ERP NEWS
MAGAZINE
ISSUE #37 • 06 / 2023

WHY DO COMPANIES **SWITCH TO A NEW ERP** IN 2023?

Advertise at ERP News and increase your visibility in 2023

advertise@erpnews.com

ERPNEWS

CEO & PUBLISHER
Harun DOYURAN
harun@erpnews.com

MANAGING DIRECTOR
Pinar SENGUL
pinar@erpnews.com

EDITOR
Pinar SENGUL
pinar@erpnews.com

ASSOCIATE EDITORS
Katie SLIMOV
katie@erpnews.com

Burcu Nihal DEMIRCI
burcu@erpnews.com

ART DIRECTOR
Sena Çarlık
sena@erpnews.com

FOR ADVERTISING
advertise@erpnews.com

VISIT US
www.erpnews.com

Pinar SENGUL

EDITOR'S NOTE

As businesses grow and their needs change, they need new software that can support more complex processes and changing demands. Small inefficiencies build up and trigger the realization that they need new ERP software.

And what are those small things that make you change your ERP system? In this issue of ERPNews Magazine, we will dig down into the reasons why you might want to change your ongoing system. It could be manual processes that slow you down, limited traceability that decreases your efficiency, and most probably overreliance on Excel. Also neglected customers, no remote or mobile access or rising costs might ring the bell.

Do not miss out on the articles written by the thought leaders of the foremost ERP vendors written by ***Gabe Mensching, Chief Technology Officer, NIMBL, and Mike Guay, VP, Customer Success Executive at Infor***, and check out the exclusive interview with ***Matthew Gordon-Box, Product Manager Supply Chain at SYSPRO*** in which we had the opportunity to discuss the critical factors that affect the process of selecting the right ERP software and an interview with ***Alok Ajmera, Chief Executive Officer at Prophix*** and he shared his opinions about the top tech trends among finance leaders over the last few years since COVID.

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

CONTENTS

Issue # 37, June 2023

THE BUSINESS BENEFITS OF RISE WITH SAP — 6
*Product Review by **Gabe Mensching**, Chief Technology Officer, NIMBL*

TOP TECH TRENDS AMONG FINANCE LEADERS — 8
*Interview with **Alok Ajmera**, President and CEO, Prophix*

NULOGY SECURES $20 MILLION CAD FUNDING TO DRIVE SUPPLY CHAIN COLLABORATION & DIGITIZATION SOLUTIONS — 11
Press Release from Nulogy

SPEAKING THE SAME LANGUAGE — 12
*Interview with **Matthew Gordon-Box**, Product Manager Supply Chain, SYSPRO*

UNIT4 CONTINUES DIGITIZATION MOMENTUM ACROSS PUBLIC SECTOR, PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AND NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS — 15
Press Release from Unit4

EXPLORING THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN GENERIC AND INDUSTRYSPECIFIC ERP SYSTEMS — 16
*Article by **Katie Slimov**, Associate Editor, ERPNews.com*

THE ROLE OF ASSET INTELLIGENCE AND MANAGEMENT IN DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION — 18
*Interview with **Syed Ali**, CEO and Founder, EZO*

WHAT TO CONSIDER WHEN SWITCHING ERP IN 2023 — 22
*Article by **Mike Guay**, Vice President Customer Success, Infor*

NEW ANALYST REPORT DETAILS HOW SYSPRO EMBEDDED ANALYTICS IMPROVES MANUFACTURING OPERATIONS — 25
Press Release from Syspro

SAP TO EMBED IBM WATSON ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE INTO SAP SOLUTIONS — 26
Press Release from SAP

BENEFITS AND DRAWBACKS OF INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC ERP SYSTEMS — 28
*Article by **Katie Slimov**, Associate Editor, ERPNews.com*

NEW EPICOR DATA CENTRE IN INDIA SUPPORTS COMPANY'S ACCELERATING INTERNATIONAL GROWTH — 30
Press Release from Epicor

SAGE AND BASEBALL HALL OF FAMER CAL RIPKEN JR. ANNOUNCE LAUNCH OF MLB ALL-STAR GAME SWEEPSTAKES — 31
Press Release from Sage

IFS CONTINUES ON GROWTH PATH WITH ROBUST Q1 PERFORMANCE — 32
Press Release from IFS

AVALARA AND EBAY PARTNER TO SOLVE CROSS-BORDER COMPLIANCE FOR GLOBAL SELLERS — 34
Press Release from Avalara

ROOTSTOCK SOFTWARE ANNOUNCES ENTERPRISE INSIGHTS – BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE FOR MANUFACTURING — 36
Press Release from Rootstock

UNIT4 ANNOUNCES GENERAL AVAILABILITY OF APP STUDIO, A LOWCODE PLATFORM TO DEVELOP BUSINESS APPS AND AUTOMATE PROCESSES — 38
Press Release from Unit4

STEEDA AUTOSPORTS SUPERCHARGES ITS BUSINESS WITH NETSUITE — 40
*Customer Story by **David Rodman**, SVP of Global Customer Success, Oracle NetSuite*

CANADIAN HOME SERVICES GIANT CHOOSES IFS TO OPTIMIZE CUSTOMER SERVICE AND DRIVE GROWTH — 41
Customer Stories from IFS

ENJET AERO — 42
Customer Stories from Epicor

CLARINS UK SETS FOUNDATION FOR GROWTH WITH INFOR — 44
Customer Stories from Infor

FINK'S JEWELERS ENGAGES NETSUITE TO OUTSHINE THE MARKET — 45
*Customer Story by **David Rodman**, SVP of Global Customer Success, Oracle NetSuite*

ANTON DEBATIN GMBH RELIES ON A CONTINUOUS PROCESS CHAIN – SUPPORTED BY ABAS ERP — 46
Customer Stories from abas

GUILLEVIN INTERNATIONAL — 48
Customer Stories from Epicor

STREAMLINING OPERATIONS WITH ODOO: THE OTHER FACE KSA'S SUCCESS STORY — 50
Customer Stories from Odoo

FASTER REALIZATION OF CUSTOMER REQUESTS WITH GROUNDBREAKING APPLICATIONS — 52
Customer Stories from abas

E&A SCHEER SELECTS INFOR TO OPTIMIZE PROCESSES — 54
Customer Stories from Infor

APTEAN NAMED A 'MAJOR PLAYER' IN IDC MARKETSCAPE REPORT FOR WORLDWIDE PROCESS MANUFACTURING EXECUTION SYSTEMS — 55
Press Release from Aptean

HOW SNF OMAN SAVED TIME, MONEY AND RESOURCES WITH ODOO — 56
Customer Story from Odoo

REMOTE FINANCE SUCCESS: FIND THE RIGHT SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES — 58
*Article by **David Appel**, Head of the SaaS Vertical at Sage*

5 OF THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS TO LOOK FOR IN ERP SELECTION — 60
Article from abas

LICENSING CHALLENGES FOR ENTERPRISE MERGERS AND ACQUISITIONS — 62
*Article by **Dawn Moser**, Content Writer at Avalara*

A CASE FOR ERP SYSTEM INTEGRATION - ADAPTING TO THE NEW NORMAL — 64
Article from abas

10 FEATURES TO LOOK FOR IN MANUFACTURING INVENTORY MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE — 66
Article from Rootstock

MAXIMIZING 3PL EFFICIENCY AND PROFITABILITY WITH ADVANCED TRUCK ROUTE PLANNING SOFTWARE — 69
Article from Aptean

WHAT SHOULD CFOS FOCUS ON IN 2023? — 72
Article from Unit4

PROCUREMENT TRENDS AND PRIORITIES TO PURSUE IN 2023 — 74
Article from QAD

THE BUSINESS BENEFITS OF RISE WITH SAP

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

Businesses can only advance their digital transformations so far with legacy enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems. They have limited functionality and extensibility – and, as they stand, can't support artificial intelligence, robotic automation, and other advanced technologies on many enterprise roadmaps. Legacy ERPs are also costly to operate and maintain, requiring IT resources to monitor and manage the infrastructure and updates necessary to keep the system running.

Modernizing the ERP environment can solve those pain points and enable a business or enterprise to advance to a higher level of digital capabilities and, therefore, greater efficiency and competitiveness. However, the transition from a legacy ERP to a cloud system, e.g., SAP ECC to SAP S/4HANA, can be daunting. A "Business Transformation-as-a-Service" solution, such as RISE with SAP, minimizes the complexity and risk associated with modernizing an IT ecosystem.

RISE with SAP packages SAP S/4HANA Cloud with embedded service and tools. It helps users get started with SAP Business Process Intelligence (BPI), SAP Business Technology Platform (BTP), and SAP Business Network. Moreover, SAP takes responsibility for the infrastructure necessary to run RISE with SAP. In short, this solution not only guides clients towards an intelligent enterprise, it also helps them achieve it.

TCO Before and After Modernizing the ERP

Before an organization begins to implement a new ERP system, a clear understanding of costs needs to be established – both short- and long-term. With a legacy ERP system, companies must consider software costs and maintenance when projecting total cost of ownership (TCO). This is due to the amount of labor hours required for infrastructure and operating system upkeep. The in-house IT team will also spend time maintaining the ERP database to ensure that accurate information is available to all systems connected to the core. If a company is currently using a cloud ERP system, one must also factor in cloud and hyperscaler costs.

With a comprehensive, Business Transformation-as-a-Service solution, TCO changes. When opting for a solution based on the SaaS model, users pay a subscription rather than an annual fee. However, it takes more than a quick calculation to compare the cost of yearly licenses with subscriptions to understand the investment a business will make. The subscription cost includes the operating system and software maintenance, and even though the company transitions from on-premises infrastructure to the cloud, there are no additional hosting costs. In the final analysis, many companies find that annual costs decrease with the cloud solution.

> **A CLOUD ERP CAN ALSO HELP A BUSINESS ADVANCE ITS SUSTAINABILITY GOALS. RISE WITH SAP, FOR EXAMPLE, SUPPORTS SAP'S "TRIPLE ZERO" APPROACH OF ZERO WASTE, ZERO EMISSIONS, AND ZERO INEQUALITY. THE PLATFORM HELPS DECREASE A BUSINESS' CARBON FOOTPRINT WHILE MAKING DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION ACCESSIBLE.**

Additional Benefits of RISE with SAP

While cost is important, there is more to be considered with an ERP implementation project. The new system will become the onramp to new digital capabilities, innovation, and possibly new revenue streams, such as providing APIs to data sources, remote product monitoring, or other services.

A cloud ERP can also help a business advance its sustainability goals. RISE with SAP, for example, supports SAP's "Triple Zero" approach of zero waste, zero emissions, and zero inequality. The platform helps decrease a business' carbon footprint while making digital transformation accessible.

Additionally, upgrading to a system that supports an intelligent enterprise may be the key to operations simply working better. One of our clients that provides services to customers worldwide had maintained its own data center. This action provides too many opportunities for risk because the data center was a single point of failure, and backups weren't immediately accessible. RISE with SAP enabled the business to get out of the "data center business" and move to the cloud, while SAP handles infrastructure and software maintenance.

How to Decide If RISE with SAP Is The Right Choice for Your Business

For businesses implementing an ERP system for the first time, RISE with SAP is a good place to start.

However, users transitioning from SAP ECC or another ERP system must consider their operational needs. The SAP S/4HANA platform is an in-memory database and platform, which means it stores large amounts of data in the servers' RAM to enable quick access to data. RISE with SAP is based on SAP S/4HANA sizing, so a large database can result in higher costs. Businesses with large databases may want to downsize their database before the transition or consider an alternative path to digital transformation.

Considering the benefits – from TCO to improved IT management and sustainable operations – will help businesses make an informed decision about whether a simplified path to digital transformation with RISE with SAP is the right choice.

> **HOWEVER, USERS TRANSITIONING FROM SAP ECC OR ANOTHER ERP SYSTEM MUST CONSIDER THEIR OPERATIONAL NEEDS. THE SAP S/4HANA PLATFORM IS AN IN-MEMORY DATABASE AND PLATFORM, WHICH MEANS IT STORES LARGE AMOUNTS OF DATA IN THE SERVERS' RAM TO ENABLE QUICK ACCESS TO DATA. RISE WITH SAP IS BASED ON SAP S/4HANA SIZING, SO A LARGE DATABASE CAN RESULT IN HIGHER COSTS.**

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.

Prophix

TOP TECH TRENDS AMONG FINANCE LEADERS

*Interview with **Alok Ajmera,***
President and CEO, Prophix

Prophix Software released a new survey data from over 700 global finance leaders and Prophix's findings provide a great overview of how the corporate finance office has been trending over the last few years since COVID, including increased investments in automated tech tools to help finance leaders be more agile with their reporting and forecasting, especially in today's volatile market where cash is king.

We have discussed the challenges that finance offices are facing today and how ready they are for the transformation that is awaiting for them with Alok Ajmera, President and Chief Executive Officer at Prophix.

1. Prophix is a leading global finance performance platform for mid-market businesses. Can you explain to us what a "finance performance platform" does and how it helps companies achieve their business objectives and strategic goals?

Sure, financial performance platforms provide real-time access to data and automate manual processes all in one place to help companies predict and forecast variables quicker. Financial performance platforms deliver planning, budgeting, reporting, forecasting and consolidation solutions in an integrated and cloud-based platform. With the help of these platforms, finance leaders can drastically reduce budgeting time, improve profitability and minimize risk to put time back into what matters most - uncovering business opportunities.

> **"FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE PLATFORMS PROVIDE REAL-TIME ACCESS TO DATA AND AUTOMATE MANUAL PROCESSES ALL IN ONE PLACE TO HELP COMPANIES PREDICT AND FORECAST VARIABLES QUICKER. FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE PLATFORMS DELIVER PLANNING, BUDGETING, REPORTING, FORECASTING AND CONSOLIDATION SOLUTIONS IN AN INTEGRATED AND CLOUD-BASED PLATFORM.**

2. Prophix recently shared new data from its 2023 Finance Leaders Survey, which queried more than 700 global senior-level finance professionals across multiple industries. What have been the top tech trends among finance leaders over the last few years since COVID according to your survey findings?

Finance leaders are understandably concerned about the current economic climate and are looking for ways to do more with less. That said, there is still a substantial focus on innovating within the finance department. Finance leaders are focused on elevating the finance department to a more advisory, predictive and agile role. We know that automation and AI are essential for the future of finance - and we found that there is a substantial upward trend in expected investment in technology more over the next three years than in previous years. Respondents said they planned to invest more in AI and machine learning, financial planning & analysis (FP&A) resources and training, improved scenario planning capabilities, and cybersecurity, with over 20% listing cybersecurity as a leading investment priority.

Ultimately, the results of our survey show that most finance departments are planning for the immediate future while developing a vision to increase efficiency and capabilities for the next few years.

> **"ACCORDING TO OUR SURVEY THE TOP THREE EXTERNAL PRESSURES OUR RESPONDENTS IDENTIFIED ARE ALL ECONOMIC. COMING IN AT NUMBER ONE WAS INFLATION, WITH 21% OF RESPONDENTS IDENTIFYING IT AS THEIR TOP CONCERN. SECOND WAS RISING ENERGY PRICES (14%), WITH FEARS OF RECESSION (11%) FOLLOWING BEHIND.**

3. Do you think finance professionals are better prepared than in previous years to overcome the unprecedented business and economic challenges of the day or are they still performing below their financial targets post-Covid?

Overall, the sentiment is very optimistic. Despite the stop-and-go nature of getting back to business after the initial lull during the quarantine stage of the pandemic, only 7% of finance leaders said their business was performing below their target for 2022, while 43% said they were above target and 17% well above target.

4. What are the most important challenges that finance offices are facing in today's volatile market?

Companies are dealing with a lot right now, from global supply chain disruptions to hiring difficulties to rising inflation rates. According to our survey the top three external pressures our respondents identified are all economic. Coming in at number one was inflation, with 21% of respondents identifying it as their top concern. Second was rising energy prices (14%), with fears of recession (11%) following behind.

5. Automation and Artificial Intelligence are essential for the future of finance for sure but are the finance leaders ready for this transformation?

From our survey, we know that finance leaders understand automation is an important part of strategically transforming their business – 41% said this was a top goal for their automation initiatives. Automation can also help finance teams free up time to focus on more high-value tasks. Despite this, we also found that finance teams have a long road ahead to getting automated. Only 27% said that their processes were over halfway automated at the time of taking the survey.

According to our survey, the top challenge in implementing automation isn't budget, but rather skills and training. Funding for technology, time to implement and learn, and organizational inertia were virtually tied for second place. Luckily, 65% of finance leaders do plan to be over halfway automated by the end of 2023. Despite barriers, finance leaders understand the value of automation and are actively investing in technology to get automated.

6. What do you think is the most critical finding of this survey?

I think probably the most critical finding is that 60% of organizations were performing above, or well above, their financial targets from 2022, which signals that finance professionals are better equipped to overcome unprecedented challenges than in previous years. We can equate some of this success to ongoing investments

in automation and digital transformation, and we expect this trend to continue in 2023 and beyond. Most of our respondents said they expected their budgets were likely to increase in 2023 compared to 2022. 52% of respondents expected a slight increase and 24% expected a significant boost, with only 4% anticipating a decrease.

7. Could you tell us about the growth strategy of Prophix in long term?

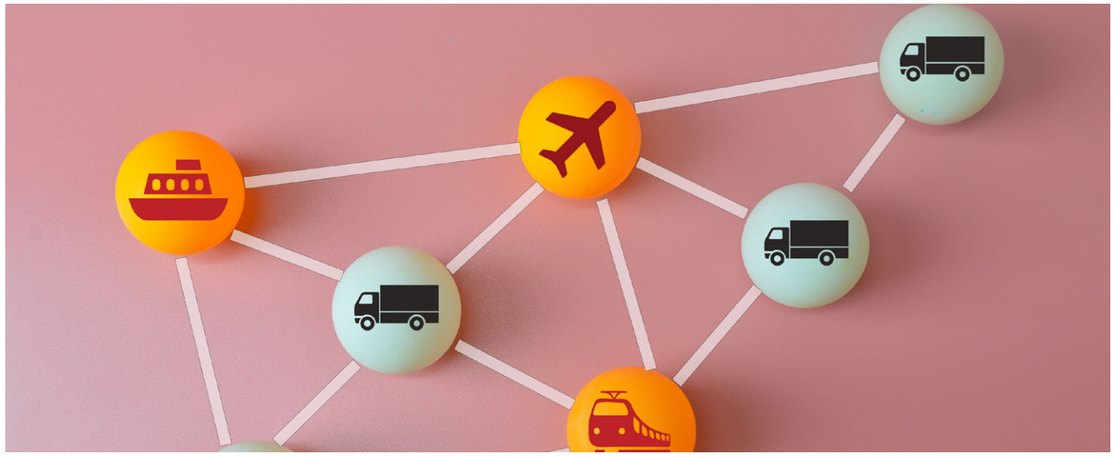
Prophix is continuing to be agile and responsive to market conditions, and we're also maintaining the inspired culture and commitment to customer service that has enabled us to dominate our market in recent years. We offer a truly unique, cloud-native platform and finance departments are only just beginning to unlock its full value. Moving forward, the office of finance will have the ability to solve more problems, from financial operations, to consolidation & close, to advanced FP&A, all from one platform.

"I THINK PROBABLY THE MOST CRITICAL FINDING IS THAT 60% OF ORGANIZATIONS WERE PERFORMING ABOVE, OR WELL ABOVE, THEIR FINANCIAL TARGETS FROM 2022, WHICH SIGNALS THAT FINANCE PROFESSIONALS ARE BETTER EQUIPPED TO OVERCOME UNPRECEDENTED CHALLENGES THAN IN PREVIOUS YEARS.

Alok Ajmera is the President and CEO at Prophix Software, a leading provider of Corporate Performance Management (CPM) software solutions. Alok joined the company in 2004 and rocketed from consultant to president. Alok's experience gives him a deep understanding into each critical functional area of the company to enable him to drive Prophix's ongoing rapid growth. Alok regularly speaks about what it takes for businesses to thrive amidst changing economic and technological conditions. Alok's mission is to ensure that every customer, prospective client, partner, and employee has a memorable and positive experience with Prophix.

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.



NULOGY SECURES $20 MILLION CAD FUNDING TO DRIVE SUPPLY CHAIN COLLABORATION & DIGITIZATION SOLUTIONS

Funds will be used to accelerate product innovation and company growth

Nulogy, the leading provider of supply chain collaboration solutions, announced the company has received $20 million CAD (approx. $15 M USD) in a mix of funding from Export Development Canada (EDC) and incremental working capital from a Tier 1 Canadian Bank. The funds will be used for product innovations and to accelerate the growth of Nulogy's multi-enterprise supply chain platform and solutions.

Nulogy's solutions are used by fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) and consumer packaged goods companies and their networks of contract manufacturing and contract packaging suppliers. The funding from EDC was completed in the first quarter of 2023.

Nulogy's cloud-based platform provides a set of solutions both for suppliers—including co-packers and contract manufacturers, and for the brands and manufacturers who trust these suppliers to function as an integral part of their business operations. The unique capabilities of the Nulogy solutions enable these companies to collaborate in near real time to monitor and manage orders, to respond to rapidly changing conditions, and to cut costs, increasing the quality and efficiency of their supply chain operations. According to a 2021 report from industry analyst firm Gartner, Nulogy is the only notable vendor for the contract manufacturing and contract packaging industry.

"We're excited to partner with EDC to continue innovating new capabilities to better serve our customers, while accelerating the growth of our network of users," said Jason Tham, CEO and co-founder of Nulogy. "As a provider of multi-enterprise solutions, the larger the number of users of our network, the greater the value for all users—so we're very excited about the value this brings to our community of customers."

"Nulogy has been focused on core supply chain solutions, propelling some of the world's leading brands and their supplier networks in more than 20 countries," said Guillermo Freire, Senior Vice-President, Mid-Market Group at EDC. "EDC is committed to helping Canadian mid-market companies like Nulogy realize their international growth potential. As a strategic partner, EDC can support Nulogy by leveraging our financial solutions, trade knowledge, and global networks, which will provide the company with even more momentum as they expand into new markets around the world."

About EDC

Export Development Canada (EDC) is a financial Crown corporation dedicated to helping Canadian businesses make an impact at home and abroad. EDC has the financial products and knowledge Canadian companies need to confidently enter new markets, reduce financial risk and grow their business as they go from local to global. Together, EDC and Canadian companies are building a more prosperous, stronger and sustainable economy for all Canadians. For more information and to learn how we can help your company, call us at 1-800-229-0575 or visit www.edc.ca.

About Nulogy

Nulogy, a leading supplier of cloud-based supply chain solutions, enables customers and their supplier communities to collaborate on a multi-enterprise platform to deliver with excellence to an ever-changing consumer market. The Nulogy platform optimizes upstream supply ecosystems composed of brands, contract manufacturers and packagers, third party logistics providers, and raw material and packaging suppliers in order to accelerate supply chain responsiveness and collaborate at the speed of today's market.

