

CLOUD ERP BUYER'S GUIDE

Combining Scalability and Speed to Boost Efficiency and Cost-Effectiveness

WHITEPAPER

P4 Today's cloud ERP software is either 100% based on cloud, or a legacy app leveraging cloud technology.

P5 Cloud platforms offer a powerful mix of scalability, affordability, efficiency and speed meeting the needs of software buyers who seek solid, small cloud applications.

P6 Today's cloud suites come in various shapes, offering speed and scalability across a wide spectrum of work streams along companies' value chains.

P8 Successful cloud ERP software buyers focus on storage capacity, collaboration capabilities, cost considerations and technology components.

"The global public cloud services market will reach US \$678.8 billion in 2024, up from \$563.6 billion in 2023"

SYNOPSIS

In an era in which technology and storage capacity have reached operational prominence in Organizations large and small, finding innovative and cost-effective ways to record, archive, access and safeguard business information have become critical.

Businesses are engineering approaches to control budgetary constraints while optimising enterprise data and its relevance across the value chain, from research and development to human resources management, operations research, sales and marketing, client relationship management, supplier administration, and logistics.

Cloud ERP software offers game-changing solutions aimed at curbing costs without sacrificing revenue growth and operational productivity. Cloud applications — including Perform-as-a-Service programs, Order-to-Cash applications, Supply Chain applications, Human Resources software and Financial Accounting applications — fuse technological sophistication and operations research to provide functionalities that:

Are easily scalable and integrated within legacy applications Can be quickly built and deployed Are engineered on state-of-the-art platforms and programming environments that are cost-effective and operationally nimble

Given the size of the global ERP market, concerns around data safety and security and a complex, mature market structure featuring several ERP suite vendors; companies must determine the proper approach to ascertaining the software suitable for their operations, the optimal cost-quality ratio, and efficient application deployment logistics in the short and medium terms.

To properly evaluate market trends and identify cost-effective solutions, software buyers must understand

- The application market as it was yesterday
- The market's status today
- The emerging power of cloud platforms
- Important trends in cloud suite trends
- Best practices for purchasing application software

APPLICATION SOFTWARE SUITES, AS THEY WERE YESTERDAY

In the last 50 years, application software suites have filled the operational needs of companies seeking programs offering an array of functions. Corporate software buyers preferred suites that possessed a breadth of functionalities, modules and deployment capacities — in short, software that offered the breadth and depth of settings necessary to improve the 3Ps: productivity, performance and profitability.

In that context, the most successful vendors had a value proposal centred on products that:

- Had a uniform set of system software tools, development tools and programming language, making life easier for IT staff when it came to learning and supporting third-party applications.
- Possessed identical user tools across all modules, so that personnel can apply knowledge gained in one application or module across multiple sub-modules or sub-applications.
- Were sold with module-to-module integration service offered by the software vendor, freeing valuable in-house IT resources.
- Had a built-in price discount offer, enabling corporate buyers to enjoy often-sizable rebates on bulk purchases.

Although older applications offer the breadth and depth of features — empowering the value chain and operations of Organizations large and small — upstream technological and proprietary differentiation made it difficult to use and scale products, rendering downstream implementation tasks sometimes challenging. Each vendor had its own data model, module code, technology stack, among others (up-stream differentiation), which made it difficult for in-house IT staff to make operationally necessary adjustments in terms of operating systems, on-premise hardware, and file and data management systems, to name a few (downstream implementation). The cloud had changed the status quo — ushering in fresh, effective and operationally nimble approaches and technologies.

FACTS ABOUT TODAY'S APPLICATION SUITES

The booming market of application suites has attracted many players in the last few years. Depending on their strategies, operational resources and target audiences, software vendors have developed an array of products ranging from hybrid applications (cloud-legacy products) to pure-play, cloud application suites. The current market structure features two prominent operational strategies: greater profitability.

