages with security and faster time to value. Over 60,000 organizations in more than 175 countries rely on Infor's 17,000 employees to help achieve their business goals. As a Koch company, our financial strength, ownership structure, and long-term view empower us to foster enduring, mutually beneficial relationships with our customers. Visit www.infor.com.

DELOITTE DIGITAL CONTINUES TO BUILD MIDMARKET SALESFORCE PRACTICE BY ENTERING A STRATEGIC ALLIANCE WITH CLOUD ERP PROVIDER ROOTSTOCK SOFTWARE

Deloitte Digital and Rootstock Software announced a new strategic alliance to offer consulting, implementation and integration services to manufacturers and distributors with revenue between $50M and $1B. This new alliance combines Deloitte's advisory and technological capabilities with Rootstock's powerful ERP software to deliver value to the midsize manufacturing market.

In a move to continue pushing into the midmarket, Deloitte Digital plans to grow their Rootstock consulting team by 250% over the next three years. Following their recent acquisition of Nubik, a top North American Rootstock implementation partner, Deloitte's digital transformation consulting practice is poised to expand their Rootstock offering to midmarket industries around the world – with ongoing engagements in Canada, the United States, Australia, and Europe.

"From the first time we implemented Rootstock Manufacturing ERP for a client, we were convinced of its effectiveness as a solution for midsize manufacturers," says Camil Bourbeau, Partner, Deloitte Canada. "Our experience implementing Rootstock in the North American market has prepared us to set our sights globally, and to continue building a center of excellence for Cloud ERP on Salesforce. We're excited to help manufacturers around the world improve their operations and manage critical challenges, like supply chain concerns and adapting to an increasingly automated working environment."

This new alliance positions Deloitte Digital as a premiere implementation partner for Rootstock – the only Cloud ERP on Salesforce designed specifically for manufacturers. The move addresses critical industries for Deloitte Digital's growing midmarket practice, namely Energy, Resource & Industrial, Technology Media & Telecom, and Health Care & Life Sciences.

"Deloitte Digital delivers the digital transformation expertise and consultancy resources we need to scale globally for growth among midsize manufacturers," says David Stephans, CEO of Rootstock Software. "Their team extends our ability to serve manufacturers that envision complex system and business process scenarios. With our manufacturing Cloud ERP serving as a core solution, we'll be able to offer manufacturers—using or interested in the Salesforce Platform—a viable, modern alternative to today's rigid, slow-to-adapt legacy ERP providers."

Despite supply headwinds, labor shortages, and an uncertain economic environment, the manufacturing industry continues to surpass the expectations of previous years. To maintain this growth, leaders should leverage digital technologies, adopt strategies for the future of work, and drive supply chain resiliency. Deloitte Digital, bolstered by its new alliance with Rootstock Software, can help organizations turn risks into advantages and capture growth.

About Rootstock

At Rootstock Software, our connected Manufacturing Cloud ERP enables hundreds of manufacturers, distributors, and supply chain organizations to turbocharge their operations in a dynamic, post-pandemic world. With our solution natively built on the Salesforce Platform, our customers leverage the industry's leading Cloud ERP, Rootstock, to connect with their suppliers, trading partners, and the broader ecosystem. Ranked as a leader in the ERP Value Matrix by industry analysts, Rootstock has vertical expertise in discrete manufacturing, medical devices and high-tech verticals. Rootstock team members partner with customers as trusted advisors in driving change and transformation to what's next. We continue to grow, so stay tuned to our new customers, career opportunities, and LinkedIn posts.

SEASONED TECH LEADER EDUARDO ROSINI TO LEAD GLOBAL PARTNER STRATEGY AT SAGE

Bringing 25 years' international experience, including at Intuit and Microsoft.

Sage – the leader in accounting, financial, HR and payroll technology for small and mid-sized businesses (SMBs) – announces the appointment of Eduardo Rosini as its new executive vice president of partners and alliances. As Sage bolsters its indirect business, this role sees Rosini take on responsibility for driving global partner strategy, supporting Sage's ecosystem of resellers, ISVs, developers, and strategic alliances to drive mutual growth.

Rosini brings more than 25 years' experience in global sales, marketing, and business development to this role. Prior to joining Sage, he was vice president, mid-market and corporate sales at Intuit, with responsibility for leading a sales business by meeting the evolving needs of SMB customers. He was previously chief revenue officer at Turi, a machine learning start-up acquired by Apple, and he also held several SMB and partner ecosystem leadership roles during his tenure at Microsoft.

Aziz Benmalek, President, Sage North America, says: "Our partners are critical to our success. Together we have enormous potential to build on our momentum, helping our joint customers to save time, improve productivity and build resilience – helping business flow. Eduardo joins us with significant leadership experience in various large organizations and across multiple regions. Through his leadership, Sage is well-positioned to continue to build on the success of our indirect business, as we continue to help more SMBs across the world benefit from the latest technology."

Eduardo Rosini, EVP, Partners and Alliances at Sage, comments: "It's an exciting time to be joining Sage. I'm looking forward to working with our powerful ecosystem of partners and together supporting more customers, expanding and growing our businesses as a result."

About Sage

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

QAD ACQUIRES REDZONE, THE WORLD'S #1 CONNECTED WORKFORCE PLATFORM, TO FORTIFY ITS VISION OF THE ADAPTIVE ENTERPRISE

Latest acquisition helps manufacturers transform productivity and frontline engagement to deal with the challenges of rising input costs and labor shortages

QAD Inc., a Thoma Bravo portfolio company delivering next-generation manufacturing and supply chain solutions in the cloud to enable the Adaptive Enterprise, has closed the acquisition of Redzone, the #1 connected workforce solution for manufacturing.

Over 1,000 plants and 300,000 frontline workers worldwide rely on Redzone's solutions to create a better employee experience for frontline teams and transform productivity by energizing and arming teams with the digital workflows and collaboration tools to get the most out of every shift.

"We are delighted to bring Redzone into the QAD family," said QAD CEO Anton Chilton. "We believe the emerging connected workforce space is the most transformational area of technology for manufacturing companies. As we assessed the market for the category leader, it was evident that not only is Redzone the #1 provider globally but also the pioneer of the category and the one who continues to define it. And the Company's financial performance speaks to its market leadership: profitable since inception, SaaS revenues growing 35 percent organically, and a clear path to being the first connected workforce solution in manufacturing to achieve $100 million revenue run rate this year."

"Since acquiring QAD in 2021, we have remained committed to supporting the Company in its mission to enable its customers to rapidly adapt to disruption and effectively innovate for competitive advantage," said Peter Stefanski, a Partner at Thoma Bravo. "The acquisition of Redzone, with its impressive growth trajectory in a large, unpenetrated $40 billion market, demonstrates our commitment to advancing QAD's vision and to further building its leadership position in the broader industrial software universe."

This is the second acquisition completed by QAD in the last two months – in December, QAD acquired Livejourney, a provider of a real-time process mining and predictive modeling solution designed to discover, monitor and improve business processes.

Redzone received a growth equity investment from Summit Partners in 2020 and has continued to deliver strong growth over the last several years. In 2022, the Company defied a slowing SaaS market, accelerating bookings growth to 46 percent, adding over 100 new clients and over 200 new plants by meeting the critical needs of manufacturers with its suite of frontline Productivity, Compliance, Reliability and Learning applications. Global manufacturers that benefit from the technology include the likes of Nestle, Post Holdings and Tyson.

"Connected Frontline Workforce (CFW) applications are proven human-centric platforms that accelerate business value with real-time insights and knowledge management, leading to faster, better decisions," said Allison Kuhn, EHS, Sustainability/ESG, Future of Industrial Work Research Analyst, of LNS Research. "LNS Research expects a dramatic increase in CFW adoption as manufacturing executives significantly accelerate focus on Future of Industrial Work initiatives and look to transform the end-to-end employee lifecycle and experience."

QAD Adaptive Applications are designed to support the Adaptive Enterprise where in a turbulent world, facing disruptions in supply and fluctuations in demand, manufacturers and supply chains rapidly respond to change and seamlessly optimize agility, efficiency and resilience for effective customer service.

The addition of Redzone's connected workforce product supercharges the QAD Adaptive Applications product suite by enabling QAD customers to drive rapid, tangible increases in empowerment, retention and productivity on the frontline. When employees have a growth mindset, they are better able to take extreme ownership of the challenges that impact their production goals and continuously improve, creating resilience in the face of disruption.

"People, process and technology are critical elements of any organization, and in a world of increasing labor shortages, the people factor becomes of paramount importance," said QAD CEO Anton Chilton. "QAD has concentrated on delivering industry best practices to manufacturers supported by industry leading technology delivered through the cloud. Redzone's focus on people, their productivity and engagement addresses a primary area of opportunity for our customers."

"Joining QAD will accelerate our mission of transforming manufacturing by empowering the frontline," said Redzone co-Founder and CEO Richard Tester. "We have always put the frontline worker at the heart of our technology and know that arming these teams with the right digital workflows is the fastest way to unlock productivity on the plant floor. Redzone has been the leader in the food and beverage and CPG industry but more recently expanded into the automotive, life sciences and discrete manufacturing verticals with great success. With QAD's expertise in these aligned verticals, combined with its large global customer base and footprint, Redzone will experience more growth further cementing our position as the category leader."

Labor productivity improvements directly impact efficiency. Productive and empowered employees increase the effective capacity of a manufacturing plant and accelerate time to productivity for new employees. This gives manufacturers the agility they need while also reducing the amount and impact of employee attrition.

Recent worker shortages have plagued manufacturers and are not going away – according to Deloitte, the labor shortfall is likely to reach 2.1 million and cost the economy $1 trillion by 2030. With the addition of Redzone, QAD now has a complete end-to-end solution for manufacturers to fully realize the potential of the Adaptive Enterprise from the shopfloor to the top floor, and from supplier to end customer.

"QAD Redzone addresses some of the greatest productivity challenges manufacturers face today including rising input costs, wage inflation and labor shortages. We have been incredibly impressed with the results Redzone customers are achieving; on average, manufacturers using Redzone have increased productivity by 22 percent, improved employee engagement by 74 percent and reduced staff turnover by 32 percent in just 90 days," said QAD Chief Product Officer Charles Sutherland.

Barclays served as financial advisor to Redzone, with Wilson Sonsini acting as legal counsel. Kirkland and Ellis LLP served as legal counsel to QAD and Thoma Bravo.

About Thoma Bravo

Thoma Bravo is one of the largest software investors in the world, with more than $120 billion in assets under management as of September 30, 2022. Through its private equity, growth equity and credit strategies, the firm invests in growth-oriented, innovative companies operating in the software and technology sectors. Leveraging Thoma Bravo's deep sector expertise and strategic and operational capabilities, the firm collaborates with its portfolio companies to implement operating best practices and drive growth initiatives. Over the past 20 years, the firm has acquired or invested in more than 420 companies representing over $235 billion in enterprise value. The firm has offices in Chicago, London, Miami and San Francisco. For more information, visit Thoma Bravo's website at thomabravo.com and Twitter @ThomaBravo.

About Redzone

As the #1 connected workforce solution in manufacturing, Redzone enables frontline teams to contribute their full potential, elevating the frontline with new technology to achieve company goals around productivity and throughput. Today, hundreds of thousands of frontline workers are valued, celebrated, and working with purpose; creating stronger communities inside and outside their plants. With customers both big and small, Redzone is helping more than 1,000 plants worldwide achieve remarkable productivity gains in just 90 days. For more information visit www.rzsoftware.com.

About QAD – Enabling Adaptive Enterprises

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

Acumatica

ACUMATICA CLOUD ERP ENABLES SEATTLE-BASED LUXURY FURNITURE AND FLOORING RETAILER TO INCREASE REVENUE BY 40%

Acumatica Customer Curran Spotlighted in Summit Keynote, IDC Study for its Successful Digital Transformation and Impressive Growth

Showcasing businesses transforming their organizations through cloud ERP systems was a focus at Acumatica Summit in Las Vegas where customers were featured in main stage presentations, breakout sessions and engagement roundtables. Acumatica dedicated segments of its keynote presentations to stories about several customers overcoming challenges and thriving with the help of its ERP solutions including Curran, a luxury furniture and flooring retailer that has increased revenue by 40% thanks to Acumatica's state-of-the-art cloud ERP software. Acumatica has enabled Curran to transition seamlessly to digital business management processes and improve purchase order accuracy and efficiency.

Leading technology analyst firm IDC spotlighted Curran's impressive digital transformation and revenue increase in its special report about how successfully implementing and applying business management software can help midsized companies thrive in a competitive economic environment.

Doug Johnson, vice president of product management at Acumatica, shared the story of Curran's successful cloud ERP implementation during the Summit Day 2 keynote address last month. He shared how Curran team members used technology to champion the company's growth, and how their feedback has helped innovate and evolve Acumatica's solutions.