SYSPRO SPEAKING THE SAME LANGUAGE

*Interview with **Matthew Gordon-Box,***
Product Manager Supply Chain, SYSPRO

SYSPRO announced new capabilities to their latest ERP release with enriched functionality for improved internal and organizational controls, a connected supply chain, deeper business intelligence and digital dexterity. We have discussed the key pillars and highlights of the release with Matthew Gordon-Bo, Product Manager Supply Chain at SYSPRO.

1) Could you tell ERP News readers about yourself and your role at SYSPRO?

I have over 20 years' experience within the SYSPRO Ecosystem, developing and implementing integrated systems and solutions in both the UK and Australia. In my current role, I am the Supply Chain Product Manager where I analyze the current offering and complete development of SYSPRO systems to help companies strengthen their supply chain. Together with our product management team, I spearhead the SYSPRO supply chain software functionality. In collaboration with the product operations team, I also facilitate the release-to-market of software, ensuring that it is carefully planned and delivered.

2) SYSPRO is a global provider of industry-built ERP software specialized in the manufacturing and distribution sectors. What does specializing in certain industries provide your customers?

Our biggest differentiator is our people. We have a deep understanding of our customer's specific industries and the challenges they face. It's something we hear over and over from our customers – "You speak our language." All that knowledge has been baked into the design and architecture of our ERP platform so that mid-market manufacturers and distributors can minimize the amount of customization required, see rapid time-to-value and maximize the business benefits they experience.

This expertise also means that we act as trusted advisors to our customers to provide technical expertise and counsel that advances their specific business goals, helps them secure their digital future and enables them to make timely, data-driven decisions that give them a significant competitive advantage.

In the end, our technical and industry expertise means mid-market manufacturers and distributors get a platform and a partner that are both uniquely equipped to empower them to digitally transform their business so they can thrive and grow no matter what challenges they face.

> "SYSPRO'S LATEST RELEASE PROVIDES ADVANCED EMBEDDED ANALYTICS DIRECTLY WITHIN THE ERP SYSTEM, ENABLING CUSTOMERS WITH THE ABILITY TO GAIN HEIGHTENED VISIBILITY OF OPERATIONAL ACTIVITY ACROSS THE ORGANIZATION.

3) SYSPRO recently announced new capabilities to their latest ERP release with enriched functionality. Can you tell us about the important highlights of the release? What are the benefits?

The recent release of SYSPRO 8 provides several enhancements, along with two standout capabilities: Embedded Analytics and a low-code application designer.

SYSPRO's latest release provides advanced Embedded Analytics directly within the ERP system, enabling customers with the ability to gain heightened visibility of operational activity across the organization. SYSPRO Embedded Analytics can easily create, customize, and deploy dashboards and visualizations anywhere in SYSPRO to provide real-time, accurate, and relevant data from all aspects of the business. It's an incredibly powerful capability, allowing our customers to have full visibility of what's going on within their business at any time.

The Low Code Application Designer enables customers to easily and quickly create and integrate new applications with SYSPRO. In a nutshell, this means manufacturers and distributors can easily adapt software and create new functionality without having to spend a ton of time and money on development.

> "SYSPRO'S FLEXIBILITY ALLOWS BUSINESSES TO CUSTOMIZE THEIR DATA MODELS TO FIT THEIR REQUIREMENTS AT DIFFERENT STAGES OF THEIR DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION JOURNEY.

4) Providing real-time, accurate, and relevant data is one of the cornerstones of digital transformation. Does SYSPRO provide this ability to the customers through their digital transformation journey?

Absolutely. SYSPRO, as an integrated ERP system, captures relevant, accurate, and actionable data in real-time. Additionally, SYSPRO's flexibility allows businesses to customize their data models to fit their requirements at different stages of their digital transformation journey. Tools like SYSPRO's Embedded Analytics platform provides advanced data insights, enabling customers to make informed decisions that drive business growth and support digitization. SYSPRO is focused on providing customers with the data they need to achieve their digital transformation goals.

5) Selecting the right ERP software is a challenging process for businesses. Could you give our readers some tips about choosing between generic and industry-specific ERP systems?

Definitely. The generic ERP systems do have their advantages, but for mid-market companies, there are a lot of good reasons to consider an industry-specific solution. Here are some of the points I'd advise considering when evaluating new ERP platforms:

- To what degree does the provider and your potential implementation partner understand your business? Much of the value you'll get from ERP is through the automation of key business processes. The better your provider and their partners understand your industry, the more likely the ERP platform will not only properly automate your processes, but also improve them. You don't want to automate inefficient processes, and a strong partner will help you avoid making that mistake.

- If you use an ERP selection consultant, make sure that they take an unbiased view of potential products and partners. If they use a "one size fits all' template for selection, you may end up with a massive ERP platform that requires much more customization to be useful than you are prepared for.

- For the final candidates, give the provider access to your business and your team so they can ask the questions and perform discovery. A demonstration based on a cold functional request for information without discovery will likely miss the mark.

- If an ERP implementation partner offers you a free business analysis or discovery and offers to present this back to you, take it. You can measure the provider on their ability to understand your requirements quickly, and articulately play back their understanding of your needs, your industry and business.

- Make sure to research whether a provider has experience and references in your industry with your specific type of manufacturing, distribution, or specialized business process.

- Remember that you are ultimately responsible for the ERP selection process, so take ownership of the implementation phases. Fully relying on a third-party who can walk away at any time to make that decision for you is less likely to result in complete success.

6) How does SYSPRO differ from other industry-specific ERP software?

SYSPRO is an integrated software solution designed for small and medium sized businesses. The following features set it apart from other industry-specific ERP software:

- ***Customization:*** SYSPRO is highly customizable, which allows businesses to tailor the system to their specific needs. The flexibility means that the software can be adapted to a wide range of industries, and customization of the core solution won't affect the internal workings of the system.

- ***Scalability:*** SYSPRO is scalable, meaning that it can be used by businesses of all sizes, from small start-ups to large enterprises. This makes it a cost-effective solution for a growing business that needs a system that can keep up with their changing needs.

- ***User Friendly Interface:*** The interface is easy to navigate and understand, which reduces the learning curve for new users.

- ***Advanced Analytics:*** SYSPRO offers advanced analytics and reporting capabilities, which help businesses make data-driven decisions.

- ***Cross Platform:*** SYSPRO offers both cloud and on-premise deployment, with desktop, web and mobile solutions with access via any device anytime from anywhere.

- ***Inventory Optimization:*** SYSPRO has advanced inventory management features that optimize inventory levels based on demand forecasts, lead times and reorder points. This reduces potential stock-outs, minimizes excess inventory and improves supply chain efficiency.

- ***Traceability and Compliance:*** Robust traceability and compliance features allow organizations to track materials and products through the supply chain, from raw materials to finished products.

- ***Production Planning and Scheduling:*** SYSPRO has powerful production planning and scheduling features that optimize production schedules based on demand, capacity, and resource availability.

- ***Business Process Automation:*** The built-in workflow engine allows organisations to automate routine tasks and streamline business processes, reducing manual errors, improving efficiency and increasing productivity.

7) Could you tell us about the growth strategy of SYSPRO in the long term?

As a business we are relentlessly focused on global market growth serving the manufacturing and distribution sectors. SYSPRO works very closely with our partners, and we're working to deepen these channel relationships and to grow our channel program with partners who bring deep technical and industry expertise. Ultimately, our growth will build on the meaningful, trusted relationships we build with our customers, partners, and global teams.

Experienced Software Engineering Manager with a demonstrated history of working in the information technology and services industry. Skilled in HR Consulting, WPF Development, .NET Framework, C#, and Syspro. Strong product management professional with a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) focused in Business Computing from University of Sunderland.

About SYSPRO

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

UNIT4 CONTINUES DIGITIZATION MOMENTUM ACROSS PUBLIC SECTOR, PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AND NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

Unit4, a leader in enterprise cloud applications for people-centric organizations, has completed its first quarter of 2023 with continued momentum across public sector, professional services and nonprofit sectors, with organizations looking to digitize operating processes, business-wide collaboration and engagement.

In Q1 of this year, a range of new customers – including Frankfurt Construction Management GmbH, L&Q Housing, Gemeente Edam-Volendam, City of Nanaimo, and MONETRA - have selected either Unit4 ERPx, FP&A and Scanmarket, or a combination of the three, to deliver deeper insights, mitigate risks, lower costs and improve operational efficiencies.

These benefits are already being derived by a number of existing customers - in the public sector in particular - who have now gone live on ERPx, Unit4's next-generation ERP cloud solution. In the Dutch market in Q1, customers making the move to cloud included the Municipality of Bodegraven-Reeuwijk, Municipality of Etten-Leur, and Municipality of Bronckhorst, underscoring the appetite to pursue a cloud strategy and digital approach. By implementing ERPx, these organizations will improve the quality of their data, simplify processes and, ultimately, deliver an enhanced customer and employee experience.

Unit4's next-generation ERP is transforming its customers' organizations, across industries, from productivity gains to increased engagement and business growth. Pre-configured to adapt to the way that organizations work, and incorporating industry best practices, ERPx is integrated for agility with a low total cost of ownership, accelerating time to value.

"For organizations seeking to improve productivity while moderating spending, Unit4 provides an effective way to reduce IT complexity, bundle software costs, expedite implementations, and realize higher ROIs from their technology deployments," said Sam Hamway, Research Analyst, Nucleus Research. "Through this value proposition and demonstrated competitive wins against other enterprise software suite vendors, Nucleus is confident in Unit4's market competitiveness as spending tightens."

Speaking about Unit4's solutions, Henk Neijenhuis, Manager, Gemeente Bronckhorst explained, "Bronckhorst municipality wants a modern SaaS solution that meets the municipality's changing needs and can grow over time. We want a user-friendly solution that supports our financial processes efficiently and can be easily integrated. We are looking for an ERP solution that helps us and residents move forward, now, and well into the future. ERPx meets that need."

"Our customers' buying patterns clearly demonstrate that digitization is a priority for all types of organizations," said Mike Ettling, CEO, Unit4. "Retaining legacy systems for fear of how much it will cost to replace, may actually cost companies more than they realize, and not just financially. Those organizations which are moving to flexible, cloud-based solutions are building resilience for the future and crucially, already experiencing business transformation."

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

EXPLORING THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN GENERIC AND INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC ERP SYSTEMS

*Article by **Katie Slimov**,*
Associate Editor, ERPNews.com

Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) is a software system that manages and integrates core business processes such as finance, human resources, supply chain, customer relationship management, and others. The purpose of ERP is to improve productivity, increase efficiency, and provide visibility into business operations. There are two main types of ERP systems: generic and industry-specific.

Generic ERP:

A generic ERP system is a software that can be used by businesses across multiple industries. It is designed to offer a broad range of features and functionalities that can be adapted to various business models. Generic ERP systems are usually customizable to some extent, but their primary advantage is their versatility. They are suitable for businesses with simple operations or those that do not require specific industry features. They also work well for small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) that do not have the resources to develop their own bespoke ERP system.

Generic ERP systems can offer a range of benefits for businesses. They can streamline operations, automate processes, and provide real-time data and insights into the business's performance. They can also improve collaboration among employees, reduce manual data entry, and provide better access to information. However, generic ERP systems have some limitations, such as lack of industry-specific features, which can limit their usefulness in certain industries.

> **"GENERIC ERP SYSTEMS ARE USUALLY CUSTOMIZABLE TO SOME EXTENT, BUT THEIR PRIMARY ADVANTAGE IS THEIR VERSATILITY. THEY ARE SUITABLE FOR BUSINESSES WITH SIMPLE OPERATIONS OR THOSE THAT DO NOT REQUIRE SPECIFIC INDUSTRY FEATURES.**

Industry-Specific ERP:

Industry-specific ERP systems are tailored to meet the unique needs of specific industries. They are designed to address industry-specific challenges, comply with industry-specific regulations, and support industry-specific workflows. These systems typically offer features and functionalities that are not available in generic ERP systems. For example, an ERP system designed for a manufacturing business may include features for managing production scheduling, inventory management, and quality control.

Industry-specific ERP systems can offer significant benefits for businesses in their respective industries. They can provide greater visibility into industry-specific processes, improve compliance with industry-specific regulations, and streamline workflows that are specific to the industry. They can also provide better integration with other industry-specific software solutions, such as supply chain management systems or customer relationship management software.

However, industry-specific ERP systems can also have some drawbacks. They can be more expensive than generic ERP systems, and they may require more extensive customization to meet a business's specific needs. They may also be less flexible than generic ERP systems, which can limit their ability to adapt to changing business requirements.

In conclusion, both generic and industry-specific ERP systems have their advantages and disadvantages. A generic ERP system is suitable for businesses that have simple operations or do not require industry-specific features. An industry-specific ERP system is suitable for businesses that need to manage industry-specific processes, comply with industry-specific regulations, and streamline industry-specific workflows. Ultimately, the choice of ERP system will depend on the business's needs, budget, and goals.

> **"INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC ERP SYSTEMS ARE TAILORED TO MEET THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF SPECIFIC INDUSTRIES. THEY ARE DESIGNED TO ADDRESS INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC CHALLENGES, COMPLY WITH INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC REGULATIONS, AND SUPPORT INDUSTRY SPECIFIC WORKFLOWS.**

THE ROLE OF ASSET INTELLIGENCE AND MANAGEMENT IN DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

*Interview with **Syed Ali,***
CEO and Founder, EZO

We recently discussed with Syed Ali, the CEO of EZO, the journey with EZO, and how Enterprise Asset Management (EAM) Software can help companies in 2023.

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

EZO was founded in 2011 with a mission to build easy-to-use yet powerful cloud-based operations solutions for organizations worldwide. I started the company with a team of fellow IT and software technologists sometime after Sun Microsystems, where I worked, was acquired by Oracle. We had grown tired of having to deal with repeated occurrences of outdated and incorrect office inventory when trying to track solutions. Often, the data on inventory was outdated, or worse, completely missing — not to mention the fact that misplaced assets were sometimes assigned to the wrong employee who may not even work at the company anymore. It was frustrating, but out of that frustration, we founded EZ Web Enterprises. We recently renamed the company to reflect all our innovative offerings and the evolution of the technology – now called EZO.

EZO offers SaaS-based solutions, and we are passionate about delivering consistently amazing user experiences with best-in-class functionality and enterprise scalability. Our products have helped thousands of organizations around the globe streamline operations in many key areas, including physical asset management with EZOfficeInventory, IT asset management with AssetSonar, equipment maintenance management with EZO CMMS and rental business management with EZRentOut.

2. You recently announced that you launched a strategic consolidation of product offerings and renamed the company EZO. What does this name change reflect about the company and its mission?

Yes. We announced in January a strategic consolidation of our product offerings and renamed the company EZO. The name change reflects the organization's mission to provide operations teams with streamlined, easy-to-use, and powerful solutions for tracking and managing assets in almost any imaginable workflow. The name change is another major milestone for our company and we could not be more excited about it.

The brand EZO is derived from the name of the company's flagship product, EZOfficeInventory, our award-winning physical asset tracking software system. We are proud of the last decade of work and can't wait to take the asset management industry to another level with the addition of new solutions, including our most recent product launch, EZO CMMS.

3.EZO provides customers with a SaaS solution to control and maintain operational assets and equipment. What is the role of Asset Intelligence and Management in digital transformation? How do you support your customers through their digital transformation journey?

Asset Intelligence and Management play a critical role in digital transformation by enabling companies to gain insights and optimize their assets' performance, and further, leveraging this intelligence to drive increased productivity across the entire organization. Asset Intelligence and Management helps companies to improve their operational efficiency, reduce costs, and enhance their customers' experiences.

In the context of digital transformation, Asset Intelligence and Management can help companies to make informed, data-driven decisions about their assets by providing real-time data on asset usage, cost, and maintenance needs. This data can be used to optimize asset utilization, prevent downtime, and reduce cost of ownership.

For example, located north of Minneapolis, the St. Francis school district encompasses more than 700 employees and 4000 students from kindergarten to senior high. In the past, St. Francis's IT team relied completely on Excel spreadsheets for IT asset management processes. This manual asset tracking system was creating a lot of holes: things were getting missed, and the data was far from accurate. If a Chromebook was checked out of the school by a student or teacher, someone from the IT team had to update spreadsheet-based records with the person's name, their ID number, the device number, and the school location. This was all done manually, and as a result the team wasn't able to consistently track the devices they managed.

Today, the district is utilizing EZO's ITAM system to track approximately 4000 devices that include Chromebooks, MacBooks, Windows laptops, iPads, wireless hotspots, and peripherals. The team can now import device data from spreadsheets with a few clicks and keep track of every IT asset. Monitoring the location, utilization, and ownership of every device also helps the team in recovering these devices from students at the end of the academic year, and the same is true for other devices.

> "
> **ASSET INTELLIGENCE AND MANAGEMENT CAN HELP COMPANIES TO MAKE INFORMED, DATA-DRIVEN DECISIONS ABOUT THEIR ASSETS BY PROVIDING REALTIME DATA ON ASSET USAGE, COST, AND MAINTENANCE NEEDS. THIS DATA CAN BE USED TO OPTIMIZE ASSET UTILIZATION, PREVENT DOWNTIME, AND REDUCE COST OF OWNERSHIP.**

4. How can Enterprise Asset Management (EAM) Software help companies achieve their business objectives and strategic goals?

Enterprise Asset Management Software can help companies achieve their business objectives and strategic goals in several ways:

Improved value derived from assets: EAM Software can provide real-time data on assets' custody, maintenance needs, and usage, which can help companies optimize asset utilization, prevent downtime, and reduce maintenance costs. This can help companies achieve their business objectives by improving operational efficiency and productivity.

Cost savings: It can help companies reduce maintenance costs and extend the life of their assets by implementing preventive maintenance programs. This can help companies achieve their strategic goals by reducing operating expenses, extending asset lifecyles and increasing profitability.

Enhanced compliance: It can help companies ensure compliance with regulatory requirements, safety standards, and environmental regulations. This can help companies avoid costly fines and legal liabilities, and achieve their strategic goals by maintaining a positive reputation and building customer trust.

Improved decision-making: It can provide companies with data-driven insights and analytics that help them make informed decisions about asset investments, upgrades, and replacements. This can help companies achieve their business objectives by optimizing asset utilization and maximizing return on investment.

Streamlined processes: EAM can help companies automate and streamline their asset management processes, reducing manual tasks and improving workflow efficiency. This can help companies achieve their strategic goals by improving productivity, reducing errors, and freeing up resources to focus on other strategic initiatives.

5. EZO also recently launched its innovative equipment maintenance solution, EZO CMMS (computerized maintenance management system). Can you tell us why a maintenance management system is important for a company and what are the benefits of this solution?

EZO launched its innovative equipment maintenance solution, EZO CMMS in January, an asset-first operations solution that seeks to go beyond simple work order management by providing intuitive workflows which support the end-to-end management of all team activity involved in asset maintenance.

> **"OUR EXPERTISE IN ASSET MANAGEMENT ALLOWS US THE FLEXIBILITY TO LAYER ON PRODUCTIVITY ENHANCEMENTS THAT ARE REQUIRED FOR UNIQUE USE CASES, AND FOR MAINTENANCE WE BELIEVE WE'RE OFFERING A GROUNDBREAKING APPROACH THAT WILL GET RESULTS FOR MAINTENANCE ORGANIZATIONS OF ALL SIZES AND TYPES, FROM FACILITY MANAGEMENT TO MANUFACTURING AND BEYOND.**

The system makes both assets and work schedules easily accessible and manageable by maintenance supervisors from a single location. It also helps teams resolve issues before they happen, supporting preventative measures to maintain equipment for stable, continuous operations -- ensuring audit readiness and compliance, warranty tracking, and a focus on preempting issues that can be disruptive to business.

Preventative maintenance is critical for all industries, but it is especially crucial for manufacturing operations to ensure equipment reliability, prolong equipment lifespan, improve product quality, enhance workplace safety, and comply with regulations.

As a concept, we found that the ability to optimize assets' lifecycles, and ultimately performance and uptime, requires a user-friendly connection of assets to the activities that maintenance requires – the management of a team's effort and time, through easy to use scheduling and internal communications.

This innovative approach is meant to drive greatly increased maintenance efficiency and overall organizational productivity. Our expertise in asset management allows us the flexibility to layer on productivity enhancements that are required for unique use cases, and for maintenance we believe we're offering a groundbreaking approach that will get results for maintenance organizations of all sizes and types, from facility management to manufacturing and beyond.

Overall, EZO CMMS can help companies improve asset performance, increase productivity, reduce costs, ensure compliance, and make better, data-driven decisions. This can ultimately help companies achieve their business objectives and maximize their return on investment.

6. How does EZO's CMMS differ from other market asset management software?

EZO has been in business for over a decade and servicing clients' needs in the EAM space. We have experience on our side and have adapted our products and offerings with the needs of the industry. Our new CMMS platform has many features that businesses can take advantage of, which include:

- ***Visibility:*** The total visibility into assets, team and schedule ensures fast effective decision making and more accurate forecasting. It also allows a business to anticipate and prevent issues before they turn into major problems.
- ***Scheduling:*** Centralized management of the maintenance team's time, enabling a supervisor to centrally assign tasks, ensuring streamlined tracking and timely completion
- ***Communications:*** Coordinated communications and data management ensure peak productivity across all operations
- ***Productivity:*** Improved maintenance team performance helps organizations increase uptime, product targets and more
- ***Analytics:*** Historical data and analytics provides the insights that businesses need to understand and improve operations in meaningful ways
- ***Processes:*** Advanced processes and continuous visibility ensure precisely timed equipment, maintenance, reducing costs.

> **"EZO'S DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION SOLUTIONS FOR ASSET MANAGEMENT REDUCE FRICTION THROUGHOUT OPERATIONS, AND OUR GOAL IS TO MAKE IT EASY FOR ORGANIZATIONS OF ALL TYPES TO LEVERAGE THESE BENEFITS FOR GROWTH AND SUCCESS.**

7. What are the critical factors that should be considered during the selection phase of asset management software?

There are several critical factors that should be considered during the selection phase of EAM software. I would say there are four top things to make sure you consider.

Functionality: The software should be able to meet the specific needs and requirements of your organization. It should include the features and functionality that you need to manage your assets effectively, such as inventory tracking, work order management, preventive maintenance scheduling, and reporting. It should also offer enough customization flexibility to be tailored for all of your operational workflows, enhancing them for better outcomes.

User interface: The software should be user-friendly and easy to navigate, with a clear and intuitive interface. This will help ensure product adoption so that your business can quickly access the information and features you need without getting bogged down in complicated menus or confusing screens.

Scalability: The software should be able to scale as your business grows and your asset management needs change. It should be able to accommodate additional assets, users, and locations without requiring major modifications or upgrades.

