

REGION FOCUS: WORLDWIDE

EVALUATING ERP SOLUTIONS: Advice and Checklists for Service Organizations



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Introduction

More of the workforce is now remote.

Disruptions are reshaping services organizations.

- ✔ **Systems are still disconnected**, resulting in a lack of real-time information
- ✔ Data driven decisions are **challenging due to inconsistency**
- ✔ Difficulty in **connecting operations with strategy**
- ✔ Historical patterns for predictive purposes are **no longer relevant**
- ✔ **Digital advancements and remote work** are driving essential change
- ✔ Services organizations need their **technology to provide a better people experience**
- ✔ **Innovation acceleration is creating new value streams** for services organizations



“Moving to the cloud was the only way we have been able to remain competitive.”

Professional services organization

Legacy ERP Systems Hinder Speed, Scale, Agility, and Resilience

Legacy systems encounter a range of issues:

- ✗ Organizational changes are time consuming and expensive
- ✗ Connection doesn't occur across the organization due to fragmented systems
- ✗ Data is separate from points of need
- ✗ Slowed automation and batch updates increase decision time
- ✗ Business processes either overlap or miss major aspects
- ✗ Too many screens must be utilized to navigate and get to an outcome
- ✗ Analysis takes weeks due to over reliance on standalone databases and Excel



“Our world is now digital and if we hadn't shifted to a cloud ERP application, we would not have been able to keep up with our business demands.”

Architecture and engineering organization

The Digital World: Speed, Scale, Agility, and Resilience Requires Modern, Modular ERP

