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CHECKLIST

10 THINGS TO CONSIDER
## IN HOW TO SELECT YOUR ERP

Shopping for an ERP?

Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems are essential for distributors and manufacturers in the highly competitive current economy. Well implemented ERP systems, streamline business processes, improve efficiencies, and enhance decision-making. But with a multitude of options available in the market, selecting the right ERP can be a daunting task. In this blog post, we will explore some factors for when selecting an ERP. This is for the SME (Small to Medium Size Enterprise) audience.
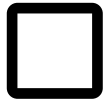
☐ #1 Who is the publisher?

ERP products are very complicated software systems, but this should be transparent to you. In other words, the user experience should be positive. Large software companies, like SAP can deliver such products. There are many ERP software publishers, especially in the North American market. Good things to look for include: Install base, partner solutions, an active road map and functional depth of product. These become clearer when there is a solid company (aka "publisher") behind the product. It is especially important to look at a long term track record of the publisher. ERP systems have evolved over time, and many publishers have come and gone. Pick one who has longevity.
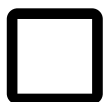
☐ #2 Who is the implementer?

The success of an ERP deployment depends on the skills and expertise of the implementation team. Considering "who" will do the implementation (likely a Value Added Reseller) is the number one priority. Make sure to evaluate their track record, experience, and references. Things you want include: knowledge of the software, experience in learning your business and ability to work with your internal people. Ask your VAR lots of questions and make sure they also ask you questions too! On your side, you'll need good people to implement. These folks will "learn to fish", ensuring that the project stays on track, the software works in your business and progress is communicated to the stakeholders.

☐ #3 Product functions: The overwhelming many versus the vital few

ERP systems come with a range of features and functions. However, not all functions will be relevant to your business. It is essential to identify the critical ones, essential for your business. Then, ensure that the ERP system you select has those functions, and they have been demonstrated. For example, if your business relies heavily on alerts and approvals, ensure that the ERP system you choose has automation capabilities.

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#4 Can grow - scalability and future development.

When selecting an ERP system, it is essential to consider whether the system can accommodate your business's future growth. As your business expands, your ERP system should be able to scale and adapt to meet your changing needs. Additionally, consider the publisher's track record of releasing updates and enhancements to their ERP system to ensure the ERP is up to date with changing business requirements.
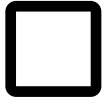
#5 Your budget - Price...yes, important. Value ... absolutely more important than price!

Newer ERP systems are much more scalable as the needs of your business change. Perhaps you have a straight increase in top line performance, or plan for an acquisition, or have developed a new product line. These exciting changes should not be hampered by a limited ERP system which cannot accommodate them.
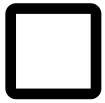
#6 – Installation base – how widely used is the candidate ERP?

The popularity and adoption of an ERP system can be an indication of its effectiveness and suitability for your business. A widely used ERP system will likely have a larger community of users, making it easier to find support and resources. Additionally, a more extensive installation base can provide an indication of the publisher's stability and longevity in the market.
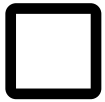
#7 Time to implement

We recently got a call from someone interested in switching ERP systems. They said a competitor committed to do a complete implementation in two weeks. I wished them luck – they'll need it. A well deployed ERP system cannot be achieved this rapidly. One of the true measures of a successful deployment is user adaptation. This takes time – and more importantly takes involvement. That involvement takes your users away from other responsibilities. But the benefits often outweigh the costs. When considering a timeline, be realistic.
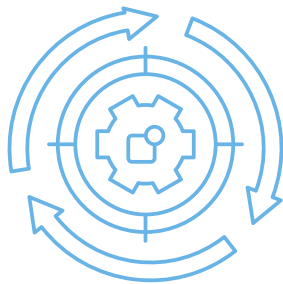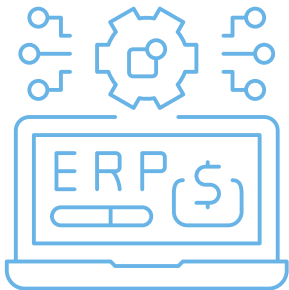
#8 – Location

A local VAR who can get to you easily, is a plus. Despite advances in the likes of ZOOM and TEAMS, some level of "face to face" at a minimum is better and often is a necessity. We find recent projects use a mix of virtual and in person. Not a bad approach. Just make sure in person is a reasonable option. Don't expect a smooth implementation if you choose a VAR on the other side of the world.

#9 – Plan

Examples include reduced responsiveness, unfavorable mergers, extensive change of personnel, unreasonable rate escalation, rigid help desk structure, cannot talk to a person. Does your VAR provide you the service you deserve?

#10 – User reaction

Prepping for sale. Perhaps the ERP system you run reflects negatively on your business which you are considering selling. A prospective buyer will look favorably on a well deployed ERP system which a) produces trustworthy numbers b) is an asset to her potential purchase and c) shows you are serious about good control of your business.

Ready for Help Selecting Your Next ERP?
Contact Us Today.

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