Curran is a Seattle-based retailer providing an assortment of outdoor lifestyle and home fashion products to customers worldwide. The company previously relied on QuickBooks

and paper-based processes for business management tasks. As technology advanced and digitization progressed, decision-makers at Curran realized the importance of transitioning to a digital-first strategy that would support their global team in managing diverse customers and a high volume of transactions.

Finding legacy systems to be inefficient and ineffective, Curran searched for an automated, cloud-enabled solution that would enhance data visibility, accurately manage inventory and support international currencies. Acumatica's support for multiple base currencies and international sales tax allowed Curran to become a global player in the residential, hospitality and commercial sectors with plenty of room to grow into new market segments.

"We needed a modern, automated solution to help us compete within the ever-changing digital economy," said Jeff Curran, founder of Curran. "After months of evaluating our options, we found that a cloud-based ERP software would provide access to needed data and streamline processes that bogged down our staff. Acumatica was the only system built on a modern platform that supported our needs with open connectivity for our homegrown website."

After implementing Acumatica Cloud ERP Manufacturing Edition, Curran's revenue rose 40%. Curran has also improved purchase order accuracy and eliminated manual data entry.

"Thanks to Acumatica, we can truly maximize the value of data and serve our customers effectively and efficiently," said Curran. "Curran is now a modern, digital-first business that can support and manage substantial growth in revenue, staff and scale."

Manufacturers like Curran understand the importance of becoming digital and data driven. However, many still lack the expertise and tools to build a roadmap and execute digital-first strategies. With Acumatica, Curran seamlessly transitioned to automated business management processes that allow employees to focus their time more strategically on tasks that help improve the business overall.

"Today's business landscape is becoming increasingly digitized and fast-paced," said John Case, CEO of Acumatica. "To compete, companies like Curran are investing in flexible and agile ERP applications that reduce the time spent on traditionally laborious processes and provide real-time customer data available anywhere, anytime. It's great to see how Curran is using data and intelligence to reach new levels of growth and success."

About Acumatica

Acumatica Cloud ERP provides the best business management solution for transforming your company to thrive in the new digital economy. Built on a future-proof platform with open architecture for rapid integrations, scalability, and ease of use, Acumatica delivers unparalleled value to small and midmarket organizations. Connected Business. Delivered.
For more information, visit www.acumatica.com.

SALESFORCE TO BUY 280,000 MWH OF RENEWABLE ENERGY TO INCREASE CLEAN POWER ACCESS IN EMERGING MARKETS

First-of-its-kind purchase helps scale new, high-impact projects in Brazil, India, sub-Saharan Africa, and Southeast Asia that advance a just and inclusive energy transition

Eight-year contract enables Salesforce to maintain its renewable energy commitment and delivers clean energy access in regions highly dependent on fossil fuels

Salesforce purchase will help unlock an estimated $65 million of investments in new solar capacity and is expected to avoid over 50,000 tonnes of CO^2 emissions annually

At GreenBiz 23, Salesforce announced it will purchase 280,000 megawatt hours (MWh) of renewable energy certificates from small, distributed energy projects over the next eight years to accelerate clean electricity access in emerging markets and help maintain its commitment to match 100% of the electricity it uses with renewables.

Salesforce has contracted with Powertrust, an aggregator of high-impact renewables around the world, and will leverage Distributed Renewable Energy Certificates (D-RECs) – an innovative financial mechanism that enables organizations to accelerate deployment of capital for small-scale, distributed renewable projects – to drive this new clean energy supply.

Today, more than 750 million people lack access to basic electricity, while 2 billion more suffer from inadequate and unreliable access. Distributed renewable energy projects can provide much needed access to electricity and help reduce emissions in communities around the globe. However, until now, emerging countries have been largely excluded from corporate purchasing for a number of reasons, including difficulty aggregating and certifying multiple small-scale projects.

"Nearly 95% of corporate renewable energy purchases today take place in North America and Europe. We need to ensure the rest of the world isn't left behind," said Megan Lorenzen, who leads power sector decarbonization for Salesforce and is co-author of the More than a Megawatt report.

"Small, decentralized renewable energy projects can, in many cases, deliver greater impact than large utility-scale facilities. Especially in regions where energy access is limited, these projects can positively transform lives and communities around the globe." - *Megan Lorenzen*

Salesforce purchase helps drive critical social and environmental benefits

Salesforce's D-RECs purchase will focus on procuring projects in non-traditional markets to help deliver social and environmental benefits to communities. Potential projects within this portfolio include:

- ***Brazil:*** A project that aims to replace old diesel generators with a solar-powered microgrid for a remote community along the Amazon River, reducing fuel consumption by more than 50% and benefitting around 1,000 people.
- ***India:*** A solar-powered microgrid in Nagaland, an eastern state in India, where an isolated mountain community will receive electricity for the first time. In addition to initial energy access, the community will receive training on how to use the energy productively, such as for operating rice hullers.
- ***Sub-Saharan Africa:*** A solar and storage installation at a hospital that will help improve electricity reliability while controlling rising electricity costs. The system will power ventilators, organ support equipment, and operating rooms. Moreover, 30-40% of the direct jobs created by these projects will be assigned to women.
- ***Southeast Asia:*** A solar microgrid in the Borneo region of Malaysia, which is home to 72% of rural Malaysians who lack access to electricity. The project will pair a solar system with a micro-hydro installation to provide reliable power.

"Salesforce was instrumental in the development of this high-impact procurement approach," said Nick Fedorkiw, CEO, Powertrust. "However, the impact of this commitment goes far beyond Salesforce's purchase. Companies across the globe have an appetite for high-impact renewable energy purchases and can't find the supply they need. Now, as proven by Salesforce, companies can open up new sources of supply while maximizing social impact."

These projects will be located in schools, hospitals, public service facilities, or in disadvantaged communities and deliver on the UN Sustainable Development Goals outcomes aligned to climate resilience (goals 9 and 11), universal energy access (goal 7), gender equality (goal 5).

This initiative also demonstrates Salesforce's commitment to the newly established climate justice policy priorities to help drive an equitable transition to net zero.

Significant financing needed to achieve equitable access to electricity

To reach global net zero emissions, annual investments in clean energy need to expand to $1 trillion by 2030 – a 3x increase from existing levels. This must include mobilizing billions of dollars per year toward new clean energy infrastructure in emerging markets to ensure equitable access to electricity.

As part of this global net zero focus, Salesforce also joined nine other leading companies in launching the Emission First initiative. The initiative calls for accounting standards to shift to allow corporate procurements to look beyond traditional markets like North America and Europe and focus on decarbonization in regions where the world needs it the most.

About Salesforce

Salesforce, the global CRM leader, empowers companies of every size and industry to digitally transform and create a 360° view of their customers. For more information about Salesforce (NYSE: CRM), visit: www.salesforce.com.

APTEAN TO EXPAND ERP CAPABILITIES FOR BEVERAGE COMPANIES WITH ACQUISITION OF DRINK-IT

Cloud-native solution will enhance Aptean's Food & Beverage ERP offerings

Aptean, a global provider of mission-critical enterprise software solutions, announced that it has entered into a definitive agreement to acquire Drink-IT, a provider of enterprise resource planning software designed to meet the needs of beverage companies, including breweries, distilleries, bottlers and wholesalers. Drink-IT is a subsidiary of the NORRIQ Group.

The planned purchase of Drink-IT will build upon Aptean's Food & Beverage ERP offerings with additional applications and expertise to serve the beverage industry globally. Drink-IT will benefit from Aptean's complementary team, offerings and technological expertise.

Founded in 2002 and headquartered in Tremelo, Belgium, Drink-IT supports customers in Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark, Germany, UK and over forty other countries across the globe. Drink-IT's modular app-based solution is designed specifically for beverage companies to implement standard processes in beverage production, quality management, alcohol balance tracking, sales and contracts management, compliance and tax management, warehouse management, logistics, and deposit management. Drink-IT ERP is a proprietary, cloud-native solution, developed based on best practices gained from decades of experience supporting beverage companies.

"When finalized, the acquisition of Drink-IT will add new, cloud-based ERP capabilities for beverage producers and distributors to Aptean's offerings," said TVN Reddy, CEO at Aptean. Drink-IT's talented team shares Aptean's culture of innovation and collaboration and we look forward to welcoming them to the Aptean family."

"We're delighted by the opportunity to join forces with Aptean and provide our deep beverage knowledge with Aptean's food and beverage expertise to deliver an exceptional level of service and support to our customers and partners," said Sarah Broux, Managing Director at Drink-IT. "As part of Aptean, we will be better positioned to live up to the full potential of Drink-IT and deliver the benefits of digital transformation to the beverage industry."

"It has not been an easy decision to say goodbye to a strong team of dedicated colleagues but we are convinced that this is the right move for the Drink-IT business and for all the employees of Drink-IT. With Aptean's global presence, conditions are optimal for continuing the incredible development that the Drink-IT business has undergone in recent years. We want to thank Sarah Broux and her team for the business growth they have driven and wish them success in the next phase of Drink-IT's future." said Bo Martinsen, CEO of NORRIQ Holding.

About Drink-IT

Drink-IT's beverage management software extends the Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central platform and is used by 150+ beverage companies around the world; with 20+ years of experience in the sector, Drink-IT knows, understands and can help manage the day-to-day challenges beverage companies face in purchasing, production, sales, logistics and warehousing.
To learn more visit: www.Drink-IT.com.

About Aptean

Aptean is one of the world's leading providers of purpose-built, industry-specific software that helps manufacturers and distributors effectively run and grow their businesses. With both cloud and on-premise deployment options, Aptean's products, services and unmatched expertise help businesses of all sizes to be Ready for What's Next, Now®. Aptean is headquartered in Alpharetta, Georgia and has offices in North America, Europe and Asia-Pacific. To learn more about Aptean and the markets we serve, visit www.aptean.com.

WHAT IS HYPERAUTOMATION?

*Article By **Candice Arnold,***
VP of Marketing - CMO, IFS assyst

Hyperautomation is the integration of advanced technologies, such as artificial intelligence and machine learning, with traditional automation tools to enhance the capabilities and performance of business processes. Originally coined by Gartner, hyperautomation takes automation to the next level, enabling organizations to make better use of their data and insights to drive better decision-making.

Hyperautomation is a rapidly growing trend in the business world. And this is evident from the market, with the hyperautomation market's value estimated to reach $46.4 billion by 2031. This growth is driven by several factors, including the increasing availability of AI and other advanced technologies and the growing need for organizations to improve their efficiency, agility, and compliance.

We understand the multiple benefits of automation in IT operations and IT service management, so it's no surprise that organizations are looking beyond traditional automation tools and toward more sophisticated technologies to maximize the benefits for their business. But what sets hyperautomation apart?

Automation vs hyperautomation: what's the difference?

Automation and hyperautomation are terms that are often used interchangeably, but there is a difference between the two. Automation refers to the use of technology to automate tasks and processes, reducing human involvement. Hyperautomation, as mentioned previously, is a step beyond automation, encompassing more complex technologies that enable organizations to execute key business processes with greater speed and accuracy.

Here are just two things that set automation and hyperautomation apart.

Level of automation

Traditionally, automation refers to the use of technology to automate repetitive tasks but is often limited to activities that are simple in their nature. Hyperautomation extends the capabilities of automation to cover a broader range of processes and tasks, including those that are more complex.

This can be the smart routing of an incident to the right resolution team depending on several factors, which can include the nature of the incident, the team's workload, and urgency.

Human involvement

Automation reduces human involvement in tasks and processes, but it still requires some level of human oversight. Hyperautomation, on the other hand, has the potential to completely remove the need for human involvement in certain cases with the right setup.

Though sharing a similar goal, hyperautomation represents a significant step forward in terms of the level of automation that can be achieved, opening up further opportunities on how to best leverage the latest technologies.

Hyperautomation in ITSM

Hyperautomation can be applied in many ways, streamlining and optimizing the various processes involved in ITSM.

Incident management
Automating the incident resolution process can help IT teams quickly identify and resolve incidents, reducing downtime and maintaining the high performance of all IT systems.

Change management
Hyperautomation can be used to streamline the change management process, ensuring that changes are made in a controlled and efficient manner.

Service request fulfillment

Automating the service request fulfillment process can help to quickly and efficiently resolve customer requests, elevating the overall customer experience.

Problem management
Hyperautomation can be used to automate problem resolution, reducing the time and effort required to resolve problems. Thus, increasing the reliability of an organization's tech infrastructure.

IT asset management
Hyperautomation can be used to automate ITAM processes, such as asset discovery, tracking, and maintenance, reducing manual effort and improving the accuracy of IT asset information.

As technology continues to evolve, the use of hyperautomation in ITSM will likely become increasingly prevalent, and organizations that adopt it will be well-positioned to stay ahead of the curve.

What does hyperautomation involve?