- Hybrid applications, which attempt to take advantage of cloud technology while retaining their legacy components, and
- Pure-play applications, which revolve 100 percent around cloud technology, and (re)engineer products that systematically embed cloud functionalities and features.

Large players, such as IBM, Oracle & Dell and smaller ones, like Axolt, have embraced the pure-play approach, which has received accolades from businesses and seems to be the winning strategy for the near future.

Application integration is a key concern for IT executives and software buyers, especially when it comes to fusing legacy systems with the new, innovative cloud technology. Whether a business has 10 applications or 200, the effect of a smooth, seamless and scalable integration process can save significant resources and free up substantial staff efficiencies in the short and medium terms.

Irrespective of the integration approach [on-premise --> on-premise, cloud --> cloud, cloud --> on-premise, or on-premise --> cloud] companies can establish the right protocols to define, execute and monitor software integration. The cloud enables scalability, flexibility and speed; important factors to reckon with when deploying enterprise-wide application on-boarding, upgrading, adjustment or replacement. Personnel can share information from one cloud service to another, across modules or applications. For multi-tenant applications personnel only need access to the latest version of relevant applications in order to implement the necessary software assimilation. The greatest benefit of cloud integration is the lower number of environments supported in the cloud, unlike the countless technical combinations that might be necessary when dealing with a single-tenant or on-premise cloud universe.

In the age of scalable cloud resources, Organizations can easily join consumer and corporate cloud applications, saving valuable IT resources thanks to reduced needs with respect to application integration and support. In the coming months & years, cloud integration will morph into a value-adding, cost-effective task, empowering Organizations large and small to embrace cloud application software. Software buyers now have greater latitude, as they no longer need to acquire, say, 10 applications from a single vendor — thus reducing risks as diverse as sub-optimal functionality, technology dissimulation, and vendor operational viability.

Buyers can now acquire many small, yet robust, suites that deliver optimal functional solutions

THE EMERGING POWER OF CLOUD PLATFORMS

Cloud platforms offer a powerful mix of scalability, affordability, efficiency and speed, meeting the needs of software buyers who seek solid, small cloud applications.

Vendors nowadays attack the cloud from many angles as software development in the cloud expands to take on many forms. Larger vendors as well as smaller players, such as Axolt, combine state-of-the-art module expertise and business acumen to create winning cloud strategies.

They may offer cloud-based development and application scaling or infrastructure management for deploying and managing apps in the cloud.

They may also offer a Platform-as-a-Service that virtualizes applications through a merger of open-source software and hardware.

Here are some of the most effective — and popular — functionalities and features seen in today's cloud-based platforms:

- Development, management, distribution and cloud solutions for dynamic language applications
- Platform-as-a-Service service through PHP-based cloud, including cloud-based development and app scaling in PHP
- 'Open PaaS' stack enabling an organization to transform its infrastructure into a self-service, cloud app platform
- Ability to build, run and manage Java applications in the cloud, quickly and with ease
- Ability to pull value from corporate structured and unstructured data
- Deployment of a business-ready private PaaS to improve developer productivity, reduce cloud app management costs and maintain security and compliance
- Cloud infrastructure management play for deploying and managing applications in any kind of cloud
- Application virtualization and cloud platforms enabling the move of mission-critical applications to next-generation environments

- Platform enabling users to develop, scale and manage data-intensive big data app's using integrated compute and in-memory data grids

- Platform helping Organizations develop process-driven applications and build apps in a development environment with few headaches

- Functionality empowering (1) businesses to automate processes, collaborate and boost visibility through real-time reporting; (2) developers and solution providers to monetise best practices into their own SaaS offerings

CLOUD SUITE TRENDS — A MIXTURE OF DIVERSITY AND SPEED

Today's cloud suites come in various shapes, offering speed and scalability across a wide spectrum of work streams along companies' value chains.

Industry observers, developers and software vendors on one end, and corporate buyers and end users on the other end, have come to appreciate the operational benefits of multi-form and multi-format cloud suites that boost performance, productivity and profitability.