Resiliency requires agility and visibility

Economic Headwinds



Geopolitical conflict



Supply chain



Currency fluctuation



Inflation



Recession

Modern and Modular
Multitenant Cloud ERP

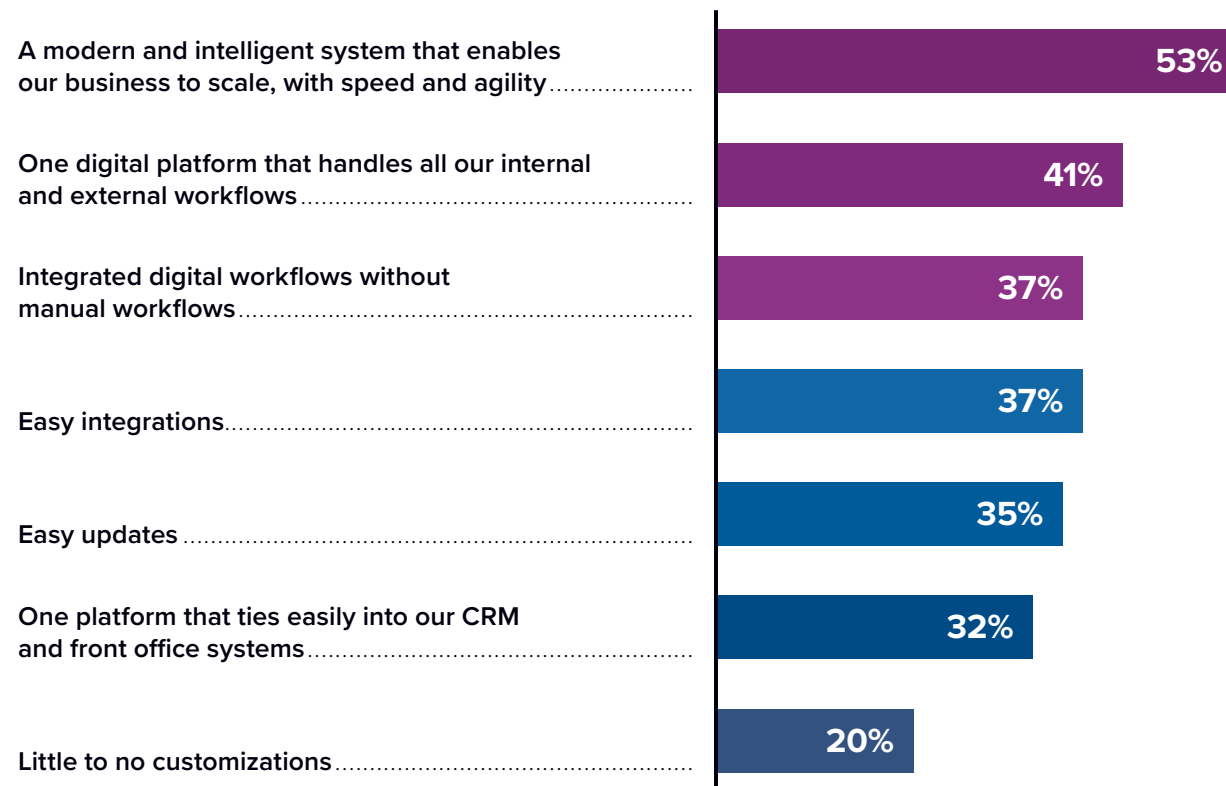


Business Requirements

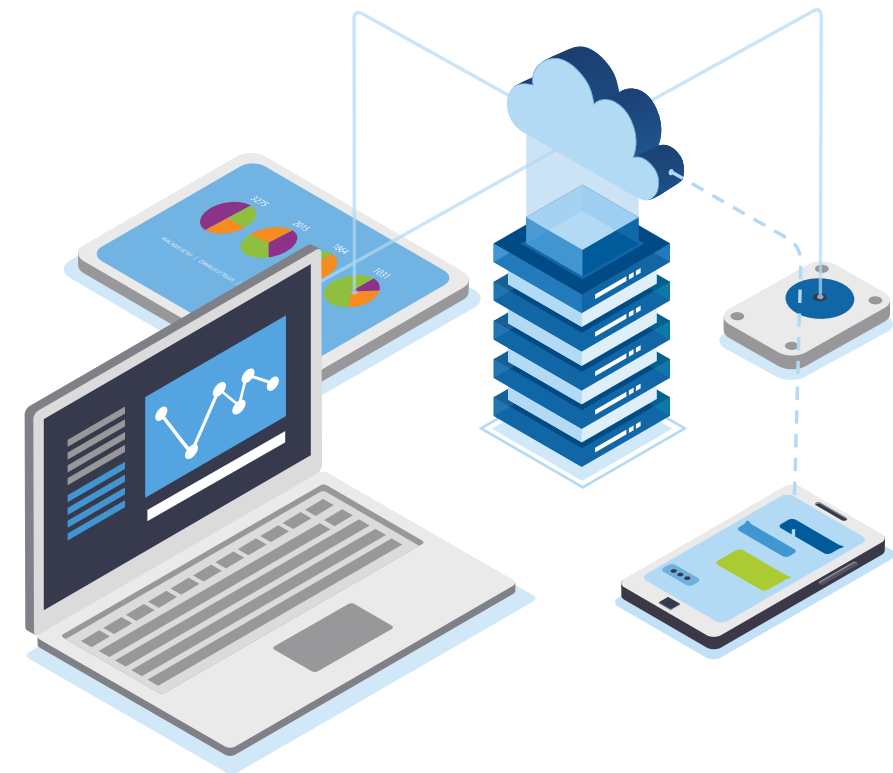
- ✓ Modular to adjust organizations
- ✓ Smart invoice processing
- ✓ Smart payments
- ✓ Smart direct debit collection
- ✓ Employee engagement
- ✓ FP&A budgeting and planning
- ✓ Statement processing
- ✓ Workflow management to adjust processes

Cloud ERP Helps Organizations Tackle the Disruption

What is your vision of the perfect ERP system?



Source: IDC's SaaSPath 2022, surveyed over 2,000 executives across 23 different applications areas



“If we hadn’t invested in our cloud ERP system, we would have shut our doors when the community needed us most.”

