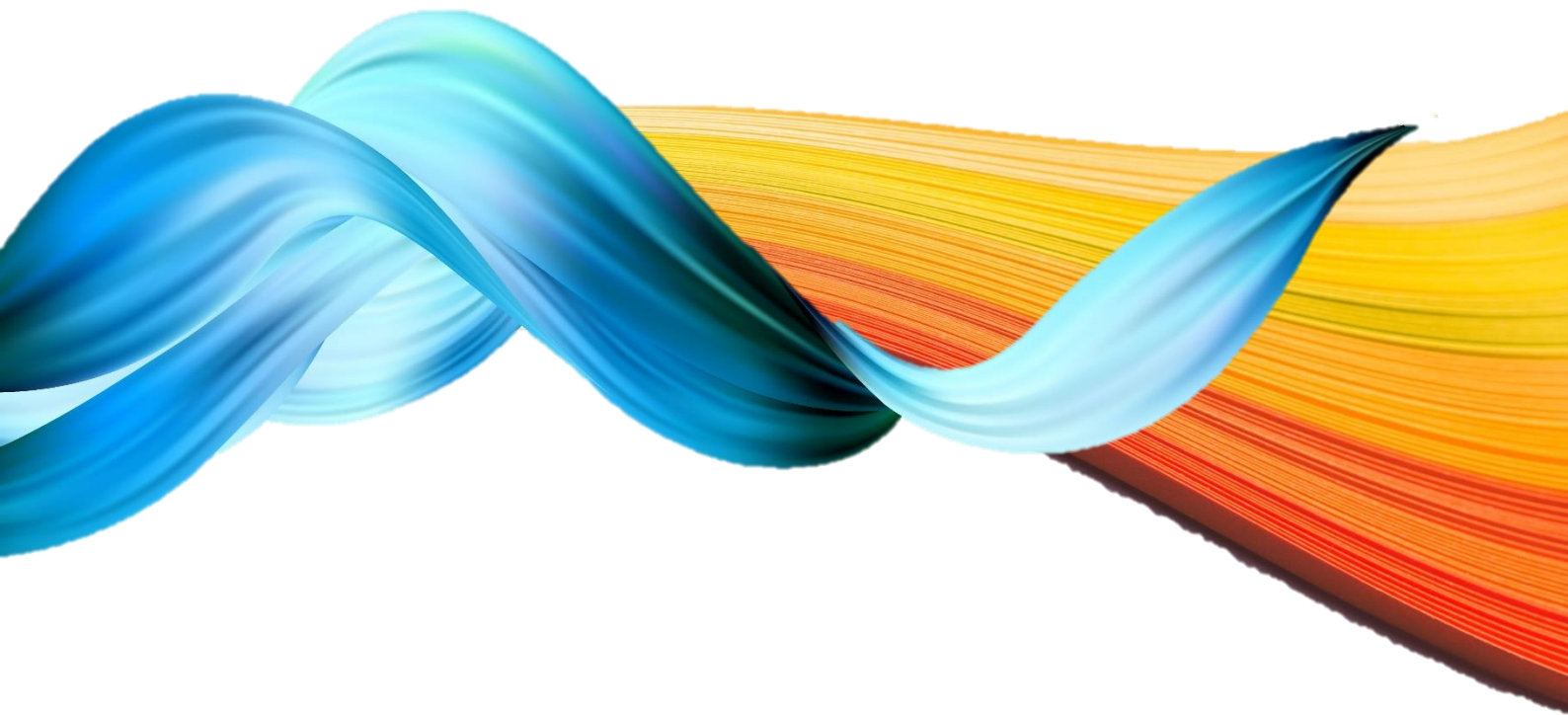# Buyers' Guide to ERP Business Management Software

Introduction:

ERP, or in other words "Enterprise Resource Planning", the overwhelming understanding can be quite confusing for beginners.

If you are a new business, an evolving business or a business which is experiencing high levels of growth then to look at all the different types of ERP solutions can be quite a daunting step. The automation of your business processes is a strategic investment for any organisation and finding the right vendor partner is critical for your future success.

That's where APH can help you understand the routes forward and discover the basics, the detailed and the understanding of what ERP is and how it can help your business.

To understand how an ERP solution can transform your business you need to understand and take a step back from the bigger picture. By understanding the various processes in which you need and use daily and which you think you would benefit the most from by automating. It's all about understanding the essentials behind your business and the processes which you couldn't keep on track without.

ERP helps attack common business issues and can help influence the way you trade. Covering sectors including human resources, accounting, inventory and order management, customer relationship management (CRM) and furthermore.

The purpose of this buyers' guide is to help educate and explore the level of value ERP can bring to your business, identifying the different types of ERP and how the solutions can open doors for businesses which are experiencing limitations to growth and development. This guide highlights on the main questions to ask yourself before purchasing any software, by understanding what type of buyer you are, the products you would benefit from and the services you may require.