Vendor reputation and support: It's important to research the vendor's reputation and customer support track record to ensure that they can provide reliable technical support and address any issues or concerns that may arise. It is also important that you work with a company that has experience in the industry.

8. Could you tell us about the growth strategy of EZO in the long term?

We see the applicability of our asset-driven approach to operations in almost every industry. Education is a great example and a major focus for us in the near term: As the world becomes increasingly digitized, educational institutions are relying more and more on technology to provide an efficient and effective learning environment. Managing a complex IT infrastructure can be a daunting task, especially with limited resources and budgets. We see a significant value that we can provide by baking in best practices around a single source of truth for IT asset management (ITAM) solutions enabling our customers to focus on their growth rather than housekeeping. We also note that the need for highly refined processes to manage both non-IT daily-use school assets, and the effective maintenance of facility equipment offer more opportunities for our approach to help schools achieve their key learning goals.

EZO has already been supporting several school districts and colleges across the US and we expect this to continue to grow. They will need a centralized system for tracking and managing school assets, IT assets, and facility-supporting assets that can help improve their operational efficiency and reduce costs.

For the longer term, we see many opportunities to add value across these major business areas in other industries, such as government, public works, IT, finance, manufacturing, healthcare, and more. Our goal is to apply our considerable asset intelligence and management expertise to these organizations' particular needs – innovating to help these teams benefit from dramatic productivity and efficiency gains that were previously out of reach. EZO's digital transformation solutions for asset management reduce friction throughout operations, and our goal is to make it easy for organizations of all types to leverage these benefits for growth and success.

About EZO

EZO was founded in 2011 with a mission to build easy-to-use yet powerful cloud-based operations solutions for organizations worldwide. Our team is passionate about delivering consistently amazing user experiences with best-in-class functionality and enterprise scalability. EZO's products help thousands of organizations around the globe streamline operations in many key areas, including physical asset management with EZOfficeInventory, IT asset management with AssetSonar, equipment maintenance management with EZO CMMS and rental business management with EZRentOut. For more information, visit ezo.io.

WHAT TO CONSIDER WHEN SWITCHING ERP IN 2023

Article by **Mike Guay,**
Vice President Customer Success, Infor

Organizations running an older ERP are often pleasantly surprised when they see demos of the modern, easy-to-use, flexible and powerful ERP systems being sold today. This often propels the "we need a new ERP" conversation.

Leading ERP vendors have invested in programs to make moving to their new cloud-based ERP products easier than it has been in the past – and they tout this during the sales process. But easier does not mean easy. Switching ERP is not like changing your cell phone provider. It is still expensive and disruptive. Whether or not to switch, and how to switch needs to be considered carefully.

When switching to a new ERP, it is important to:

- Define your 5- to 10-year business objectives
- Evaluate the ERP vendor's roadmap and its investment in technology
- Evaluate the latest product from your existing vendor vs. products from competitors
- Prepare your organization for the move to SaaS ERP

Remember that the grass is not always greener. Switching one ERP vendor for another will not automatically provide the benefits you seek.

Your 5- to 10-year business objectives

To fully realize the benefits of an ERP solution, your company's ERP strategy must align with your business objectives. Define and document your business strategy before beginning an ERP replacement process. Several common drivers for ERP replacement include:

- Your existing system will not scale to support business growth.

- The features and capabilities you need are not present in the existing product and are not included in the vendor's near-term roadmap.
- Your industry has experienced disruption. Old business models and systems are no longer adequate, and you need to undertake a digital transformation to stay competitive.

> **FUNCTIONAL CAPABILITIES ARE STILL IMPORTANT, BUT JUST AS IMPORTANT TODAY AND IN THE FUTURE IS THE UNDERLYING ENTERPRISE APPLICATION PLATFORM (EAP) AND TECHNOLOGY.**

ERP functionality and technology roadmap

In the past, ERP suites from most major vendors were delivered as huge one-size-fits-all deployments. Some vendors still take this approach. However, with the advent of SaaS, more ERP vendors are delivering suites tailored to specific vertical industries to minimize the need for customizations. Consider the following points when switching ERP.

Functionality and fit for your vertical industry. Since customizations to vendor-delivered code are no longer permitted, organizations need to determine how much of a fit the SaaS ERP suite is out of the box. Some vendors provide SaaS ERP tailored to vertical industries such as manufacturing, food and beverage, public sector, etc. Others rely on implementation partners to provide industry-specific configurations and extensions for vertical industry requirements. Each approach has pros and cons. Confirm the approach your selected vendor is proposing and check with references to see how well that approach has been executed for them.

Investment in EAP and technology. Functional capabilities are still important, but just as important today and in the future is the underlying enterprise application platform (EAP) and technology. There is significant overlap between this topic and support for composability. This point is related to how well the ERP vendor leverages its underlying technology to deploy things such as process analysis and automation as part of the normal upgrade cycle. What this means is the applications themselves get smarter and recommend automating repetitive processes as part of the ERP suite's normal release schedule. Significant gains in productivity are delivered as a matter of course.

Support for composability. Composable ERP is the future. But what is composable ERP? As one of the architects of that concept, I am often amused by how this concept is defined in the market. I don't have the space here to elaborate fully, but the main points include:

- A fundamentally reliable SaaS ERP suite built on a state-of-the-art EAP. This permits vendors to rapidly develop and deploy new capabilities. See above.
- An ecosystem of services to deliver experiences and capabilities fully integrated to the back-end ERP. This includes sophisticated API management for complex integrations, embedded AI / ML, low-code /no-code development and integration for deployment by power users, process intelligence and hyper-automation.

It is absolutely imperative that any ERP suite selected in 2023 and beyond has a leading EAP. Organizations need to consider these underlying platforms with the same level of importance and functional capabilities.

> **SWITCHING WOULD IMPLY MOVING TO A NEW VENDOR AND ERP SUITE. HOWEVER, LEADING ERP VENDORS HAVE INVESTED SO HEAVILY IN MODERNIZING THEIR ERP SUITES THAT THE NEWER PRODUCTS OFTEN HAVE SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES FROM THEIR LEGACY ERPS. EVEN IF YOU REMAIN WITH THE SAME VENDOR, THE APPROACH TO TAKE IF MOVING TO A NEWER SAAS ERP SHOULD BE THAT OF RE-IMPLEMENTATION- NOT UPGRADING.**

New products from the same vendor or a new vendor

Switching would imply moving to a new vendor and ERP suite. However, leading ERP vendors have invested so heavily in modernizing their ERP suites that the newer products often have significant differences from their legacy ERPs. Even if you remain with the same vendor, the approach to take if moving to a newer SaaS ERP should be that of re-implementation – not upgrading.

Change management is usually easier if you stay with the same vendor. However, transformation can sometimes be easier when switching vendors. The adoption of new business models is sometimes easier when you leverage the fact that you are changing vendors – so processes have to change.

Readiness for implementing SaaS ERP

Modern ERP is delivered as SaaS on multi-tenant cloud infrastructure, which enables leveraging advanced technology and the rapid deployment of new features and capabilities. Once you have decided to replace your ERP system there are organizational changes required to make sure you are successful.

- New features and functions are deployed multiple times per year. New roles will be required to evaluate vendor-delivered functional enhancements and technical capabilities such as process automation.
- Consuming new features and capabilities requires more frequent but light-weight change management and testing – especially of extensions and integrations.

Summary

When replacing your ERP suite:

- Know why you need to replace ERP. Do not assume a new ERP system will automatically make things better. You will not achieve your objectives without defining the "why."
- Ensure any vendor you select has a state-of-the-art EAP and capabilities to support composable ERP.
- Treat a move from an older version architecture ERP to SaaS ERP as a e-implementation. Even if both products are from the same vendor.
- Prepare your organization for the changes required to adopt SaaS ERP. It's likely organization roles and responsibilities will need to change.
- Don't underestimate change management and training that will be required on an ongoing basis.

Guay started working with business systems decades ago – before they were called ERP. His career has spanned over 35 years as a user, a vendor, and system integrator. His expertise and experience with ERP systems crosses HR, Finance, Supply Management and technology. He has worked with customers in many verticals including Public Sector, K-12, Higher Ed and others. Prior to joining Infor in 2020 Guay spent over 7 years as a senior ERP Analyst at Gartner. He was the lead author of the first Cloud ERP Magic Quadrant in 2018. He has expertise in best practices for adopting MT SaaS ERP and how customers can maximize value from the investments Infor is making in products and technology.

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.

SYSPRO™

NEW ANALYST REPORT DETAILS HOW SYSPRO EMBEDDED ANALYTICS IMPROVES MANUFACTURING OPERATIONS

New analyst report details how SYSPRO Embedded Analytics increases enterprise visibility and productivity while reducing IT costs

Isaac Gould, Nucleus Research Analyst, notes that this new functionality in latest SYSPRO release enables non-technical users to analyze ERP data without burdening IT

SYSPRO, a global provider of industry-built ERP software, has been recognized for its significant new Embedded Analytics capability in a Nucleus Research report. As part of SYSPRO's latest release, SYSPRO's Embedded Analytics functionality empowers everyday manufacturing and distribution business users to conduct sophisticated analyses on ERP data to gain insights, all without involving IT.

According to Isaac Gould, Research Manager at Nucleus Research, "Most companies still lack a modern data analytics ecosystem, and instead rely on Excel spreadsheets that prove too slow and cumbersome to be effective in informing day-to-day operations. SYSPRO's introduction of Embedded Analytics functionality within its ERP platform serves to enable typical business users to leverage and visualize real-time data within their ERP systems. With a centralized analytics solution, organizations can propagate analytics to the individual employee level within their workspace while maintaining security and access controls."

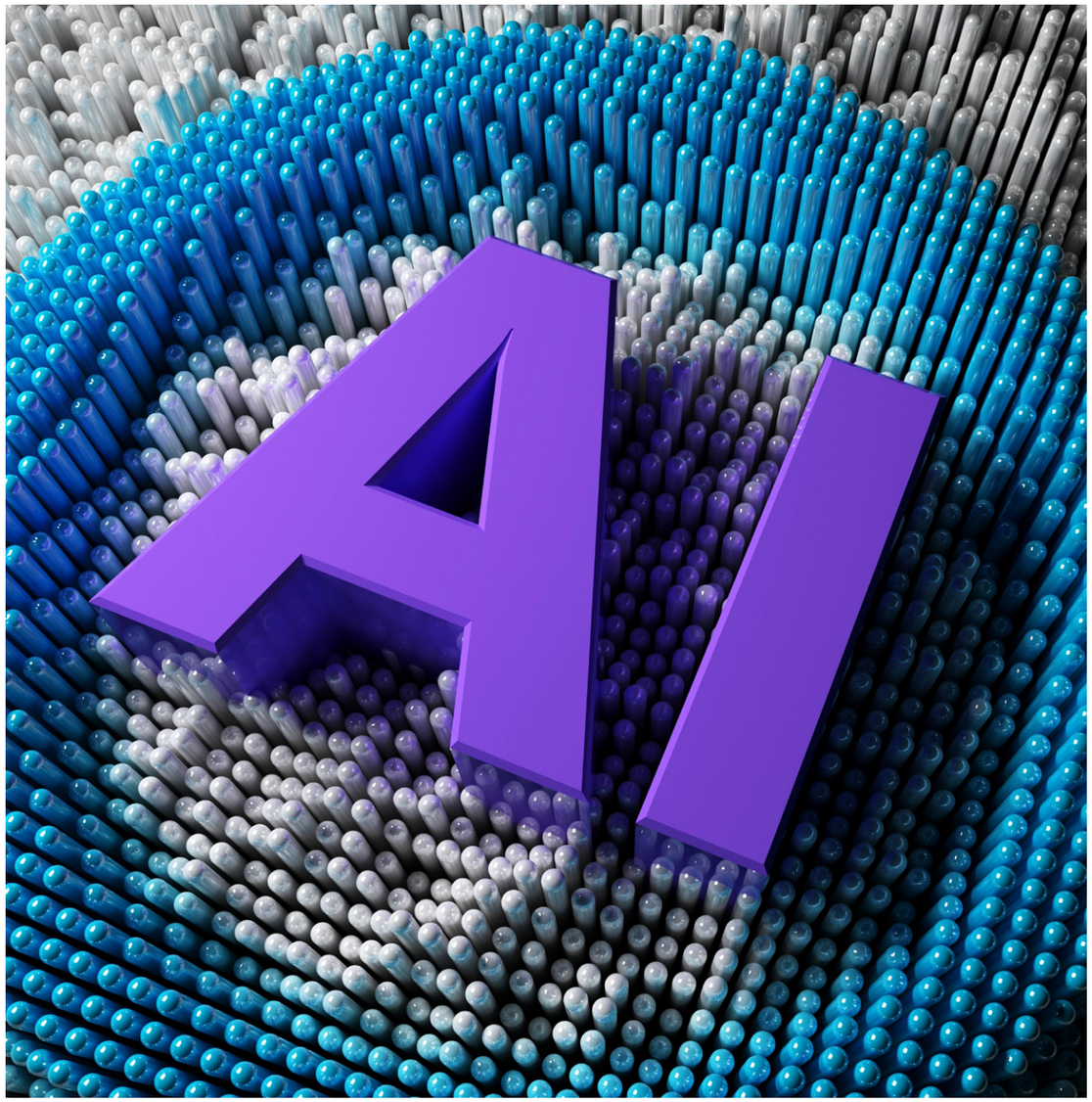
The Nucleus report outlines three expected benefits for users:

- **Improved organizational visibility:** Out-of-the box, SYSPRO embedded Analytics can combine multiple sources of data from sales, operations, finance, workforce and other sources from inside SYSPRO ERP so users can gain a complete, up-to-date view of the organization. Interactive dashboards and visuals enable users to drill down and expand visuals to provide business users with quick access to relevant information.
- **Improved employee productivity:** With embedded analytics, SYSPRO users can avoid involving and waiting on IT or data science teams to generate the insights they need. SYSPRO's wizard enables business users to build custom dashboards and analyze data on their own.
- **Reduced operational costs:** Embedded Analytics enables SMBs and mid-market companies to analyze data without having to hire expensive data scientists to support a separate BI tool. Additionally, because analytics is built into SYSPRO ERP, there's no need to spend time and money on integrations between the BI solution and various data sources.

According to Darren Edwards, Head of Product Operations at SYSPRO, "Nucleus found that SYSPRO Embedded Analytics enables users throughout the organization to access data and insights. As a result, they can make faster, data-driven decisions that improve their customer relationships, optimize operations and increase revenue."

About SYSPRO

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



SAP TO EMBED IBM WATSON ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE INTO SAP SOLUTIONS

SAP and IBM announced that IBM Watson technology will be embedded into SAP solutions to provide new AI-driven insights and automation to help accelerate innovation and create more efficient and effective user experiences across the SAP application portfolio.

SAP will use IBM Watson capabilities to power its digital assistant in SAP Start, which provides a unified entry point for cloud solutions from SAP. With SAP Start, users can search for, launch and interactively engage with apps provided in cloud solutions from SAP and SAP S/4HANA Cloud. New AI capabilities in SAP Start will be designed to help users boost productivity with both natural language capabilities and predictive insights using IBM Watson AI solutions built on IBM's trust and transparency and data privacy principles.

"This milestone collaboration with IBM aims to provide SAP customers a better user experience, faster decision-making and greater insights to help transform their business processes," said Christian Klein, CEO and Member of the Executive Board of SAP SE. "Working together to incorporate additional AI, machine learning and other intelligent technologies into SAP solutions can lead to better business outcomes for our joint customers. Today's news, along with the recent news of our expanded use of Red Hat Enterprise Linux, is a prime example of how the rich, 50-year partnership between our companies continues to grow stronger and move the industry forward."

New digital assistant capabilities in SAP Start will be extended across SAP solutions to help answer diverse questions for managers and employees. By automating and

speeding up common tasks, the capabilities are designed to help unlock employee productivity to focus on more strategic work. SAP Start will allow customers to benefit from intelligence at the point of decision-making with the ability to use AI and machine learning to extract information from a variety of data sources and answer user questions across lines of business. Today, IBM technology currently available in the TripIt mobile app from SAP Concur is helping nearly 13 million users easily access AI-derived weather insights to make more sustainable travel choices before and during their trips.

IBM delivers market-leading AI capabilities with Watson products deployed by more than 100 million users across 20 industries. In addition, SAP and IBM Consulting are currently supporting customers with 25 joint intelligent industry solutions that use IBM Watson capabilities underpinned by SAP Business Technology Platform (SAP BTP). These industry solutions help customers across industries such as retail, manufacturing and utilities accelerate their business transformation and use data to make more informed decisions.

"IBM and SAP are joining forces to give businesses new and exciting ways to harness the transformative power of AI and use it as a source of competitive advantage," said Arvind Krishna, IBM Chairman and Chief Executive Officer. "With this announcement, we are infusing IBM Watson's powerful, enterprise-grade AI capabilities into SAP's leading ERP platform to help businesses reimagine customer experiences, boost productivity and fuel growth."

In addition to natively embedding IBM Watson AI capabilities into SAP solutions, SAP and IBM are collaborating on generative AI and large language models aimed to deliver consistent continuous learning and automation based on SAP's mission-critical application suite.

About IBM

IBM is a leading global hybrid cloud and AI, and business services provider, helping clients in more than 175 countries capitalize on insights from their data, streamline business processes, reduce costs and gain the competitive edge in their industries. Nearly 3,800 government and corporate entities in critical infrastructure areas such as financial services, telecommunications and healthcare rely on IBM's hybrid cloud platform and Red Hat OpenShift to affect their digital transformations quickly, efficiently, and securely. IBM's breakthrough innovations in AI, quantum computing, industry-specific cloud solutions and business services deliver open and flexible options to our clients. All of this is backed by IBM's legendary commitment to trust, transparency, responsibility, inclusivity, and service. For more information, visit www.ibm.com. Statements regarding IBM's future direction and intent are subject to change or withdrawal without notice and represent goals and objectives only.

About SAP

SAP's strategy is to help every business run as an intelligent, sustainable enterprise. As a market leader in enterprise application software, we help companies of all sizes and in all industries run at their best: SAP customers generate 87% of total global commerce. Our machine learning, Internet of Things (IoT), and advanced analytics technologies help turn customers' businesses into intelligent enterprises. SAP helps give people and organizations deep business insight and fosters collaboration that helps them stay ahead of their competition. We simplify technology for companies so they can consume our software the way they want – without disruption. Our end-to-end suite of applications and services enables business and public customers across 25 industries globally to operate profitably, adapt continuously, and make a difference. With a global network of customers, partners, employees, and thought leaders, SAP helps the world run better and improve people's lives. For more information, visit www.sap.com.

BENEFITS AND DRAWBACKS OF INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC ERP SYSTEMS

*Article by **Katie Slimov**,*
Associate Editor, ERPNews.com

Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) is a software system that helps manage business processes, such as financials, human resources, supply chain, customer relationship management, and more. Industry-specific ERP is designed to meet the unique needs of specific industries by addressing industry-specific challenges, complying with industry-specific regulations, and supporting industry-specific workflows. In this article, we will explore industry-specific ERP in more detail, including its benefits, examples, and drawbacks.

Benefits of Industry-Specific ERP:

Industry-specific ERP offers several benefits over generic ERP, including:

1. Better Compliance: Industry-specific ERP systems are designed to comply with specific regulations and standards that are unique to an industry. For example, a pharmaceutical company's ERP system must comply with Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) and other regulatory requirements. By complying with these regulations, an industry-specific ERP system can help a business avoid costly fines and legal issues.

2. Customizable: Industry-specific ERP systems are designed to be easily customizable to meet the unique needs of a specific industry. These systems offer a wide range of features and functionalities that can be tailored to meet the specific needs of a business.

3. Improved Efficiency: Industry-specific ERP systems can help improve business efficiency by streamlining industry-specific processes, such as production scheduling, inventory management, and quality control. By automating these processes, an industry-specific ERP system can help reduce errors and improve overall business performance.

4. Better Integration: Industry-specific ERP systems are designed to integrate with other industry-specific software solutions, such as supply chain management systems or customer relationship management software. This can help businesses better manage their overall operations and improve collaboration among employees.

Examples of Industry-Specific ERP:

Industry-specific ERP systems are available for a wide range of industries, including:

1. Manufacturing: ERP systems designed for manufacturing businesses help manage production scheduling, inventory management, quality control, and other industry-specific processes. Examples of manufacturing ERP systems include SAP ERP, Epicor ERP, and NetSuite ERP.

2. Healthcare: ERP systems designed for healthcare businesses help manage patient data, medical billing, and compliance with healthcare regulations. Examples of healthcare ERP systems include NextGen Healthcare, Cerner, and Allscripts.

3. Construction: ERP systems designed for construction businesses help manage project management, resource planning, and job costing. Examples of construction ERP systems include Procore, Viewpoint, and Sage 300 Construction and Real Estate.

4. Retail: ERP systems designed for retail businesses help manage inventory, point-of-sale systems, and customer relationship management. Examples of retail ERP systems include Microsoft Dynamics 365 for Retail, Oracle Retail, and Infor CloudSuite Retail.

Drawbacks of Industry-Specific ERP:

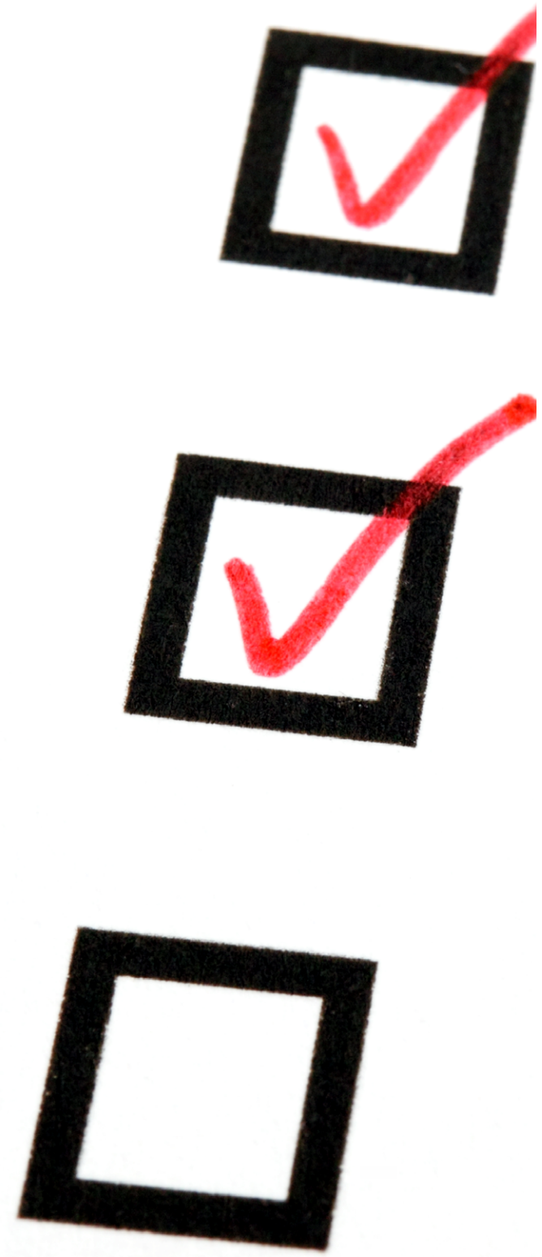
While industry-specific ERP offers several benefits, it also has some drawbacks, including:

1. Higher Cost: Industry-specific ERP systems are typically more expensive than generic ERP systems. This is because they require more extensive customization to meet the specific needs of a business.