Here are important trends that corporate software buyers must heed:

Cloud computing is pervading the mobile space.

The future of cloud is undoubtedly in the expansive IT network and infrastructure required to support, maintain and enhance performance within the hundreds of millions of hand-held devices roaming the planet, particularly smart phones. Today's workers can perform tasks from tablets and phablets and may need real-time cloud access to execute critical duties. Gone are the days when personnel must stop by the office to log into an application. With access-enabled hand-held devices, staff can stay connected everywhere, anytime.

The cloud is 'smoothing' internal and external business communication.

Cloud technology is breaking down barriers among departments and units, easing the exchange of information and data within businesses and shattering hierarchical structures that until now may have hindered inter-departmental communication.

Software buyers now pay attention to cloud suites that include key elements of the value chain, such as customers, suppliers and human resources staff. For example, cloud-enabled tools such as automated dashboards and supply chains enable Organizations to reduce significantly all kinds of inefficiencies in terms of project management, order placement and delivery, post-delivery analysis, and client-expectation ratio analysis.

The cloud is going global.

In an economy becoming more global by the day, corporations need cloud application suites that not only help perform tasks in, say, London, but also help oversee operational research in Mumbai, track productivity trends in Johannesburg, monitor social media responses in New York and improve user interfaces & interaction in Rio de Janeiro.

As the number of cloud-powered Organizations expands on a global basis, individuals and business partners can communicate across multiple locations, by accessing applications' local capabilities like multi-currency financial tools and multi-language interfaces, among many others.

More businesses will adopt the cloud.

Cloud ERP is poised for dramatic growth — even on top of the exponential gains it has already achieved in the last few years. Industry observers estimate that 30% of global companies use cloud technology, a percentage that will rise in the next years and trickle down into the SME [small and midsize enterprise] arena. Given the enormous opportunities, both structurally and geographically, cloud ERP software is here to stay. According to consultancy Gartner, the global public cloud services market will reach US\$204 billion in 2016.

Social media are embracing the cloud.

Besides their greater flexibility when compared to legacy, on-site software, cloud ERP programs are social.

Here are important trends that corporate software buyers must heed:

Cloud computing is pervading the mobile space.

The future of cloud is undoubtedly in the expansive IT network and infrastructure required to support, maintain and enhance performance within the hundreds of millions of hand-held devices roaming the planet, particularly smart phones. Today's workers can perform tasks from tablets and phablets and may need real-time cloud access to execute critical duties. Gone are the days when personnel must stop by the office to log into an application. With access-enabled hand-held devices, staff can stay connected everywhere, anytime.

The cloud is 'smoothing' internal and external business communication.

Cloud technology is breaking down barriers among departments and units, easing the exchange of information and data within businesses and shattering hierarchical structures that until now may have hindered inter-departmental communication.

Software buyers now pay attention to cloud suites that include key elements of the value chain, such as customers, suppliers and human resources staff. For example, cloud-enabled tools such as automated dashboards and supply chains enable Organizations to reduce significantly all kinds of inefficiencies in terms of project management, order placement and delivery, post-delivery analysis, and client-expectation ratio analysis.

The cloud is going global.

In an economy becoming more global by the day, corporations need cloud application suites that not only help perform tasks in, say, London, but also help oversee operational research in Mumbai, track productivity trends in Johannesburg, monitor social media responses in New York and improve user interfaces & interaction in Rio de Janeiro.

As the number of cloud-powered Organizations expands on a global basis, individuals and business partners can communicate across multiple locations, by accessing applications' local capabilities like multi-currency financial tools and multi-language interfaces, among many others.

More businesses will adopt the cloud.

Cloud ERP is poised for dramatic growth — even on top of the exponential gains it has already achieved in the last few years. Industry observers estimate that 30% of global companies use cloud technology, a percentage that will rise in the next years and trickle down into the SME [small and midsize enterprise] arena. Given the enormous opportunities, both structurally and geographically, cloud ERP software is here to stay. According to consultancy Gartner, the global public cloud services market will reach US\$304.9 billion in 2022.

