Upgrading Your ERP

When and Why You Should Upgrade Your ERP

IS IT TIME TO UPGRADE?

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UPGRADING YOUR ERP

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If the current software you're using is responding slower than before or working inefficiently, then it may be time to upgrade or consider an ERP performance assessment. If you are having issues with your current processes or data, then starting fresh with up-to-date software can remedy that and help your business get back on track.

You know why you implemented your first ERP system—to help

When and why you should upgrade your ERP technology can be a significant investment for small- and medium-sized businesses.

There's a temptation to delay upgrades because of the perceived inconvenience and cost. But when it comes to your ERP system, failing to implement new advances can stall your company's growth. ERP upgrades, therefore, ought to be seen as a valuable asset that ensures you save money over the long term.

Is It Time to Upgrade?

If you're like most business owners, you may have grown accustomed to your ERP's little quirks. But if those little quirks are preventing your company from satisfying more customers, perhaps you should consider an ERP upgrade to increase efficiency. Your ERP should, at a minimum, support your company's growth and not impede your extended reach into more markets. Your ERP might be too old when any of the following apply:

You can't get new updates. Users of many legacy systems find that the company that created the software has stopped supporting their version with new updates. While the product may still work for you on a day-to-day basis, this lack of incremental improvements is a sign it will soon be outdated. If you just bought new hardware, like a laptop, and can't load the ERP, that's a sure sign the technology you need to run your ERP is leaving it behind.

You still have multiple systems. ERP by its nature should prevent duplication. But perhaps a company merger or acquisition has left you with several versions of ERP. Your data should be in one place and be easily accessible by people with the right credentials across the organization. If you have to look in more than one place for whatever piece of information you need, it's time to upgrade.

You still have to manually input information more than once. ERP is supposed to solve this data entry issue. But for a number of reasons, you may be in a situation where you have to start from square one with your information. Remember—duplication is never something you want as it increases the possibility of errors and adds extra work.

You are not satisfied with your reporting and data analytics functions. These are vital to modern business and likely a reason you switched to your legacy ERP from your previous IT system in the first place. But reports that gave you up-to-date, relevant and user-friendly information.

10 years ago may look very dated today. Also, your business needs have probably evolved and changed. An advanced ERP can include new information such as analytics from your e-commerce site and offer key insights as to how you might improve operations across your organization.

Your employees complain about inefficiencies. If there are rumblings coming from your office cubicles, listen closely. Your employees might be on to something bigger that's affecting the quality of your product development, manufacturing and customer service. Employees usually know best how to do their jobs and if a computer system is making them frustrated, they are proably not putting their best foot forward for your company.

In modern business culture, not having immediate access to information is a competitive disadvantage, regardless of your industry. Consumers have a wide variety of choice, and if you can't give your customer an immediate answer, they can switch to your competitor who can. By the same token, if you're the one with the answer, you can beat out the company that's also vying for that customer's business.

Legacy ERP systems also require ongoing maintenance that may hinder your ability to run your business. The extra cost in employee time and IT support to keep aging systems functioning adequately causes your balance sheet to take a hit, even in the short term.

Advantages of a New ERP

New ERP systems have improved functionality that simply didn't exist 15 or even 10 years ago. These advances have been in step with the changing nature of technology and evolving consumer preferences. Increasingly, your customers are looking up product information on their phones and expect interactive information from your company through mobile.

This kind of improvement not only lets you keep step with your fast-moving industry, but allows your company employees to work better together. Improved ERP means real-time access to the same information from everywhere, so your employees can serve clients wherever they are and don't need to check in to the office.

Consider ERP Cloud

Take new and improved ERP one step further with ERP in the cloud, which is exactly as it sounds: your company's ERP system operates in the cloud rather than on company-owned servers.

The benefits to this approach extend beyond reduced hardware and IT support costs. The ubiquitous nature of the cloud enables you to expand or relocate your brick and mortar business without having to move or acquire new ERP hardware and software. Your data is safe in the hands of a reputable cloud ERP vendor that provides file backup and disaster recovery planning. The ERP cloud service that you purchase can be changed in scale to accommodate growth or downsizing more easily than an in-house ERP configuration. The advantages to cloud ERP are enough to make this an option worth considering.

How to Upgrade

Check to see if a newer software version, or products from different vendors like PeopleSoft, Oracle E-Business and JD Edwards, can optimize your IT. An improved user experience using the latest technology can increase collaboration and maximize your efficiency.

While an upgrade may seem like a substantial cost, it saves you money in the long term and vastly improves your ability to do business. It's also probably a lot cheaper than you think. Upgrading ERP needs to be done right in order to ensure you get the system that works best for you. Get in touch with the experts who know the complicated ins and outs of ERP. These experts can get your system running the way you know it should to support your business.

Given the wide range of business processes affected by an ERP project, it's important to have access to experts who are intimately familiar with the enterprise application. However, recruiting and retaining these professionals can be difficult and often does not make fiscal sense. SmartERP's extensive experience in business applications, assists organizations with an end-to-end solution offering right design/implementation to post-implementation support. With comprehensive domain knowledge of business applications, Smart ERP facilitates effective decision making and enables customers to meet their business requirements, with a focus on quality, knowledge transfer and process simplification.

" Our goal is to help you implement business solutions that effectively support your business process, not functional silos. "

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SMART BRIEFS - THE CASE FOR UPGRADING YOUR ERP SYSTEM

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For more information
on the next steps to your upgrade
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