2. Limited Flexibility: Industry-specific ERP systems are designed to meet the specific needs of a business. This means that they may be less flexible than generic ERP systems, which can limit their ability to adapt to changing business requirements.

3. Complex Implementation: Industry-specific ERP systems require a more complex implementation process than generic ERP systems. This is because they require more extensive customization to meet the specific needs of a business.

> "INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC ERP SYSTEMS CAN HELP IMPROVE BUSINESS EFFICIENCY BY STREAMLINING INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC PROCESSES, SUCH AS PRODUCTION SCHEDULING, INVENTORY MANAGEMENT, AND QUALITY CONTROL.



Conclusion:

Industry-specific ERP is a software system designed to meet the unique needs of specific industries. These systems offer several benefits over generic ERP, including better compliance, customization, improved efficiency, and better integration with other industry-specific software solutions. However, they also have some drawbacks, such as higher cost, limited flexibility, and complex implementation. Ultimately, the choice of ERP system will depend on a business's specific needs, budget, and goals.

NEW EPICOR DATA CENTRE IN INDIA SUPPORTS COMPANY'S ACCELERATING INTERNATIONAL GROWTH

Epicor, a global leader of industry-specific enterprise software to promote business growth, shared plans to launch a new regional data centre for India, supported by surging customer cloud adoption.

The new data centre for customers in India builds on the company's strong growth trajectory across international markets, including the recent announcements of a new data centre in the Middle East and introduction of Epicor Managed Hosting Services for Kinetic for customers in China.

"Epicor customer cloud adoption in India grew more than 150 percent year-over-year in 2022," said Vibhu Kapoor, Epicor Regional Vice President, Middle East, Africa & India. "The addition of our new India data centre – slated to be online mid-year – will help provide customers in the region greater performance and speed to run Epicor purpose-built solutions such as Epicor Kinetic for manufacturing, as well as improve security."

In addition to the new data centre, Epicor officially opened its new office in Bangalore, one of the company's largest globally. The new facility provides expanded resources for the company's product development and engineering teams in the region, helping Epicor deliver the deep industry knowledge and know-how customers require to digitally transform their business and drive growth.

About Epicor

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

SAGE AND BASEBALL HALL OF FAMER CAL RIPKEN JR. ANNOUNCE LAUNCH OF MLB ALL-STAR GAME SWEEPSTAKES

Sage will reward one winner with a VIP experience which includes a meet and greet with Ripken at the 2023 MLB® All-Star Game® presented by Mastercard

Sage, the leader in accounting, financial, HR, and payroll technology for small and mid-sized businesses is partnering with Baseball Hall of Famer Cal Ripken Jr to extend its Out of Office (#Sage000) campaign by launching the Sage MLB All-Star Game Sweepstakes, where one winner and three (3) guests will win an unforgettable VIP experience.

Continuing the celebration of Sage's first year as the Official Finance Software Partner of Major League Baseball, the Sage MLB All-Star Game Sweepstakes will reward one winner with a VIP experience at the 2023 MLB All-Star Game in Seattle.

The winner will receive:

- Four (4) tickets to the 2023 MLB All-Star Game on July 11, 2023 at T-Mobile Park
- A meet-and-greet with Hall of Famer Cal Ripken Jr. at the All-Star festivities
- Travel and lodging accommodations for the game
- Concession vouchers
- Sage-branded gear

"We are thrilled to see Sage's sponsorship of Major League Baseball continue to come to life for both Sage and baseball fans across North America," Aziz Benmalek, President of Sage North America, said. "By offering an experience like no other, this signature MLB event will create lasting memories for baseball fans and their families for many years to come."

Sage introduced the #Sage000 campaign in the lead up to up to MLB Opening Day presented by Chevrolet, by partnering with 19-time All-Star, two-time MVP, and Hall-of-Famer, Cal Ripken Jr. to surprise several Sage customer CFOs and their employees from across North America with a day off from work and a VIP Opening Day experience. Ripken holds the record for playing in an incredible 2,632 consecutive MLB games earning him the 'Iron Man' title, was known for being the consummate professional and team player. The spirit of the #Sage000 for Opening Day was to reward members of the Sage community who display those same qualities, and now, with the Sage MLB All-Star Game Sweepstakes, Sage is extending a similar opportunity to the broader MLB fan community.

"I'm excited to continue my partnership with Sage on another unique and really fun fan experience," Ripken said. "MLB All-Star Week has always been one of my favorite parts of the season. It's a terrific showcase for our sport and a memorable few days for the fans. Thanks to Sage, a lucky fan and their guests will have the chance to enjoy the Midsummer Classic in person. I have been fortunate to have played in 19 All-Star Games and have taken in many others as a fan. Working with Sage to provide this experience for a few fellow baseball fans is something I'm really looking forward to!"

To enter the Sage MLB All-Star Game Sweepstakes visit SageAllStar2023.

Sage is in the first year of a multi-year partnership with Major League Baseball, the company's first North American sports partnership. The pairing aims to enhance the in-game experience for fans by offering a suite of integrations with insights and analysis focused on pitching decisions and managerial insights. In addition, Sage will be the presenting sponsor of the new Pitcher Power Rankings and Leaderboards, which will live on MLB's digital platforms.

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.

IFS CONTINUES ON GROWTH PATH WITH ROBUST Q1 PERFORMANCE

- Sustained demand for cloud pushes Q1 cloud revenues up 55% YoY
- Strong market penetration drives ARR up 57% YoY and Software revenue up 44% YoY

IFS, the global cloud enterprise software company, announced its financial results for the quarter ending March 31st, 2023, with recurring revenues up a significant 48 percent year on year and cloud and software revenues up 55 percent and 44 percent respectively. The company cites strong penetration in all its markets and a solid performance across all solution segments.

The current economic dynamics are challenging CIOs to prioritize technology investments that help build agility and resilience in their business. Concurrently, they must balance the need to lower their TCO (Total Cost of Ownership) with the imperative of accelerating business value realization through increased productivity and efficiency. Globally, companies continue to pursue customer loyalty through differentiation and innovation to achieve competitive advantage.

These trends and challenges are reflected in the increased demand IFS is seeing for cloud technology across FSM, PSO, ERP and ESM from large asset-centric companies, both existing customers and new, including RES, Enercare, KAN, HEXPOL, Lujatalo Oy, MyDentist, and NCC. EAM remains a strong revenue driver for the company, which has just been recognized as being #1 in Global Market Share for EAM in 2022 for the second consecutive year based on Gartner research1.

As well as delivering a strong and consistent financial performance, IFS continues to be acknowledged for its software and services, which combined make it possible for customers to buy, consume and update their technology

in a way that creates the most value and makes them evergreen. As CEO Darren Roos enters his sixth year at the helm of the company, the product strategy is set to remain focused on its core industry-specific product offerings and delivering innovation and flexibility as companies build their composable enterprise.

IFS CEO Darren Roos commented: "I am very proud that we are taking our performance trend from 2022 into 2023. As well as the strength of our technology and the trust our customers place in us, our strong Q1 performance is underpinned by contribution from our FY22 acquisitions which are all performing to plan. Over the past 5 years we've worked hard to improve the agility, quality and resilience of our business model and these investments are paying off as we continue to create shareholder value despite the macroeconomic uncertainty."

IFS Chief Financial Officer, Matthias Heiden, commented: "Q1 saw raised levels of economic uncertainty driving businesses to rethink their technology vendor landscape and seek out those that are showing strong financial performance, innovative in their product offering and agile in their delivery. For IFS, Q1 shows positive and robust results, with our Cloud revenues up by 55% and our recurring revenue as a share of total revenue at 75%." Heiden continued: "These strong results highlight the relevance of IFS in its markets and that we are pursuing the right growth strategy – one which is all about focus."

Financial* and Operational Highlights for Q1 FY2023:

- Q1 FY2023 software revenue was EUR 186m, an increase of 44 percent versus Q1 2022
- Q1 FY2023 recurring revenue was EUR 176m, an increase of 48 percent versus Q1 2022
- Q1 FY2023 cloud revenue increased 55 percent versus Q1 2022
- Q1 FY2023 net revenue was EUR 236m, an increase of 38 percent versus Q1 2022

*Note: all figures based in Euros and reported in constant currency.

In line with WorkWave establishing itself as a standalone business at the end of Q2 2021, the performance reported above excludes WorkWave's contribution to the IFS Group.

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.

AVALARA AND EBAY PARTNER TO SOLVE CROSS-BORDER COMPLIANCE FOR GLOBAL SELLERS

Avalara, Inc., a leading provider of cloud-based tax compliance automation for businesses of all sizes, announced its cross-border compliance solutions support eBay International Shipping — a program that takes the complexity out of selling products on eBay and shipping them internationally. eBay International Shipping leverages Avalara software natively to determine Harmonized System (HS) commodity classification codes, identify item-level trade restrictions, and generate landed cost pricing for more than 200 million items hosted on eBay, and sold to more than 200 countries.

"eBay is passionate about giving people the resources they need to connect with the things they love — no matter what country or category," said **Adam Ireland, VP and GM, eBay US.** "With eBay International Shipping, we're making global connections even more accessible, affordable, and profitable, significantly increasing the volume of items available to shoppers in 200+ countries, and making it even easier for our sellers to tap a universe of new business opportunities."

Streamlining cross-border compliance for eBay merchants

Consumers often look online to shop for items at lower prices, for goods that are scarce at home, or for products from well-known brands abroad. According to Juniper Research, the value of cross-border ecommerce will exceed $2.1 trillion in 2023. To successfully sell products around the world, businesses must comply with customs duties and import taxes, which can be complex and expensive to navigate.

When it comes to landed cost pricing, tools must take into account HS codes, trade restrictions, and true shipment clearance costs to provide accurate calculations and reduce compliance risks and disruptions to customer experiences. Through eBay International Shipping, eBay has developed a solution to help its more than 5 million sellers make their products available to more than 70 million buyers worldwide.

Avalara's cross-border solutions make it easier to sell anywhere in the world by automating the process of identifying and mapping tariff codes to products, and by calculating customs duties and import taxes. Several Avalara cross-border solutions will be natively available in eBay, including Avalara Cross-Border Estimated, Avalara Managed Tariff Code Classification, and Avalara Trade Restrictions Management.

These solutions allow merchants to:

- ***Improve accuracy of duty and tax estimates.*** Avalara Cross-Border Estimated calculates costs by leveraging the company's industry-leading artificial intelligence engine and global compliance content database.
- ***Reduce customs delays and penalties.*** Avalara Managed Tariff Code Classification automates the process of assigning HS codes to products, providing advanced shipping information and more accurate customs duty calculations.
- ***Navigate trade restrictions and unlock new markets.*** Avalara Trade Restrictions Management maps products to applicable government restrictions to allow merchants to avoid trade complexities and streamline HS code classification, language translation, and calculation of duties and taxes.

"Ecommerce and cross-border consumer demand are booming as global marketplaces make it possible for businesses of all sizes to sell to customers anywhere in the world. Unfortunately, the complexity of cross-border compliance often stands in the way of that opportunity for sellers," said **Jayme Fishman, EVP and GM of Indirect Tax at Avalara.** "With Avalara's cross-border solutions embedded within eBay's International Shipping program, we're able to simplify cross-border compliance complexity and reduce potential customer experience disruptions by providing more transparent landed cost pricing for global buyers and helping ensure parcels meet local customs requirements."

Avalara's commitment to partner success

Avalara's latest partnership with eBay illustrates the company's ongoing commitment to ensuring the success of its partners by embedding its automated tax compliance solutions into partner-led offerings.

Last year, Avalara announced new tools and APIs to expand opportunities for partners to build compliance integrations and functions, as well as a partnership with Xero to automate sales tax compliance for small businesses. In 2021, Avalara announced Shopify would be using the company's cross-border solutions to power Shopify Markets, a solution that generates landed cost pricing to determine duty and import tax requirements for more than 180 countries.

About Avalara

Avalara helps businesses of all sizes get tax compliance right. In partnership with leading ERP, accounting, ecommerce, and other financial management system providers, Avalara delivers cloud-based compliance solutions for various transaction taxes, including sales and use, VAT, GST, excise, communications, lodging, and other indirect tax types. Headquartered in Seattle, Avalara has offices across the U.S. and around the world in Brazil, Europe, and India. More information at avalara.com.

ROOTSTOCK SOFTWARE ANNOUNCES ENTERPRISE INSIGHTS – BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE FOR MANUFACTURING

Spring '23 Release introduces Five New Analytics Modules, Enhanced Financial Management Capabilities and a Boosted Lightning Experience

Rootstock Software, a recognized leader in the Manufacturing Cloud ERP space, announced the launch of Enterprise Insights, the new analytics solution within its Spring '23 Release. This analytics solution is designed to provide manufacturers with a complete view of their business, so they can chart a course toward profitability, efficiency, and value throughout their operations. In addition to this new analytics product, Rootstock's Spring '23 Release also includes enhancements to its Financial Management module and a boosted Lightning experience.

"Today, manufacturers have data scattered across their enterprise in spreadsheets and silos," said Raj Badarinath, Chief Product & Marketing Officer at Rootstock Software. "Legacy analytics fail to unlock insights from a manufacturer's stockpile of information. To remedy this issue, Rootstock has launched Enterprise Insights, a powerful analytics solution purpose-built for manufacturing. Now, manufacturers can leverage highly interactive, dynamic dashboards to delve into their treasure trove of data and drive more informed business strategies."

Enterprise Insights is built on the Rootstock data foundation, which enables it to connect to products like Salesforce Commerce Cloud, Manufacturing Cloud, and Service Cloud. Enterprise Insights can then consolidate data from ERP, CRM, and other connected solutions. This analytics solution extracts and presents this data to provide a big-picture overview of a manufacturer's business—as well as the ability to look at data from various organizational perspectives and in relation to other metrics. Dashboards are easy to use and configure; customers simply drag, drop, and filter data, so their at-a-glance visualizations include the key performance indicators (KPIs) they value most.
Enterprise Insights consists of five modules enabling manufacturers to analyze key areas:

- ***Sales Analytics*** empowers manufacturers to identify trends and understand where sales teams should focus to improve revenue and results. Leaders can use metrics to set goals, improve processes, assess profitability by product or region, and drive decisions on where to invest future resources.
- ***Spend Analytics*** helps manufacturers track spending trends, improve supplier sourcing, and ultimately reduce costs in the procurement process. Since this module compiles data from across the Procure-to-Pay process, manufacturers gain visibility to streamline inefficiencies, improve contracting terms, and enhance supplier collaboration.
- ***Inventory Analytics*** provides insights to help manufacturers improve inventory performance. Due to ever-changing market conditions, they need to be able to quickly adjust to market fluctuations. This module gives them the power to track products through the supply chain journey—from the purchase of raw materials to final sales. Using this information, manufacturers can minimize the risk of stockouts, backorders, excess inventory, and shrinkage, as well as reduce average costs per unit. Such improvements can lead to higher customer satisfaction and improved profitability.
- ***Manufacturing Analytics*** provides insights to help manufacturers optimize their shop floor performance. They can view dashboards on production, scrap rates, lead times, and other metrics to help them drive toward continuous improvement.
- ***Financial Analytics*** provides manufacturers with increased visibility into their assets, liabilities, income and expenses. These insights help leaders monitor revenue and costs and make more informed business decisions.

"This is a comprehensive set of operational and financial analytics for manufacturing," said Badarinath. "With these capabilities, manufacturers can leverage Enterprise Insights to set a strategic course to what's next, while remaining responsive to factors that are in constant flux."

The Spring '23 Release also includes enhancements to Rootstock Financials. These enhancements are designed to help CFOs who are experiencing significant, often competing pressures to drive revenue, reduce costs, and adhere to budgets—all while meeting unprecedented demands for transparency and decision support.

In the Financial module, manufacturers will have the flexibility to enable various payment options to help drive revenue. For example, they can facilitate credit card payments, support transactions from external sources and user-developed webpages and enable out-of-the-box payment types, such as subscriptions and leases. In addition, customers can use Rootstock Financials to set and track a corporate budget against actual spending.

Rootstock is also dedicated to providing a user-friendly, intuitive interface. Toward this end, the company has made significant investments in its Rootstock Lightning Toolkit, which gives customers greater usability and flexibility in tailoring user experiences.

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.

UNIT4 ANNOUNCES GENERAL AVAILABILITY OF APP STUDIO, A LOW-CODE PLATFORM TO DEVELOP BUSINESS APPS AND AUTOMATE PROCESSES

Unit4, a leader in enterprise cloud applications for people-centric organizations, announced the General Availability of App Studio, a new feature within the Unit4 Extension Kit that will help customers to streamline both their development and automation efforts.

Leveraging the Unit4 People Platform, App Studio supports new ways of customizing Unit4 ERPx, enabling customers to build new business apps that increase productivity. It also supports task automation, and customers will be able to design, develop and deploy their custom solutions in a low-code environment.

Unit4's Extension Kit has already helped over 200 customers to automate essential business tasks and create data integration flows that extend the capabilities of their Unit4 applications. Last year, Unit4 introduced Industry Mesh which utilizes the Extension Kit's platform to develop more than 100 industry-specific data flows, and which seamlessly connects ERPx with the most widely used business applications.

With App Studio, ERPx customers will be able to:

- Easily extend Unit4 ERP implementations for an organization's unique needs
- Build custom apps that run across all devices
- Automate data validation and business processes
- Avoid coding - configuration is made easy through a drag-and-drop and low-code interface
- React to business process changes quickly, giving a competitive advantage
- Address localization needs
- Create new processes and capabilities and enable innovation.

Partners using the Extension Kit will also now be able to use App Studio to develop apps to meet localization and customization needs. Partner developed apps will be available in the recently launched Unit4 Marketplace.

"We are very excited to be launching App Studio, a new feature that extends the value our customers can extract from ERPx." ***Claus Jepsen, Chief Technology Officer, Unit4***

Dan Andre Nylaender, Head of Development at Unit4 partner, Tellit Solutions AS, said "App Studio is a great addition to the Extension Kit and makes it easy to develop fit-for-purpose screens in Unit4 ERPx. Tellit Solutions has a long history of developing vertical specific solutions, especially for the construction industry, and App Studio can support us on delivering our development strategy."

"App Studio is an eagerly awaited feature for us," said Mark Taimre, Business Optimization Manager, Acor Group Services, a Unit4 customer. "It allows us to customize and modernize the User Experience and adapt Unit4 ERPx to the individual needs of our business. Combined with Unit4's powerful API capabilities, App Studio will enable us to make Unit4 a platform for our people.

Claus Jepsen, Chief Technology Officer, Unit4, said "We are very excited to be launching App Studio, a new feature that extends the value our customers can extract from ERPx. It is well-suited for businesses that need to quickly create custom applications that can scale as their needs change. By reducing the need for extensive coding, the platform can help businesses save time and money while empowering them to quickly build the applications they need to succeed."

Unit4 App Studio will be available to new and existing ERPx customers from April 13th.

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

ORACLE NETSUITE

STEEDA AUTOSPORTS SUPERCHARGES ITS BUSINESS WITH NETSUITE

Customer Story by **David Rodman,**
SVP of Global Customer Success, Oracle NetSuite

Founded by Dario Orlando in 1988, Steeda is on the leading edge of the automotive aftermarket and helps Ford enthusiasts maximize enjoyment from their vehicles. The first Steeda Mustang was produced that year and went on to win various races nationwide.

But the story didn't start there. Dario's grandfather worked at Ford shortly after its creation and his father went from broom-sweep to the design team at Ford, influencing the creation of the Thunderbird in 1954, the original Mustang in 1964, and the GT40 that beat Ferrari at LeMans in 1967. In other words, Steeda has Ford in its DNA.

Today, Steeda is still family owned and is the biggest manufacturer of Ford performance parts, operating both wholesale and direct to consumer businesses. It operates a 100,000-square-foot manufacturing and distribution center and has a growing ecommerce arm that performed 25,000 ecommerce transactions in 2021 alone.

Outperforming its Legacy Systems

When the pandemic hit in 2020, demand for performance parts increased as homebound enthusiasts tinkered with their vehicles. As Steeda expanded its operations to meeting growing demand, it faced challenges because it could not provide customers with real-time inventory availability on its website. In addition, running sales promotions required the team to go through SKUs manually, which significantly slowed down operations and sales.

"The spike in demand for our direct-to-consumer business made it clear that it was time to act," said Chris Cervenka, director of marketing, Steeda Autosports. "It was difficult to grow our operation with an inefficient inventory management system and on-premises business system."

Moving to a High-Octane System for a High-Octane Business

To support its growth, Steeda needed to replace its existing on-premises systems and after careful evaluation, it selected Oracle NetSuite.

With NetSuite, Steeda has a real-time, consolidated view across financials, inventory, order management, point-of-sale, and ecommerce processes. In addition, NetSuite saves the Steeda team days' worth of time each year by automating manual reporting processes and enabling them to automatically create monthly reports for management. The team uses the time savings to work on new product lines for the Steeda portfolio and improve the ecommerce experience.

"Choosing NetSuite was a no-brainer," said Cervenka. "We are saving an exponential amount of time with NetSuite. It is helping us track performance and gain a clear view of our business."

Hitting the Accelerator Towards the Next Opportunity

The demand for Steeda continues to outpace the competition. In the future, Steeda plans to take advantage of NetSuite to improve its website, which represents 90 percent of revenue. With NetSuite, the Steeda team will be able to improve site speed and search engine optimization, fine-tune live inventory feeds, and automate ecommerce orders to improve efficiency. Steeda is also looking forward to the release of the next Mustang body style, which represents an opportunity to be first to market—yet again—this time with a highly efficient cloud ERP system for rocket fuel.

"It's going to be a huge opportunity for us to do what we did with previous Mustangs – but do it bigger and better with NetSuite," Cervenka said.

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.

IFS

CANADIAN HOME SERVICES GIANT CHOOSES IFS TO OPTIMIZE CUSTOMER SERVICE AND DRIVE GROWTH

IFS solution will enable Enercare to optimize scheduling for field technicians

IFS, the global cloud enterprise software company, announced that Canada-based home and commercial services and energy solutions company, Enercare, has selected IFS Cloud for Service Management, together with the IFS Planning and Scheduling Optimization (PSO) software, to streamline service operations and field productivity.

