



How to Successfully Select a New ERP System

By Pauline Zorz, Sherwood Systems

As professionals, we have a tendency to use terms like 'ERP' that we think everyone in our industry understands. But what about you, the prospective customer? Do you know, or even care, that ERP stands for Enterprise Resource Planning? You're probably more interested in finding the right solution for your business needs and requirements.

You want to be sure you are looking at the right product and solution provider. But how do you do this? How do you know if what you are asking for is something that we can provide? Are you suspicious when our salesperson says that our company can do everything you want? Maybe we can, but do you know for sure?

Step 1: The Meeting & Requirements Review

The first, and most important, part in the ERP selection process is a professional sales meeting and requirements review. This is your opportunity to meet us, to see the product and to have many of your operational questions asked and answered.

Changing your ERP solution is a huge investment for your organization, so do your due diligence. Take the time to check the solution provider's references. And don't just check the ones they give you, but ask around. You may have colleagues who have some experience with the ERP package you are considering or know someone who does.

One of the greatest compliments we receive is from a customer who we haven't provided as a reference. In other words, the prospect found one of our customers who is using our software and services and they gave us a very glowing review – unsolicited!

During your meetings with the solution provider, ask what they are offering you AFTER the initial sale:

- What is their philosophy on your current and future relationship with them?
- Are they committed to partnering with you or will you continue to be dependent on their expertise?
- What happens when you have problems with the software or need future changes?
- Will they be there to help you through these hurdles or will they be on to the next BIG sale?
- Does the partner provide ongoing education after the sale so you can FULLY utilize your investment in financials, inventory, supply chain, payroll and any other functions you purchased?

The Role of Your Solution Provider

We are true believers that this new system you purchased is your responsibility and you are accountable for the day-to-day processes. So why would we take control of deciding how you should use the application?

We are here to guide you and to answer questions that help you make the right decisions. There are many ways to implement a new ERP system – and we have done them all. However, what matters the most to you is that the system is set up in the best way for your success.

We want you to have all the knowledge and to make all the decisions, because you will be running this system day in and day out. Our job is to train you and set you free, but always know that we are only a phone call or an email away in helping with problems, questions, or concerns.

Believe me, we are in business and expect to stay in business – but we want to earn your business and loyalty. We believe that if you do right by the customer, you have a great partnership for life. That is what we strive to do, every day.



Pauline Zorz, Sherwood Systems

As General Manager of Sherwood Systems, Pauline juggles many roles daily while keeping the entire team - employees, owners and particularly the customers - happy. With Sherwood for nearly 20 years, the company's success is a great testament to her management skills and personality.

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