Hyperautomation makes use of a range of tools and techniques that, when combined, provide a more efficient, effective, and streamlined way of working. If you've been keeping up with enterprise tech trends throughout the years, you've likely heard of these technologies before.

Robotic process automation (RPA)

RPA involves the use of software robots to automate repetitive and routine tasks. This technology can be used to automate a wide range of processes, from data entry and customer service to more complex tasks, such as financial reporting and analysis.

Artificial intelligence (AI)

Artificial intelligence involves the use of advanced algorithms and computer systems to perform tasks that would normally require human intelligence. This technology can be used in hyperautomation for complex processes, such as decision-making and problem-solving.

Machine learning (ML)

Machine learning is a subfield of artificial intelligence that focuses on developing algorithms that enable computers to learn from data. Drawing conclusions by observing patterns enables computer systems to adapt to certain scenarios and execute tasks without human intervention.

Big data

Big data refers to the large amounts of data that are generated and collected by organizations every day. This data can be used in hyperautomation to provide valuable insights into business operations, customer behavior, and market trends, helping organizations to make better decisions and improve their performance.

Chatbots

Chatbots simulate conversation with human users. They provide customers with instant answers to their questions or route them to the right information or person, improving the overall customer experience and reducing the workload for service desk teams.

The combination of all these technologies provides organizations increases the value automation can provide, including key business insights and seamless service experiences.

What are the advantages of hyperautomation?

We've already touched upon various advantages of hyperautomation in the previous sections and they're significant in getting organizations to get ahead of the curve.

Higher efficiency, lower costs

Organizations can lower operational costs by 30% by 2024 with the help of hyperautomation, according to Gartner. As organizations continue to experience tumultuous changes, many are needing to make do with less. Hyperautomation enables organizations to maximize the value of their resources without sacrificing business performance and service quality.

Agility becomes second nature

Extending their automation capabilities helps organizations free up their employees' time to focus on more strategic and value-added activities. In an ever-changing business environment, time is of the essence. Getting this time back provides organizations with the competitive edge they need to get ahead.

Water-tight security and compliance

Automated processes and tasks can help ensure that data is handled in a secure and compliant manner, reducing the risk of data breaches or other security incidents. For example, with hyperautomation, you can create automated workflows that monitor system performance and resolve

issues as soon as they're flagged – all without an IT professional having to lift a finger.

How can you best leverage hyperautomation?

The sky's the limit when it comes to the potential value hyperautomation can bring to an organization. So, how best can you leverage this capability in your business? Here are just some best practices to consider.

1. Start with a clear understanding of your business objectives

The possible applications of hyperautomation are vast, so it is essential to have a clear understanding of your business objectives. Identify the processes that are ripe for automation and ensure that the automation solution is aligned with your business goals. Without a clear direction, you can easily waste resources figuring out how to make it work for your organization.

2. Choose the right automation tools

As much as we wish it would be, an organization's tech budget isn't limitless. Hyperautomation involves multiple tools and technologies, so it's crucial to choose the right combination that meets your specific needs. Consider factors like the complexity of the processes, the amount of data involved, and the desired outcomes when choosing the right automation tools.

3. Define clear roles and responsibilities

Implementing hyperautomation in your processes can cause a significant shift in your people's roles and responsibilities. It is essential to define these clearly to ensure that everyone involved in the process understands their part and can work together effectively.

4. Emphasize continuous improvement

To guarantee the benefits of hyperautomation, don't forget that its implementation is not a one-time process but an ongoing journey. To leverage it effectively, it is crucial to have a growth mindset and continuously evaluate and improve your processes.

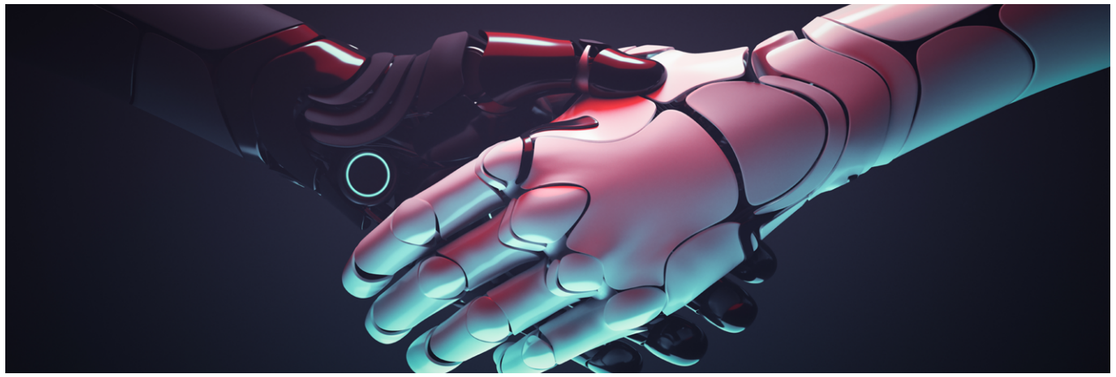
5. Foster a culture of innovation

Hyperautomation is about innovation and change, and it's essential to foster a culture that embraces and encourages it. This means encouraging experimentation and learning, as well as providing the necessary resources and support for hyperautomation initiatives.

Enable hyperautomation with IFS assyst

Need a reliable solution to elevate your automation capabilities?

IFS assyst can provide you with the automation tools to free your people from the mundane and help them concentrate on work where they can make the biggest impact. Quick to deploy and easy to use, it has everything you need to design, deliver, and optimize your essential ITSM processes



Candice Arnold is the CMO for Enterprise Service Management (IFS assyst) at IFS and is at the helm of the branding and marketing efforts for their leading ESM/ITSM solution. She has been named one of the Top 50 most influential Women in the UK Channel and shortlisted as CRN's marketeer of the year. Candice firmly believes that marketing breathes life into brands and services and has extensive experience in leading large global teams to solve complex commercial issues, having held senior marketing roles in the enterprise software space.

About IFS

IFS develops and delivers enterprise software for companies around the world who manufacture and distribute goods, build and maintain assets, and manage service-focused operations. Within our single platform, our industry specific products are innately connected to a single data model and use embedded digital innovation so that our customers can be their best when it really matters to their customers – at the Moment of Service. The industry expertise of our people and of our growing ecosystem, together with a commitment to deliver value at every single step, has made IFS a recognized leader and the most recommended supplier in our sector.

UNIT4

THE DO'S AND DON'TS OF DIGITALIZATION IN SOURCING

The digitalization of sourcing has been an ongoing trend for the past few years. Many organizations have already embarked on this journey, and there are others that are considering doing it.

The digitalization of sourcing is elevating businesses with more revenue and more value-producing opportunities. The benefits are enormous and include improved efficiency of operations, reduced costs and wastage, improved quality of services, better customer service delivery, and improved data analytics capabilities.

It is important to note that there are some challenges to consider when embarking on a digitalization journey, such as security concerns and a lack of skilled resources to operate digital systems, but these can be easily managed with proper planning and execution.

What is the digitalization of sourcing?

The digitalization of sourcing is the process by which a company transitions from its traditional ways of sourcing to modern technologies. This transition can be challenging, but the benefits are worth it.

The Gartner IT glossary defines digitalization as:

"The use of digital technologies to change a business model and provide new revenue and value-producing opportunities; it is the process of moving to a digital business."

Why embark on the digitalization journey?

There is now a need for more advanced tools because the world in which you operate is getting more complex. As supply chains have continued to increase in complexity, so too have the tools required to manage them. When your sourcing software is up-to-date, it can help you make better decisions. Digitalizing the sourcing process will increase communication, improve collaboration, and increase visibility and transparency.

The benefits of digitalizing your sourcing include:

- An increase in revenue thanks to faster response times from suppliers who are able to submit orders more quickly than before, thanks to automation.

- Ability to leverage sourcing data quickly, easily, and accurately. Instead of spending time and effort retrospectively and manually analyzing your sourcing data, simply click a button and run real-time reports on various metrics.
- Increased efficiency. Making your sourcing processes digital gives you more control over them and can help you get more out of them.
- The potential for human error in the data collection process is eradicated.
- Improved visibility into your supply chain, allowing you to make better decisions about how you spend your time and money.
- When sourcing processes are automated and streamlined, sourcing teams can speed up each project cycle time and ultimately increase their percentage of spend under management.
- Automation of repetitive tasks, allowing you to focus on strategic business decisions instead of getting bogged down by manual tasks.
- Increased internal and supplier compliance as digitalization achieves more structure, visibility, and control of daily activities.

Where should you start your digitalization journey?

The first step in your transition toward a more efficient and effective sourcing process is to evaluate your current processes and identify areas for improvement. Then, you can develop an actionable plan for implementing those improvements by choosing which technology solutions and which provider will best suit your needs and will help streamline those processes for you.

Accelerating digitalization in procurement comes down to a straightforward set of principles:

1. Have a plan
2. Make incremental progress
3. Hold yourself, your team, and your leadership accountable
4. Make adjustments as needed
5. Proactively communicate with all involved
6. Always think about what's in it for your employees, your executive team, and your stakeholders

The do's and don'ts

- Do make sure to get key stakeholders and users involved at an early stage.
- Do keep it simple.
- Do remember that technology alone is not the solution.
- Do maximize user adoption and throughput
- Do make it easy
- Don't be too feature-centric
- Don't try jumping across the stream in one go
- Don't rely on system demos alone
- Don't forget about selecting the right provider, as well as the right system

Don't forget what you'll be judged on:

- Does the system support and enhance processes?
- How quickly and well did the implementation go?
- How quick and successful was user onboarding?
- What is the level of throughput in the system?
- What was the return on investment?

Before you embark on your digitalization journey, here are some things to keep in mind:

- Establishing key metrics so you can start measuring and sharing success when the system is live will aid focus throughout the year.
- The digitalization journey does not happen overnight – it requires time and effort from everyone involved in your business.
- Make sure that everyone understands why they need to be involved in this process and how their role will benefit them as well as the company overall.
- Keep an open mind when making changes because there will be some bumps along the road (but don't let them get in your way).

How Unit4 can help streamline your sourcing processes

Digitalization is the new way of doing business. It is the future of sourcing. Unit4 Source-to-Contract by Scanmarket provides advanced functionalities in an effortless design. Originating from the needs of the end user, Unit4 Source-to-Contract by Scanmarket solution is attuned to meet the needs of the procurement professional. We take ownership of customer success with experts at your fingertips to drive user adoption. Digitalize your upstream procurement functions with technology that is built to be used.

About Unit4

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

For more information, please visit https://www.unit4.com/, follow us on Twitter @Unit4global, Facebook: Unit4 Business Software, Instagram: @unit4global or visit our YouTube: Unit4 and LinkedIn page

SAP ENABLE NOW: THE DIGITAL ADOPTION PLATFORM POWERING INTELLIGENT ENTERPRISES

*Article By **Sindhu Gangadharan,***
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As the global pandemic fundamentally changed the way we work, digital adoption has become a top priority for organizations to foolproof their businesses against ungovernable circumstances.

An essential aspect of business success is to prepare end users and employees for digital adoption. This is where a digital adoption platform like SAP Enable Now comes into play.

Digital adoption offers competitive advantage to enterprises due to, among other factors, increased efficiency of business operations. By 2025, 70% of organizations are expected to use digital adoption platforms across the entire technology stack to overcome insufficient application user experiences. Additionally, it is proven that increasing ongoing training by 10% can double the improvement of business value. Therefore, deploying digital adoption solutions as part of the digital transformation strategy is not just an inducement, but a business imperative to maximize return on investment (ROI).

At SAP, one driver of product adoption is a consistent, intelligent personalized user enablement experience, with relevant product assets in the required languages. As the digital adoption layer, the company's homegrown digital adoption platform SAP Enable Now enables every enterprise to become an intelligent, sustainable enterprise. With next-generation capabilities such as on-screen translation and integration with business process modelling solutions, SAP Enable Now helps ensure that the knowledge levels and productivity of all employees remain high to increase the potential ROI for enterprise software.

The easy access to learning content directly within many SAP applications is powerful enabler and includes SAP S/4HANA Cloud and SAP S/4HANA, as well as digital supply chain, SAP SuccessFactors, SAP Ariba, SAP Fieldglass, SAP Concur, SAP Marketing Cloud, and SAP Sales Cloud solutions, among others. These applications include embedded and customizable content provided by SAP and translated into the language of choice, which delivers time-of-need learning to help people develop the skills they need to do their jobs effectively.

It is important for businesses to empower project managers, learning teams, and end users with continuous learning in order to develop the right knowledge to use the software accurately and efficiently, leading to accelerated productivity and improved performance. With SAP Enable Now, businesses can create and deliver any type of learning — for any SAP and non-SAP application, for any domain, for any channel, integrated with any source, and for all their employees.

