



# Navigating ERP Selection: **A Guide for Process Manufacturers**

A Roadmap for ERP Selection in  
Today's Digital World

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# Introduction

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Selecting the right ERP system is critical for process manufacturers looking to enhance efficiency, meet compliance requirements, and stay competitive. This guide outlines key considerations and common challenges faced by manufacturers to help you navigate the complexities of ERP selection.

So, let's get to it.

Here's your roadmap with the six things we advise process manufacturers like you to consider on your journey to select a new ERP solution in today's digital world.

# Modern Technology and Platform

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

## What Modern ERP can do for your business

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

## Issues faced with outdated ERP

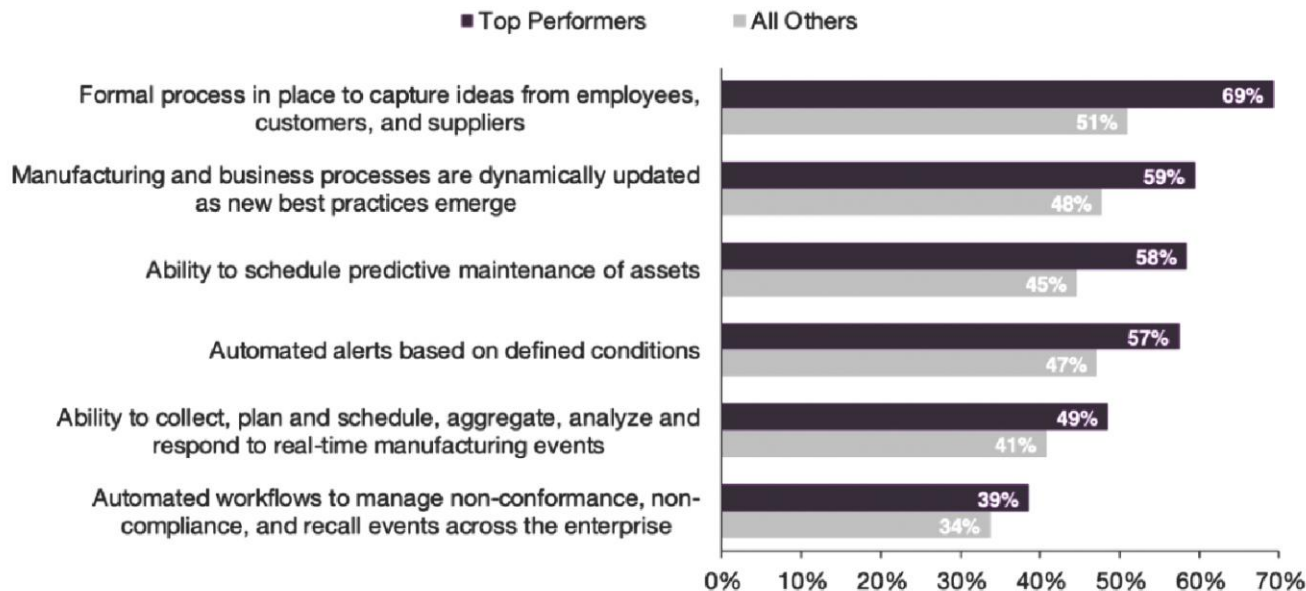
- Difficult to integrate, scale, or stay current with business needs.
- Frequent system glitches that require reboot.
- A mix of out-of-date software and time-consuming manual processes.
- Difficulty leveraging data to generate reports and analytics.
- Not-so seamless integration between finance and plant floor operations.
- Critical data is distributed across multiple screens, requiring multiple clicks.

## Beware of ERP that can't grow with you

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

Choose a modern platform that can grow with you, and you won't need another ERP platform for many years.

## Process Optimization: High Priority for Top Performing Manufacturers



Percent of respondents, n=262  
Source: Aberdeen, December 2021

## Challenges for Manufacturers

- Fluctuating customer demand
- Variable inventory needs
- Shortage of skilled workers
- Little opportunity to consider strategic goals
- Supply chain vulnerabilities
- Lack of efficient processes and tools



# Industry-Specific Features and Functionality

Manufacturers and distributors must choose an ERP system tailored to their industry-specific requirements. Purpose-built solutions provide the functionality to support and optimize your unique business operations.

Avoid ERP vendors who claim your processes can adapt to their software. If the system isn't the right fit from the start, it won't be later—costing you valuable time and resources.

## Here's what an ERP should do:

- Standardize workflows to enhance compliance and efficiency.
- Automate routine tasks to minimize errors and save time.
- Provide real-time tracking for inventory and production processes.

Tailored ERP systems align with the specific needs of industries such as food and beverage, chemicals, nutraceuticals, and personal care, reducing the reliance on spreadsheets or standalone software.



# The Benefits of Process Manufacturing-Specific ERP

1

Provides full visibility and transparency



2

Automates and streamlines processes



3

Achieves full production and control



4

Standardizes operations



5

Formulation management tailored to batch production



6

Uses real-time data for informed decision-making



7

Enables just-in-time inventory



8

Accurate lot traceability and compliance support



9

Automated regulatory reporting (e.g., FDA, EPA, GMP)



10

Optimized production scheduling and resource planning



# Future-Proofing with Digital Transformation

Digital transformation has reshaped the manufacturing landscape, and ERP systems play a central role in this evolution. When evaluating ERP options, consider:

Key features of a digital-ready ERP:

- Advanced infrastructure for enhanced performance and accessibility.
- Integration of advanced tools like IoT, machine learning, and predictive analytics.
- Automated updates to ensure your system remains current.

Defining Digital:

A digital-ready ERP system provides the foundation for leveraging new technologies to streamline operations and improve outcomes.

Manufacturers implementing **digital transformation strategies** see an average 45% increase in operational efficiency and a 30% reduction in production costs.

Source: Deloitte, 2024





# Choosing the Right ERP Partner

ERP selection extends beyond software to the partnership with the provider.  
A good ERP partner should:

- Understand the unique challenges of process manufacturing.
- Offer guidance throughout the implementation process.
- Provide long-term support and insight into industry trends.
- Collaborate to address your specific business needs.

To ensure a successful implementation, evaluate potential partners based on their expertise, discovery approach, commitment to customer support, and their ability to provide a full-range of services both for your known and unpredicted needs.



# Scaling Smart: ERP Sized for Your Business

Choosing an ERP system that aligns with your business size and goals is crucial. Consider:

- Functionality that addresses current and future needs.
- Scalability to support growth without unnecessary complexity.
- Aligns with your budget now and in the future.

Finding the right balance ensures that your ERP system supports your operations without overwhelming them.



# Anywhere Access: Mobility and Cloud ERP

Modern ERP systems should enable real-time access to operational data from anywhere. Key benefits of mobility and cloud-based ERP include:



Real-time tracking of inventory, production, and job statuses.



Improved communication between the production floor and office teams.



On-the-go access for remote decision-making.



Enhanced visibility into operations and financial performance.

Cloud ERP systems provide the flexibility needed for today's fast-paced manufacturing environments.





# Insights from Process Manufacturers

Below is feedback from industry-leading process manufacturers on their priorities for ERP systems.



Standardized processes and best practices that can be easily adhered to.



Simplified processes that reduce manual intervention.



Real-time inventory and production tracking.



Integrated financial tools for streamlined accounting.



Comprehensive tools for industry-specific needs.

Understanding these needs can help you prioritize features during your ERP selection process.

This guide serves as a starting point for selecting an ERP system tailored to the unique requirements of process manufacturers. By focusing on functionality, technology, scalability, and partnership, you can identify a solution that supports your goals today and into the future.

