

Back the right ERP solution to win

Purchasing and implementing an ERP system is a complex undertaking and continues to be regarded as a high-risk project by most companies. Subject expert UXC Eclipse offers its top recommendations for successfully choosing and implementing a new ERP solution...

Understand the business requirements and engage key stakeholders

An organisation must fully understand the problem it is trying to solve. This sounds simple, yet remains one of the biggest stumbling blocks. Teams often haven't mapped the current business processes so they cannot fully understand the end result of what they are requesting. If you start by understanding what is working and what isn't you can identify best practices and take full advantage of the functionality and workflow offered by a new ERP system.

Equally important is engaging leadership and consultants early enough in the process to manage expectations and ensure the best possible results. Once a project starts, it is difficult to change direction without significant cost, weakening of the design and delays. This can lead to missed market opportunities and rapidly turn initial internal enthusiasm into antipathy of the new system.

Choosing the right technology

There is a wide range of ERP solutions available, from monolithic ERP solutions and mid-market ERP solutions, to industry specific ERP solutions and everything in between. Choosing a solution isn't just about price. It's important to look at a variety of parameters. We suggest you consider:

- depth of functionality
- industry-specific features
- ease of support
- future development path
- flexibility to adapt to the changing business model
- integration with existing / future systems

- cloud versus on-premise reporting and analytics tools

Industry specific solutions deliver deep functionality combined with the technology, upgrade path and fundamental benefits of out-of-the-box applications, without the risks associated with typical customised legacy systems.

Future-proof the decision

Choosing an ERP solution is not a quick-fix job. It's a project which requires extensive planning and attention to detail. Therefore, it is important to select a solution that maps as closely as possible to the current and future requirements of the business.

With this in mind, it is best to look for an implementation partner which isn't tied to one ERP solution. Companies that work exclusively with one product will, of course, recommend that solution, but this means that better suited products may be overlooked.

Look for a strategic partner

An ERP implementation is a major IT infrastructure project. A successful project will depend highly on the accomplishments of the partner. They should be stable, financially secure, well referenced and reliable. The right ERP implementation partner will have strong skills in technology, business applications and project management as well as expertise in your particular industry.

The best possible starting point for an ERP partner is to invest time in understanding your business goals and strategies, so they can act as a true partner and an extension of the customer's internal



project team. An ERP project is not about simply installing some software. There are many stakeholders and complex, mission-critical business processes involved. This means a high quality of work is required, with the scope for customisation and the need for appropriate (technical) support.

Here are the key attributes to take into consideration when choosing an ERP implementation partner:

- Experience: Look for a partner that has managed different projects and has run implementation teams in similar industries. Experience will mean the company has the ability to foresee issues and solve them quickly. The value of experience is almost immeasurable so check the credentials of the people who will be working on the project.
- Knowledge: An ERP implementation is incredibly complex. Make sure your partner company



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has the technical know-how for the project, from security to networking to service and enterprise architecture.

- Attitude and work-ethic: Look for a passionate team, which can deliver the right support and commercial people. With a business-critical project such as this, the team should not be afraid to work extra hours to get the job done and should be invested in the success of the project.


- Communication skills: Your partner company needs to be able to communicate at all levels in the organisation – from ground staff, to managers and the leadership team. Regular communications on the progress of the project are required, and any hurdles or issues need to be flagged as soon as possible. Transparency and clarity are key to the success of a project.

- Self-awareness: It’s important to understand

where each person fits within the project and how this contributes to the overall success.

Post-implementation support for ongoing success

The implementation of an ERP solution is a long-term investment, which requires continued input from your chosen partner. When the project is finished, it’s not the end of the story. There needs to be a clear support mechanism for changes to the system and your partner should be looking at modification and optimisation continuously.

It is also important to make sure your internal team has the right training and education so they have the skills they need by the end of the implementation process. Involving the entire team with the new system will add to the success of the project and its adoption into business processes. 

FOR MORE INFORMATION//

This article was supplied to *iStart* by UXC Eclipse, formerly Eclipse Computing. For more information on UXC Eclipse’s ERP experience and strategy, contact:

Australia:

1300 660 471
info@uxceclipse.com.au
www.uxceclipse.com.au

New Zealand:

0800 472 962
info@uxceclipse.co.nz
www.uxceclipse.co.nz