

21st Century ERP Selection Roadmap

an advisory for small and midsized
manufacturers and distributors

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Introduction

Selecting the right ERP software is one of the most important business decisions you will make. The right ERP software will accommodate your business as it changes and grows. You're investing in a solution that solves your most pressing manufacturing problems.

So, let's get to it.

Here's your roadmap with the 6 things we advise manufacturers like you to consider on your journey to selecting a new ERP solution.



1

A 21st century platform

The problem with most ERP platforms is the layering of so-called new ERP functionality onto older 20th century platforms. 21st century ERP delivers industry-specific functionality that is built into the ERP platform. It's not a generic after the fact add-on. It's beyond seamless and more than an end-to-end solution. It's your central business management platform, and the foundation for your growth and success.

What 21st century ERP can do for your business

- Stay current and agile
- Keep costs down
- Improve efficiency
- Increase visibility
- Drive profitable growth

How to recognize a not-really-new ERP

- **Home-grown ERP** is assembled, often piece meal, with off-the-shelf tools. It is less stable and risky.
- **Mash-up ERP** is the merging of software companies and their differing solutions. It is heavy and slow.
- **Cosmetic ERP** is when new architecture, like cloud, is layered on top of legacy code. It is a shortcut and not a long-term solution.
- **Frankenstein ERP** is built by customer request without a product roadmap. It is messy and difficult to use.

Problems you can anticipate with a 20th century ERP

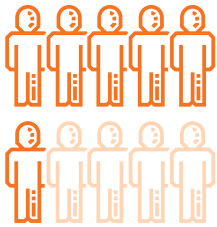
- Incomplete and siloed systems of information across the organization.
- Difficulty leveraging data to generate reports and analytics.
- A mix of out-of-date software and time-consuming manual processes.
- Not-so seamless integration between finance and plant floor operations.
- Frequent system glitches that require reboot.
- Critical data is distributed across multiple screens, requiring multiple clicks.

Beware of ERP that doesn't grow with you

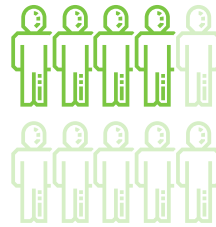
As you add more users and process more data, you'll need 21st century ERP with the processing power that can scale with your growth without ever holding you back or slowing your business down.

Choose a 21st century platform that can grow with you and you won't need another ERP platform in your lifetime.

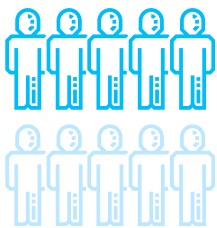
Business challenges facing small and midsize manufacturers



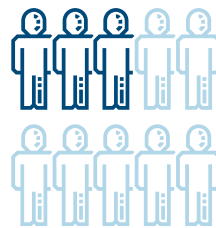
55% of manufacturers say operational inefficiencies are a huge business challenge.



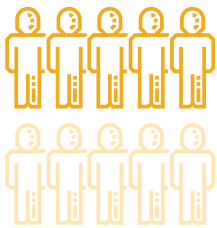
40% say costs are unsustainably high.



50% cite faster time to market needed to meet customer lead times.



33% say too many product integration targets are missed.



46% cite need to fix defects in product performance, costs and services.

80%

of new ERP selections are upgrades from existing ERP systems

Source: ERP's role in the modern manufacturer. Aberdeen Report. February 2017

2

Industry-specific ERP solution and functionality

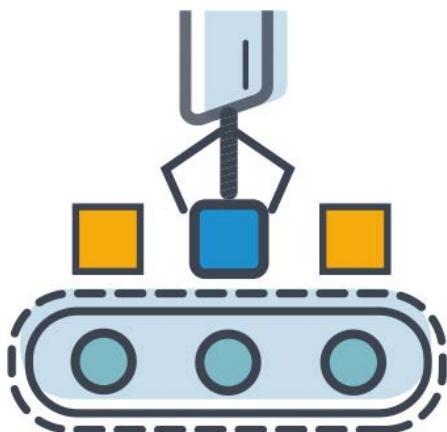
During your ERP selection process, make sure that the ERP software you select is actually designed for your manufacturing business. Purpose-built industry applications deliver functionality that fits the way your manufacturing business works.

Eliminate ERP vendors who insist that your processes can be molded to work with their software. If the application doesn't fit from the get go, it won't fit later. And you will have wasted valuable time and energy.