SAP Enable Now also supports process transformation and project management by integrating with SAP Signavio and third-party solutions. It supports systematic learning for the end users, through which businesses run many complex business processes. Next-generation in-app help with the SAP Companion service, including context-sensitive help, embedded learning, and process guidance, is also available in the application of choice.

Language is key to adoption of any software. With SAP Enable Now, end users can consume enablement content in more than 40 languages powered by machine learning with integrated SAP Translation Hub. The solution also offers the ability to export learning content in formats compatible with most learning management systems. It also supports change management with content lifecycle management as well as automated translation and maintenance of content services. For instance, partners can customize SAP-provided content or can create pre-build based on industry and solution best practices and offer enablement as a service. Businesses to scale with their partners through the powerful authoring suite for creating e-learning courses, software tutorials, and help documents, as well as flexible, template-based content production.

Undoubtedly, digital adoption significantly impacts the success of software implementations. Increased adoption leads to higher productivity, thereby maximizing ROI on business applications. With easy access to knowledge that end users need to succeed, exactly where and when it's needed, SAP Enable Now is integral to any business' digital adoption strategy to improve productivity, user adoption, and the end user experience for maximized business value.

Sindhu Gangadharan is head of SAP User Enablement and senior vice president and managing director of SAP Labs India.

About SAP

As a market leader in enterprise software, SAP turns businesses into intelligent, sustainable enterprises. Our applications and services enable business and public customers across 25 industries globally to operate profitably and adapt continuously. With a global network of customers, partners, and employees, SAP helps the world run better and improve people's lives.

For more information, visit www.sap.com.

BE BRILLIANT: HOW TO SPARK INNOVATION IN YOUR ORGANIZATION

For those outside of the finance department, the phrase "innovation in finance" probably sounds pretty strange.

Were a bunch of new numbers discovered? Did a mathematician drop some new equations we should all check out?

But while numbers don't change much, technology certainly does. And with new technology comes higher expectations from the rest of your organization, new potential for your department to take on a larger role—and, of course, new challenges.

Finance Innovators are focused on paving the way for a more efficient and effective way to generate insights. Their mission is to take existing processes and build on them, empowering the team to create something new and valuable for the business.

Innovators can forge a better way forward with the right skills, knowledge and initiative on board. If you're ready to tackle the challenge, the rewards can be substantial.

Here's how you can become an Innovator in your organization.

Develop Your Skill Set

Digital transformation in finance means forging a new relationship with data. From gathering data to analysis to reporting, it's all about using the right insights gleaned from data to become an advisor to the business. In the case of Innovators, it's also about backing your brilliance with finance technology.

Embrace Analytics

Finance teams are used to working with numbers to create reports, which involves gathering data about expenditures and revenue and compiling results.

The next frontier for a finance Innovator is learning and adopting data analytics. Instead of focusing on surface observations one can make by looking at data, it's about

surfacing deeper insights with artificial intelligence and machine learning.

You don't have to become a data expert overnight, but you should have a general understanding of how data analysis is performed and how to automate it.

Learn the Latest Tools

If your finance team hasn't adopted new technology since Windows 98, it's time to see just how far the tools have advanced. Cloud finance solutions provide a wealth of data management, analysis, collaboration, and reporting tools.

It's worth dipping a toe into the financial performance management market to see what new processes—like workflow automation, for example—your team can adopt to free up time for more innovative pursuits.

Round Out Your Soft Skills

In order to rally the organization around your innovative ideas, you will need to use your data and insights to tell a compelling story. Anyone can make a slide presentation with charts and graphs, but it's the narrative that will truly make your case. This is how Innovators can take an existing asset (data) and create something valuable (a comprehensive narrative).

Storytelling will continue to serve you and your department as you take on a more advisory role in the organization. After all, insights are only valuable if people are convinced to take action on them!

Communication skills are a critical part of driving change. "Innovators in finance need great leadership skills," says Andy Burrows, Finance Leadership and Career Coach. "They need to be able to communicate a plan that links right into the heart of why we exist in the organization, and that inspires people to want to do better for the success of the business."

Start with our presentation checklist to begin to hone those storytelling skills.

Adopt the Right Attitude

It takes flexibility and resilience to be a successful Innovator. "The one indispensable skill that finance Innovators need to have is the ability to persevere through changes, wins, and setbacks," says Gabrielle Luoma, Co-Founder and CEO at Mod Ventures, LLC. "Persevere to a better tomorrow and don't be phased by failures. This is the only way we learn and grow."

It's easy to become risk-averse in a finance role. But playing it safe and innovating are mutually exclusive. It's important to be comfortable with experimentation, a little uncertainty, and even a few failures on the way to success.

Dig into Best Practices

What are the leading finance teams doing differently that puts them ahead of the curve? While there isn't one singular formula for success, it's worth evaluating others' best practices to see if they make sense for your team. Here are three that our research has shown to be effective:

Scenario Planning

In upcoming our survey, only 4% of respondents said they regularly make time for scenario planning. But those who do carve out time are faster, more accurate in their predictions, and able to predict further into the future than their peers.

Rolling Forecasting

Between 19-25% of companies have implemented 12-month rolling forecasting. These organizations have reduced their reforecasting time, increased accuracy, and in general are more agile in responding to organizational change.

Zero-Based Budgeting

For larger companies, zero-based budgeting (ZBB) can provide substantial benefits in accuracy, efficiency, and forecast accuracy. If your organization has the time and resources to devote to ZBB, it's a worthwhile step forward in your innovation journey.

These three best practices aren't mutually exclusive, either; each can increase the efficacy of the others. All together, they help create a more agile finance department with supercharged capabilities for analysis, insight, and decision-making.

Innovation in Action: Mission Health

Mission Health Communities (MHC) provides services to senior living and skilled nursing communities, managing over 50 facilities in the U.S.A.

MHC's finance team did most of its accounting and budgeting manually, using spreadsheets. This process was not only cumbersome and time-consuming, it actively prevented the kind of organizational data gathering and analysis needed to surface insights.

Mission Health implemented the Prophix platform over two months in 2019, using it to automate processes, enable communication and collaboration, and run advanced analytics.

In just 18 months, Mission Health saw a 110% return on their investment in avoided costs and increased efficiency.

Read the full story here

Take the Initiative to Spark Innovation

Your finance team needs Innovators like you to help transform finance in your organization. Start by gathering support from your internal team by showing the benefits of digital transformation. From there, you can recruit stakeholders from across the organization and ultimately make the business case for your innovative ideas to drive new efficiencies, generate more relevant insights, and ultimately move the business forward.

About Prophix

To empower mid-market companies to achieve their goals, Prophix provides an integrated, cloud-based platform to the Office of Finance; one that delivers planning, budgeting, reporting, forecasting, and consolidation solutions. With Prophix, finance leaders improve profitability and minimize risk, and put the focus back on what matters most – uncovering business opportunities. Prophix supports the future with AI innovations that adapt to meet the strategic realities of more than 2,600 active customers, globally, who rely on Prophix to deliver tangible business outcomes and transform the way they work. For more information, visit www.prophix.com.

Nolan Business Solutions

HOW NETSUITE ERP CAN BE USED TO SUPPORT YOUR MARKETING EFFORTS

Marketing is a crucial component of any successful business. It helps to build brand awareness, attract new customers, and ultimately, drive sales (both off and online). However, this is easier said than done. One of the main challenges that businesses face when it comes to marketing is having the right tools, systems, and team in place to manage the process effectively.

Enter NetSuite ERP. Whilst NetSuite is not exactly known for its ground-breaking marketing features or functionalities, businesses that utilise the platform should certainly make the most out of its marketing capabilities. By integrating NetSuite to support your marketing campaigns, you can streamline processes, improve efficiency, and drive greater results. Here's how.

1. Implementing data-driven marketing strategies

NetSuite ERP provides you with access to a wealth of customer data, allowing you to make informed decisions about your marketing strategies. You can use this data to segment your target audience and personalise your marketing efforts to better meet their needs.
For example, you can use customer purchase history to create targeted email campaigns. If you're able to pin point customers who have purchased a specific product, and a new version of this product has just been released, who better to target than previous purchasing customers?

You can even use data on website behaviour to then set up A/B tests and optimise your web page conversion rates. You'd be surprised at how such a small change can make a difference to your conversions.

2. Obtain more data for better business decisions

Data is a valuable asset that can inform every aspect of your business, from marketing to logistics. By combining the power of digital marketing and NetSuite, you have the opportunity to collect a wealth of data that can inform decisions and drive your business forward.

NetSuite acts as the hub for all your data collection, integrating information from digital marketing tools, marketing channels, and other business functions. This creates a centralised repository of data that can be used to inform your decisions and drive better results.

Some of the data you can collect using NetSuite and digital marketing includes:

- ***Customer Information*** - You can collect and store customer data such as names and contact information, allowing you to better understand your audience and target your marketing efforts more effectively.

- ***Product Details*** - You can collect and store data on your products, including product ID numbers, size, material, and other relevant information, allowing you to better understand your offerings and make informed decisions about your product line.

- ***Marketing Performance*** - Digital marketing channels and tools provide data on the performance of your marketing strategies, such as clicks, views, and shares. With this data on hand, you can uncover actionable insights into the effectiveness of your marketing efforts and make data-driven decisions to improve your strategies.

3. Improved lead management

NetSuite ERP provides several features that help improve lead management, making it easier for your business to nurture and convert leads into customers. Some of the ways that NetSuite ERP helps to improve lead management include:

- ***Lead tracking and nurturing*** - NetSuite's lead management module allows you to track leads from initial contact to final sale. You can create custom workflows and set up automated communications to keep your leads engaged and move them towards a purchase.

- ***Lead scoring and qualification*** - NetSuite's lead scoring and qualification features allow you to evaluate the quality of leads based on various criteria, such as industry and product interest. This allows you to prioritise leads and focus your resources on the most promising opportunities.

- ***Customisable lead forms and reports*** - NetSuite's lead management module allows you to create custom lead forms and reports, helping you collect the data you need to evaluate the performance of your lead generation and management efforts.

4. Real-time analytics and reporting

NetSuite ERP provides real-time insights into your marketing performance, helping you to quickly identify areas of strength and weakness. This allows you to make data-driven decisions and optimise your marketing strategies in real-time. You can also use this information to evaluate the success of your marketing campaigns and measure their impact on your ROI.

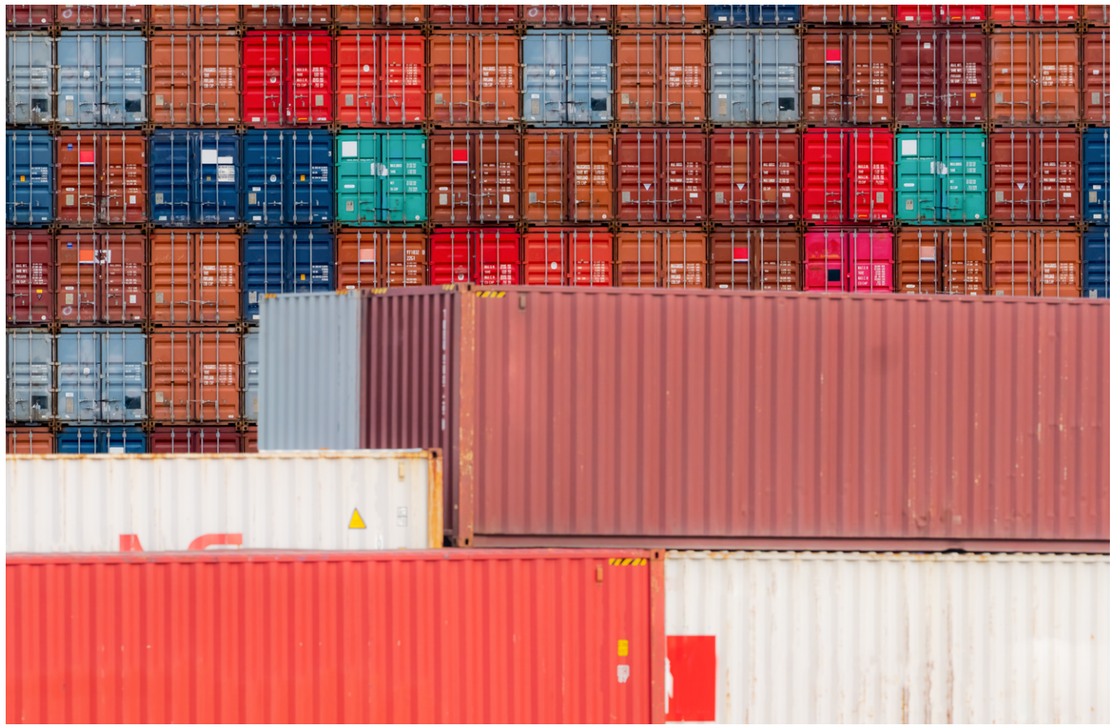
NetSuite ERP from the experts – Nolan Business Solutions

At Nolan Business Solutions, we specialise in providing tailored NetSuite solutions for businesses looking to grow. As an award-winning NetSuite partner and accredited NetSuite Solution Provider, we have the expertise and experience required to recommend, deliver, and maintain the very best software solution for you.