Non-profit organization

The Benefits of Cloud ERP

- ✓ **Modern**, enabling the employee to work anywhere and anytime
- ✓ **Manages massive data sets**, tying them to analytics and turning data into action in real time
- ✓ **Connects** across customers, suppliers, and employees
- ✓ **Scalable** because it can run in the cloud, enabling it to grow and contract based on business requirements
- ✓ **Agile and real-time**, providing employees more ability to think, understand, and move quickly with intelligent decision making
- ✓ **Compliant globally** with segregation of duties in accounting, material management, and supply chain track-and-trace
- ✓ **Collaborative** so the entire enterprise can work together, extending into the global network of suppliers, contingent labor, and supply chains
- ✓ **Innovative**, using intelligent workflows and multiple data sets to innovate and scale fast
- ✓ **Integrated**, connecting quickly and easily to other systems

“Connecting our employees regardless of their location enabled our organization to be agile, work collaboratively in real time, and meet our customers’ requirements.”

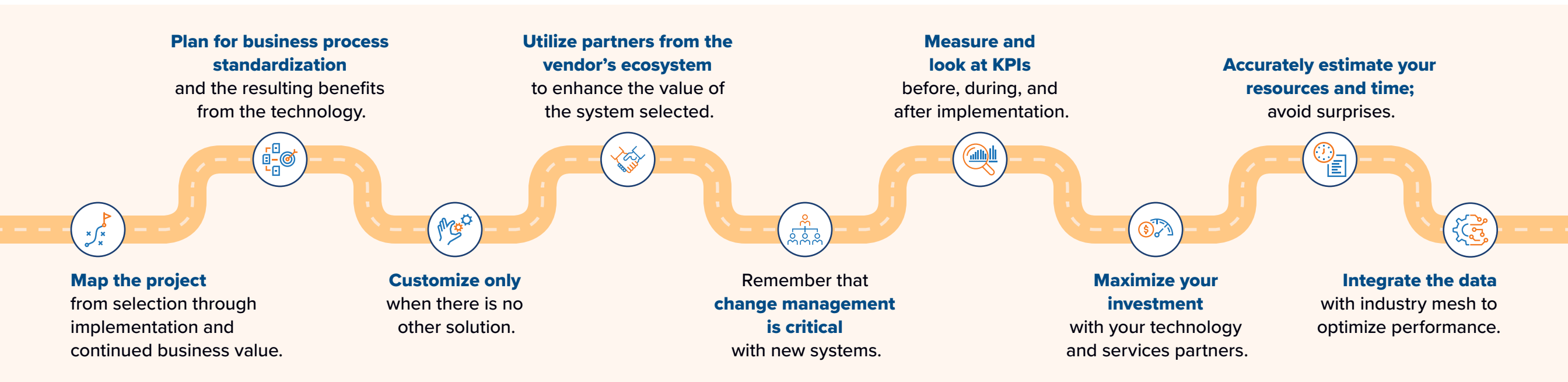
Media organization

Cloud ERP Technology Evaluation Checklist


Finding the right cloud ERP technology vendor requires an evaluation checklist:


- Can the system scale as we grow?
- Can we make regular changes to the system or our processes without major disruption or excessive cost?
- Does the cloud ERP solution focus on my industry with efficient and services-minded business processes?
- Is the solution available anywhere and anytime?
- Is it multitenant SaaS, modular, and configurable?
- Is the solution innovative, using AI/ML, predictive analytics, virtual assistants/chatbots, natural language processing, and intuitive UIs?
- Does the cloud ERP have real-time data, even as it manages massive data sets, for the entire organization?
- Is it people-centric with actionable outcome-based workflows?
- Does the solution use automation to improve accuracy and save users time?
- Does the workflow send alerts to notify users of actions and problems?
- Does the cloud ERP use predictive analytics and scenario planning?
- Does it provide financial planning and analysis?
- Are there talent management capabilities?
- Do the references of the cloud ERP vendor have commonalities with my business and operating style?
- What is on the product road map in the next six months and within 1–3 years? How will this impact my organization?
- Does the product pricing support my business overall? What do I need to do now versus the future?


