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How to choose a partner for your ERP system?

During the implementation of an **ERP** system, noticeable transformations occur at the organizational level of the company. With regard to the process of choosing an **ERP** system, three critical criteria are to be considered:

- Line of Work functionalities (Standard modules and Customization)
- Technical Infrastructure and Architecture
- Publisher Sustainability

When choosing which system to implement, the independence of the external consultant and the impartiality of the most influential members of the decision-making team are to be assessed as the financial stakes of **ERP** projects are often sizeable.

The implantation of an **ERP** system aims at bringing change to organization and demands the collaboration of different stakeholders within a company; this project is not simply related to IT, but is indeed a project aimed at organizing processes.

A project of organisation requires an investment in time to create ideas, implement them and have them adopted by everyone concerned.

Each organization being unique, the project of installing an **ERP** has to take into account the number of functional modules, the critical path of the project (order of deployment of the functional modules) and the implementation schedule.

Knowing precisely each modification of the processes of the company enables structuring decisions to be made in order to define the parameters of the **ERP**.

Applying such a business solution has a direct impact on business processes and thus on the daily lives of users. For this reason, an **ERP** project must be divided into phases. Each one of these phases calls upon specific competencies in order to allow a seamless implementation.

The success of an **ERP** project depends on the ability of an organization to consider the human aspects that emerge throughout the implementation of a new technology. Managing change and learning processes (i.e. apprenticeship of users, skills development, creation and communication of knowledge, changing practices) is crucial to a successful project execution.

The implementation methodology of INTEGRA e-business™ as expressed by the professionals at JBM Logic Inc

In regard to the setting-up of an information system such as the **ERP**, our methodology follows a logical and practical approach. This methodology is tested and true, as it represents the fruit of our expertise which has evolved progressively in congruence with our experience.

The goal of our methodology is to provide a solid framework in order to achieve and even exceed the targets set for a successful implementation. Our methodology is also adaptable to the specific needs of each mandate that we carry out.

The steps necessary for launching the project

1. Project Definition
2. Specific Needs Analysis (process and resources)
3. Implantation and Deployment of the tool by specific development or the defining of parameters
4. Knowledge Sharing and Training
5. Full documentation of processes of the company and their use in e-business INTEGRA™

There exists a risk factor in implementing an **ERP** system if the following three factors are not respected: cost, quality, and deadlines. This is why it is essential to understand and break down every phase of the project, which our teams do systematically.

Project Definition: This phase involves clearly assessing and understanding short and long-term objectives as defined by Management (i.e. knowing all of our client's current operations). At this point, a committee composed of a multidisciplinary team, comprised of the JBM Logic Inc team as well as those of our client, is to be formed. This committee will be responsible for defining and approving schedules, evaluating work progress and overcoming the constraints that may arise during the execution of the project.

Specific Needs Analysis: This is a major step as each section identified in the definition of the project will be meticulously analysed. Working practices inside the organization must be fully understood and assimilated, which will make it possible to suggest necessary improvements to meet the objectives of the company. Thanks to this identification task, the work force will be able to define the type of parameters that need to be configured for the INTEGRA e-business™ application, in order to respond to the present and future needs of the organization in a measured and personalized manner.

Implantation and Deployment: At this level, the parameters of the new solution, having been defined in the previous steps, are now ready to move to the production stage. At this time, our customer disposes of the entire functional solution. The software and databases are installed and configured according to the planned infrastructure. The telecommunication links are also checked. The application is installed on stations as designated by our customer. The whole solution is tested before being put into use.

Knowledge Sharing and Training: For optimal use of the new information system, this phase is essential and consists of developing a solid knowledge base for the primary users of INTEGRA e-business™. These same users will subsequently train other users.

For successful learning, it is essential during all these steps to establish close collaboration between the JBM Logic Inc teams and the client. To this end, a tool for the sharing and transferring of knowledge is used: the TWIKI central platform. This platform is accessible by username and password and constitutes a solid knowledge base, thus documenting the transition between the old system and the new INTEGRA e-business™. (For more information visit: <http://www.twiki.org>)

Migration Procedure from version 4x to version 5x of INTEGRA e-business™

INTEGRA e-business™ version 4 will gradually give way to the new generation of modules and functionalities (version 5.5), which is already being used by 30% of our customers.

The methodology that consists in migrating one version of INTEGRA e-business™ to another was tailor-made for our partners who are directly involved in the migration process from start-to-finish. This migration begins with constant communication on all the "ins and outs" of the whole process.

The information, documentation and functionalities on the new generation of INTEGRA e-business™ are available on demand.

With close collaboration with our partners, a migration plan including the different key-steps is initiated within the set timeframe in order to respect the launch-date established in advance with our partner.

The internal processes of your company are subject to validation and verification so that the new version of INTEGRA e-business™ meets your expectations. Thus, we can ensure that the customized reports that you will use are compliant and functional with the newer version. We also take great care in further ensuring that customizations developed specifically for you work as expected, as well as EDI modules (electronic data).

Prior to the forecasted deadline, the JBM Logic Inc support team installs a DEMO of the new generation of INTEGRA™ e-business. This DEMO will help to test the work routines and business processes of our clients; thus these tests will be fully customized to each client. Test results will be presented to our clients by our technical support team in order to ensure a seamless migration experience and to further ensure that data and systems are in conformity by no later than the specified launch date, thereby enabling new users of the INTEGRA e-business™ to continue with their duties unperturbed.

Once the project has been launched, a JBM Logic Inc senior analyst will visit our client in order to assess the success of the migration, touch up on minor details and verify that everything is functional and operational.

In short, customers wishing to migrate from one version to another of our INTEGRA e-business™ solutions are accompanied from the start-to-finish and can rely on the expertise and professionalism of our team managers and programmer-analysts.

Tips and tricks

It may happen that two or more users trying to simultaneously modify, for example, a sale or purchase order can, consequently, block a session. In this case you will see the following message: ***“Could not reserve record”*** or ***“Record locked by another user”***

Here are some ways to bypass this issue:

- 1- Try to identify the user who is trying to change the order at the same time as you, wait until he finishes recording the information (accomplished by clicking F10) and then you may resume changing the order.
- 2- As a built-in function, INTEGRA e-business™ allows you to directly identify the user who is blocking a session. To do so, here is the path to pursue: System-Session-Type Select 'blocker' through the value list. The system will give you the user and the module that is blocking the session. It will be easy thereafter to delete the session that blocks other users by clicking on 'Delete the session' This function can also be used exceptionally when the connection to your database is cut and the session that you had opened is still active. You can unlock the commands causing the problem in the same manner as described above.

... Last Minute...

There is only 1 month left to respond to our satisfaction survey. So please seize the opportunity to share your opinion with us and contribute to the continuous improvement of our services and process. We appreciate your input! To enter your answers, just click the following link:

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=fMrCvIbZ8qxbkMzCwyfuFA_3d_3d

We would be honoured if you were to recommend our newsletter to your colleagues and business partners! Simply send us your suggested contacts to the following address: hbaci@jbmlogic.com

For any information or if you have any questions, please communicate them with our customer service at: 1 (800) 799-6839 ext 234.