If you are a fast-growing business looking take things to the next level, contact our team of experts today. We are more than happy to answer any questions and would love to support your business from strength to strength.

About Nolan Business Solutions

Nolan Business Solutions has helped thousands of companies worldwide solve their business problems by implementing leading mid-market business software solutions and custom developed software applications for over 20 years. Nolan Business Solutions is a unique Microsoft Dynamics GP and NetSuite solution provider with the ability to deliver standard and customised enhancements, as well as straightforward out-of-the-box installations for both products. Their ability to deliver proven on-premise, as well as Software as a Service (SaaS) bespoke functionality makes them stand out from the crowd.



WHAT 4 ISSUES ARE KEEPING SUPPLY CHAIN LEADERS UP AT NIGHT?

*Article By **Trevor Long***

The recent Supply Chain and Logistics (SCL) Hub in London was a welcome return to one of my personal favorite supply chain events – and good timing too! The ongoing disruptions of recent years are forcing supply chain leaders to rethink how supply chains are designed, how all the different parties communicate, and what is possible.

Supply chain conversations have shifted from the boardroom to the dining room, (where delayed shipments for birthday presents causes nail biting family anguish) as these disruptions impact our daily lives. Supply chain leaders are looking at their options, and asking what can be done differently. One thing is for sure — and more spreadsheets are definitely not the answer!

Four Recurring Themes

During my meetings and conversations throughout the day, there were 4 themes that kept recurring:

1. Supply Chain Planning

The importance of supply chain planning, and this being directly connected with the production schedule. A great plan is a great goal to aim for, but is only the start of the journey. A great plan must be executed against, and include financial metrics. You must understand the impact on business performance as changes in one area are propagated through the end to end supply chain — so the effect on procurement, manufacturing, supply chain/ distribution are clearly understood.

It might look good to be winning and taking additional business, but at what cost? It is possible some orders could be reducing margins, especially if additional overtime or premium freight is required to fulfill correctly.

2. The Connected Workforce

How do companies best engage employees and increase productivity of the front line manufacturing workers? From Food & Beverage, CPG through to industrial manufacturing, whether process, batch or assembly, in times of skilled labor shortages it is vital to maximize the use of labor (which is often one of the biggest operational expenses).

Institutional knowledge, often stored in the individual heads of employees, which can be captured and shared between different production lines, different shifts, and also between different locations. Real time performance taken from various forms of shop floor data capture (SFDC) is key to helping achieve hourly, daily, and weekly production targets. With energy prices surging and costs of raw materials rising, increasing employee and engagement represents a massive untapped opportunity

3. Digital Transformation

Digital transformation often means different things to different companies and people. What came across loud and clear from the SCL Hub was how companies were exploring the best ways to use new technology to reduce information black holes — where different information from different

sources just seem to disappear. In a very simple supply chain model – the physical materials could be considered to flow from: Procurement > Manufacturing > Distribution > Consumers/ Market place, whereas the information signals flow in the reverse direction.

Digital transformation is key to maturing logistics processes, breaking down data silos between departments such as procurement, sales, finance, logistics and trade compliance. Ultimately it's about providing the decision makers with a single version of the truth, so they can take the best course of action in real time.

4. Process and Procedural Inertia

Even though the potential benefits of new technology appear to be understood at an academic and conceptual level, one of the biggest obstacles was fully understanding the change management journey. Adding a layer of cutting edge software and technology on top of obsolete processes and poor procedures will yield few positive results.

One way to approach the issue of change from a different perspective is to consider the word ROPE.

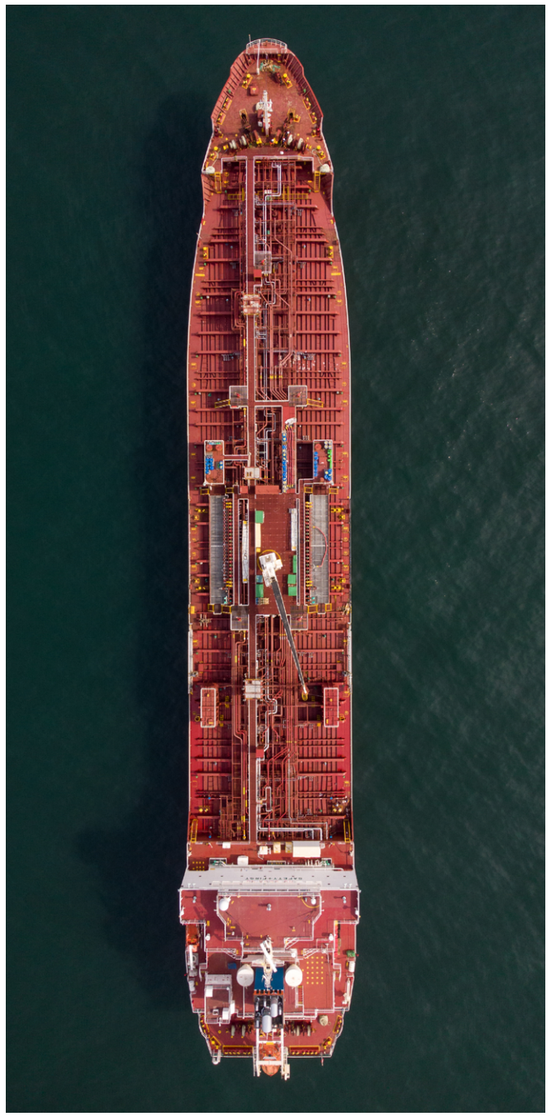
ROPE — Return on Pain Eliminated

To understand ROPE, ask yourself this simple question: What would my business look like, if I found a way to eliminate my primary pains? What would the benefits be and what could I do differently. What new opportunities might open up?

Understanding this could provide you with insights and act as a catalyst to challenge and overcome the inertia.

As companies grow, organically or through acquisition, it's even more important to have standard ways to capture, optimize and report supply chain information.

If you would like to have a conversation to see if these conversations lead to meaningful insights for you and your supply chain — from creating more accurate forecasts and production schedules, to reducing inventory and increasing customer service, or increasing workforce productivity, and smoothing cross border trade, or making sure your parcels arrive on time, we can help.



Trevor Long has over 20 years' experience of selling Supply Chain solutions including: Transport Management, Global Trade Compliance, Supply Chain Optimization, Manufacturing Execution, and Mobile applications across Manufacturing, Life Sciences, Retail and 3PL industries. In his spare time, Trevor enjoys playing cricket, walking his Cavalier King Charles spaniel and spending time with his family.

About QAD – Enabling Adaptive Enterprises

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

ABAS

DIGITAL FACTORIES ARE SHAPING THE FUTURE OF MANUFACTURING

The digital factory movement is gaining momentum as manufacturers embrace transformative technologies that are helping them achieve greater productivity and update their business models for today's marketplace. From artificial intelligence to advanced robotics systems, Industry 4.0 is changing the way manufacturers run their businesses, creating opportunities for efficiency and productivity that would be impossible without deep use of digital solutions in the factory.

In simplest terms, the move toward digital factories gives manufacturers the ability to make more informed decisions as they work to optimize operations. This begins with building data into every process and eventually leads to sustained innovation as the lessons learned from that data fuels progress. While the move toward such digital factory systems is already well underway in the form of modern enterprise resource planning systems and Internet of Things projects, transformative technologies could take the movement to another level.

Transformative Technology Drives Digital Factory Innovation

Transformative is a term thrown around a great deal in conversations surrounding digital technologies, but it is more than a buzzword. An IHS Markit study asked business leaders about six technologies the research firm dubbed transformative. The technologies were AI, 5G networks, the IoT, blockchain, cloud computing/virtualization and the move toward video everywhere. Approximately 56% of those polled said these technologies will have a "high-to-significant disruptive impact" in their sectors within the next three years. Just 4% said they aren't expecting such disruption.

Digital technologies are starting to drive major changes in how companies operate. IHS Markit explained that the disruption being driven by today's emerging technologies will likely lead to major operational changes, creating new market opportunities and changing how competition unfolds within an industry.

This is evident in manufacturing, where the digital factory movement is changing many longstanding perceptions. Among major disruptions driving this change are:

- An increased ability for small manufacturers to compete by offering specialized, highly customizable products.
- A heightened use of robotics and software that deepens the role of automation through better real-time data transmission.
- An accelerated adoption of modernized supply chain strategies that reduce operational costs and streamline production.
- A greater capacity for forecasting and inventory optimization to better adapt capabilities to market demands at a given time.

These efforts to drive operational excellence are leading to the move to digital factories as businesses seek ways to create new revenue opportunities in highly competitive markets.

Smart Manufacturing Rises

With disruptive technologies driving a move toward digital factory systems, the larger smart manufacturing industry is rising fast. Smart manufacturing refers to data-driven technologies used to allow for more intelligent, informed decision-making both in everyday operations and for big-picture strategies. In many ways, the idea of the smart factory is interchangeable with the digital factory. Grand View Research reported that the global market for smart manufacturing solutions was valued at $198.21 billion in 2018 . From that point, it is expected to grow at a compound annual growth rate of 10.7% to 2025.

According to Grand View Research, the move to smart manufacturing is evident in a variety of key trends, including:

- Increased digitization across the industry.
- Converged IT and operations technology systems.
- Modernization of legacy control solutions.

The study found that advances in these areas are impacting the entire manufacturing value chain.

Take Steps Toward the Digital Factory

Taking advantage of the cutting-edge technologies transforming manufacturing isn't about a huge one-time project. It is instead a matter of taking a digital journey, making iterative updates and changes to adapt processes, equipment and staffing strategies to better take advantage of digitalization across the manufacturing process. The long-term vision of a digital factory is one in which processes are digitized across the entire business, meaning:

- Sales teams have insight into production data, vendor capabilities and existing supply so they can accurately quote projects and forecast resource availability when speaking with clients.
- Production runs blend robotic processes, additive manufacturing and human interactions to ensure each part of production is handled in the most efficient way possible.
- Testing and quality control systems feature digital imaging and video-based capabilities to provide deep analysis faster, and more accurately, than human testers.
- Warehouse and field services teams have full insights into inventory levels, including items in transit, and that data is easily accessible for stakeholders across the business.

A digital strategy doesn't just incorporate these isolated capabilities. Instead, the data collection and management capabilities across lines of business ensure cohesion and efficiency. This innovation won't happen overnight. It requires iterative progress that builds over time. Steps you can take in this process include:

- Update your ERP system to a future-proof platform designed to be adaptable for the specific workflows created by emerging technologies.
- Implement IoT solutions to solve specific pain points and create immediate value to justify further investment.
- Deploy AI that allows machines to adjust how they function with minimal human intervention.
- Equip staff with modern devices that ensure they have easy access to the data they need to create value in digital factory settings.

Manufacturers can't simply sit back and wait for the digital factory movement to mature. Instead, it's vital to start taking steps now to keep up with innovation in the sector. We can help you on that journey with an ERP system designed with future needs in mind.

About abas ERP

Founded in 1980, abas is a leading provider of flexible next generation ERP and eBusiness solutions. abas serves mid-market manufacturers and distributors focusing on discrete, Engineer-to-order, Make-to-Order, Assemble-to-Order, and Job Shop Manufacturing environments. With unparalleled flexibility, abas provides the ideal solution to energize your business processes and be a part of your company's strategic activities. A worldwide network, state of the art technology, ease of use and industry expertise allow abas to provide the business logic layer for your success. abas is also uniquely qualified to successfully implement international ERP projects. No other company has the combination of a unified partner network, strategic orientation, globally enabled software, and a rapid implementation methodology that defines the roadmap to success. abas provides quick ROI because it is easy to learn, use, customize and upgrade. More than 3000 customers have chosen abas as their long term ERP provider and work successfully with the internationally applicable ERP-Software. abas provides a wide range of services including implementation, customization, hardware, network support, on-site support and ensures short reaction times and high service quality.

POWERED BY AI: HOW BUSINESSES ARE EMBRACING INTELLIGENT TECH TO SOLVE PROBLEMS

*Article By **Asavin Wattanajantra,***
Small and Medium Enterprise Expert

You might not realize it, but artificial intelligence (AI) is here, and you're probably already using it.

In many cases, we already take AI for granted, whether talking to Alexa or Siri, having a conversation with a chatbot, or having product recommendations driven to us by some of the world's most popular e-commerce platforms.

If you're running a digital business in a Software as a Service (SaaS) world, you can derive value from AI—but you might not know it yet.

In this article, two businesses reveal where they are in their AI journeys and what it means for their products and services.

