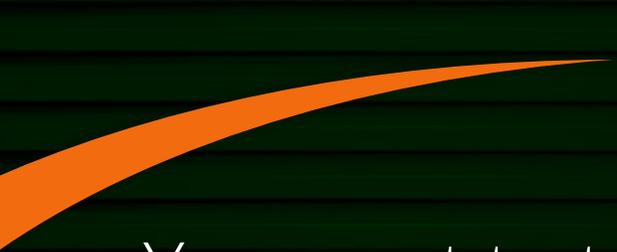


18 Things You Need From Your ERP

By Adam Grabowski
Director of Marketing
Global Shop Solutions





You want to take your manufacturing from good to great right? You are not alone. Let's cut the nonsense and get right to business. Here are the 18 things you will want to get from your ERP software.

1 Always-on ERP

The right ERP software means you should always be on, giving you access to your system from anywhere at any time, and doing it securely because your ERP system is available in the cloud.

This means you should have applications that give you real-time data about your manufacturing business from any device. Additionally, you should be getting customer support from someone in your local market in two minutes or less 24/7/365. If two minutes isn't fast enough, you should have the CEO's phone number. No more waiting for your data or wondering when you'll get service.



YOU SHOULD HAVE APPLICATIONS THAT GIVE YOU REAL-TIME DATA ABOUT YOUR MANUFACTURING BUSINESS FROM ANY DEVICE

2 More Than Software

The health and growth of your manufacturing should be top of mind for your ERP software provider.

They should be providing you with more than the software to manage your critical business functions – they should be providing you resources, programs, and opportunities to grow your business. This means you have access to industry experts that are direct employees of the ERP software provider. These experts should help evaluate your manufacturing process and ERP software for continuous improvement. Meaning you have a dedicated Account Representative that makes sure you know what you own, what is available, and what other manufacturers just like you are doing in the space. You should have **training** and **user conferences** available to you to attend in order to grow your knowledge, meet other customers, and take your manufacturing from good to great. Last but not least, manufacturers are great at making parts and not always great at telling their story. Your ERP software provider should be giving you a marketing playbook to grow your brand and top line revenue. Make sure you spend time with them at their headquarters – meet the leadership and the teams building the product you rely on. No more laboring with an ERP vendor who isn't your long-term partner.



YOUR ERP SOFTWARE PROVIDER SHOULD BE PROVIDING YOU RESOURCES, PROGRAMS, AND OPPORTUNITIES TO GROW YOUR BUSINESS

3 Peace of Mind

As a manufacturer, your most important vendor relationship should be with your ERP software provider.

You trust your money, time, effort and most critical manufacturing processes to them, and they should provide you peace of mind, not more problems. How do you get this peace of mind? **Pick the right company** to work with. You should be able to count on your ERP software provider to be your trusted partner and advisor for as long as YOU want to be in business. Some great questions to ask are:

- Does my ERP software provider have plans on selling?
- Is my ERP software provider influenced by private equity or third parties?
- Will my ERP software provider spend more on their debt and dividends or their product R&D?

Look at the financial statement of the company you are working with and look for line items like debt, interest paid, dividends, and good will (a sneaky balance sheet account highly leveraged companies can borrow against and pay dividends even while losing money). No more waking up to a forced upgrade or unsupported version that costs you more money.

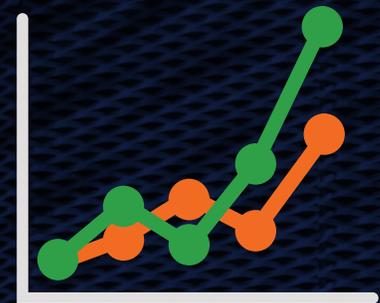


YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO COUNT ON YOUR ERP SOFTWARE PROVIDER TO BE YOUR TRUSTED PARTNER AND ADVISOR FOR AS LONG AS YOU WANT TO BE IN BUSINESS

4 More Than 35 Real Time KPIs to Help You Sleep Better

The only way you know if your manufacturing is going from good to great is by measuring your business.

Don't wait until a fire happens to ask why. The key benefit of implementing **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)** is creating a culture that revolves around proactive decision making. Predict the crisis rather than react to it. Your ERP software should give you real time KPIs that allow you to measure and compare your business against itself, as well as industry specific metrics. How does your on-time delivery compare against previous jobs and against other manufacturers just like you? Only real-time KPIs can answer those questions. No more reactive decision making.



YOUR ERP SOFTWARE SHOULD GIVE YOU REAL TIME KPIS THAT ALLOW YOU TO MEASURE AND COMPARE YOUR BUSINESS AGAINST ITSELF, AS WELL AS INDUSTRY SPECIFIC METRICS

5 Work From a Single Screen All Day, Every Day

We expect to do everything from one screen now.

You interact with friends and family through a single screen on your phone or computer, calling on extra features or functionality when you need them. Manufacturing is no different. Whether you are responsible for AR, AP, Shipping, Scheduling, Inventory, Customer Service, or any other specific manufacturing function, your ERP software should already have or be able to quickly give you a **single screen to do your work** all day, every day. Wearing multiple hats becomes much easier when “you have a screen for that.” No more looking at multiple screens to see if your manufacturing is where it should be.