Actions to Drive Success for Your Services Cloud ERP System




51% of organizations consider themselves a digital business, while 49% are still transforming. Both need the right enabling technology to run their operations. Their top project priorities are:

 **30%**
Generate a quick ROI

 **24%**
Reduce costs of current systems

 **23%**
Enable easy execution

 **21%**
Create operational efficiencies in financial reporting, project management, and employee experience

n = 694. Source: IDC's COVID-19 Impact on IT Spending Survey (May 21–28 period), May 2020

Pitfalls to Avoid and Top Tips to Assist with Cloud ERP

Pitfall

- ✘ Choosing a tool that cannot grow or contract with your business.
- ✘ Accepting the status quo on your known processes.
- ✘ Living with unhappy employees frustrated by outdated systems.
- ✘ Ignoring the gaps that exist across functions and around manual and semiautomated business processes.
- ✘ Assuming the product will completely change and digitize your organization.
- ✘ Adding to the project scope — a sure sign of a failed implementation.
- ✘ Thinking that implementation is the entire project.
- ✘ Going full speed ahead without navigation, courting disaster.

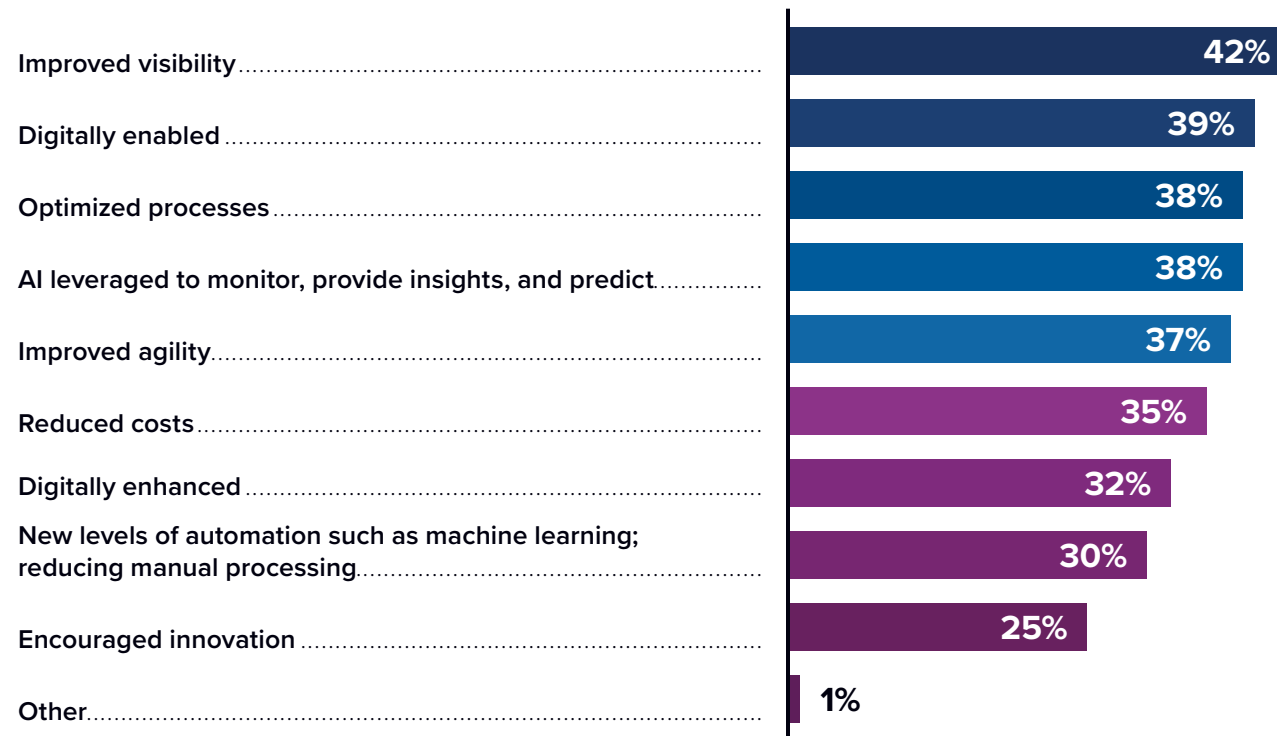
Top Tip

- ✔ Select a tool that can grow and contract with your business and enable smoother and more insightful processes. It must be faster, provide real-time information, and allow your organization to work smarter and better together.
- ✔ Challenge your internal thinking on your known processes for new methodologies yielding better performance.
- ✔ Enhance the employee experience by integrating data with all business processes.
- ✔ Make automation and digitization the new paradigm for your organization.
- ✔ Align the organization on digital transformation as a goal.
- ✔ Minimize scope creep to reduce frustration while keeping the project on time and within budget.
- ✔ Remember that governance, compliance, resources, and recognizing solid KPI improvement are all components of a successful implementation.
- ✔ Use your brakes and stop scope creep, or reset your organization, the vendors, and partners on your project requirements and goals.

ERP Systems Enable Business Resiliency

Organizational resiliency is the ability for an organization to rapidly adapt and respond to disruptions while maintaining continuous operations and its core sense of purpose.

How has/will the move to a new ERP system impact your business outcomes?



“We can’t be resilient without the right technology. We rely on our ERP system to keep us resilient.”

Services organization



n = 149. Source: IDC's SaaSPath 2022, surveyed over 2,000 executives across 23 different applications areas

The Right Cloud ERP Enables You To...

- ✓ Grow as the organization while **remaining resilient**
- ✓ Become a **people-focused company**
- ✓ Adapt and optimize based on the market utilizing **microservices, extensible ERP, digital assistance and enhanced UI**
