Key elements of a successful ERP implementation

Why a modern ERP makes business sense

In today's fast-changing business environment, modernization can have a strategic impact on your business. Without access to a modern enterprise resource planning (ERP) system, it can be difficult or even impossible to support new business models and keep up with evolving customer demands. Whether you're planning to upgrade your current ERP system or implement a brand new one, getting your system up and running quickly is the key to obtaining a fast return on your technology investment. No matter how complex your organization is, a variety of agile implementation practices can speed transformations—and deliver game-changing returns.

How to secure ERP buy-in from business leaders

Securing executive buy-in is crucial to any implementation initiative. Before approaching the executive team, define your strategic priorities, build your team (both internal and external), and have clear goals and objectives in mind so you can build a strong business case. Clearly explain the return on investment (ROI) that is possible when embracing modern technology, not only from a savings and efficiencies gained perspective, but also the value of identifying new and additional revenue opportunities. Implementing a modern ERP system presents new opportunities to increase service levels and improve customer satisfaction that can be monetized. With a combination of revenue and cost efficiencies, ROI will prove a compelling reason for the C-suite to invest in a modern ERP system.

Choosing Infor as your partner for implementation will enable you to:

- Deploy quickly and reliably, anywhere in the world

- Accelerate time to value and minimize risk

- Achieve a cost-effective, easily supported deployment

- Maximize the long-term value of your investment

Planning an ERP implementation

One of the key elements of a successful ERP implementation comes before any money is spent or infrastructure is put in place. Creating an implementation plan—including a budget, project team, change management strategy, and clearly defined metrics for success—is a crucial first step to driving agility throughout the entire implementation process and beyond.

Many organizations fail to create a strategic plan before implementation, which is one of the reasons **67% of ERP implementations result in negative ROI**. That doesn't have to be your reality. Focus on four key areas when creating an ERP implementation plan:

1. **Set an ERP budget**
   Like any major purchase, organizations must have a budget in mind for their ERP implementation. Many people compare an ERP implementation to building a house—assuming it will take twice as long as planned and cost twice as much as originally budgeted. The truth is, with the right technology partner and implementation strategy in place, an ERP implementation can stay on-time and on budget. Many factors should be considered when **setting an ERP budget** including deployment model, number of users, infrastructure investments, integration, training, and more.

2. **Assign your project team**
   Implementation success relies heavily on the individuals driving the process. When creating your dedicated project team, be sure to incorporate talented professionals who together understand the full scope of your business. An internal product owner should be assigned to lead the project and make key decisions, while cross-functional teams should be created to focus on more precise program goals. According to **ERP Focus**, "A talented implementation team sees the big picture more completely, appreciates the implications of the strategic plan better, evaluates decisions not only in terms of what is today, but what is likely to become tomorrow, and has the organizational respect to sell difficult, but necessary process changes."

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The talent a company assigns to its ERP team demonstrates to a large degree its commitment to long term organization health.

Source: ERP Focus, ERP Implementation, 11 steps to success.

Delivering successful implementations with Infor Agility

Infor's innovative service delivery model, Infor® Agility, is guided by decades of successful ERP implementations and has been continuously refined with the goal of delivering software implementations on time and on budget. With elements from an agile methodology approach, Infor Agility delivers:

- Advanced implementation accelerators based on industry-specific CloudSuite™ solutions, with almost 90% of the necessary business processes already built in. This allows Infor to focus its time and effort developing processes that are highly differentiating and unique to each of its customers.

- Innovative process intelligence tooling that can help improve process management by monitoring and analyzing processes on a historic or real-time basis.

- A data migration factory approach that uses established methodologies to successfully, accurately, and quickly complete critical, customer data migrations. This proven service helps to eliminate costly in-house errors, ensures implementations stay on track, and sets a solid foundation for future data management processes.

- Testing as a service, a single platform for testing the full range of functional and non-functional requirements for deploying multiple tools. This allows for the deployment of new releases to be executed with confidence and with minimized post-deployment issues.

- Consumerized learning, an innovative approach to training that provides a personalized enterprise learning environment in a variety of formats that are modern, easy to use, and delivered in an embedded, contextualized, consumer-grade user experience.

- Managed services offerings that provide customers with a service agreement tailored to their unique and specific business requirements. This results in increased productivity and a reduced total cost of ownership.

3. Create a change management strategy

It's inevitable that an ERP implementation or upgrade will create some disruption within your organization, but with a change management strategy in place, your employees will be more receptive to this change. While much of the change that comes with ERP implementation is driven by management, enlisting change agents from all levels of the company can give employees a sense of ownership toward the changes they're about to undertake. Organizations that embrace change management are more likely to **achieve project objectives, stay on or ahead of schedule, and stay on or under budget**.

4. Establish clear metrics to measure implementation success

As part of the initial planning stage, it's important to determine how you will measure the success of your ERP implementation. Establish the metrics and criteria you're planning to measure post go-live and create a baseline measurement of these metrics so you can have a clear before and after picture.

Evaluate your success

Soon after implementing an ERP system, your executive team will be eagerly awaiting tangible results. The metrics you established in the implementation planning phase will set you up for success in proving ROI. In the first few months after go-live, success may be measured by more abstract results such as improved business efficiency and productivity. As time goes on, ROI metrics will become quantitative results such as decreasing order entry time or increasing the number of orders shipped by a certain percentage. A modern ERP paired with agile implementation ensures your business will see ROI soon after go-live and for years and years to come.

Make agile ERP implementation your reality

It's a common misconception that once you are live on a new ERP system, agility and progress halts. The truth is, modernization means you can always keep your application and ecosystem capabilities current with business needs. Because an ERP system is increasingly working in real-time with suppliers and customers, on-going management also needs to adopt an agile approach. Continuous cloud upgrades deliver new capabilities every 30 days, making continuous innovation possible.

The Infor team of experts are committed to your success every step of the way. We know that strategy and long-term thinking are essential to shaping the future of your business and we know how to support your strategy with technologies that keep you competitive in a volatile marketplace.

Agile organizations are **70% more likely to be in the top 25% of organizational health**—the best indicator of long-term performance. Join the top 25% and make agile ERP implementation your reality.

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