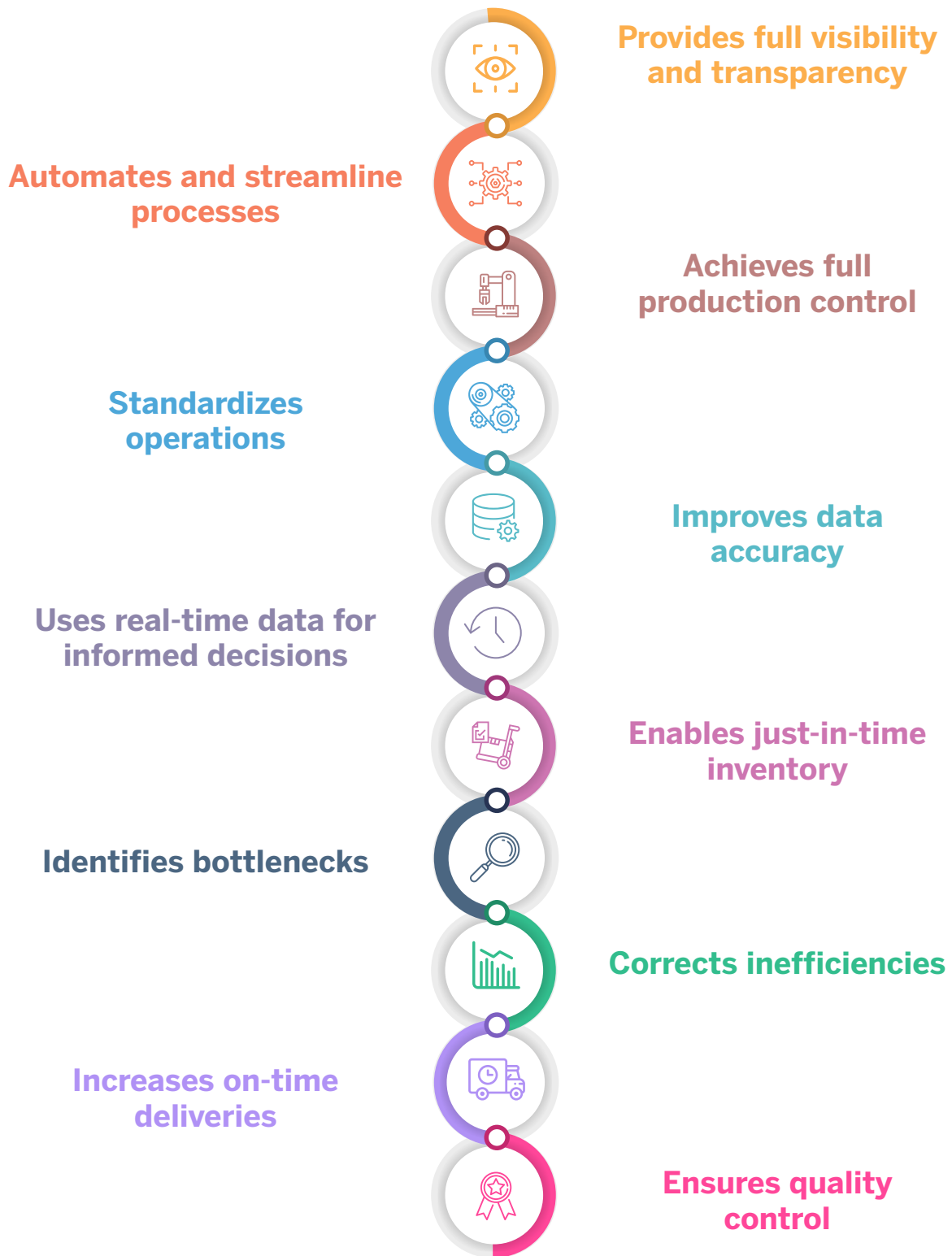
How manufacturing specific ERP works

Manufacturing ERP mirrors your key processes, introducing standardization, automation, collaboration and real-time information for intelligent decision making across your manufacturing operations.

Optimize your business processes and shop floor operations with manufacturing-specific ERP. It's ready to work the way your business does - only better. And it's ready to help you grow, without spreadsheets and stand-alone software.