Opting for IFS Cloud and PSO will enable Enercare to achieve a combination of single platform functionality and field service capabilities to meet all of its use case requirements 'out of the box.' It will also allow the company to use the AI-driven predictive analytics embedded in the software to optimize field service resource scheduling and maximize business efficiencies.

Enercare wanted a new solution to replace its existing software, which was nearing end of life. Thanks to the IFS implementation, project managers and senior field service supervisors at Enercare will have access to dashboards and reports, enhancing their visibility over operations and enabling them to make informed decisions in real-time. In parallel, field technicians will benefit from access to a new mobile app to empower them to receive schedule changes quickly and rapidly report back on the status of jobs.

The implementation will be handled by IFS partner and systems integrator, Gogh Solutions, with the first phase supporting scheduling and dispatch processes for Enercare's field technicians.

David Cefai, CIO, Enercare, said: "In engaging with IFS, we were looking for a long-term solution that would enable us to give our customers the best possible customer service. We wanted a modern, 'cloud first' solution that could provide us with all that capability from the word go. IFS Cloud was the ideal choice. The service and support we have received from IFS has been excellent too. We have been impressed with the technical capability of the IFS team, their ability to align with our transformation roadmap and the onsite demos and workshops they have delivered."

Marne Martin, Chief Strategy Officer and President, IFS, said: "We are delighted that Enercare has chosen IFS to help streamline their service operations and support their continued growth. IFS Cloud and PSO provides Enercare with the capacity to differentiate their product offerings not just on the basis of service but through efficiency, driving customer experience and growing their business over time."

About Enercare, Inc.

Enercare Inc. ("Enercare") is headquartered in Markham, Ontario, Canada and is a portfolio company of Brookfield Infrastructure Fund (BIF) III which is managed by Brookfield Asset Management along with direct institutional partners. Enercare is one of Canada's largest home and commercial services and energy solutions companies with approximately 1,700 employees under its Enercare, Service Experts Canada and HydroSolution brands. Enercare is a leading provider of water heaters, water treatment, furnaces, air conditioners, water treatment systems, standby generators, electrical vehicle chargers and other heating, ventilation and air conditioning products, as well as protection plans, plumbing and electrical services, energy audits and other related services. For more information on Enercare, visit www.enercare.ca.

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.

EPICOR

ENJET AERO

Standardized Cloud Operations Deliver Agility, Efficiency and Scalability for Aerospace Manufacturer to Soar

The Challenge

Deloitte's 2022 Aerospace and Defense Industry Outlook predicts that the vertical will focus on innovation to improve efficiencies and reduce costs while taking advantage of growth opportunities. One company already accelerating on that runway is Enjet Aero, a precision machined and fabricated component manufacturer for commercial and military aircraft engine OEMs.. The company has 650 employees and runs eight manufacturing locations plus headquarters and engineering support sites.

To be successful within their industry, Enjet Aero needs to manage a complex supply chain and inventory consisting of tens of thousands of parts and materials, and in an efficient manner, coordinate its manufacturing processes, many of which are multi-step and involve shipping products in various stage of development from one plant to another. Further compounding Enjet Aero's complexity is the fact that they have completed eight acquisitions over the last six years and each of the companies they acquired utilized different software solutions to run their operations.

With a high-octane acquisition growth strategy, managing disparate systems can quickly become a massive and complicated job. Nicholas Mueller, director of ERP systems at Enjet Aero explained, "At first, our approach was to let each company run its own system. However, by our third acquisition we realized we needed a deliberate go-forward

plan. We were running Epicor Kinetic deployed on premise, and at the Epicor Insights conference I learned more about Epicor Kinetic in the cloud multisite capabilities and the Epicor Kinetic roadmap. That was enough to give us the confidence to standardize on cloud across sites."
"The move to the cloud has been a game-changer for us. Within two days, I can have a have a new company set up and give it immediate access to everything Enjet. We can share data freely and get it up and running as a supplier to our other sites, which has alleviated supply chain issues, In addition, all sites are automatically updated to the latest version at the same time."

Enhanced Operations and Insights

The decision to regulate and standardize systems paid off in more than expected ways. With a single integrated platform, Enjet Aero has effective information and resource sharing as well as consistent methods for scheduling, planning, purchasing and cross-site selling. Mueller disclosed, "We try to run as vanilla as possible, without a lot of customization. Getting everyone to use the same language and deploy consistent processes smooths communication, enabling us to identify potential issues, better understand KPIs across the business, and improve output to our customers."

As an example, one site might handle a project to supply another site. Instead of waiting for an email update on progress, the receiving site can simply log in and check the status—a boost to operational efficiency.

Another crucial benefit is access to, control of, and confidence in business data. "If we were looking at an increase in WIP or where inventory was not turning over, we all knew that it was an entity that was not yet on Epicor because divisions with it have the insights to enhance operations," Mueller acknowledged. For a non-Epicor entity to achieve a pan-business view, data would be pulled from different systems, dumped into a spreadsheet, and there would be an attempt to aggregate it. Mueller admitted, "It was the proverbial apples and oranges. It simply could not be done in a scalable and time efficient way. Information is value, but it has a finite self-life. Once a certain amount of time passes the opportunity to realize the value of the information goes away. Now, with Epicor, we input information and it cascades through our sites and through our process, without loss of data and occurs in real time allowing us to react quickly to market changes and better serve our customers."

Enjet Aero also tracks the exact same metrics across all locations, whether it's a high volume/low mix site or low volume/high mix, and BAQs (business activity queries) can instantaneously provide data for any and every site. Mueller shared, "Instead of spending time building the data, Epicor Kinetic enables us to invest our time analyzing it. The data enables us to build a plan to have the right parts on the shelf when a customer calls."

In addition, with Epicor Kinetic Financial Management, all accounting-related tasks are centralized, enabling sites to keep their focus on getting parts built for customers, not distracted with back-office functions.

Employees value Epicor Kinetic too. Mueller said, "There is often initial resistance because users of legacy software are both experts and proud of their systems. However, once they see Epicor in action, the fact that everything is right there—MRP, scheduling, financials—they love it!"

Cloud Accelerates Growth

More recently, significant industry disruptions—including the COVID-19 pandemic—slowed Enjet Aero's business. Instead of waiting for winds to shift, the company's leadership leveraged the quieter window to invest in becoming more agile. Mueller imparted, "Moving Epicor Kinetic to the cloud was very strategic to our business, both because of our acquisition strategy and also because we run a very lean IT team." He added, "We are not in the business of managing servers and storage. With everything in the cloud, we work in the system, not on managing it. We also value the security and disaster recovery aspects of cloud storage versus on premises servers."

"Our leadership is continuously looking at how we can improve. Standardizing on Epicor, centralizing processes, and moving to the cloud have made us more agile, proactive and reliable."

Epicor Kinetic in the cloud accelerated Enjet Aero's acquisition strategy. The company has made three acquisitions since the pandemic. "The move to the cloud has been a game-changer for us. Within two days, I can have a have a new company set up and give it immediate access to everything Enjet. We can share data freely and get it up and running as a supplier to our other sites, which has alleviated supply chain issues, In addition, all sites are automatically updated to the latest version at the same time," Mueller elaborated. In the latest acquisition, he and his team brought the new company fully live in 90 days from the date the acquisition closed.

Committed to Non-Stop Improvement

The next part of the business to reap the benefits of process enhancement is content management. Mueller said, "We deployed Enterprise Content Management (ECM), but got sidetracked by an acquisition. It's a major focus for us now. We want to adopt the workflows to streamline approval processes and ensure compliance with government mandates such as CMMC (Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification) and ITAR (International Traffic in Arms Regulations). Beyond that there are tremendous efficiency gains by linking documents to the ERP for one click retrieval such as suppliers NDA's, customer PO's, shipping documents, and others. It displaces a lot of filing cabinets and network storage."

Investing to maintain an unwavering focus on core business optimization and consistent customer satisfaction has enabled Enjet Aero to continue to expand. Mueller noted, "Our leadership is continuously looking at how we can improve. Standardizing on Epicor, centralizing processes, and moving to the cloud have made us more agile, proactive and reliable."

About Epicor

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

CLARINS UK SETS FOUNDATION FOR GROWTH WITH INFOR

Premium skincare brand selects Infor WMS to optimise visibility, traceability and productivity at new distribution centre

Infor®, the industry cloud company, today announced that premium skincare brand Clarins UK has deployed Infor WMS warehouse management system. Supporting a new distribution centre, the cloud solution, powered by AWS (Amazon Web Services), will facilitate a standardised, best-in-class digital backbone for the beauty leader. While delivering increased visibility, improved traceability and inventory accuracy, Infor WMS also will enhance order management and dynamic picking, for optimum productivity.

With a remit to establish a scalable infrastructure for the future, and improve both traceability and accuracy of customer orders, Clarins needed to move away from its previous legacy warehouse management system. Infor's multi-tenant cloud-based WMS was selected with support from Supply Chain Consulting Group. The decision was based on the solution's best-in-class capabilities, and prebuilt processes to enable a fast deployment, as well as scale for the future.

"With the launch of our new distribution centre, we took the opportunity to review our processes and implement a cloud-based, standardised system with best-in-class processes," comments Alison Surridge, business transformation director at Clarins (UK) Ltd. "The project came in ahead of the deadline and under budget, which was crucial as we had a short window to establish everything in order to hit the ground running. We now have a world-class distribution centre, underpinned by the very best digital platform from which to optimise performance and customer service, as well as the flexibility for further expansion.

"Now we have increased visibility of ASNs and shipment order status, and enhanced order management through waves, plus we have significantly improved the traceability and accuracy of our inventory through Infor WMS. The fact that the system is so easy to use means operative onboarding time has reduced, and a more streamlined warehousing operation inevitably means that we can deliver better service to our customers."

"Clarins' new distribution centre represents a perfect example of a major brand embracing the potential of digital to drive greater scale, performance and agility. Our 'engage' workshop drove home confidence that Infor was the right project partner to deliver this transformative technology in the new distribution centre," comments Mike Weeks, solution specialist for distribution industries at Infor. "Automation and integration are key to optimising performance in a modern warehouse, and through instilling the right processes, supported by world-class software capabilities, Clarins is in the best position to build on the success of its brand and adapt its operations as market dynamics evolve in the coming years."

About Clarins

Clarins is a French family-owned company recognised throughout the world for its award-winning skin care formulations, (No 1 premium skin care in Europe – source NPD trends) make-up and spa treatments. Pioneers of plant science, all of its ingredients are carefully sourced with the utmost care for the environment as well as their effectiveness. Unrivalled French laboratory expertise fused with state-of-the-art technology ensures the ingredients are delivered in an optimal formula to achieve maximum results. Driven by an approach that prioritises continuous innovation with a deep commitment to responsible beauty, the brand's success is also underpinned by the close relationship and dialogue it cultivates with its customers. Clarins continues to create many revolutionary industry firsts – problem-solving formulations that deliver impressive results for customers at every stage of their lives. Clarins has made bold innovation its signature with pioneering formulas that are constantly being reinvented, and best-sellers that stand the test of time. Visit www.clarins.co.uk/

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.

FINK'S JEWELERS ENGAGES NETSUITE TO OUTSHINE THE MARKET

Customer Story by **David Rodman,**
SVP of Global Customer Success, Oracle NetSuite

It all began on the streets of Roanoke, Virginia.

Founded in 1930, Fink's Jewelers has always put a premium on building strong customer relationships and delivering great products. To survive the Great Depression, Nathan Fink, a starving pharmacist, pushed a cart around downtown Roanoke selling jewelry on credit. As the popularity for his products increased, Fink opened his first store.

Today, the business is owned and operated by the third and fourth generation of the founding family and serves the Southeastern US with quality pieces ranging from engagement and wedding rings to watches and bracelets. It operates 10 stores across three states and has growing ecommerce and private-label businesses.

Having a Great ERP Should Not Be a Luxury

In the last year, Fink's has experienced exceptional growth and achieved up to 70 percent more revenue in 2022 than it had in the previous two years. The performance of its business fueled high inventory turnover, but its existing system, which is based on manual processes, was creating inefficiencies. To support its growth and its expanding product portfolio, Fink's needed to make a change.

"We needed a powerful inventory management system with the ability to log new items with minimal administrative burden," said Todd Stafford, Vice President of Information Systems, Fink's Jewelers. "Essentially, our legacy IT had lost its luster. We needed our system to match the quality and the style of our business."

Choosing a Time Saving System for a Timeless Business

Fink's evaluated Microsoft Dynamics and Oracle NetSuite, and quickly discovered that Microsoft Dynamics would not readily support specific processes, such as creating and printing the tiny price tags common among jewelers. After a careful evaluation, Fink's replaced its existing systems with NetSuite.

With NetSuite, Fink's has one source of the truth for its business and can maximize the value of its data by integrating its financials, inventory and order management, point-of-sale, and ecommerce processes on a single system. In addition, Fink's is now able to automate inventory management, reducing the time spent logging new product lines from several days to a few hours, and is able to connect stores with its ecommerce platform to improve the experience it provides to its customers and ultimately increase sales.

"NetSuite has the cloud figured out," said Stafford. "It is helping us get the answers we need to unlock growth."

Having a Bright Future Together

The demand for Fink's is stronger than ever. In the future, Fink's plans to take advantage of NetSuite's CRM capabilities to use sales data to forge stronger customer relationships and boost sales. Fink's is also looking to generate new insights from its data to expand to new regions, broaden its portfolio, and continue to better unify its ecommerce and physical locations.

"We are always considering ways that we can evolve," said Stafford. "No matter where or how our business grows, NetSuite will serve as the foundation for those plans."

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.

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.

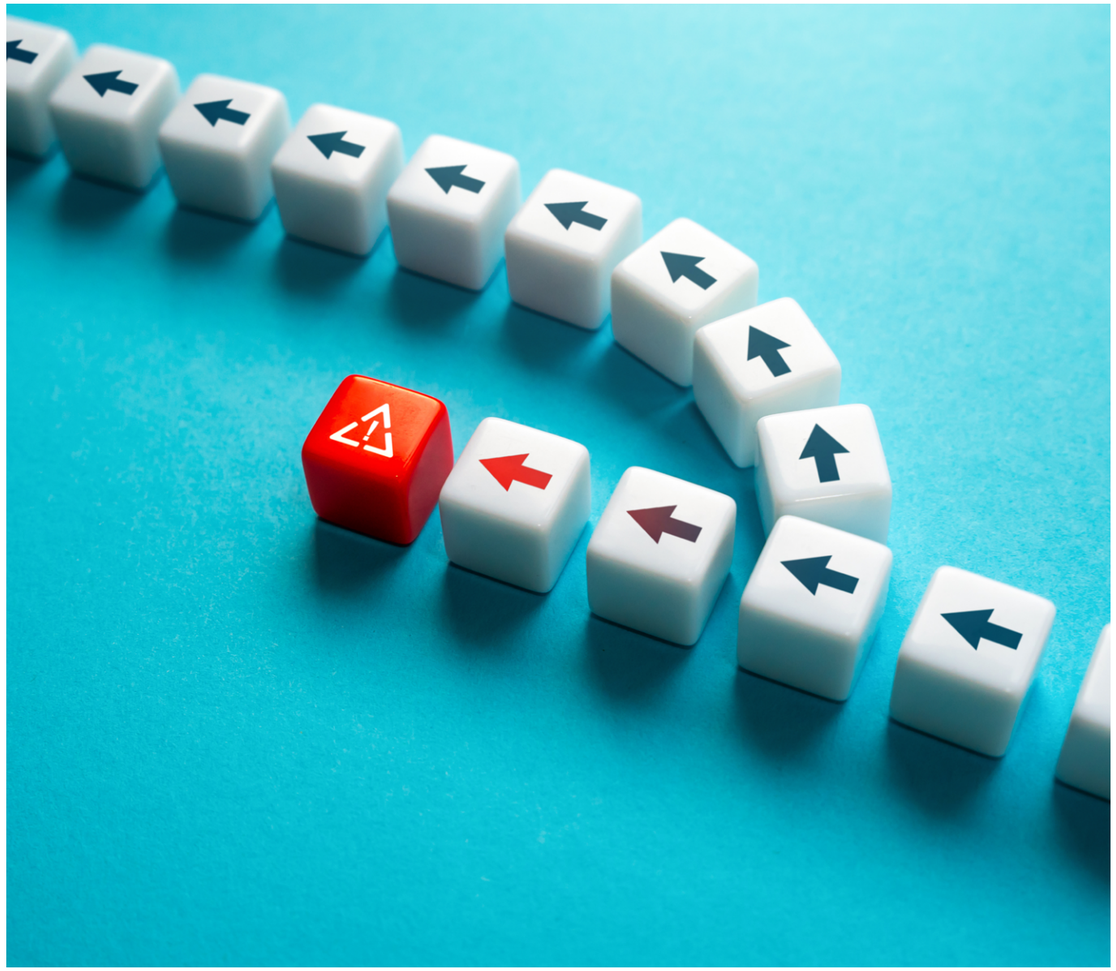
"The flexibility that convinced us in the decision-making process has been confirmed again and again over the past 20 years." ***Thomas Rose, Managing Director of Anton Debatin GmbH***

Fit & 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.



EPICOR

GUILLEVIN INTERNATIONAL

Integrated ERP/EDI/ECM Solution Creates Foundation for Digital Transformation That Powers Huge Growth

Eliminating Obstacles

At 117 years old, but still rapidly growing, Guillevin International recognized it was at a point where existing systems were hindering the company's progress. Management decided to launch a digital transformation initiative and brought in Laurent Renaud, Vice President, Information Technology, at Guillevin to lead the charge. He shared, "Management recognized that we needed to invest in building a robust technology foundation to support growth and create value for the business."

Guillevin is one of Canada's largest distributors of electrical material, safety products and equipment, industrial supplies, and in addition, operates more than 125 locations across the country. With a focus on the end-user experience, Laurent selected Epicor Prophet 21. He revealed, "Compared to a more generic solution, which required substantial modifications to make it fit our business, Epicor Prophet 21 is an out-of-the-box, built-for-distribution answer. We felt that Epicor had a much better understanding of our business and our needs."

"Compared to a more generic solution, which required substantial modifications to make it fit our business, Epicor Prophet 21 is an out-of-the-box, built-for-distribution answer. We felt that Epicor had a much better understanding of our business and our needs."

Integration Amplifies Efficiencies

That decision made the Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) choice clearer as Laurent was not interested in building the needed expertise internally. The fact that Epicor helped to offer an EDI module integrated with ERP felt like a natural fit. "With Epicor, you get one partner who understands both. When you talk to the EDI team, they know Epicor Prophet 21. That cross-over knowledge made the integration easier and was a key determining factor," he remarked.

Early in the project, EDI was flagged as a potential risk. With the number of partners and transactions at stake, that was unacceptable, so Laurent requested to fast-track the EDI implementation. "Epicor assured us they could meet our timeline and eliminate that risk," Laurent explained. "In fact, Epicor delivered the EDI integration six to eight weeks early!"

Today Epicor EDI is used primarily for invoices from key vendors. The next step is to move all vendors to Epicor EDI, and, in conjunction with Epicor Enterprise Content Management (ECM), helped to enable Guillevin to fully automate the payables process. "Because the EDI integration went so smoothly and efficiently, we are not worried about migrating our vendors, which is a relief for such a big project."

Liberating Resources for Growth

Epicor EDI and Epicor ECM integrated with Epicor Prophet 21 is the cornerstone of Guillevin's digital transformation: "We will be moving from a decentralized and manual workflow to a centralized, automated one," Laurent clarified. Instead of each location managing invoices, the corporate office will be able to consolidate the process. And Epicor has already helped to provide rich capabilities in terms of visibility and access to the right information. "We were coming from a system that didn't have a lot of checks and balances, so it was easy to bypass information. But trying to manage a system with incomplete information comes back to bite you," Laurent acknowledged.

"We can open new sites and acquire new businesses, without having to add new hires to handle a massive load of invoices. Epicor has given us the ability to grow at the operations level without having to generate additional costs in the back office."

The integrated Epicor solution helped to enable Guillevin to automate the entire sales workflow and make all data accessible to both end-users and management. "Furthermore, the centralization of EDI combined with ECM and ERP will deliver a huge improvement and cost savings in terms of being able to redeploy resources," Laurent projected.

He continued, "We can open new sites and acquire new businesses without having to add new hires to handle a massive load of invoices. Epicor has given us the ability to grow at the operations level without having to generate additional costs in the back office."

This is critical because Guillevin was experiencing rapid growth, much of it through acquisitions.

Proven, Painless On-Boarding

That rapid pace of growth demands systems that can accommodate expansion seamlessly. Guillevin's experience with Epicor had given the company confidence in doing so efficiently, even with unique requirements. As an example, for the ERP rollout Laurent had requested a phased implementation approach, which required Guillevin to run both the legacy EDI and the Epicor EDI concurrently for several months. Laurent observed, "The Epicor team did a great job in building a fairly complex, totally customized dispatch table to feed data to both. That was a key element to enabling us a progressive and successful rollout."

Laurent elaborated, "Migrating to Epicor was a good project—it delivered on time, and we didn't have to massively rescope anything to do so. That means we can show risk-averse business leaders a track record of smooth implementations."

Promises, Delivered

A seasoned IT executive, Laurent has heard vendors who claim they can do everything and horror stories of vendors who over promise and under deliver.

Laurent stated, "It's refreshing to have a partner who delivered on its promises. And even if we aren't yet using all the advanced functionalities, we know now that whatever we want to do going forward, Epicor will support it."

With integrated Epicor Prophet 21, Epicor EDI and Epicor ECM, Guillevin now has the technological foundation to build a modern business and to support a rapid expansion rate. He added, "Before Epicor our answer was too often 'No, our systems can't do it.' Now, our answer is, 'Yes, we can.' It's a major shift."

In addition to on-boarding new acquisitions, Laurent's next big initiative is deploying Epicor Warehouse Management. He predicted, "If we project out a year and a half, once everything is fully on-board and integrated, the efficiency gains we make will be huge." That is an important milestone to look forward to.

About Epicor

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

STREAMLINING OPERATIONS WITH ODOO: THE OTHER FACE KSA'S SUCCESS STORY

The Other Face KSA is a startup company based in Saudi Arabia, opening a pop-up store in mid-February. This concept store is their first venture, and will have a new brand called The Other Face KSA. The company operates from one branch and has a warehouse to manage their inventory. The company has a small team of 5-10 employees and is not using any systems to manage their operations.

The company has decided to implement an ERP system to streamline their business processes and improve efficiency. They are looking for a fully integrated ERP system to help them manage their business flows efficiently. An ERP system will enable them to automate and integrate various business processes such as inventory management, sales and purchase management, accounting, and more.

Odoo is the perfect solution for The Other Face KSA, providing a fully integrated ERP system that has met all their business needs. With Odoo, they managed their inventory, sales, and purchase orders, track their financials, and automate many other business processes. Odoo has been easy to use and helped the company streamline their operations, save time, and improve their overall business performance.