Here's what we cover:

- AI can differentiate you from the competition
- Find a problem that needs an AI solution
- Selling and funding a SaaS AI product
- How to bring in people for growth
- Digital businesses can take advantage of AI
- Huge opportunities for AI in the future

AI can differentiate you from the competition

Forecast is a SaaS business that sells project and resource management software—a market saturated with companies such as Trello, Asana, and Basecamp.

Transparency Market Research says the global online project management software market expects to attain a value of $6.08bn by 2025.

Forecast differentiates itself through a resource management platform that uses AI to help project team members understand their work, with a machine learning algorithm generating precise estimations around time, budget and profit.

There's an obvious demand for its AI-based software, as Forecast can claim significant growth in the past few years, beginning as a Danish startup founded in 2016 by a team of computer scientists and growing to become an 80-strong business with offices in Copenhagen, London and New York that has attracted around $40m of funding.

Forecast also made the Deloitte Fast 50 as one of the top 50 fastest-growing technology companies in the UK, based on revenue growth over the past four years.

Find a problem that needs an AI solution

The success of Forecast shows there's a hunger for AI-based software that can take away the pain of spreadsheets for complex processes.

Before CEO Dennis Kayser co-founded Forecast, he worked on e-commerce projects for a global technology provider.

He discovered a problem that needed solving after experiencing chaotic projects that never came in on time or within budget.

His teams were always using spreadsheets for delivery, which, although widely used for resource and project management, quickly turned into unwieldy mishmashes of data.

Dennis investigated project and resource management systems but couldn't find a solution aimed at the mid-market business segment that met his needs.

So he sought to tackle the problem himself.

He says: "We wanted to build a holistic finance, resource and project management system with a best-in-class user interface and experience.

"We also wanted customers to be able to connect their existing systems, such as Salesforce, HubSpot, Sage and others, and through that data, use AI and machine learning."

Selling and funding a SaaS AI product

The founders of Forecast originally intended to bootstrap the business, but as interest grew in what they were doing, the complexity of the questions that needed answering grew.

They realized they needed external financing to accelerate development. And after a short period where the product was available for free, they started monetizing it.

"There's that classic fallacy when you're technical that if you build something, people will find it by accident, they'll love it, and come in droves," Dennis explains. "But you must consider the commercial and marketing aspects of pushing the product early on.

"The founders will always be the best sellers of the product because they know the problem in depth. We talked to each and every one of our first customers to try and understand their problems and how to solve them."

With $40m of funding, Dennis and his fellow founders have been very successful in attracting capital from investors.

But it's not an easy process, especially with the economic climate as it is now.

"The market can be a little strange sometimes," says Dennis. "It's not always a great idea to build something completely novel.

"An investor should know at least one aspect of your business, such as your target market or product.

"I would always try to get warm introductions through your network or people you know within the industry instead of doing cold outreach to investors.

"They get many of those, and you'll be a needle in a haystack."

How to bring in people for growth

To scale, Forecast needed to bring in more people, especially as it wanted to accelerate and grow in the US market.

Dennis says:, "At the start, we had bookkeepers and a handful of different systems. We matured from there. We first brought in a finance director to create more structure, and now we have a CFO with a fully fledged finance team."

Simone Goodman came in as the CFO to support the growth of Forecast into the US market.

At the Series A stage, a startup probably won't have a fully formed leadership team. Over the past 12 months, that's what Dennis has been working on and developing.

He says: "We're very optimistic about what comes next. We recently hired a VP of sales and marketing working out of New York, which is super exciting. We'll also be building a New York-based Centre of Excellence."

Suppose you're in a SaaS leadership role. In that case, you should understand that constant change is the reality and that you must navigate that situation with people to ensure everybody has a good experience, whether they choose to stay or leave.

To some extent, you need to be doing things that some people in the business will have never seen or experienced.

Right at the beginning, Forecast's founders were content with bringing in technology that worked best at the time. However, as the business matured, any tech that didn't fit with how Forecast grew would have to be replaced.

For example, with financial accounting, Forecast started with a small Danish system, moving on to QuickBooks and other systems in different regions—it started to get complicated, and that's when it turned to Sage Intacct.

Simone says: "At the same time as bringing people in, you take a critical look at the tech you have in place and whether it's fit for purpose, today and tomorrow.

"Does it play harmoniously with your systems, and can it scale with your business? If not, rip it out and replace it."

Digital businesses can take advantage of AI

Even if your business isn't developing an AI product, that doesn't need to stop you from taking advantage of using AI.

Pete Hanlon is group chief technology officer (CTO) at Moneypenny, an outsourced communications provider.

Since he arrived at the company in 2019, Pete has driven Moneypenny's digital transformation, moving the business to the cloud. He's overseen the development of a cloud platform that brands use to offer services such as energy switching.

The company is exploring how to embrace AI across customer service, telephone services and the use of live chat.

In addition, Pete believes deep learning, particularly Natural Language Processing (NLP), is an exciting space and many opportunities exist to use the emerging technology. This includes its live chat functionality, where human operators can surface information they can incorporate into their responses.

Pete advises digital businesses that want to use AI to use third-party services instead of embarking on the journey of developing their own platform.

He says: "You could spend months building a scalable infrastructure that could never turn into a real product. Instead, leverage a SaaS platform. Don't build it yourself. Let others build the technology for you who know what they're doing."

It's important for somebody in a CTO/chief information officer (CIO) position to understand the perspective of a CFO looking at areas such as performance metrics and return on investment (ROI).

Pete elaborates: "You should be able to explain to a CFO how the technology in question will impact the businesses. Consider capital and operational expenditure. It's important to frame what you're doing.

"You need to take your tech hat off, put your business hat on, and make sure you're resonating with the CFO—if they understand the technical roadmap and why we're doing what we're doing. They need to if they're going to be open to investment."

Huge opportunities for AI in the future

Tech leaders such as Microsoft, Apple, Amazon and Google have made highly publicized investments in AI while OpenAI's ChatGPT has opened the eyes of many people to the potential of machine learning.

"Coronavirus quickly revealed that our current systems are not as resilient as we thought they were," says Martin Nuska, a research manager at global market intelligence firm IDC.

"We have seen digital transformation become urgent, with disrupted supply chains, a shortage of workforce and skills, and a critical need for fast and accurate data to support decision-making processes.

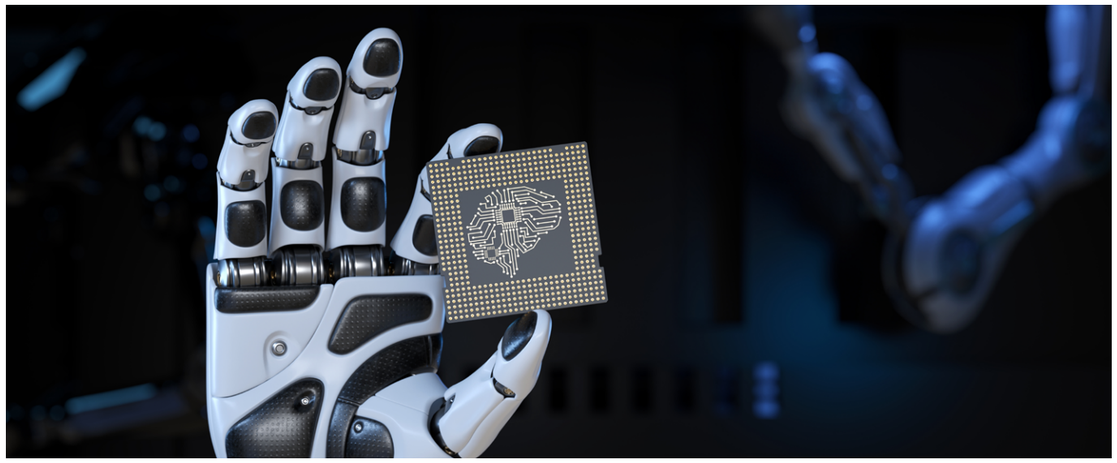
"Artificial intelligence proved to be a solution to many real-life problems, which did not go unnoticed among businesses."

Dennis Kayser says AI technology has matured incredibly in the six years since Forecast was founded and advises digital businesses wanting to use AI to utilize existing technologies rather than start from scratch.

He says: "The advantage of starting now versus some years ago is that you can leverage third parties and not build stuff yourself."

In certain cases, computers can perform tasks better than humans. However, Dennis believes that we're more likely to see AI automating general business workflows and removing mundane manual work.

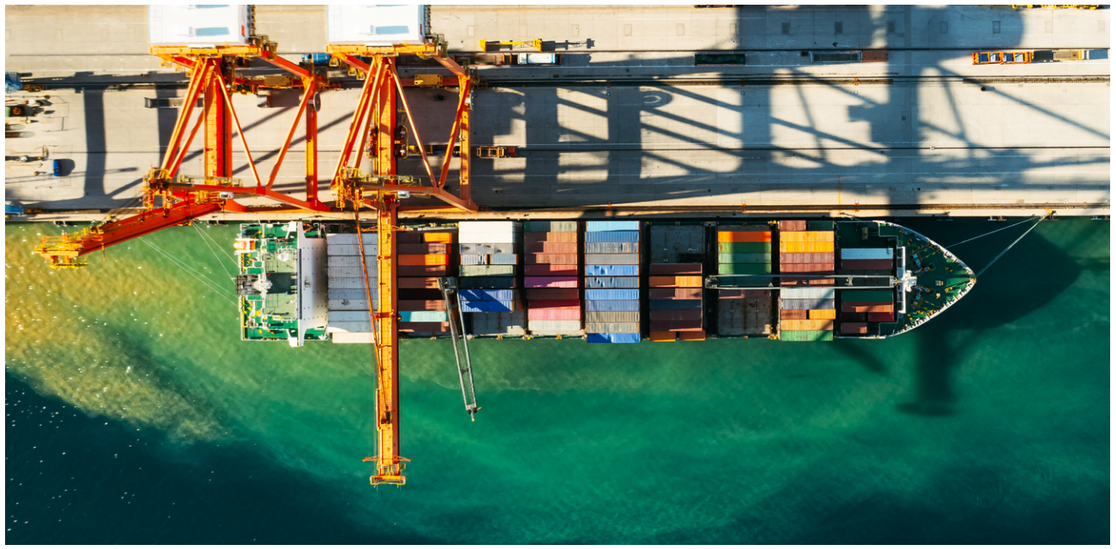
He adds: "It's about letting technology do what it does best, so humans can do what they do best. With problem solving, humans are still better than any computer, which will continue for the foreseeable future."



Asavin is an expert in small and medium enterprises, at Sage. He specialises in analysing and reporting on business technology and innovation, from side-hustles to global supply chains. Asavin has been a journalist for more than 12 years, working with tech brands such as Microsoft, Intel, SAP, Dell, Adobe and Rackspace. He was born to Thai parents, but is a true Brit at heart, with a blue passport to prove it!

About Sage

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



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NAVIGATING THE JOURNEY OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION FOR LOGISTICS BUSINESSES

In today's fast-paced business world, investing in advanced routing and scheduling technology is crucial for logistics companies to gain a competitive advantage.

According to Gartner, 61% of supply-chain executives agree that technology is vital for success, yet only 2% of U.S. supply-chain leaders are investing in digital transformation. So, what's holding companies back?

The answer is simple: they don't know where to begin.

The journey of digital transformation can be overwhelming and filled with uncertainty. But it doesn't have to be that way.

To guide you through the journey, we've created an interactive roadmap to digital transformation that highlights the tools you need and the steps to take to future-proof your transportation operations.

Our infographic covers the following topics:

- ***Route Optimization:*** Determining the most efficient routes for your fleet amid complex delivery requirements.
- ***Real-Time Route Execution Visibility:*** Empowering fleet managers and dispatchers with visibility of drivers' real-time performance, allowing for monitoring of operations and ensuring on-time deliveries.
- ***Proof of Delivery:*** Providing real-time delivery and item-level tracking, as well as automated notifications upon parcel delivery.
- ***Home Delivery:*** Managing your entire fulfillment process, reducing planning time and improving information flow throughout your organization.
- ***ERP Integration:*** Automating delivery operations from manufacturing to final delivery.
- ***Strategic Modeling:*** Making informed decisions by modeling the impact of various "what-if" scenarios, like flexing driver shift times or considering new warehouse and depot locations.

As with managing a fleet, preparing and planning ahead is essential for digital transformation. Modern fleets that want to grow and stay competitive need the right technology and guidance to stay ahead.

