



Newsletter Vol. 55 - Introduction

Softengine News is dedicated to keeping you up to date with the latest information regarding SAP Business One systems, Softengine solutions and Best Business Practices.

What's New?

How to make your ERP Implementation a Success?

Clear Objectives

If an ERP implementation is going to succeed, there have to be clear and measurable objectives. This includes specific product functionality improvements, a clear project plan (blueprint), business process improvements, measurable financial improvements and of course a detailed budget.

Good Communication

If a business is not organized for success, virtually all ERP implementation projects will be compromised. This includes inadequate communications between executives and the rest of the business. In many cases executives want to control (i.e. micro-manage) all aspects of the business. Executives will also be quick to take credit for anything positive and even quicker to distant themselves from doing any real work or accepting blame when things go wrong. If your executives tacitly approve an ERP implementation project, but do not actually participate in identifying corporate strategies and objectives, then the ERP implementation has no chance of real success.

No Excessive Customization

Products that are heavily modified are going to fail, if for no other reason than the fact that the modifications alone will increase the ERP implementation timeline substantially, not to mention the fact that you will lose contact with the product's vendor when it comes to regular product updates if the source code has been modified.

"All-on-Board"

Every person in an organization contributes to the organization's success. If people who have any relationship with the business management software are not included in the ERP implementation process, particularly the definition of requirements, critical information could be missed. The key concept here is simple. If you do not include someone in a process that directly affects them, there will be no incentive for them to support the outcome. Resistance of this type can doom an ERP implementation to failure.

Follow a Positive Approach to ERP Implementation

It's certainly beneficial to know what to avoid, but it is more important to adopt a positive approach to ERP implementation and determine what you need to do to promote a successful outcome.

Find an Effective Project Leader

A project leader does not really crack any form of whip. They are the chief organizer and cheer leader. Their most important tasks are creating an effective ERP implementation project plan, explaining that plan to everyone who is going to participate (which is just about everyone), and taking steps to keep the plan on track.

Project Leaders are also the chief communications link between their firm and product reseller's project manager. Everything must go through them, not because they are power hungry, but because this is the only way that the plan and its historical records can be effectively maintained.

Let Each Employee Contribute to ERP Implementation Success

Each person in any company is unique. That's our nature. Therefore, the methods by which decisions are made, or tasks carried out, are unique as well. While there are some common steps by which people carry out their job responsibilities, for the most part each person must decide for themselves what they require to be an efficient, effective and contributing member of the organization. It is only under this assumption that we can evaluate business management software, ERP solutions or any software for that matter.

Find the Best ERP Platform and Best Implementation Partner

A knowledgeable user needs to find not just appropriate business management software, but a reseller who represents the product and who will become your trusted business partner. Specifically users need to find a reseller who has the ability to complete an ERP implementation in a timely and effective manner. This has to be a mutually beneficial business partnership with each party providing the knowledge and skills necessary to bring this ERP implementation to a successful conclusion.

As you and your staff are evaluating each product, take this time to also evaluate the potential of the partnership you will form with each product reseller.

- Does the reseller understand your industry and its competitive requirements?
- Does the reseller understand your business and its unique challenges?
- Does the reseller understand the importance of building a solid foundation for success by helping you evaluate and improve your business processes?
- Is the reseller more interested in selling software or helping you achieve greater success?
- Is the reseller willing to challenge your knowledge and opinions and educate you?
- Does the reseller really understand the product they represent?
- Is the reseller trying to sell you functionality you clearly do not need or just the functionality that will meet your unique requirements?
- Does the reseller seem to have the ability to successfully transfer your legacy data during the actual ERP implementation process?
- Does the reseller and software supplier have documented Customer Successes?
- Did their reference clients with whom you talked give them excellent references?
- Do the reseller and vendor appear to be financially sound?
- Has the product vendor published a development roadmap with a dedication to product improvement?
- Is the reseller going to create an ERP implementation plan (blueprint) that is unique to your business needs and employee knowledge and skills?
- Do you feel as though the reseller can become a trusted business partner who could contribute to your success?

Evaluate Each Product in Depth

The process of evaluating business management software and business management software implementers is really a single series of events/tasks that are carried out over a period of time. In the end several key questions need to be answered.

- Does the business management software do what you want it to do (functionality match)?
- Does the business management software support required functionality in a way that makes sense to people?
- Is the business management software “technology current” (e.g., mobility, cloud-data center option)?
- Can key transactional processes (e.g. enter a sales order) be accomplished efficiently?
- Does the business management software support key processes (e.g. credit and collections, exception management –alerts and workflow management - approvals)?
- Does the business management software support the decision making process (e.g. Business Intelligence)?
- Do the vast majority of people feel comfortable (like) with the business management software system being evaluated?

Excerpts from Blog by Charles Chewning, Accounting Library

For more information about SAP Business One ERP system, please contact Barry Lederman: 818.704.7000,
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