Point of Sale

The Point of Sale (POS) application is essential for any retail business, and The Other Face KSA is no exception. With Odoo's POS, the user set the opening cash for the given session, and walk-in customers can start choosing the products they would like to purchase. The user can scan the barcode on the product or search for the product through the categories/search bar and adjust the quantity accordingly. Once the order is punched in, the payment has been made either by cash or card. The Other Face KSA benefited from Odoo's gift card and loyalty points features. If a customer has a gift card, they can redeem it, pay through their eWallet, and even get a specific reward based on their loyalty points. This will encourage customers to return to the store and make more purchases.

In some cases, customers may need to return products. Odoo made this process easy by allowing the user to access the paid orders and refund the customer without any hassle. A report is generated to track the orders and payments made at the end of the day. This report will help The Other Face KSA keep track of their daily sales and profits.

The Other Face KSA's invoicing process involves generating customer invoices and sending receipts via email or WhatsApp. By implementing Odoo's invoicing module, the company can benefit from a more streamlined and digitized invoicing process. Odoo's invoicing app provides general features that make it easier to use, such as generating invoices, sending receipts, and tracking payments, all in one place. This saves time and effort for both the company and their customers. Odoo's invoicing app provides users with detailed reports on sales, and payments, giving them a clear view of their financial position. Users can also track overdue invoices and send reminders to customers, helping to improve cash flow and reduce late payments. it integrates seamlessly with other Odoo applications, such as accounting, inventory, and CRM. This allows for a more streamlined and automated workflow, reducing the risk of errors and saving time for the user.

Accounting

Odoo's integrated business management software has helped The Other Face KSA manage their operations more efficiently and effectively. The accounting module of Odoo helped the company manage their financial transactions effectively. It allows the company to record incoming and outgoing payments, match them against invoices, and reconcile bank statements. The accounting module also supports multiple payment methods, making it easy for the company to handle different types of transactions.

In addition, Odoo's accounting module provided real-time financial reports that have helped the company get an overall understanding of their financial position. The module allows the company to set up budgets, monitor expenses, and compare actual performance against the budget. To manage their assets effectively, the other face used Odoo's accounting module, which includes features that helped manage assets, including depreciation and amortization.

Odoo supports different accounting methods, including Anglo-Saxon accounting, which is suitable for companies that manage inventory and want to track the cost of goods sold accurately. Odoo allowed the other face to assign the cost of goods sold to the inventory items when sold rather than when they are purchased.

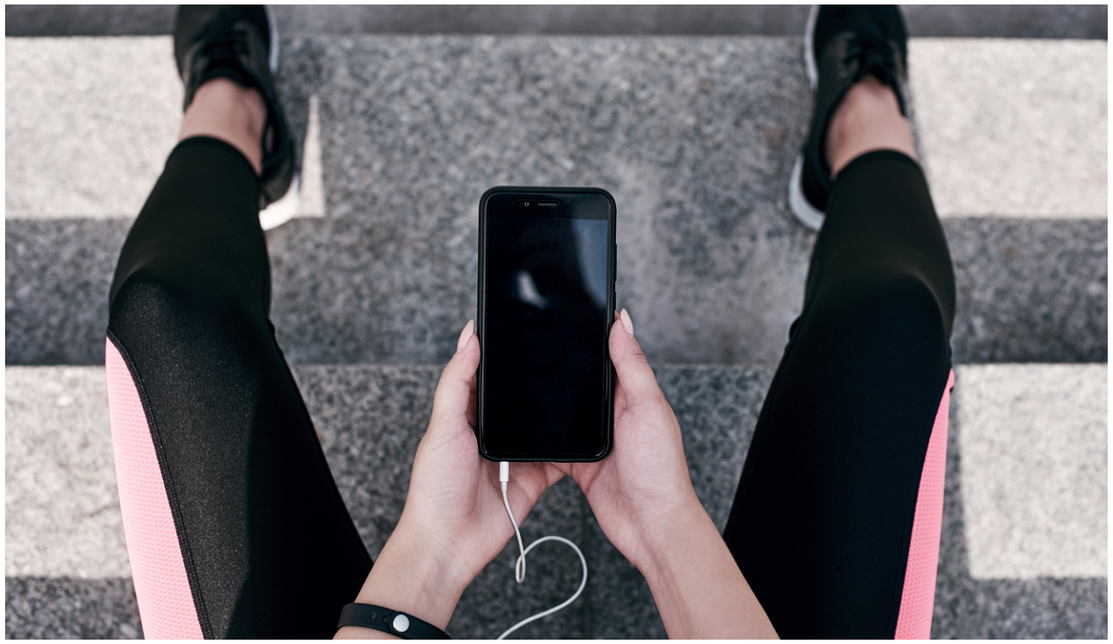
Finally, Odoo's inventory management module provides several methods for inventory valuation, including standard cost, average cost, and FIFO. The module allows the other face to set up the inventory valuation method on a per-product category basis, making it easy to manage different inventory items with different costing methods. By using Odoo's modules for accounting, assets, and inventory management, The Other Face KSA has managed their operations more efficiently and effectively, helping them to achieve their business objectives.

Conclusion

The Other Face KSA, a Saudi Arabia-based startup concept store, has opted to integrate Odoo's ERP system to streamline its business processes. The company has effectively managed its retail and outbound operations by utilizing Odoo's POS, invoicing, gift cards, loyalty points, and reporting modules. The implementation of Odoo allowed The Other Face KSA to offer its customers an exceptional shopping experience while maintaining an efficient and organized business.

| About Odoo

Odoo is a leading provider of all-in-one, open source business software for small and medium sized businesses worldwide. Founded in 2005, Odoo thrives in a unique and fully open ecosystem combining the resources of its community and partners to deliver a full range of easy-to-use, integrated and scalable business applications. Odoo has offices in the U.S., Belgium, Luxembourg, India, Hong Kong and Dubai. For more information, please visit: www.odoo.com.



ABAS

FASTER REALIZATION OF CUSTOMER REQUESTS WITH GROUNDBREAKING APPLICATIONS

MEIKO goes mobile: The plant engineering company based in Offenburg realizes customer requests more quickly with groundbreaking plug-ins and apps, and strengthens the feeling of togetherness with a uniform ERP system. The fast-growing company from the Baden region puts its money on an effective IT infrastructure to integrate sites around the world with the parent company.

It's a classic success story that began in 1927: A small 5-person workshop grew into a global industrial enterprise with more than 2,300 employees. From their headquarters in Offenburg, Germany, MEIKO rinsing and disinfection systems conquer the world market. MEIKO has become a world champion in cleaning, rinsing, and disinfection. MEIKO dishwashers are found in the kitchens of luxury liners, upscale hotels, major restaurants, and cafeterias. MEIKO cleaning and disinfection systems eliminate germs in hospitals, laboratories, and nursing wards. MEIKO counts on sustainability, resource conservation, and efficiency with its products.

In 2007 the ERP system at MEIKO reached its limits. The midsize enterprise from Baden-Württemberg, rapidly expanding abroad, decided to acquire new ERP software and to transform the IT infrastructure. Establishing high-performance, secure structures that will grow with the business was the goal, for example, so that new sites at home and abroad can be more easily integrated with the data center in Offenburg. The new IT structure and ERP software had to provide a secure platform for day-to-day operations on the one hand and, on the other hand, to actively support new trends such as mobility.

"Thorough preparation paid off. It truly was teamwork for us: A successful major project, with outstanding results."***Andreas Wetzel Head of Business Consulting, MEIKO Group Global***

Customization While Maintaining Release Compatibility, SME Orientation, and Partner Networks were Decisive Factors

In the search for a new ERP system with an intensive prequalification phase, the plant engineering firm held extensive workshops, each lasting more than a day, respectively for three chosen ERP providers. "It was a lot of effort, but we wanted to review the systems very carefully in order to find software that would be viable for the coming years," reports Walter Armbruster, CIO of the MEIKO Group Global. MEIKO chose abas ERP, counting on „the flexibility of abas regarding customization while maintaining release compatibility. That was a key reason for choosing this software. Our experiences with the previously used software in this regard were not the best," Walter Armbruster sums up. "The defined SME orientation was another important decision criterion. We also liked that abas has certified partners in 32 countries, who carry out localization and provide support for the software on site," recalls Andreas Wetzel, Head of Business Consulting, MEIKO Group Global.

Dr. Eng. Stefan Scheringer, CEO of the MEIKO Group Global, sums up the decision in favor of abas like this: "The overall picture was decisively in favor of abas ERP. Coordination of the entire sales process worked best with abas. We received answers to our questions in a timely manner, the in-house presentation impressed the entire selection team, and the involvement of international abas partners – starting in an early phase – signaled that abas has a worldwide partner network. Another key argument was the option of a high degree of customization while maintaining release compatibility, and the possibilities of a distinctive configuration technology."

From Offenburg to the World

MEIKO first installed abas ERP at its headquarters in Offenburg, then at all sites in Germany. It was implemented in a simplified version in Australia and China in parallel with headquarters. After the implementation across Germany, the introduction continued internationally with Austria, the Netherlands, Poland, and Turkey. Malaysia is currently on the agenda, and the USA is in the planning phase. Contemporary plug-ins, such as a mobile app for outside sales (called Mobile Sales at MEIKO), were added as well. This applies for the custom programmed MEIKO contingent planning and for production. Contingent planning supports precise production planning and predicts reliable delivery times. Which machine groups are fully utilized, and where are free capacities available?

The new software applications give MEIKO competitive advantages in offer preparation, project development, meeting delivery commitments, and the fast processing of service requests. Sales staff has access to a lot of ERP data (such as customer data, prices, offers, and so on) via the mobile app, starting with the initial customer consultation, which enables fast and competent customer consulting.

Speed and planning reliability are important for MEIKO. In order for company and operations management to respond quickly to developments in the company, MEIKO uses its own business intelligence tool. The abas data is periodically transferred to the data warehouse. Data that was previously collected only in large enterprises and processed by specialized analysts is now available to company management and the specialist departments at MEIKO in their day-to-day business. This either takes the form of predefined reports, which provide information on key indicators and important trends in the respective area, or intuitively configurable ad-hoc evaluations created directly by users without the IT department's help. Pivot tables or KPI queries can be created with just a few clicks.

What Goes Together, Grows Together

After the installation of abas ERP at headquarters in Offenburg, MEIKO began the abas rollout at the Rhein-Main dealership in 2011, which went live in April of 2012. This implementation was a pilot project. Basic work was done here for subsequent implementations. A uniform concept with an introductory guide, training documents, specifications for data transfer and the IT infrastructure, training plans, and much more was developed. This considerably sped up the subsequent rollout. The dealerships in northern Bavaria and Munich went live the same year, in December of 2012. Five more dealerships followed in 2013. Stuttgart and Mannheim in May, Hanover in November, and Leipzig and Berlin in December. "Thorough preparation paid off," Andreas Wetzel recalls.

Aside from introducing the abas ERP system, almost the entire IT infrastructure of the dealerships was converted to the new technology. Walter Armbruster, Head of IT, describes this as a "lock, stock, and barrel integration". This means that almost all dealership programs run in the MEIKO data center in Offenburg: The abas system, MS Office programs, the digital archiving system "Habel" where MEIKO stores documents, the digital service report (DSB), and the HR software "MIP" (employee information portal). Citrix is used for dealer access to the programs in the MEIKO data center. This means the programs in the MEIKO data center can be used from just about anywhere in the world. All you need is a PC and an Internet connection. This technology is not only used by the dealerships, but also by employees who travel for MEIKO around the globe. The MPLS network technology (Multi Protocol Label Switching) is used to connect the dealerships to the MEIKO data center in Offenburg. This is quasi MEIKO's own Internet, the "MEIKO Cloud", with permanent, guaranteed transmission bandwidth and ultimate reliability. Software maintenance has been greatly simplified as well: As a rule, software is only installed once in the data center and is immediately available to all connected sites.

Duplicate Work is History

"In parallel to implementing abas ERP, MEIKO extensively optimized its processes from quotation to ordering, order processing to after-sales service" – central structures were established and duplicate work was minimized. Newly created or edited master files for customers, prices, and products now only need to be recorded once and are available to all abas users throughout the group. "Field warehouses were considerably reduced and replaced by rapid access to the central warehouse in Offenburg. Service has access to this inventory from anywhere in real time, for example, to guarantee the just-in-time delivery of replacement parts for Customer Service. In addition to more efficient business processes, employees at the sites now have access to the same information as their colleagues in Offenburg," says Andreas Wetzel.

Stronger Feeling of Togetherness

An unexpected aspect during the introduction of the new IT structure and ERP system was the convergence of different cultural groups such as Australians, natives of Baden, Chinese, Swabians, Saxons, and people from Hamburg. "Not just the project meetings and installation work, but also the occasional small party made a major contribution to international understanding and the important feeling of togetherness. It was genuine MEIKO teamwork: Numerous successful ERP/IT conversions with no major problems. Every dealership was able to conduct its day-to-day business on the first day of going live. Then there was the integration of the first international sites.

"In summary, we can say that various teams from different specialist departments got closer to each other in the course of these tasks and challenges," says ***Andreas Wetzel.***

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.

E&A SCHEER SELECTS INFOR TO OPTIMIZE PROCESSES

Rum company implements Infor CloudSuite Food & Beverage to address F&B-specific ERP challenges

Infor®, the industry cloud company, announced the go-live of Infor CloudSuite Food & Beverage at E&A Scheer. The rum company uses the solution to optimize internal processes. The future-proof solution offers the Dutch rum company improvements for distribution and recipe management in combination with greater insight into the supply chain.

E&A Scheer is a family business that has existed for over 250 years. The company imports, blends and trades rum, Batavia arrack, and cachaça. E&A Scheer supplies custom-made rum blends, mainly to beverage companies in more than 50 countries worldwide. The more than 200 rums are purchased from at least 35 distilleries. E&A Scheer's 100 percent subsidiary, The Main Rum Company, also offers unique and matured rums in barrels.

E&A Scheer was looking for a partner with standardized cloud solutions for sector-specific challenges. After a thorough evaluation, Infor was selected because of its extensive food & beverage functionalities, such as planning & scheduling, recipe management and inventory management. In addition, the cloud expertise and team composition from Infor played an important role in the decision.

"We are extremely satisfied with the progress of the implementation project. Both the solution and the references led to a quick choice for Infor CloudSuite Food & Beverage," said Reinout de Rooij, group CFO at E&A Scheer. "Thanks to Infor CloudSuite Food & Beverage, we can look to the future with confidence, manage our supply chain well and continue to grow as an organization. We look forward to using this technology to lay a solid foundation for our next period of growth, especially at a time when the opportunity for flexible distribution is becoming increasingly urgent."

"Manufacturers need ERP systems that allow them to respond quickly to market changes," said Arne Gelderblom, Infor Food & Beverage account executive. "Infor CloudSuite Food & Beverage supports the increasing need for flexibility in a dynamic time for the beverage industry. We are delighted to help such a great family business to increase their success and growth."

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.

APTEAN NAMED A 'MAJOR PLAYER' IN IDC MARKETSCAPE REPORT FOR WORLDWIDE PROCESS MANUFACTURING EXECUTION SYSTEMS

Aptean, a global provider of mission-critical enterprise software solutions, announced that it has been named a Major Player in the IDC MarketScape: Worldwide Process Manufacturing Execution Systems 2023 Vendor Assessment. The IDC MarketScape evaluated Aptean Manufacturing Execution System (MES) and Overall Equipment Effectiveness (OEE) process manufacturing offerings. Aptean's MES and OEE offerings for process manufacturers are tailored to meet the needs of several subverticals, including food & beverage and chemicals.

Aptean was also named a Contender in the IDC MarketScape: Worldwide Discrete Manufacturing Execution Systems 2023 Vendor Assessment (doc # US49435422, April 2023). Aptean offers industry-specific MES and OEE solutions for discrete manufacturers designed to meet the needs of specific subverticals, including industrial machinery and equipment, metal fabrication, and fashion and apparel.

Process and discrete manufacturers rely on Aptean MES and OEE solutions to transform manufacturing data and process information into actionable business intelligence. Through the real-time visibility delivered by Aptean MES and OEE, manufacturers are able to drive continuous improvements on the shop floor, ultimately reducing costs and increasing productivity. Aptean MES and OEE solutions can be quickly and efficiently implemented with either on-premise or cloud deployment options. Intuitive software features enable strong user adoption, which helps to deliver a rapid ROI for Aptean customers.

"Aptean is pleased to be recognized by the IDC MarketScape as a Major Player in Process Manufacturing Execution Systems Vendor Assessment" said TVN Reddy, CEO at Aptean. "Our purpose-built MES and OEE solutions are designed to meet the unique needs of industry sub-segments and are supported by Aptean's team of experts, who deliver an exceptional level of service and commitment."

About IDC MarketScape

IDC MarketScape vendor assessment model is designed to provide an overview of the competitive fitness of ICT (information and communications technology) suppliers in a given market. The research methodology utilizes a rigorous scoring methodology based on both qualitative and quantitative criteria that results in a single graphical illustration of each vendor's position within a given market. IDC MarketScape provides a clear framework in which the product and service offerings, capabilities and strategies, and current and future market success factors of IT and telecommunications vendors can be meaningfully compared. The framework also provides technology buyers with a 360-degree assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of current and prospective vendors.

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.

HOW SNF OMAN SAVED TIME, MONEY AND RESOURCES WITH ODOO

SNF Oman is a leading chemicals company specializing in water chemistry. Their markets are driven by the increasing scarcity of natural resources such as water, oil, gas, and minerals, and most of their product applications either treat and recycle water, or minimize water consumption. As a global leader in manufacturing water-soluble polymers, SNF has developed a range of more than 1,000 products that help to preserve natural resources, encourage recycling, and improve industrial process efficiencies.

SNF polymers have several complementary functionalities including flocculation, coagulation, rheology modification, and friction reduction. However, the company's HR and project management operations were being done manually, using pen and paper and excel sheets. This led to issues with centralizing data, poor communication between staff, and a lack of control over employee actions. In order to address these challenges, SNF Oman looked to Odoo to digitize their HR and project management processes, including employee expenses, planning, time sheets, project and task management, and employee leaves. The company decided to start with Expenses, Time Off, Planning, Invoicing, Projects, Timesheet, Planning, and Studio, and plan to add Accounting, Inventory, and Sales later on.

Recourse Planning:

Before Odoo, SNF Oman's resource planning was done manually with pen and paper, as well as through Excel spreadsheets. This created inefficiencies in communication within the organization, confusion in managing projects and employees effectively, and inconsistencies and a lack of accountability in employee plans.

With Odoo's Planning module, the company was able to digitize their resource planning operations, centralize data, and improve communication between staff. They designated a planning manager who had exclusive access to input and modify information in the Planning module. Other users could only view the information. The Planning manager advised senior management when a specific employee's plan was ready, and the plan underwent one level of approval by senior management.

Odoo's Planning module allowed the company to have a clear, consolidated planning overview of site and office employees, as well as visitors, third-party contractors, and visitors from Headquarters. The module also included common situations that may arise, such as an employee going on a business trip abroad or undergoing training.

Project Management:

SNF Oman's project management was previously done manually and through Excel spreadsheets, which limited access to information and created potential security vulnerabilities. With Odoo's Project Management application, access to the project module was limited to senior management, who had the ability to view and edit the information contained within it. This helped to ensure that sensitive project data was kept secure and that only authorized personnel were able to make changes to the project information.

Project Timesheets:

SNF Oman's Project timesheets were a critical component of salary computation, but they were previously done manually outside of Odoo. This made the process time-consuming and prone to errors. In addition, there was no option to set a spending limit or identify and label overtime and discrepancies.

Odoo's Project Timesheets module allowed the company to link time-off and timesheets, automatically reflecting an employee's public holidays and leaves on their timesheet schedule. The module also created a two-level approval hierarchy for timesheets, allowing for more accurate data and a more streamlined approval process. Additionally, several filters were created to allow the finance team to utilize them directly to determine the total time of a certain activity.

Expenses App:

SNF Oman's previous legacy system was Excel, which was not suitable for managing complex business processes, including an ERP system that could be difficult for everyone to comprehend at the start. The company also faced problems with inefficient document management processes and difficulties in keeping track of expenses and deductions.

With Odoo's Expenses App, the company was able to activate several currencies through invoicing to get automatic currency conversion on expenses, create a new expense menu with multiple fields to define limits for specific expense types and then automatically approve and/or reject an expense, and limit the visibility of multiple standard and/or customized fields from a group of employees using studio. Additionally, a customized printed expense report was created, which included both approvals as a validation.

Time Off:

Before Odoo, SNF Oman relied on emails and manual calculations for time off requests. This method of tracking time off requests was time-consuming, prone to errors, and not very efficient. The company also faced difficulties in tracking time off days, which could lead to issues with employee compensation and dissatisfaction.

With Odoo's Time Off module, SNF Oman was able to set up the different leave types, configure Access Rights, and set the level of approval for leave requests. The module also allowed the company to keep track of the number of leaves consumed by each employee on a monthly and/or annual basis. This improved compliance with Oman labor law, eliminated the need for manual calculations and emails, and provided a reliable system for tracking time off days.

Conclusion:

SNF Oman faced numerous challenges in their HR and project management operations, which were being done manually using pen and paper or Excel. This led to difficulties in centralizing data, communicating between staff, and obtaining more control over employee actions. With Odoo's help, SNF Oman has been able to digitize its HR and project management processes, including Employees Expenses, Planning, Time Sheets, Projects, and Task Management. The company has started with Expenses, Time Off, Planning, Invoicing, Projects, Timesheet, Planning, and Studio, and will add Accounting, Inventory, and Sales later on.

Odoo has provided solutions for all the company's pain points, from inefficient email communication to lack of clear, consolidated planning overview, from manual calculation outside of Odoo to absence of foreign country rates, from inaccurate data to difficulties in budget management, and from time-consuming and prone to errors timesheet to tracking time off days.

With Odoo, SNF Oman can now manage their resources, plan their employees' schedules, approve employee plans, manage their various projects, approve and process expense requests, and keep track of employee leaves in a more centralized and efficient way. They have been able to improve their communication, obtain more control over employee actions, ensure accountability, and keep their sensitive business data and processes secure.

Odoo's customizable modules have enabled SNF Oman to tailor their HR and project management operations to their specific needs, which has saved them time, money, and resources. With Odoo's help, SNF Oman has been able to digitize their operations, which has helped them to become more efficient and effective in managing their business processes.

| About Odoo

Odoo is a leading provider of all-in-one, open source business software for small and medium sized businesses worldwide. Founded in 2005, Odoo thrives in a unique and fully open ecosystem combining the resources of its community and partners to deliver a full range of easy-to-use, integrated and scalable business applications. Odoo has offices in the U.S., Belgium, Luxembourg, India, Hong Kong and Dubai. For more information, please visit: www.odoo.com.