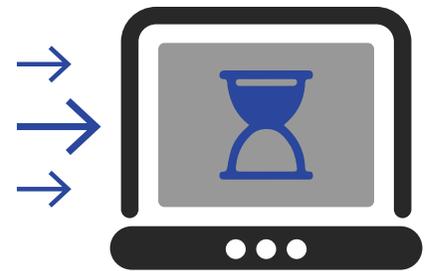


YOUR ERP SOFTWARE SHOULD ALREADY HAVE OR BE ABLE TO QUICKLY GIVE YOU A SINGLE SCREEN TO DO YOUR WORK ALL DAY, EVERY DAY

6 Avoid Delays and Mistakes with CAD Integrations

No one should have to sit for hours each week writing bill of materials (BOMs).

Your ERP software should be providing you a low cost or no cost CAD Interface giving time back to your employees to do things that matter to your business and bottom line. A **CAD Interface** will seamlessly import the BOM into your ERP software from your CAD software, removing the task of manual data entry. Get your BOM into your ERP system and on the shop floor faster and error-free. Through a fully-integrated ERP system, your engineer is then able to use the imported BOM to compare to the material and inventory located in your ERP software to make certain each job has the needed material to complete on time and on budget. No more wasted time and error-laden duplicate entry.



A CAD INTERFACE WILL SEAMLESSLY IMPORT THE BOM INTO YOUR ERP SOFTWARE FROM YOUR CAD SOFTWARE

7 On-Time, Every Time

Delivery on time, every time. No more getting calls about late shipments.

The combination of a paperless shop floor, real time inventory tracking, automated purchasing, advanced planning and scheduling, and real-time data from your machines and employees on the shop gives your customers real-time delivery information based on your actual shop load and material availability.

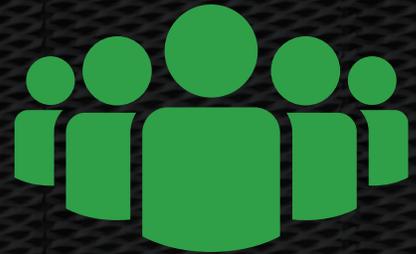


GIVE YOUR CUSTOMERS
REAL-TIME DELIVERY
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8 Smarter Employees

Your ERP software **scheduling module** should allow you to accurately view and schedule shop resources, outside processes and material requirements while estimating lead times for jobs, allowing you to better serve your customers.

Your employees should be able to show up to work and know what to work on in real time without consulting management. No more daily production meetings, manually preparing your machines and employees for what they will do each day, instead get back to making parts.

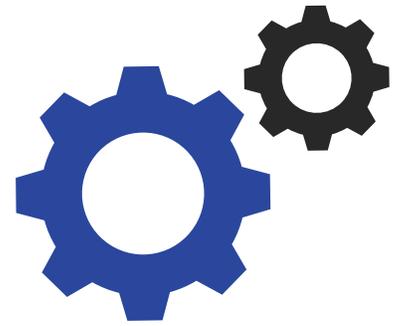


YOUR EMPLOYEES SHOULD BE
ABLE TO SHOW UP TO WORK AND
KNOW WHAT TO WORK ON IN
REAL TIME

9 Automatically Track and Record Unattended Machine Time

Your ERP software should be flexible enough to easily integrate with machine monitoring tools allowing you to increase efficiency without losing data.

Any machine that is capable of running unattended should have an employee number associated with the machine, but without a “pay rate”. So when a job is running unattended you can still gather the machine cost and overhead, but the employee pay rate is no longer part of the equation. There are few things better than making parts nearly labor free. No more inaccurate financials with employee components attached to unattended machines or workcenters.



WHEN A JOB IS RUNNING UNATTENDED YOU CAN STILL GATHER THE MACHINE COST AND OVERHEAD

10 Know Who Did What and When Easily With Better Document Control

Imagine a world where certifications and document management comes easy.

Your ERP system should provide you **document control** allowing any type of file to be attached to any major data entity in the system, including but not limited to drawings, material certs, inspection sheets, work orders, sales orders, inventory lists, purchase orders and more so it is one click away. **Version management** should maintain a full historical record of all changes made to a document, along with the secure capability to rollback to previous versions when necessary. No more time spent hunting for paper documents; no more trying to figure out what happened.



YOUR ERP SYSTEM SHOULD PROVIDE YOU DOCUMENT CONTROL ALLOWING ANY TYPE OF FILE TO BE ATTACHED TO ANY MAJOR DATA ENTITY IN THE SYSTEM

11

Performance Matters

Ever wonder which employee, shift, workcenter, or departments are performing best?

Your ERP software should be providing you **real-time performance measurement** in a single screen with filter and grouping capability so you know who is consistently exceeding, meeting, or missing expectations. No more guessing on who to reward and who to train.