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Recognising the need for an ERP system within your business

What are the main questions to ask yourself?

What business problems are you trying to solve with an ERP system?

What are you looking for out of an ERP Solution?

On-premises or cloud?

Value of ERP to your busines

An ERP Solution helps employees work more efficiently by collectively engaging data to be more accurate. Known for breaking down the barriers between departments helps for a more collaborative way of work.

ERP Solution in greater depth:

- **Enhances customer service –** by streamlining backend business processes to increase user experience by a more effective use of accurate data.
- **Automates core business operations –** strips away errors using integrated applications which manage real-time visibility and control of business processes.
- **Gives real time data accuracy –** Improves data accuracy and efficiency by automated processes making systems more secure.

With an ERP solution, your business processes are enhanced to become more centralised and to consolidate accurate information based on the way in which you trade. Helping you to make better decisions faster whilst dramatically lowering costs and eliminating unwanted processes and systems.

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Buyers type guide:

What type of buyer are you? – Understanding your enterprise and what you need

- In need of basic functionalities in the easiest and least expensive way.

- Focus to deal with business scalability, integration and complexity in business levels.

- In need of a complete ERP suite revamp to streamline and optimise processes on every level of the organisation.

- Specific business requirements: Purchasing modular processes which automate business functions.

- Industry specific: An ERP designed specifically for my industry, moulded around my product and service which I offer.

Focusing on your ERP system product Requirements:

Once you have determined your buyer type then you will need to analyse what your requirements are to make your business processes easier.

Types of products available:

- Financial Management
- Human Capital Management
- Manufacturing Management
- Project Management
- Supply Chain Management
- Customer Relationship Management
- Supplier Relationship Management
- Product Lifecycle Management

Outlining all the different types of products which an ERP system can help tackle your business issues. You need to analyse the factors against what improvement of development you would like to make. ERP systems are here to make your business processes run smoother and more effectively against time to help save costs and excel your level of growth.

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We asked ERP buyers what would be the number one advice that they would give to someone who is looking at purchasing an ERP system.

APH really took the time to understand our organisation's needs and to put together an SAP Business One solution which cover all areas of business…

APH helped to provide system processes to support our growth plans for the business…

APH continually update us with the latest news and updates to improve our system processes using SAP Business One…

APH have help to develop a system that automates and improves our business processes. We now have a far more intuitive, efficient system aligned with our business goals…

APH enabled us to unlock the full potential of the system, we now have a fully integrated ecommerce operation with our ERP software, which makes for massive efficiency improvements and much greater business intelligence. It genuinely is a great platform for business productivity and growth…

SAP Business One has been transformative. APH guided us through the entire process, really taking the time to understand our processes, our needs, and our objectives, so we've got a deployment that really works for us….

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Cloud ERP Vs On-premise ERP

One of the first decisions when choosing the right ERP system for your business would be to decide whether to go for a cloud-based ERP solution or one that's installed via servers managed locally, known as on-premise solutions.

On-premise ERP Solutions – these are installed locally on your company's hardware and servers and then managed by our IT staff.

Cloud ERP Solutions – also known as SaaS (software as service) through which users can access ERP software through the cloud. Typically provided as part of a subscription service which is hosted by the provider on their servers. Limiting the server administration requirements.

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	ON-PREMISE ERP SYSTEM	CLOUD-BASED ERP SYSTEM
COSTS	Requires a large upfront and ongoing investment to purchase and develop software to help maintain the systems and to keep everything secure.	Lower in initial costs due to software being accessed through the Internet. ERP provider hosts and maintains the whole Infrastructure for you.
PERFORMANCE	Requires frequent attention to make sure the software is being optimised and maintained to make sure they are meeting your business needs	Adaptable to your business needs, designed to optimise high performance through the infrastructure which is already supplied in the cloud.
SYSTEM ENHANCEMENTS	Systems can be customised around specific requirements of your business allowing ERP to adapt around your needs.	Systems can be customised around your specific requirements. Updates are handled by the software provider meaning you are using up to date software.
SECURITY	Businesses are responsible for ERP security from end-to-end. The on-site servers house all the data.	Security is shared between businesses and the cloud ERP provider.
ACCESSIBILITY	Accessible on desktops and hand-held devices which are on premises.	Available on any device with an Internet Connection.
DEPLOYMENT	Typical deployment time: 12 months. Time can be time consuming due to finding the suitable infrastructure and hardware to fit around your business needs.	Typical deployment time: 3-6 months. IT infrastructure is already in the cloud and you would be using infrastructure which is already in place.

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Conclusion

The term ERP can be quite daunting to come to terms with. With the number of systems to choose from, making sure your business captures the right provider will help enhance your business model. All the characteristics of an ERP can some way influence a level of growth to your business, giving it opportunities to automate, secure and develop your company on multiple platforms.

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