REMOTE FINANCE SUCCESS: FIND THE RIGHT SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES

Article by **David Appel,**
Head of the SaaS Vertical at Sage

Discover how to successfully manage your SaaS finance team in a remote work environment. Learn why QuickBooks may not be the best fit and how Sage Intacct offers a better solution.

If your SaaS company relies on a remote workforce, QuickBooks or similar options may give you more headaches than advantages in the long run. Finding the path to remote finance success can be a dubious venture–there's a lot to consider and more than a handful of potential pitfalls.

SaaS CFOs often realize it's in their firm's best interest to embrace a remote workforce. But even if you feel sure it's the right move, it still needs to be handled with care and nuance–particularly where the finance team was concerned. This article will show you how to manage the transition in a pain-free way.

How to align core finance process to remote work

Sticking to a few best practices is essential for finance leaders who are helping their teams transition to a remote workforce.

Automation is a necessity, not a luxury

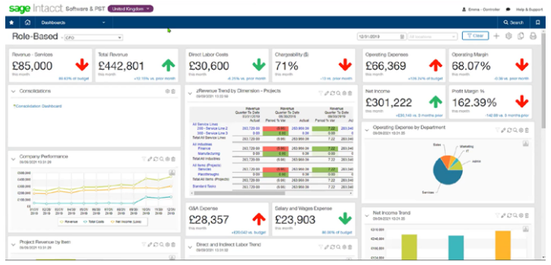
When SaaS companies go remote, automation often makes the difference between a smooth pivot and a nightmarishly complex experience. You need to eliminate obstacles to making an effective switch, not compile them with clunky manual finance processes.

Regulatory upkeep must be more dialed-in than ever

Whether you use QuickBooks remote access or something else, remote work requires companies to strictly observe all relevant regulations. This includes setting up potentially complicated approvals workflows that QuickBooks is not equipped to handle.

Currency and billing flexibility are essential

Companies that leverage a remote workforce often become more receptive to hiring overseas talent and expanding into international markets. This requires the ability to transact in local currencies.



Let's take a closer look at why QuickBooks remote access isn't ideal.

Why QuickBooks isn't ideal for your remote workforce

QuickBooks presents challenges for SaaS finance teams regardless of whether they're in the office or not. But QuickBooks remote access comes with at least 2 additional problems:

1. The QuickBooks Remote Access tool requires paying a separate fee beyond the baseline subscription.
2. Beyond that, Quickbooks: Pro for Mac does not offer remote access functionality. Given the popularity of Mac computers, this could quickly become an annoying and potentially costly inconvenience.

There are a few more issues to consider, though.

QuickBooks Remote Access Issues

For a remote workforce, QuickBooks has been known to present complications around remote access reliability. Keep in mind that any tech-induced business downtime will result in very real dollars and cents losses to your company.

In addition to the Mac issues, QuickBooks remote access has an anecdotal reputation for being glitchy on computers with VPNs. As with Macs, these are another widespread piece of technology, a fact which might present problems.

Looking for a remote connector for QuickBooks?

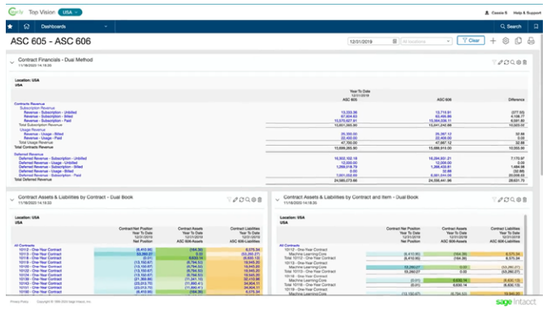
If you're considering a remote connector for QuickBooks, there's a better way forward–a way that will simultaneously maximize the speed of your transition to remote work while shielding the process from errors.

Best practices for remote finance teams

Optimizing your team's shift to remote work can be difficult if you're simultaneously struggling with QuickBooks remote access problems.

Adopting fully automated accounting software is one of the best choices you can make in order to ensure the best remote experience for you and your team. In particular, look for software that:

- Leverages a single source of truth (SSOT) to centralize data
- Surpasses the automation capabilities of QuickBooks remote access
- Organizes finance leaders' data and metrics in single-screen role-based dashboards.
- Offers automated assistance with ASC 606, revenue recognition, and accounting regulations



QuickBooks remote access might have limited utility for smaller early-stage companies. But you should be looking for more than the bare minimum.

Remote access success with Sage Intacct

Sage Intacct uses cloud-based automation to ensure the perfect experience for your remote workforce. With Intacct, you won't have to worry about downtime, regulatory headaches, approval problems, and so many other issues that traditionally accompany remote work for finance teams.

Remote work has been a major shift in the SaaS industry. But it's hardly the only reason to graduate from QuickBooks – our E-book on 10 Reasons SaaS companies shouldn't use QuickBooks goes even deeper.

David Appel is Head of the SaaS Vertical for the largest technology company on the London Stock Exchange, Sage. Over time, his organizations have earned the business of >1,800 SaaS and Software companies, growing at 40%+/year. He previously ran Direct Sales at Bill.com, led NetSuite's Software Vertical, and was part of IBM's Corporate Development team.

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.

ABAS

5 OF THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS TO LOOK FOR IN ERP SELECTION

ERP selection can be complicated. The why of an ERP system is fairly clear. The ERP system you choose will be the platform through which the various functional areas of your company cohere into one unified whole. It's the umbrella that covers and connects all your business areas and systems, enabling you to share data and make better, data-driven decisions across your entire operations. Selecting and implementing an ERP software solution helps you work smarter, improving efficiency and visibility across your business processes, which includes everything from purchasing and sourcing, manufacturing, and inventory control to sales and marketing, distribution and customer relationship management.

How to select an ERP system can be a murkier issue. Selecting the right ERP system for you is not something that should be taken lightly or done hastily. Considerable organizational resources should be dedicated to procuring the right system for you and then implementing it. The cost of a failed implementation can be staggering, and costs go way beyond wasted financial investments to include disruption of business functions, frustrated employees, and frustrated customers. By the way, as you've probably noticed, frustrated employees and frustrated customers tend to leave you, which is about as bad for your business as it gets. The ERP planning and selection process, then, are critical for a successful ERP purchase. Below are five key criteria you'd be wise to consider before deciding upon an ERP system.

Dive deeper into ERP selection with this guide: Selecting an ERP System in 7 Easy Steps

1. Your ERP selection should deliver platform scalability and flexibility

Your current list of requirements and needs should not be the only thing that guides a purchasing decision. You must also consider what features you'll need as your business grows or experiences change going forward into the future. An ERP system must be flexible enough to scale with your needs as your business grows. A "bad" ERP system is one that you'll outgrow in 5 to 10 years. You need to have that flexibility already baked into your ERP system. Otherwise, your "inflexible" ERP system may actually hinder your growth, rather than support it -- perhaps the worst-case scenario of all.

What this means is that you must look beyond the standard features a system offers and consider how easily it will be for your ERP system to adapt to changing business needs and embracing emerging technologies. If there are excessive limitations on how much a particular ERP system can be customized, it may be worth looking elsewhere. You don't want to "bolt on" new technologies and be forced to do complex workarounds because of an inflexible ERP system. What you want an ERP system to be is a platform for growth, meaning it's flexible enough to support your growth and integrate emerging technologies. What you're doing by seeking ERP agility is future-proofing your business, and that matters a lot.

2. Select an ERP with support for mobile users

With the advent of the bring-your-own-device (BYOD) workplace, more and more business users are accessing workflows and data through their own personal mobile devices. Giving employees the ability to work however, wherever and whenever they see fit has boosted productivity considerably. If mobile functionality is limited, those efficiency gains will be impossible to realize.

What you don't want to do is tie your employees to desktops and their offices. Imagine a salesperson who couldn't access key customer data on the road, but is instead tied to a desktop if he or she wants to access key customer data. How happy and effective would that salesperson be? What would your customers think when one of your salespeople visits them and says things like "I can't update your information related to our new agreement until I get back to the office." Business data needs to be accessible from wherever business happens.

Select an ERP solution with a dashboard that is mobile friendly and accessible from anywhere at any time. When your employees are on the go, they'll be able to easily access key workflows and data to avoid prolonged downtime. They can work at the hotel or the customer's site. Perhaps even more important is the ability to enter and store data all in one process. When employees can enter data directly from the field, it reduces the risk of errors that occur when they have to collect data in one place and re-enter it into the system later. Mobile-friendly is a massively important ERP feature, and you should be demanding it.

3. Customer recommendations or testimonials

An ERP software vendor should be able to give you the names of a few customers to whom you can reach out and get an inside look into the whole implementation process. It's important to note that you can't just focus on the software itself, but should be carefully considering the collaborative experience the vendor's implementation team brings and its overall technical/business acumen in partnering with companies like yours. In many cases where an ERP system fails to live up to expectations, it's not necessarily because the software was deficient, but rather, something went wrong during the implementation process, such as inadequate communication.

Listening matters, so does responsiveness and building strong relationships (in addition to strong software solutions). Change isn't simply about technology, but about processes and people too. The people stuff isn't "soft," and you'd better be sure you can trust and build a strong collaborative relationship between your people and the ERP vendor's people.

4. Ease of use and contextualization

Each functional area of the business will work daily with certain kinds of data while having no use for other kinds. The user experience should be customizable for each user so that only the most relevant information is presented. This includes contextualization for international companies that will need region-specific data and units of measurement for all locales. Essentially, a good ERP system will be able to present the right information to the right people at the right time in a simple, accessible way. You should look for a great, customizable UX, or user experience. If you need to create clunky workarounds to localize and contextualize your ERP system, that's a red flag. Your ERP system should have this already baked in.

5. Long-term costs

It's easy to get caught up in upfront costs, but you really should consider the total cost of ownership (TCO) over the long haul. Consider long-term implementation costs related to change management. Your ERP system should be set up to mirror your future-state business processes, so as your processes evolve, your ERP system and vendor will evolve with you.

Use the 5 things listed above as you answer the question of how to select an ERP system (and vendor) that's right for you.

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.

LICENSING CHALLENGES FOR ENTERPRISE MERGERS AND ACQUISITIONS

Article by **Dawn Moser,**
Content Writer at Avalara

Mergers and acquisitions (M&A) are a part of business life. Market pressures and societal trends can influence the ebb and flow of M&A activity, but as long as capitalism exists, companies will continue to buy, sell, combine, and re-form.

There's a lot of due diligence required for a successful M&A deal. It's not just researching the financials, investigating the foundation and fundamentals of the business, and ensuring customers are real people, not bots. Some of the legwork is about compliance, specifically around taxes and licensing.

Compliance Week and Avalara recently conducted a survey of 102 risk, compliance, and accounting and audit professionals. While businesses are aware of licensing complications in the M&A process, there's certainly room for improvement in compliance management when ownership changes hands.

This blog post will look at three key factors of license compliance during mergers and acquisitions:

- Understanding governmental licensing challenges with M&A
- Preparing for licensing compliance during the M&A process
- Getting the licensing expertise you need for your merger or acquisition

Understanding governmental licensing challenges with M&A

There are several reasons why licensing is a particularly sticky wicket for businesses. The challenges can be even more complex in the midst of a business deal:

So. Many. Licenses.
Depending on the type of business you have, licensing can be as simple as applying for a license to operate in a state, or as complex as licensing the types of products you sell (e.g., animals, alcohol, ammunition) or the elements of your physical location (e.g., freezers or fire safety systems).

Even if each business has the proper licenses going into a merger or acquisition, the change in business structure or ownership often means obtaining new licenses or updating existing ones with the appropriate business name, new FEIN, primary address, new locations, and so on.

Layers of authority

Getting federal and state licenses is just the beginning. Counties, cities, and special zones all have their own licensing requirements. And because each jurisdiction sets its own rules, the requirements vary from location to location. Licenses typically aren't transferable (to other owners or locations) and even the types of licenses required can change from one place to another.

Maintaining valid licenses
Some licenses expire, others don't. When business information changes, licenses will need to be updated, which means reapplying with each individual jurisdiction where you hold a license. It's easy to see how joining or absorbing another business can make manually maintaining a license portfolio rather daunting.

Skeletons in the filing cabinet
Auditors are busy, and businesses can sometimes fly under the regulatory radar, getting some, but not all of the necessary licenses. But nothing catches regulatory attention quite like M&A activity. If processes are inefficient and records are messy, there may be complex issues lurking in the system, just waiting for an auditor to discover.

As with most things regulatory, M&A compliance isn't a particularly fun or sexy side of a major business deal. But the stakes for mishandling licenses during an M&A deal can be high. For instance, survey respondents cited fines and fees as a top concern. And for good reason. Improperly licensed businesses can find themselves in a cascading series of financial penalties, according to Andrea Jaffe, Senior Director of Professional Services at Avalara.

Rounding out the top three concerns were business disruptions and M&A delays. Both are valid concerns, and can even be more severe than fines and fees. While the latter can be expensive, serious interruptions in business threaten process and cash flow, with impacts to staff, customers, vendors, public perception, and future financial stability.

Preparing for licensing compliance during the M&A process

According to the Compliance Week/Avalara survey, 30% of respondents address licensing early in the M&A process with another 30% indicating license compliance is addressed throughout. More concerning, 9% of businesses wait until later in the process. A lot can change and ideally, tax and licensing departments should be kept in the loop, early and often.

Properly evaluating and updating your license portfolio can save you time, money, and headaches in the long run (not to mention avoiding the ire of licensing authorities). When it comes to license compliance, there are several key steps to setting yourself up for success. Some of the initial work includes:

Figuring out how the businesses will be incorporated
Will one be merged into the other or will they remain separate entities? Each option has different licensing requirements.

Coordinating registration changes or new registration activities across departments
Make sure all teams are in communication as the merger or acquisition takes place — and don't let the tax department be the last to know when things shift.

Understanding which licenses are needed and where
Depending on your business, what you sell, and where you operate, you'll need to apply for specific licenses from the federal, state, county, and local government authorities.

Getting the licensing expertise you need for your merger or acquisition

Even the best legal, accounting, or tax team may not be adept at the processes required for M&A activities. Third-party experts can help fill in the knowledge gaps that arise during complex business deals.

For instance, with Avalara License Professional Services, you can get a detailed analysis of your current portfolio, with guidance around missing documents and changes needed for M&A compliance. You can also get help applying for licenses of all types, across jurisdictions.

Once your license portfolio is properly aligned with your new or expanded business, Avalara License Management can help you maintain compliance. This sophisticated software is ideal for complex, error-prone processes. By turning licensing over to secure, reliable technology, you increase the likelihood of retaining the correct licenses and keeping them properly updated as your business evolves.

The bottom line

Mergers and acquisitions make for an exciting time for businesses; make sure yours doesn't lead to licensing headaches. With proper licensing guidance, you can avoid surprises that could result in business slowdowns or fines at a time when you should be celebrating.

Dawn Moser is a writer at Avalara. She loves learning random facts about history, society, science, and art and secretly finds taxes fascinating.

About Avalara

Avalara helps businesses of all sizes get tax compliance right. In partnership with leading ERP, accounting, ecommerce, and other financial management system providers, Avalara delivers cloud-based compliance solutions for various transaction taxes, including sales and use, VAT, GST, excise, communications, lodging, and other indirect tax types. Headquartered in Seattle, Avalara has offices across the U.S. and around the world in Brazil, Europe, and India. More information at avalara.com.

ABAS

A CASE FOR ERP SYSTEM INTEGRATION - ADAPTING TO THE NEW NORMAL

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has had a major impact on supply chains around the world, forcing manufacturers to consider ERP system integration as they rethink their approach to vendor and client management. As noted by Deloitte, companies that are dependent on China for raw materials and finished products are among the hardest hit, especially those that have a direct interest in Wuhan - 200 of the Fortune Global 500 firms have some presence in the region. Even if the global economy returns to some form of normalcy in the months ahead, there's no guarantee these supply chain disruptions will completely disappear.

Planning for an uncertain future

For decades, manufacturing companies have focused on optimizing IT systems and back-end processes to reduce costs, efficiently manage inventories and maximize asset utilization. While these efforts have helped companies mitigate smaller disruptions, most have never faced a threat as serious as the COVID-19 outbreak.

Between supply chain restrictions, company-wide lockdowns and remote work mandates, manufacturing firms are struggling to keep up with their production schedules. Additionally, many suppliers have temporarily curbed their operations to help limit the spread of the virus, according to the World Economic Forum, leaving manufacturers with a shortage of sourcing channels. Companies that were unprepared for the global downturn have become acutely aware of vulnerabilities in their supply chain relationships, yet many lack the visibility and business intelligence needed to find long-term solutions.

Luckily, the abundance of cloud-based business applications has provided manufacturers with greater end-to-end visibility and a range of automated tools that can support wider digital transformation. One such innovation is enterprise resource planning (ERP) software, which ties together a variety of disparate business functions and data sources into a single source of insight. Using an ERP platform, manufacturers can precisely manage day-to-day operations, from raw material procurement to human resources and beyond. Of course, ERP system integration can be challenging for companies with diverse data formats, siloed business applications and complex supply chains.

The benefits of ERP system integration

Modern ERP software has many different capabilities that can be customized to meet an organization's exact needs, helping to automate business processes and promote efficient data transformation. For manufacturing firms, integrated ERP solutions represent an invaluable source of business intelligence that touches on every stage of their supply chains. During periods of uncertainty, manufacturers depend on accurate, real-time data to inform their decision-making and optimize back-end processes. This includes automating data entry tasks, collaborating with suppliers, revising production schedules and aggregating critical business information from various sources - accounting, inventory, sales, logistics, etc. Some of the main benefits of ERP system integration include:

- Increased mobility: With 74% of companies planning to move at least some of their labor force to a permanent work-from-home capacity in the wake of COVID-19, according to research from Gartner, it's never been more important to offer employees a simple means of accessing critical data and business applications remotely. Cloud-based ERP software can be used on any device with an internet connection, allowing manufacturers to quickly respond to disruptions without having to visit production sites in person.

- Streamlined collaboration: Nearly all ERP solutions offer advanced data integration tools that can help manufacturers centralize their business-critical information. This can not only promote greater interdepartmental cooperation, it can also ensure business leaders have the data they need to proactively negotiate with suppliers, business partners and customers.

- Enhanced productivity: Automation has become a dominant trend in the manufacturing industry, but many firms still grapple with redundancies in their back-end processes. ERP system integration provides the visibility and control manufacturers need to optimize their operations while minimizing production delays. In fact, one study by the IT consulting firm Panorama found that 95% of companies "improve their processes" following an ERP deployment.

- Reduced IT costs: One of the biggest advantages of ERP software is that it enables manufacturers to consolidate their business applications under a single, centralized management platform. By eliminating silos between different digital solutions, companies can optimize their IT spending and focus on what really matters - growing their business. While all ERP products offer different capabilities, most are equipped with specialized tools for customer resource management (CRM), accounting, human resources, supply chain management and more.

Since every manufacturing firm has its own operational needs and budgetary constraints, it's important to carefully assess ERP vendors before making a long-term investment. Business leaders should prioritize custom ERP solutions that can be easily adapted to their shifting business climates, making scalability a top concern. What's more, a lack of integrated ERP solutions can lead to all sorts of inefficiencies - research from the global marketing firm Aberdeen found that redundant data (35%), unaligned business systems (33%) and the inability to track processes in real time (28%) are all common consequences of opting out of ERP system integration.

Looking for new a ERP system? Download the guide: Selecting an ERP System in 7 Easy Steps

Considering the uncertainty surrounding COVID-19, now may be the perfect time to integrate ERP software into existing manufacturing workflows. Without a solution in place, businesses may find themselves unable to quickly and effectively respond to future supply chain disruptions.

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.

10 FEATURES TO LOOK FOR IN MANUFACTURING INVENTORY MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE

Selecting an inventory management software for your manufacturing enterprise is not a decision to be made lightly. To make your decision easier, we've provided a list of the ten most important features to ensure are present before considering a manufacturing inventory software.

What is Manufacturing Inventory?

The word "inventory" in manufacturing has a few separate and distinct meanings. Materials or components that will be procured from suppliers are raw materials inventory that must managed from their source until they are moved to a production line. While in production, materials are considered work-in-progress (WIP) inventory. And finally, once completed, become finished goods inventory. Of course, there are numerous classifications within these three, but these are the key ones.

What does Manufacturing Inventory Management Software Do?

Manufacturing inventory management software allows companies to streamline sourcing and allocation of materials through automating repetitive tasks and reducing human error. Knowing what you have and where it is saves you time and money versus buying too much inventory to overcome uncertainty—a typical bad practice. But the most important benefit of inventory management is full visibility into all of your inventory to reduce the risks of potential stockouts that might result in short or late shipments to customers.

Top 10 Features to Look for in Manufacturing Inventory Management Software

Not every manufacturing inventory management software will have the features your company needs. Here, we've listed the top ten most important capabilities you should ensure are present before selecting a manufacturing inventory software.

1. Accurate Manufacturing Inventory Details

The most important function of manufacturing inventory software is providing precise, real-time information on your company's inventory. Ensure that your selection of manufacturing inventory software is capable of providing detailed information on your inventory, including ABC category analysis, real-time location information, and

transaction reporting. It is also worth noting that while most manufacturing inventory software is "accurate," they often operate in silos as opposed to an integrated system like enterprise resource planning (ERP), resulting in errors and discrepancies since they are isolated from the other business functions that impact and affect inventory. Thus, manufacturing inventory software that operates in conjunction with the other departments of your business often provides more precision on your inventory details.

2. Real-Time Inventory Tracking from Anywhere

Being able to track inventory from a mobile device or tablet is currently the most effective means of keeping your inventory details up to speed. Being able to log changes from a mobile device or tablet allows your staff to update inventory quickly, easily, and from any location, saving time and increasing productivity. Manufacturing inventory software with real-time inventory tracking also allows you to save money on hardware often used for entering and storing inventory. Additionally, mobile inventory systems allow you to access data remotely and entail a far lower risk of losing data.

3. Bar Code Scanning

Manufacturing inventory software like Rootstock allows for barcode scanning that easily records inventory movements, allows your enterprise to cut costs, save time, improve efficiency, and reduce overhead by eliminating the uncertainty mentioned above. Manually entering data is time consuming and highly susceptible to human error. Barcode scanning, however, is fast, reliable, and requires very little, if any, employee training. Their versatility extends beyond the products themselves; barcodes can be used to track and store data for a wide variety of purposes. They can be inexpensively printed and attached to almost any surface, allowing you to track not only products and inventory, but pricing, outgoing shipments, and equipment, as well as verifying product authenticity and managing returns. Since barcodes provide you with accurate, real-time information on your inventory levels, you can avoid ordering more than you need to meet current demand. This allows you to reduce inventory and reduce carrying costs. Moreover, excess inventory locks up valuable capital—and floor space—that could be used for other, more revenue generating investments. Time, money, and effort can be saved on data entry and retrieval, as well as locating equipment or replacing equipment presumed to have been lost.