The benefits of manufacturing-specific ERP



3

Future-ready ERP that helps you compete in the digital age

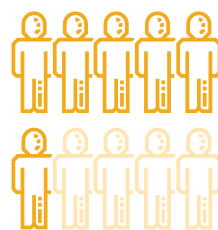
First, there was on-premise ERP. Then the cloud came along, enabling access to a single source of operational data. Now, industry experts are talking about digital as the next big thing. In reality, digital is already here. That's why it's so important to select an ERP solution whose platform can usher you into the 21st century without holding you back.

Defining Digital

Digitalization is the conversion of analog (paper-based processes) into business processes that leverage cloud technology and ERP application innovation.

How to identify digital-ready ERP

- Advanced infrastructure that delivers rapid-loading screens, fewer clicks to user-defined data and robust performance.
- Automatic application updates driven by a commitment to research and development.
- IoT, machine learning, predictive analytics and optimized processes are capabilities of the platform.



60% of all enterprises will be in the process of implementing a new digital experience (DX) platform by 2020.

Source: IDC, October 31, 2017

4

An ERP partner with deep industry expertise

Your ERP partner should act as a trusted guide during every step of the process, beginning with selection and throughout discovery, implementation and customer care. Find out where the ERP vendor stands by asking these 4 questions.

4 questions to ask yourself

1. Do the ERP vendors think of themselves as just software companies?
2. Do the vendors think of themselves as advisors and partners who map complex business process problems?
3. Do the vendors fully understand your manufacturing business and use technology to provide solutions?
4. Do the vendors have enough time for you?

What you should look for in your ERP provider

- A singular focus on delivering industry-specific solutions for your manufacturing business.
- A deep understanding of manufacturing processes and business requirements.
- A purposeful discovery process that both maps your business requirements and informs the way you think about your business priorities.
- An understanding of the particular business challenges that small and midsized manufacturers must overcome.

Expect thought leadership from your ERP vendor

- Insight into industry trends about your business priorities.
- Informed about the competitive landscape.
- Understanding of process improvements from next-generation digital initiatives.

5

ERP sized-right for small and midsized manufacturers

Bigger isn't always better. Keep looking until you find your Goldilocks ERP solution. Just right for what you need to do right now but future-ready for what lies ahead.

Why sized-right ERP matters



It's industry-specific rather than a generic ERP (for multiple industries or even broadly for manufacturing as a whole).



It's focused on your business rather than solutions your business doesn't need.



It's priced within reach of small and midsized manufacturers.



It has fewer screens and mouse clicks between you and what you want to do.

6

Anywhere, anytime ERP with cloud and mobile

Your ERP solution should let you run your business with real-time access to what's going on, whether you are in the office or not. And your shop floor employees should know what job they're working on next without leaving their work center.

Why cloud ERP and mobile solutions matter



Track material, job status, operator and machine availability from a smart device without being tied to the shop floor.



Give workers visibility and clarity about what jobs they're working on and eliminate paper-driven job logs.



Communicate machine down time or work center changes to operators in real time.



Get an accurate reflection of your operations and inventory in your financials.



Run real-time reports and monitor pre-determined KPIs to assess cash flow and confirm or adjust pricing strategies.

What we hear from manufacturers

It's deeply satisfying for us to help small and mid-sized manufacturing businesses maximize their success by delivering a 21st century, industry-specific ERP solution. We talk with a lot of business owners and execs and we listen to what they say. Here's an abbreviated wish list of things that manufacturers tell us they need from their ERP solution:



A solution that will take in orders, help estimate the cost for jobs, send out quotes and plan out business processes.



A solution that allocates labor and materials for each order and delivers detailed updates and reports on the process in real time.



A solution that includes inventory management and barcode tracking of stock items.



A solution that includes a full accounting suite with GL, AR, AP, purchasing and reporting functions.



A solution to track product quality, making sure everything is compliant and up to customer standards.

About OptiProERP

OptiProERP was founded with the vision to solve the 21st century problems that manufacturers face.

Our solution was OptiProERP, a unique manufacturing-specific solution, built on SAP Business One, the #1 ERP platform for small and midsized businesses.

With SAP's continuous 21st century platform innovation, we focus on innovating and developing our industry-specific manufacturing functionality. Instead of adding a layer of code on top of SAP Business One, OptiProERP is built into the DNA of SAP's trusted ERP platform.

The result is a 21st century solution designed to help growing manufacturers gain full visibility and control of their business, reduce production costs, increase profit margins and leverage data to inform intelligent business decisions.

Ready to take the next step in your ERP selection process?
[Drop us a line](#) and let us know how we can help.

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