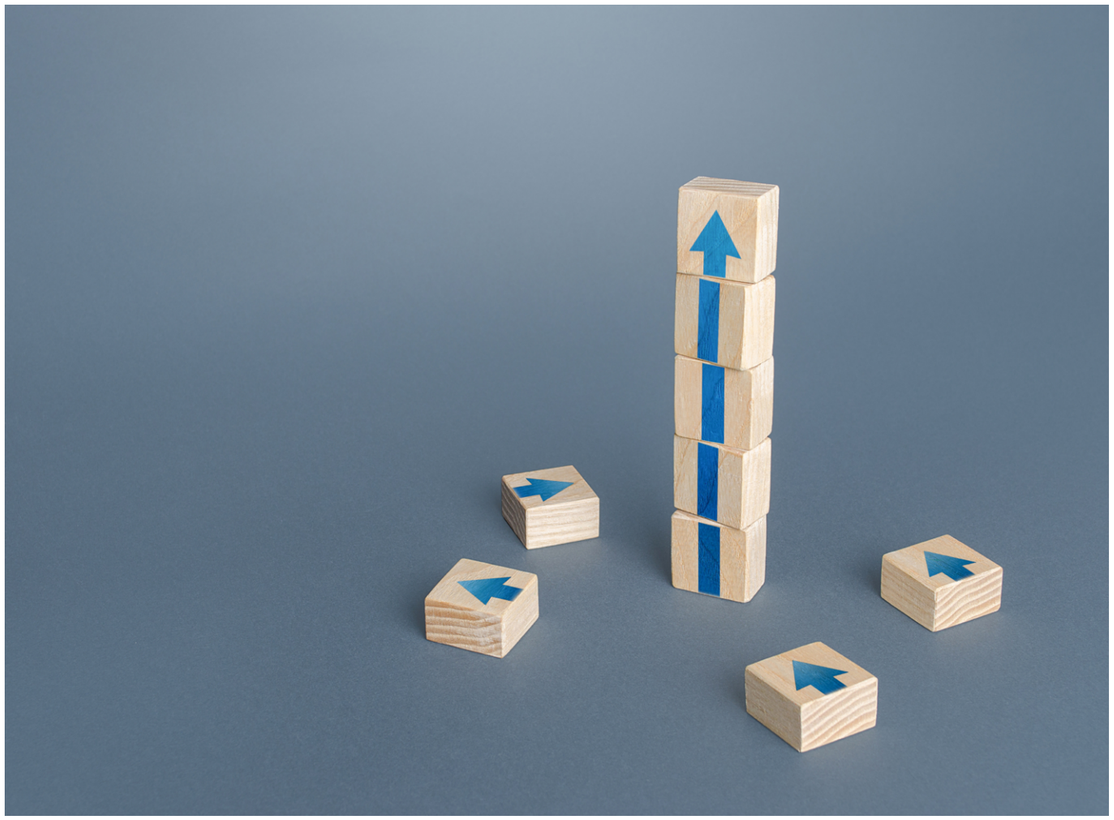
Aptean Routing & Scheduling Paragon Edition is the perfect solution to help logistics companies kickstart their digital transformation journey.

Our comprehensive software offers a wide range of features that help businesses optimize their delivery fleet operations, improve customer satisfaction, and ultimately, increase profitability.

With the right plan and technology partner, your digital transformation journey is a manageable task that can lead to great success. Don't wait any longer. Check out our interactive infographic, The Roadmap to Digital Transformation, to take that first step now.

About Aptean

Aptean is one of the world's leading providers of purpose-built, industry-specific software that helps manufacturers and distributors effectively run and grow their businesses. With both cloud and on-premise deployment options, Aptean's products, services and unmatched expertise help businesses of all sizes to be Ready for What's Next, Now®. Aptean is headquartered in Alpharetta, Georgia and has offices in North America, Europe and Asia-Pacific. To learn more about Aptean and the markets we serve, visit www.aptean.com.



A 5-STEP DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION ROADMAP

*Article By **Alan Hester,***
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A growing number of industry leaders are taking steps, though cautiously, toward transforming their businesses through digital technologies. They know the future is digital, and the first movers can lead with an advantage. But, digital transformation, a collective change towards how companies operate, has a broad scope of applicability and often poses various challenges for leaders, including determining the right course of action. This article guides you in learning what digital transformation means in its real sense and how a 5-step roadmap can help you begin your transformation journey on the right foot.

What is Digital Transformation?

Digital transformation is a quick way to describe the use of technology to complete business operations more efficiently. Not long ago, that involved simply transitioning from paper documents to digital files. Today, advances in artificial intelligence and network connectivity place the focus on automation—including intelligent automation for end-to-end processes.

Digital Transformation initiatives not only help you in creating and modifying business processes but also enable you to transform the culture. These initiatives also help you to elevate customer experiences to a large extent.

Three Fundamental Elements of Digital transformation

Digital transformation initiatives with these elements deliver enterprise-grade impact.

Digital infrastructure refers to the buildout of an organization's data processing, storage, communication, and computing abilities in a digital world. It includes everything from new hardware and software to secure online systems.

Digital operations focus on using technology to streamline processes such as sales, marketing, service, manufacturing, and supply chain management. They encompass everything from improving customer interactions through automation tools to reducing the time needed for tasks such as order fulfillment.

Customer experience encompasses everything from how customers find information about products and services to how they are billed for those products or services.

Read a detailed blog on a multi-dimensional digital transformation framework to understand these components/ elements in more detail.

Digital transformation is about becoming more digital-focused and ensuring a smooth and effective transition while making this change. Let's jump to the five-step digital transformation roadmap and its guiding principles to understand this transition in more detail.

A 5-Step Digital Transformation Roadmap

1. Identify a clear objective.

Every digital technology project should address a specific goal. This goal can be broad—increasing revenue by a set percentage, hitting a cost-cutting target, or improving a team's output efficiency by a certain amount. Or the goal can be granular. For example, one Nividous client—a major manufacturer of mineral products—wanted to reduce turnaround time and errors in accounts payable processes (we'll get to the solution and results of this example in later steps).

The more specific you make your goal, the easier it will be to determine success. Remember, a digital transformation strategy isn't associated with any one technology; you may try several solutions before meeting the goal. But you need a goal to even begin.
Guiding Principle – Defining Value & Securing Stakeholders' Commitment

Making your senior management aware of the desired value is as important as defining the value or setting clear objectives for your digital transformation initiatives. The clarity of the magnitude of the undertaking and its communication makes it easier to secure a commitment from relevant stakeholders. Then the leaders' job is to take accountability and communicate well (in both directions) with the ground-level teams. The chances of succeeding at digital transformation initiatives are higher when leaders own the projects end-to-end.

2. Measure the potential effectiveness of several technology solutions against your goal.

Reach out to technology vendors to learn how their products may meet your goal. Set qualitative and quantitative benchmarks, and use tech demos to estimate whether each solution you're considering can meet them. The simplest Key Performance Indicator (KPI) to test is Return on Investment (RoI). Vendors should be able to provide RoI estimates; ask them.

Guiding Principle – Safeguarding Investment

Securing investment is also critical; management should be willing to allocate investment to improve current processes and build new business models. Some investments may produce lower profits for a while—but without it, there is a risk of forgoing higher returns in the longer term.

At Nividous, we offer a free RoI Calculator for our intelligent automation platform. Simply enter as-is process data for a detailed estimate of how you'll save with digital automation. The report provides both monthly and quarterly RoI estimates, as well as comparisons with other automation platforms. It even includes a complexity vs. value matrix that will help you choose which processes are best primed for end-to-end automation.

Of course, this is preliminary research; you can't be sure how any technology will function until you try it out. That's the next step.

Nividous RoI report example, showing an RoI of $58,019 in 12 months and a higher RoI of 193% with Nividous.

3. Run a small-scale pilot program with your chosen solution.

Once you've identified a promising technology, confirm its effectiveness with a pilot program. Choose one task or process that relates to your overall goal, and implement the technology on a small scale. Collect data rigorously. Not only does a pilot study confirm assumptions about a solution's helpfulness, it builds a business case you can take to fellow stakeholders for buy-in on broad-scale implementation.

Nividous makes it easy to run a risk-free pilot study through our Quick Start Guarantee. This program allows you to fully implement a single digital process automation within just three to four weeks, all with a fixed cost and ongoing professional services to continue your digital transformation initiatives.

Guiding Principle – Building Teams and Initiating Cultural Change

Building a digital team with the skill set to address the ongoing digital transformation initiatives at every level of the business is crucial. You may want to recruit new individual talent or hire an agency or train your existing workforce with required skills depending upon your digital initiatives. How companies organize their teams – let's say setting up a unit independently of the organization – can promote the importance of digital transformation initiatives. Thoughtful work-culture changes are essential for smooth operations and the success of digital transformation initiatives.

4. Scale the technology to its maximum effective reach.

Once the pilot program delivers results, it's time to get the most value out of the technology. Implement the technology throughout your targeted workflows. For instance, remember the manufacturer we introduced in Step 1? The goal was to reduce turnaround time for invoice processing. Once the team determined the Nividous platform could deliver, they used its AI-powered Robotic Process Automation (RPA) bots to automate invoice data transfer from invoices into a central Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system—and the platform's automated reporting system quickly showed results.

Guiding Principle – Company-Wide Operational Change

The end goal of a digital transformation initiative is to operate with higher efficiency, leading with a competitive edge and driving higher profits. All of these require companies to establish a company-wide operating model that is not siloed but holistic, agile, and well-connected. It is essential to scale your digital transformation initiatives across the enterprise while continually building new capabilities and nurturing teams. That brings us to the final step in our digital transformation roadmap.

5. Evaluate success continually.

New technologies arrive every day. To remain competitive, you need to recognize when your current digital infrastructure is falling behind. The key to staying current is to consistently evaluate existing tools through data-rich reporting. The Nividous hyperautomation platform captures this data automatically, helping users turn information into insight with integrated reports.

That's how the manufacturer in our example saw that Nividous was meeting the objectives. In fact, by automating invoice processing, the company reduced task turnaround time by 90%, saved more than 1,000 staff-hours per month, and eliminated manual errors entirely.

Results of a Nividous case study showing a 90% reduction in process turnaround time, 1000 staff-hours saved per month, and a 100% reduction in manual errors.

Digital transformation examples

As a global intelligent automation company with over 25 years at the forefront of digital process automation technology, we have several success stories to share. Here are a few digital transformation examples across industries to help you gauge its impact and guide you to pursue it at your company.

Example 1

A leading stock brokerage company identified franchise onboarding as the first process to automate with the Nividous intelligent automation platform and began its digital transformation journey. After reducing human efforts by 90%, errors by 85%, and process handling time by 65%, the customer expanded the scope of automation to other tasks involved in the franchisee onboarding automating the complete process end-to-end. Read this detailed blog to learn what digital transformation in banking means in practice.

Example 2

An accounting and finance team of a leading manufacturing company successfully transformed its manual accounts payable process with a Nividous intelligent automation platform achieving over 85% improvement in process efficiency. According to the company's Director, "An automated approval process has allowed us to achieve straight-through processing while reducing human errors by 90% and achieving data extraction accuracy by 98%. Most importantly, we can effectively orchestrate work between Bots and our employees with the Nividous platform's native BPM – workflow management, RPA, and AI capabilities." AP automation is just the starting point. The customer plans to scale the use of automation to several other areas where there is considerable scope for improvement in operational efficiency.

Example 3

AEG Vision, a leading eyecare provider and a winner of the 'Best Achievement in Process Automation' award at the BTOES 2021 awards, revolutionized its revenue cycle management by leveraging a combination of RPA, AI, and workflow automation technologies. This customer partnered with Nividous to introduce an automation-led digital transformation in every facet of its business and achieved a whopping $4M ROI in just 12 months. The Nividous intelligent automation platform helped the customer to improve cash flow, customer experience, and ease of integration to support business growth. Automating core business processes helped the customer save 250K man-hours and improved the claim processing cycle's efficiency by 80%.

Drive Your Digital Transformation with Nividous

Nividous, with its holistic approach to leveraging automation technologies, helps you achieve your digital transformation goals with the lowest total cost of ownership and highest ROI. Nividous' intelligent automation platform – a unified platform designed to solve complex business challenges with ease – helps you automate any business process in any environment making change management as minimum as possible. From choosing your first process automation project, implementing the first bot into production with a low-cost, no-risk offer, scaling it to various departments and business functions, to building a center of excellence, Nividous does it all.

Alan, president of Nividous, is a proven leader and entrepreneur who has a wide range of business experience in large and small companies. He has over 30 years of experience applying technology to solve real-world business problems.

About Nividius

Nividous, a global intelligent automation company, is passionate about enabling organizations to work at their peak efficiency. We, at Nividous, realized quite early that automation must be approached holistically and not siloed. This is why from day one we have focused on building a comprehensive business automation platform that harnesses the power of RPA, AI, and BPM. Having these three key pillars natively available in our platform is our key differentiator. We also offer end-to-end professional services that include process discovery, implementation, support, and building Centers of Excellence ("CoE"). At Nividous, we are proud of the fact that we have 100% customer retention, and we are being recognized by leading industry analysts across the globe. Our endeavor is and will remain, continuous innovation in our products and services to help our customers improve their competitive advantages.