4. Full Traceability, Lot, and Serial Number Tracking

Traceability enables your enterprise to know the status and location of all inventory including "one-back" from where it was purchased, and "one-forward" as to what customer it was shipped to. This full traceability saves you time, money, and effort managing your inventory because it is all at your finger tips instead of cabinets of binders. With lot and serial number tracking capabilities, Rootstock provides manufacturers with all of the necessary features they need to take control of their company's inventory. Watch this 60 second demo to learn more about Rootstock's full traceability features and how it can benefit your manufacturing inventory management.

5. Powerful Automation Features

Automation features are a critical component of quality inventory management software. Automating pre-defined workflows mitigates the inevitable human error involved with manual inventory management, preventing inaccurate inventory reports and the reducing the risk of stock-outs, late shipments, and loss of customers. Furthermore, it saves time and money collecting, formatting, organizing, and reporting on inventory data; and makes the your finite accounting staff more productive.

Watch this on-demand demo to see how Rootstock benefits inventory management through its automation features and the positive impact it can have on a business.

6. Integration with ERP Systems

Manufacturing inventory software works best when integrated with an ERP system that connects it to the other parts of the company. While most manufacturing organizations already utilize an ERP system, they often use a separate, isolated system to manage their inventory. By connecting your inventory management software to the other facets of your business with an integrated ERP system, you obtain far greater visibility and a more comprehensive understanding of its operations. For instance, decisions regarding inventory management can then be made in conjunction with recent sales data or concerns about the supply chain.

7. Bill of Materials (BOM) Management

Efficient manufacturing inventory management requires a thorough understanding of the parts you will need to procure in order to manufacture your products (the BOM). Effective bill of materials management allows you to efficiently plan the purchase of materials, accurately estimate costs, and minimize production delays. It also improves your ability to respond to sourcing mishaps and supply chain delays as material components can be substituted for alternatives and BOMs can be automatically updated across your product lines.

8. Supply Chain Management

Supply chain management features are an essential component of manufacturing inventory software. Storing key vendor information and purchase order history allows you to properly prioritize suppliers and negotiate better contracts. Perhaps even more importantly, supply chain visibility allows you to readily react to short-shipments, mispicks, delivery delays, and order cancellations, ensuring your manufacturing enterprise can continue at full speed without production bottlenecks.

9. Customer Relationship Management (CRM) for Sales

A manufacturing Inventory software that is compatible with a CRM provides significant benefit to production planning and inventory control. Sales information can improve demand forecasting and reduce overhead costs from excessive inventory; and lot and serial numbers can be traced through to the end of the sales order fulfillment process for comprehensive visibility. Watch this free demo to see how Rootstock Inventory Management seamlessly operates on the Salesforce platform.

10. Supplier Collaboration Tools

Managing your relationships with your suppliers is something that should be approached strategically for maximum output. Through aligning your business strategy with the right business partners, you can drive value for your organization as well as theirs through frequent and consistent collaboration. Inventory management software with synchronous supplier collaboration features like Slack and asynchronous collaboration features like partner portals allow you to build more strategic, longer-lasting, and profitable relationships with your suppliers.

Rootstock Cloud ERP on Salesforce Improves Manufacturing Inventory Control

From bar code scanning and powerful automation features to full traceability and supplier collaboration tools, Rootstock Cloud ERP provides all of the most important features that constitute a modern manufacturing inventory software. Built natively on the Salesforce Platform, Rootstock integrates inventory control with the rest of your business, providing you with comprehensive oversight on your inventory position.

Don't just take our word for it, look what happened when Northeast Lantern implemented Rootstock Cloud ERP. From thousands of scattered spreadsheets to visibility over their entire inventory seamlessly organized onto one cohesive platform, Rootstock has helped them manage their SKU's much more efficiently.

Automate Critical Inventory Functions with Rootstock Manufacturing Inventory Management Software

Rootstock has helped manufacturing enterprises across the globe achieve visibility and control over their inventories and we're certain it can help yours too. To learn more about Rootstock's Inventory Management features, visit our product page or watch this demo on Rootstock Inventory Management.

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.

aptean

MAXIMIZING 3PL EFFICIENCY AND PROFITABILITY WITH ADVANCED TRUCK ROUTE PLANNING SOFTWARE

It's no surprise that third-party logistics (3PL) companies are looking for ways to maximize the efficiency of their deliveries, especially when over 70% of all goods in the US and nearly 80% of goods in the UK are transported by truck.

As a 3PL, distribution is your product, which means optimizing the efficiency of your deliveries is crucial to maximizing profit as every truck-mile counts. The key to unlocking greater profits for your business may lie in the routes your trucks take. By optimizing your truck routes, you can reduce the amount of time and miles it takes to complete a delivery, ultimately leading to significant cost savings.

You have the potential to reduce costs across the board—from fuel and maintenance expenses to driver wages and vehicle operating costs. And the icing on the cake? With reliably organized routes, you can be more certain that you'll deliver on time, reducing the risk of unhappy customers or costly returns.

Aptean Routing & Scheduling Paragon Edition is an advanced route planning, scheduling and tracking solution that is designed specifically with 3PLs and distribution providers in mind. Using advanced algorithms and specialized software, our advanced route optimization platform takes the guesswork out of route planning and helps ensure you're getting the most out of your fleet every day.

The Challenges of Truck Route Planning

Efficient truck route planning is essential for 3PLs and distributors to maximize profitability and productivity. But it's not an easy feat.

As you know, there are unique challenges that need to be addressed, including limited capacity, dynamic delivery schedules, varying delivery types and constantly changing

It's no surprise that third-party logistics (3PL) companies are looking for ways to maximize the efficiency of their deliveries, especially when over 70% of all goods in the US and nearly 80% of goods in the UK are transported by truck.

As a 3PL, distribution is your product, which means optimizing the efficiency of your deliveries is crucial to maximizing profit as every truck-mile counts. The key to unlocking greater profits for your business may lie in the routes your trucks take. By optimizing your truck routes, you can reduce the amount of time and miles it takes to complete a delivery, ultimately leading to significant cost savings.

You have the potential to reduce costs across the board—from fuel and maintenance expenses to driver wages and vehicle operating costs. And the icing on the cake? With reliably organized routes, you can be more certain that you'll deliver on time, reducing the risk of unhappy customers or costly returns.

Aptean Routing & Scheduling Paragon Edition is an advanced route planning, scheduling and tracking solution that is designed specifically with 3PLs and distribution providers in mind. Using advanced algorithms and specialized software, our advanced route optimization platform takes the guesswork out of route planning and helps ensure you're getting the most out of your fleet every day.

The Challenges of Truck Route Planning

Efficient truck route planning is essential for 3PLs and distributors to maximize profitability and productivity. But it's not an easy feat.

As you know, there are unique challenges that need to be addressed, including limited capacity, dynamic delivery schedules, varying delivery types and constantly changing customer demands. On top of that, there are industry challenges including volatile fuel costs, driver shortages and inconsistent supply chains.

These factors can cause major headaches for planners and operators who need to organize and plan delivery routes while meeting service-level agreements. And with both costs and competition increasing, you simply cannot afford to lose customer contracts or spend more on your fleet than necessary—a balance must be achieved.

Meeting the Needs of 3PLs and Distributors

Standard routing software is not sufficient for the needs of 3PLs and distributors. Smaller, less complex solutions rely on historical data and pre-set algorithms which can't account for real-time changes or provide the level of detail needed for cost-effective delivery planning. The result is one giant headache caused by inefficient routing, higher costs and dissatisfied customers.

Our robust routing and scheduling solution is specifically designed to meet the needs of 3PLs and distributors, providing detailed planning tools for even highly complex delivery scenarios. With a purpose-built routing and scheduling solution, you can accurately plan for changing customer demands, manage limited capacity and optimize routes in real-time that can help minimize miles, fuel costs and drive time.

How Advanced Truck Route Planning Software Benefits 3PLs and Distributors

Reduced Costs to Maximize Profitability with Optimized Routes

Advanced truck route planning software streamlines the process of generating routes, saving you significant time and money. By automating the planning process and taking into account factors like delivery windows, time constraints and vehicle capacity, you're able to create more efficient routes in just a few clicks, freeing up valuable resources to focus on other aspects of your operations.

But the financial benefits don't end there.

By following the optimized routes generated by the software, businesses can reduce total fleet miles by up to 5%. This reduction not only decreases fuel costs, but also minimizes empty miles—when a truck is driving without a load or with an insufficient load—which can add up to significant savings over time.

With a robust routing and scheduling solution, you can:

- Use fewer trucks to complete the same number (or more) deliveries
- Put less wear and tear on vehicles
- Ensure drivers are fully utilized
- Reduce fines

All of which mean more money back in your pocket.

Investing in advanced truck route planning software like Aptean Routing & Scheduling Paragon Edition can be a smart decision for any logistics operation looking to maximize efficiency and profitability along their path to digital transformation. With high fuel costs, historic driver shortages and increasing competition all squeezing your margins, can you really afford to be underutilizing your biggest resources? With the right truck route planning software on your side, you can significantly reduce costs and maximize profitability.

Improved Customer Service with More Reliable Delivery Times

One of the most notable advantages of advanced truck route planning software is the ability to offer more reliable delivery times to your customers. By using real-time data, route optimization algorithms and other advanced features such as home delivery, you can provide customers with accurate and up-to-date information about when their deliveries will arrive.

This level of transparency and reliability can go a long way in building and maintaining strong customer relationships—a crucial benefit for 3PLs.

In fact, the importance of maintaining strong customer relationships cannot be overstated. According to a recent market trend, 83% of consumers are less likely to make another purchase from a company because of a poor delivery experience. As a 3PL, you may be representing the brands you deliver on behalf of in one of the most critical steps of the customer journey, so being able to provide reliable delivery times and clear end-customer communication will go a long way in retaining your customer contracts.

Because advanced route planning algorithms take into account many variables—from average road speeds and low bridges to driver availability and unloading restrictions at the delivery location—the likelihood that you can deliver on-time, every time is significantly increased. So now, not only can you provide your customers with the tighter time windows they desire, but you can do so with extra confidence that you'll satisfy those expectations.

Aptean Routing & Scheduling Paragon Edition can help you meet the expectations of both your customers and the end-customer with real-time visibility into your scheduled routes.

Don't Settle for Standard Truck Route Planning Software

Our route optimization software has the features you need to improve your routing and maximize your efficiency and profitability—Aptean Routing & Scheduling Paragon Edition will help you to reduce costs, improve your customer service and take your 3PL operations to the next level.

That's in large part due to the fact that our teams take a collaborative approach to implementation, helping each customer to deploy the software optimally and roll out additional features when they're ready. The solution is also cloud-ready and available on the Software as a Service (SaaS) model, which can afford your organization greater scalability and reliability with stronger cybersecurity and enhanced data protection.

What's more, our dedicated professionals have decades of collective experience in the logistics industry, so we understand the challenges that businesses like yours face and have developed specialized features to help you overcome them. Aptean was also recently recognized with the , putting us in the top 10% of businesses included.

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 SHOULD CFOS FOCUS ON IN 2023?

As CFOs review the last financial year and look further ahead into 2023, it's important to consider what their main focus should be to grow revenues. As the business landscape continues to evolve and change, CFOs should continue to carefully review which costs are essential to increase revenues and which can be cut without impacting the business. By understanding what to prioritize and what investments to make, CFOs can ensure their organizations can navigate ongoing market turbulence and be well-positioned for long-term growth.

Service Performance Insight (SPI Research) has produced its 16th annual benchmark – The 2023 Professional Services Maturity™ Benchmark Report, which is a comprehensive study of the global professional services organizations (PSOs) industry and provides in-depth analysis and insights for organizations. In this article, we'll explore what the report indicates that CFOs in PSOs should focus on in 2023 to maximize revenues and improve their company's bottom line.

The global economic outlook

The global economic outlook for 2023 is still unclear. Many economies across the world are showing signs of slowing growth, while a few are experiencing record growth. CFOs should pay close attention to the potential of a recession and what that would mean for their organization's finances. Some regions have already begun to experience rising inflation, which means controlling costs is essential. Technology solutions can help reduce costs and improve long-term efficiency by analyzing where the company is spending and determining where savings can be made. As the global economy begins to recover post-pandemic, rising inflation and interest rates could have an impact on a company's cash flow. CFOs should be sure to monitor these changes and plan accordingly.

Despite the SPI report stating that "sales and G&A (general and administrative) expenses went down by 19%, which helped PSOs achieve slightly higher profitability in 2022", there is still much to be done to increase profitability and revenue growth over the next 12 months. Every other financial KPI went down in 2022, highlighting a need for better planning of revenue and margins and a tactical strategy to achieve better results.

CFOs also need to prepare their companies for potentially complex risk scenarios, including recession, inflation, geopolitical turmoil, and increased cybersecurity risks. By leveraging more agile, data-driven scenario management, they can map out the potential impacts of the risks and make informed decisions about where savings can be made with the least negative impact on the business. With the help of technology solutions, they can make sure their company is well prepared for whatever the global economy throws at them and can respond with agility.

The rise of digital transformation

In today's economy, digital transformation is becoming increasingly important for PSOs to keep up with the competition. Digital transformation allows PSOs to leverage the power of technology solutions to create new efficiencies and improve customer experiences, ultimately leading to increased revenue. By transitioning to the cloud, PSOs can potentially remove the hassle of maintaining and updating systems, allowing an organization to invest time and resources in driving organizational strategy.

The benefits of digital transformation include improved collaboration, enhanced customer service, and better data analysis. Additionally, cloud-based software solutions offer greater scalability and flexibility, allowing PSOs to adapt quickly to changing customer needs. By taking advantage of these digital tools, PSOs can improve their processes and increase their bottom line.

According to SPI, "interviews with CFOs reveal the top selection criteria for business applications include powerful yet easy-to-use reporting capability with mandatory mobile access."

Digital transformation can provide PSOs with the ability to gain a competitive edge in the marketplace. With access to the latest technology and insights, PSOs can respond more quickly to customer demands and have a more comprehensive understanding of their clients. This knowledge can be used to develop innovative services that will help them stand out from the competition and drive increased revenue.

CFOs should always be looking to optimize general and administrative expenses so they can channel more funds into sales and marketing or innovation, and the only way to do this is to improve processes and improve their technology base. People are an organization's greatest asset but also a high cost - this can all be monitored and reported on using tools such as workforce planning, part of FP&A, which also draws data from ERP and HCM.

Digital transformation is quickly becoming an integral part of any successful PSO, and by embracing the opportunities that the cloud can offer, businesses can reap the rewards and grow their revenues in 2023 and beyond.

The race for talent

The race for talent continues to rage on, and PSOs are not exempt. This makes it more important than ever for CFOs to focus on strategies to attract and retain top talent. By implementing the right technology solutions, firms can reduce costs without compromising the quality of the services they provide.

SPI state that "(In 2022) direct revenue increased and indirect revenue decreased. Direct labor and fringe benefits increased significantly, putting pressure on margins." In 2022, 20.5% of survey respondents achieved 100% or more of their annual margin target. PSOs focused more on improving sales and marketing effectiveness and their solution portfolio rather than on profitability. Average consultant annual revenue went down, so CFOs should be monitoring operational success as service excellence and sales delivery equals higher revenue per consultant.

Unit4 offers finance, HR, and planning solutions to help PSOs empower their people and increase service excellence. Our tools provide a comprehensive view of resources and operations, making it easy for organizations to track and monitor complex projects and employee performance and make data-driven decisions. With the right technology in place, CFOs can ensure that their organizations can find and retain top talent and remain competitive in the market.

The changing role of the CFO

The role of the CFO has evolved significantly over the past five years. In a professional services organization, the CFO is now more than just a number cruncher. Instead, they have become business partners who work closely with other departments to ensure the financial and operational success of the organization.

One of the primary goals of a CFO is to identify areas where revenue can be improved. The average reported revenue leakage in 2022 was the highest it has been in 5 years at 4.9%, and when SPI asked leaders which goals they were most focused on for 2023, professional services executives showed almost 40% of their efforts would be on growing revenue, followed by improving profitability. Cutting costs can help here too. With technological advancements, CFOs can better analyze data and pinpoint cost-saving opportunities. Technology solutions such as cloud computing and artificial intelligence are helping CFOs gain deeper insights into their financials, enabling them to make more informed decisions about where to reduce costs and increase profitability.

Another key focus for CFOs is to provide better visibility into the organization's financial performance. This includes developing tools that allow decision-makers to track revenue, expenses, cash flow, and other financial metrics in real-time. By accessing detailed financial information, CFOs can help develop strategies that will drive business growth and increase efficiency.

In addition to these responsibilities, CFOs must also provide guidance on taxation issues and other regulatory matters. They must ensure compliance with all relevant regulations and laws while staying abreast of changes in the industry. They must also maintain strong relationships with investors, banks, creditors, and other stakeholders.

Technology has allowed CFOs to move beyond their traditional transactional role and take on more strategic responsibilities by developing business partnerships. By leveraging data and analytics, they can become true business partners and help organizations achieve their business goals.

How Unit4 can help CFOs prepare for the future

Unit4's People Experience suite is designed for organizations like yours. This comprehensive solution gives you the tools you need to become the strategic CFO of tomorrow, no matter how your role evolves or grows.

For more findings and insights on the office of the CFO in 2023, check out the new SPI report here.

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

PROCUREMENT TRENDS AND PRIORITIES TO PURSUE IN 2023

Earlier this year, QAD hosted a live webinar to explore and analyze the trends that are likely to dominate the procurement world over the coming months. It's no secret that procurement teams have an amplified role within their businesses and that many are left with questions — our goal was to offer answers.

I sat down with Kenneth Zins, Henry Schein vice president of global sourcing, to take a look at trends, discuss where best to focus a team's energy, and share approaches for navigating the inevitable challenges ahead. Henry Schein is a worldwide solutions provider to more than 1 million healthcare professionals across the globe. Ken's role is focused on the operational side of Henry Schein's corporate brand portfolio, supplier management, cost management, and project management of new product introduction.

Ken and I started out talking about procurement landscape predictions for the year ahead. A trusted source we both look to is The Hackett Group's downloadable e-book, 2023 Key Issues, which opens up with the statement, "To thrive amid uncertainty, technology and digital transformation will be key."

What Are the Top 10 Priorities for Procurement Leaders?

The Hackett Group polled procurement executives to compile a Top 10 list of priorities:

- Ensure supply continuity
- Combat inflationary price increases
- Reduce spend cost
- Pursue procurement digital transformation and modernize landscape
- Improve analytics and insights capabilities
- Strengthen third-party risk management visibility and capability
- Act as a strategic advisor to the business
- Improve stakeholder-centricity
- Improve procurement agility (i.e. adapt quickly)
- Embed responsible procurement

Over time, this list has changed with industry modernization and world events. Looking back to just four years ago, improving cost efficiency had always been ranked #1. But in the last few years since COVID-19 and the Russia-Ukraine war, we have seen an unprecedented multi-crisis unfold that has put the availability of products and the mitigation of supply chain risks in order to ensure supply continuity at the top of the list.

We've seen an increasing need to find qualified new suppliers, and those suppliers need to be located closer to the manufacturing plants. Very often, this calls for multi-sourcing as well as near-shoring, or block building, aka localization — whatever term you want to use. And this trend is not at all over. Some companies are just starting to realize that they have to do more supplier selection processes with fewer people in the workforce.

At the same time, there is an ever-increasing need to collect information around ESG, or environmental, social and corporate governance.

We have a 36-letter German word for this: Lieferkettensorgfaltspflichtengesetz, which is the name for a German supply chain diligence law that came into effect at the beginning of this year. It basically says: If your supplier doesn't play by the rules, you will pay for it.

This law makes companies responsible for ensuring their suppliers adhere to human working conditions and environmental sustainability, and applies to companies with more than 3,000 employees for now, but will go down to 2,000 next year. And there's an EU law on the horizon that's predicted to apply to companies with as few as 250 employees.

The penalties are painful, and other countries and U.S. states have passed or are looking to pass similar laws, so taking ESG initiatives into consideration is here to stay.

Ken said that's among the interwoven challenges keeping him up at night: You want to make sure you have continuity of supply. You want to balance your inventory levels. You want to make sure you're cost competitive. You want to make sure you're compliant. You want to make sure that you're meeting ESG opportunities and requirements. All of these "make-sure" demands get compressed together, and your overarching goal is to find the right balance and diversification between all of them, to make sure you're servicing the customer.

We asked Ken how Henry Schein stays ahead of the game to ensure customer satisfaction and profitability, and he went back to that idea of balance, saying, "You really can't go too far into one of those avenues without having a direct impact on the other. So what we've done is diversify our supply chain, making sure we have sources that are established domestically within the markets that we operate, and also internationally. A lot of times, the international sources may be a little bit more cost competitive, but the domestic sources have less geopolitical constraints and shorter lead times. So there's a balance that we look to achieve to make sure we're delivering the full package to the customer. That's the strategy we've developed and implemented since COVID."

Digitization Pays Off

Looking back at that Top 10 Priorities list to address #4 — pursue procurement digital transformation and modernize landscape — Ken and I discussed the chicken-and-egg issue of scarce budgets and a shrinking labor force, and how digitization comes down to ROI.

We looked at a survey supported by the German Association for Materials Management, Purchasing and Logistics, which shows that the companies who have implemented e-sourcing to select the right supplier with digitized tools are saving 14% in process costs, which is great. But they also experience a staggering 9.5% savings through e-sourcing solutions.

Does that sound too good to be true? Let's simplify it by taking a look at a typical client size from the manufacturing space. If a company has $1 billion in revenue and we assume just a 1% cost savings — not the 9.5% as reported by the companies that have digitized sources — this $1 billion revenue company is going to add a staggering $2.5 million to their annual bottom line. That digital solution will pay for itself in mere months.

We have a solution that can help you get there. By collecting and managing all supplier information and activities, QAD Supplier Management:

- Improves supplier performance.
- Simplifies supplier onboarding, qualification and classification.
- Boosts visibility of certificates, contracts, NDAs, reports and other documents.
- Enhances supplier compliance with environmental, social and governance objectives.
- Improves productivity across procurement processes.
- Reduces direct and indirect procurement costs.
- Eliminates manually intensive supplier management processes.
- Reduces supplier-related risks and ensures compliance.

Through a single portal, you and your suppliers can access:

- Supplier Data Management – Manages all supplier information to reduce discovery, onboarding and qualification cycle time.
- Sourcing – Manages the electronic RFQ process with suppliers, from recording requirements to the RFI, RFQ, contracts and, finally, the order.
- Auctions – Delivers superior sourcing results by tailoring the auction design to the negotiation situation and awarding strategy.
- QAD Demand and Delivery – Ensures visibility and collaboration on inventory, schedules, orders, shipments, invoices and replenishment requirements.

The Hackett Group determined that digitization is one of the driving factors of success and procurement. And that alone is a compelling argument to start the journey.

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.

ERPNEWS