Social media are embracing the cloud.

Besides their greater flexibility when compared to legacy, on-site software, cloud ERP programs are social.

term productivity. This requires the addition of social-cloud considerations in all aspects of strategic thinking, from problem definition to alternative identification to solution implementation and post-execution analysis. Cloud ERP software will gradually go social and become part of the way Organizations large and small manage operational data. Experts expect this capability to progress rapidly, as cloud computing is natively web-based and upgrades are automatically rolled out to cloud solutions on a regular basis.

APPLICATION SOFTWARE BUYERS — HOW TO GET THE MOST BANG FOR YOUR BUCK

Cloud ERP software buyers must pay attention to a few factors when making acquisition decisions.

Storage capacity

Cloud technology is primarily a file-storage and sharing service, providing clients with an environment to host files. A service provider offers space in its data centres to store documents, spreadsheets, images, videos and other file types, along with the tools necessary to manage those files.

✓ Select a vendor offering storage capabilities in sync with, or exceeding, your current operational needs.

Collaboration capabilities

Companies select cloud-based services to share files for collaboration.

For example, personnel can set up a shared folder to keep everyone's work in accord, allowing users to create links to any document or folder they want to share outside the team.

Select a vendor offering collaboration capabilities in sync with, or exceeding, your current operational needs.

Cost

In terms of cost, no two cloud-based services are the same. Each one offers several plans with prices that vary, depending on the features that are included in those plans.

✓ Select a vendor whose value proposal is cost-effective and in sync with, or exceeding, your current operational needs.

Components

Effective cloud ERP software must encompass a few critical elements.

✓ Before acquiring applications, check with these four factors with the vendor:

- Cloud management and brokerage services
- Expense management
- Operational monitoring
- Governance

AXOLT ERP

Cloud ERP Solutions – Grow your business by aligning Manufacturing, Servicing, Supply, Shipping, Inventory, Finance and Human Resource.

AXOLT ERP is a dynamic Enterprise Resource Planning Suite for any businesses size. ERP suites enable Organizations to streamline every facet of business, giving real time insight and ensuring the rapid growth and success of any company. The suite allows you to manage your business effectively and effortlessly.

With AXOLT ERP , all areas within your business that have room for growth are clearly apparent, whilst costly problems are easily averted. This state of the art ERP suite is so versatile and adaptable, it offers a structured and seamless solution to managing all of the multi-faceted areas of companies today.

When businesses have multiple systems in place, they find that to try to integrate data from these systems, or to try to cross-reference different facets of the business, can be a very time consuming and costly process. It also has a huge margin for error, resulting in unnecessary and exorbitant expense to rectify this. With AXOLT ERP it is a simple procedure, everything is integrated on one simple user-friendly system. Costly mistakes are avoided, and the huge amount of manual time saved can be better spent on developing the business.

Axolt Cloud ERP facilitates in allowing easy management of the following areas of your business:

- Supply Chain and Shipping
- Manufacturing
- Equipment Maintenance and Service
- HR Management
- Finance
- Procurement

AXOLT

Axolt is proud to be an industry-leading in-novator in the field of cloud computing. By offering fully customisable Enterprise Suite solutions on cloud-based platforms. We are able to offer our clients hassle-free and worry-free solutions that reduce the cost of running business while actually offering more functionality and capabilities than traditional software/applications can.

Axolt Corporate Headquarters:

UNITED KINGDOM

Spaces Waterside Drive,
Arlington Business Park
Theale, Reading, RG7 4SA

CANADA

Unit 200 – 7404 King George Blvd
Surrey, BC, V3W 1N6

INDIA

13, 3rd Floor, 5th Main 6th Cross,
Jayamahal Extension, Nandi Durga Main Road
Bangalore – 560046 Karnataka India

Telephone: +44 (0) 115 8944 613
Fax: +44 (0) 208 2636 100
Email: info@axolt.com