**KNOW WHO IS CONSISTENTLY
EXCEEDING, MEETING,
OR MISSING EXPECTATIONS**

12

More Control

Your ERP software should give you a state-of-the-art **mobile device, labeling, and RFID** to give you real-time inventory control for raw material finished goods, sub-components, tooling, consignment and more.

Your manufacturing deserves to track all material and outside services in real time from any device. No more manual tags, clipboards, or Excel spreadsheets on the shop floor.



**TRACK ALL MATERIAL AND
OUTSIDE SERVICES IN REAL-TIME
FROM ANY DEVICE**

13

More Dollars and Sense

Your ERP software should provide an **integrated financial system** giving you an accurate reflection of operations and inventory in your financials.

Rely on real-time reporting and costing down to the **component level** per job such as freight, labor, outside services, overhead, other, and material. Know how your money is coming and going and how the slightest changes in pricing can make you more or cost you money. No more red flags for the future from costly standalone accounting packages or manual inventory journal entries.



KNOW HOW YOUR MONEY IS COMING AND GOING

14

Lean Production Numbers

One way to get lean production numbers is when your **nesting**, tooling, machines, and ERP software communicate back and forth.

The results are better inventory management and production schedules. As you see your inventory and production schedules in your ERP software, you can easily send that information to your nesting software to help optimize your cutlist. Send work orders, inventory information, workcenter details and more to your nesting software; while your nesting software can share cutlist details, material drops, scrap and estimates for routing and work orders, among other things, back into your ERP software. Automating this process frees up time for your employees to focus on producing a quality product on time. No more bloated and slow production schedules from a lack of communication between your business and machine software.



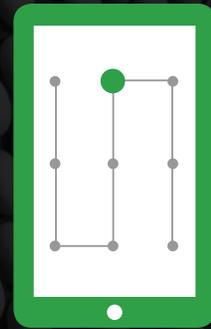
DIRECT LABOR SAVINGS FOR MOST COMPANIES CAN BE A SIGNIFICANT FIGURE.

15

Mobile Manufacturing

Your ERP software should let you manage your business as it's happening whether you are in the office or not, not after it has happened or when you return.

Your ERP software should provide you a **mobile app** that gives you dashboards and lets you view, enter, or take action on sales, orders, work in progress, inventory, CRM, and more from any device in real time. But it shouldn't stop there: you should be able to give the same app to your customer under your branding so they can track their orders and shipments in a self-service environment. No more customer calls asking where is it or when will it be done.



CUSTOMERS CAN TRACK THEIR ORDERS AND SHIPMENTS IN A SELF-SERVICE ENVIRONMENT

16

Complete Inventory Accuracy and Visibility

Your ERP software should redefine how you manage **inventory** by utilizing the latest in barcode scanning, handheld printing and mobile technologies.

Trust your inventory numbers are correct and make decisions on the spot. Stop running out to the shop floor "just to be sure". Whether receiving incoming raw materials, counting inventory in the warehouse or in the field, or transferring parts on the shop floor, the person handling the material simply scans the barcoded label and your ERP software records the transaction in real-time. No more struggling with decisions because you don't trust your inventory.

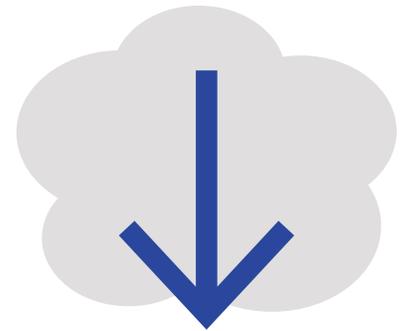


SIMPLY SCAN THE BARCODED LABEL AND YOUR ERP SOFTWARE RECORDS THE TRANSACTION IN REAL-TIME

17 Power of Many

You aren't alone in your want or need to customize screens, implement workflows, increase functionality, extend your ERP with integrations, or run reports at scheduled intervals.

Your ERP software should provide an ecosystem with the ability to **customize the system**, build applications, create custom reports, or more through a software development kit (SDK). You should be able to download what has been developed for or by the ecosystem for free. One size does not fit all, especially in manufacturing, and your ERP should be flexible enough to give you exactly what you need. No more running an ERP product that stops you from doing business the customized way you want to.



**YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO
DOWNLOAD WHAT HAS BEEN
DEVELOPED FOR OR BY THE
ECOSYSTEM FOR FREE**

18 Opinions Matter

You are a paying customer, and your feedback on the product needs to be heard.

Your ERP software provider should give you an easy-to-use feedback mechanism built into the ERP software that allows you the opportunity to vote features up in priority, down in priority, and provide feedback on the user experience itself. No more closed doors in communication with your ERP software provider.



**YOUR FEEDBACK ON
THE PRODUCT NEEDS
TO BE HEARD**



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Adam Grabowski is the Director of Marketing at Global Shop Solutions. He is responsible for translating the company's business objectives into successful brand, marketing, and communication strategies to drive awareness, revenue, and loyalty.

To learn more about the 18 Things You Need from Your ERP, call 1.800.364.5958 or visit www.globalshopsolutions.com.