- ✓ Bring trust and empathy with **on-demand usage and visibility into real-time data**
- ✓ Be an intelligent organization with a **great workforce experience**
- ✓ Improve operational excellence with the **right focus on resources, projects, and outcomes**
- ✓ Lower overall costs by **freeing up your IT department from routine expenses**
- ✓ Faster software updates with SaaS including **greater flexibility and easy scalability**
- ✓ Reduces IT capital expenditures including **lower database administration, upgrades and support costs**
- ✓ Increase data security with **high standards in privacy and compliance**
- ✓ Reduce maintenance needs so the **focus is on business continuity and the operations**

“We used to have long engagements, mismanage our resources and left money on the table because we couldn’t monitor our projects well until we utilized the right modern and modular ERP solution. Now we have a winning formula.”

Professional services organization

“Investing in the right ERP system has proven to be the single most productive investment for us this year.”

Services organization

About the IDC Analyst



Mickey North Rizza

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Mickey leads the Enterprise Applications and Strategies research service along with a team of analysts responsible for IDC's coverage of next generation of enterprise applications including digital commerce, employee experience, enterprise asset management and smart facilities, ERP, financial applications, HCM and payroll applications, procurement, professional services automation and related project-based solutions software, supply chain automation, and talent acquisition and strategies. In her role, Mickey and the team advises clients on these intelligent, modern, and modular enterprise applications for businesses of all sizes with an emphasis on the key trends, opportunities, innovation and the IT and Business Buyer concerns, requirements, and buyer behaviors.

[More about Mickey North Rizza](#)

Message from the Sponsor



Unit4 ERP: Right for Your People, Right for Your Business

Organizational resilience requires proactive management and a culture focused on noticing and responding to challenges and opportunities.

With Unit4, your business can achieve this through increased collaboration between finance, HR, and project teams on one tightly integrated cloud platform, built for flexibility.

Our ERP solution seamlessly integrates with your existing digital products and data sources, meeting your industry's unique needs and simplifying complexity. We empower your people with user-friendly, automated systems and insights, as well as enabling their own learning and career progression.

Quickly respond to change, streamline your organization, achieve your goals, and attract and retain top talent. ERP just got a whole lot easier.

[Find out more about our ERP](#)

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