PEMECO CONSULTING

COMMON ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE MANAGEMENT MISTAKES IN ERP & DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION PROJECTS

You want to streamline your business process and simplify your job—and let's be honest, who doesn't? That's why enterprise resource planning (ERP) exists.

However, most ERP implementation efforts fall short. Companies invest significant time and money in digital transformation projects, but most of that ends up wasted due to high failure rates.

Recent data from Mint Jutras shows that only 12% of companies would say their ERP implementation was very successful. Likewise, a 2021 McKinsey report states that the digital transformation success rate has remained stagnant at 30% for 15 years. Plus, the greatest value loss (35%) occurs during implementation.

So what's going wrong? Misguided priorities.

Where Do Companies Fall Short?

ERP implementation is a massive undertaking. Understandably, companies focus on redesigning and testing new business processes. But that often results in tunnel vision.
While companies understand—in theory—the importance of stakeholder adoption, they often don't prioritize it when implementing digital transformation. And if the end-users can't properly use the new systems, the success rate drops.

In other words, the high ERP implementation failure rate results from underinvesting in stakeholder communication and training.

Communication

Effective communication directly correlates to success. The aforementioned McKinsey report found that nearly 80% of companies with a successful digital transformation clearly communicated the need for change and their objectives. However, keep in mind that these companies only form less than one-third of organizations.

The rest fall short when communicating with both internal and external stakeholders.

Many companies fail to properly explain the scope of transformation deliverables. This leaves employees guessing how their daily responsibilities will change and how the new processes will work.
Another internal communication issue is the failure to set realistic performance expectations and prepare employees for the inevitable ERP emotional curve. It's completely normal for businesses to struggle after go-live. Employees are still adjusting to the changes, and the IT team needs time to iron out any issues that surface.

But not preparing them for those difficulties and setting realistic goals before—and during—implementation can result in employee stress and, potentially, a wave of resignations.

Similar communication pitfalls occur with external stakeholders, like customers, regulators, and vendors. Failure to announce the upcoming changes, provide adequate training, and give external users time to adopt the new processes can lead to business complications and even revenue loss.

In short, a lack of proactive communication throughout the digital transformation process hinders both internal and external alignment.

Training

Effective communication must come with proper training. Talking about the upcoming changes is one thing, but actually teaching your stakeholders how to adopt the new processes is another. And waiting until after cutover to introduce these new processes is much too late.

Training needs to occur well before go-live so that employees have time to adjust to the changes. Too often, companies expect everyone to immediately start hitting performance goals on day one without any hands-on training. Just like with the lack of communication, these unrealistic expectations contribute to user frustration and, ultimately, ERP implementation failure.

Plus, the companies that do incorporate training initiatives often lump everyone into one group. Simultaneously training everyone is not feasible in the long run, and it can result in disorganized processes and jumbled feedback.

Or maybe some companies do train a core team first that will later train the end-users. This situation is ideal, but the training is often insufficient. The core team is often unequipped to fulfill essential duties like mapping business processes and testing the ERP system. And then, when they try to train the end-users, they are grasping at straws due to their own limited training. This creates a chain reaction of poor training, leading to ERP implementation failure.

Four Strategies for Success

Successful digital transformation requires effective organizational change management. This structured approach to transitioning your company through ERP implementation—or any major change—supports the employees and helps them adapt to the new environment. An effective change management plan allocates procedures that you can plan, track, act upon, and measure.

Here are four strategies to include in your change management plan and help streamline your ERP system implementation.

Fill Critical Roles

Digital transformation does not happen overnight. You need team members who dedicate their full time to these processes.
When building project teams, it's important to fill critical training and communication positions alongside other key roles such as project managers, solutions architects, functional leads (such as sales and manufacturing), and business systems analysts.

Ideally, these "core team members" are fully dedicated to the project and backfilled in their day-to-day jobs. However, this isn't practical (or financially feasible) for small and midsized businesses. Nonetheless, small businesses with limited resources should still ensure that core team members dedicate at least 50% of their time to the ERP implementation or other digital transformation project to ensure its overall success.

Build a Training Plan

Two key audiences require unique training approaches: your core team and end-users. You must first train the core team well before go-live, so they have months—or even years—to implement the ERP system. Your training plan should consist of four key pieces:

1. ***An overview session:*** Train your core team on general theories relating to the ERP system.
2. ***Navigation training:*** This is a hands-on approach to software training where your core team will learn how to navigate the system.
3. ***Functional training:*** Your team learns the software tools that relate to their respective functional departments.
4. ***Systems administration training for IT core team members:*** This training covers concepts related to software administration such as the application of patches and upgrades.

After the core team members have completed this four-step training process, they become your enterprise system experts focused on key implementation activities such as process mapping, system design and configuration, testing and piloting, and end-user training.

Once they near the end of the implementation process, the core team members will then train your end users. End-user training is an exercise in both skills development and self-sufficiency. It should include comprehensive work instructions, training guides, and a detailed plan to help accelerate user adoption.

Ensure Effective Communication

Of course, training—and digital transformation projects—can't occur without proper communication.

Set your company up for success by establishing effective communication from the start. And then carry that communication through the entire implementation process and beyond.

Make sure you:

- Communicate the need for digital transformation.
- Share company-wide and departmental goals with the ERP implementation.
- Advise project teams on any status updates and support issue resolution.
- Prepare internal stakeholders for the change.
- Discuss the inevitable brief dip in business performance post-go-live.
- Set realistic expectations.
- Explain the potential changes to external stakeholder groups.
- Review how those changes might impact them. For example, suppliers might receive a different purchase order form.

Companies should use various communication methods when relaying this information. One-way communication channels such as press releases, intranet postings, and email newsletters work well for announcements or system updates.

Two-way communication is just as vital. Hosting departmental meetings or town halls help foster conversations about the implementation process. You can gather invaluable user feedback and learn about issues that would otherwise go unnoticed. Project leaders can then take this information and improve the process, pushing your company closer to a successful ERP implementation.

Have a Post-Implementation Stabilization and Optimization Plan

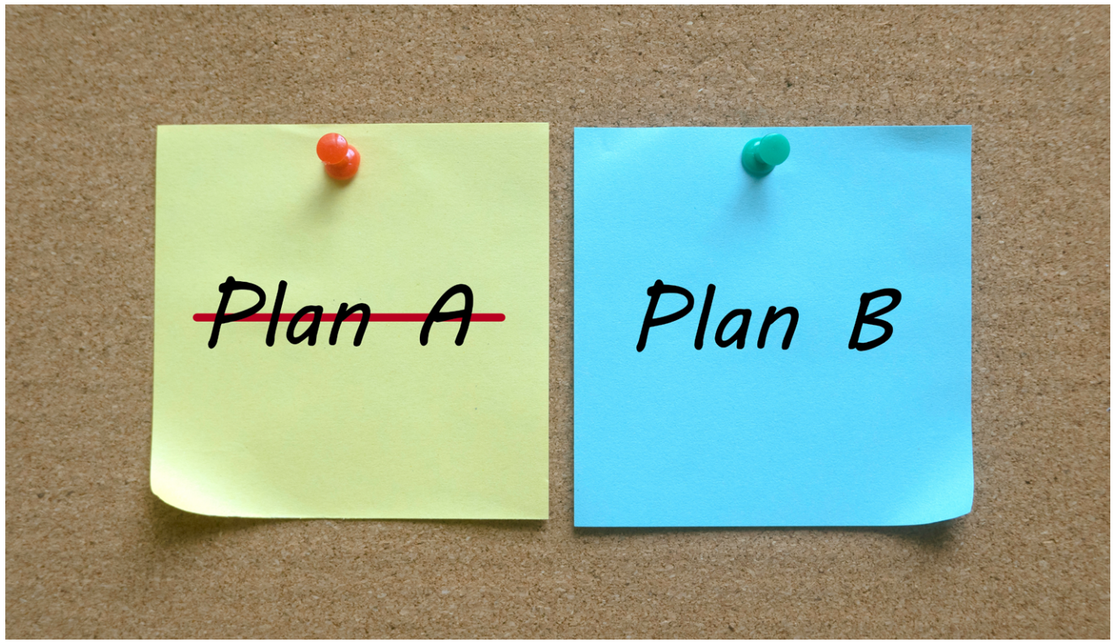
Your efforts don't end at go-live. After a lengthy implementation stage, you need a post-implementation user adoption plan.

Complete a post-go-live adoption audit a few months after go-live to see how well everyone adjusted. If you find any issues, revisit the training. Make sure all training materials are accessible and up-to-date. You can also use this time to gather feedback and make any changes to the system or processes to improve the end-user experience.

Proper Training + Communication = Successful Implementation

Organizational change management helps ensure success in ERP or digital transformation projects—if it's done effectively.

Effective training and communication are the two pillars of successful organizational change management. And when you fill critical roles with the right people, they can help oversee communication and training. When you have these three core components, you have everything you need for successful ERP implementation and digital transformation.



About Pemeco Consulting

In 1978, Pemeco started out as a global service bureau. Today, we're a full-service technology consultancy working with a clientele made up of global market leaders, high-growth start-ups, and mature mid-market companies. The speed of our clients' business demands sophisticated technologies and frictionless processing. And even though technology is evolving at breakneck speed, the fundamentals of a properly-managed implementation have changed very little over our history. Yet in spite of what should be well-known success factors, we continue to read about companies that make the same mistakes as their predecessors. Pemeco was built around a common mission: that we should deliver each and every one of our client projects successfully. Our methodologies, our recruitment methods and—most importantly—our people, embody this ethos.

Microsoft

DISCOVER NEW WAYS TO MULTITASK WITH MICROSOFT 365 AND EDGE

Despite living in a connected world, the way we use our apps can often feel distinctly disconnected. We use one app to browse the web, another to manage our email, a third for music, and so on. Whether at home or at work, multitasking across multiple apps has become the new standard.

While each app may be a finely tuned experience on its own, using them together tends to be anything but; unless you're an app windowing expert, multitasking between apps means frustratingly switching back and forth. And at Microsoft, we're constantly looking for ways to help you stay in your flow online, so you can multitask smarter with less disruption.

We're announcing a new way to help you stay focused with help from two Microsoft apps that many people use daily and consistently together—the classic Microsoft Outlook app on Windows and the Microsoft Edge web browser. Coming soon, for customers with a Microsoft 365 Personal or Family subscription, you can choose to open browser links from the Outlook app in Microsoft Edge right alongside the email they're from in the Edge sidebar pane, so you can easily access, read, and respond to the message using your matching authenticated profile. No disruptive switching—just your email and the web content you need to reference, in a single, side-by-side view. At this time, users or devices in managed environments will not see this change. And in the future, links from your Microsoft Teams messages will also open in Microsoft Edge to help you stay engaged in conversations as you browse the web.

Stay in your flow with Microsoft Outlook on Windows and Microsoft Edge

Why are we making this change? To improve the user experience between email and browsing, by letting you see them both at the same time, in the same place—no more switching back and forth between apps.
Take making dinner plans with friends, for example. A friend sends you an email with options for various restaurants and reservation times. Instead of having to switch back and forth between the message and the browser, links from your Outlook emails will open in Microsoft Edge, along with the original email message in the browser's sidebar pane. This allows you to check out the restaurants in your browser tab and respond to your friend with your restaurant pick, all within the same window.

And we're always optimizing the sidebar in Edge to give you useful content and tools while you're browsing so you don't have to toggle back and forth between windows or even other tabs—whether you're shopping online or working in a Microsoft 365 web app.

Our goal at Microsoft is to empower you so you can make the most of your time. We'll do that through experiences like this, but we're also committed to honoring and prioritizing your preferences if that experience isn't right for you. You'll have the opportunity to choose your preferred browser for opening links from Outlook the first time you launch in Edge. We're also making it easy to change this setting in Outlook at any time. In Outlook, go to File, Options, Advanced, Link Handling, and select the desired browser from the dropdown menu. Want to change the setting? Learn more about how to manage your experience.

Looking ahead

We're committed to empowering every person and every organization on the planet to achieve more. Much of this happens using Microsoft 365 apps and a web browser, which is why Edge is the first browser optimized to work hand in hand with Microsoft 365 apps and we welcome the opportunity to work with other browsers to bring this experience to users. Plus, this Outlook experience is just the start. We're looking next to bring this experience to Teams, so you can view your chat and a link side-by-side in the same fashion. Of course, we will continue to listen to your feedback; if we learn from user experience that there are ways to make improvements, we will do so. Stay tuned for continued innovation as we find new and better ways to optimize the web for Microsoft 365 apps and more, so we can work smarter, not harder, together.

About Microsoft

Microsoft (Nasdaq "MSFT" @microsoft) enables digital transformation for the era of an intelligent cloud and an intelligent edge. Its mission is to empower every person and every organization on the planet to achieve more.

ERPNEWS