



Planning Tips

Welcome There

As we approach planning season, for 2025, I thought it a good discipline to think about tools to assist with the process. One of the most useful pieces of advice I was ever given was to plan the “What if” (not just the probably) followed by the “When / Then”

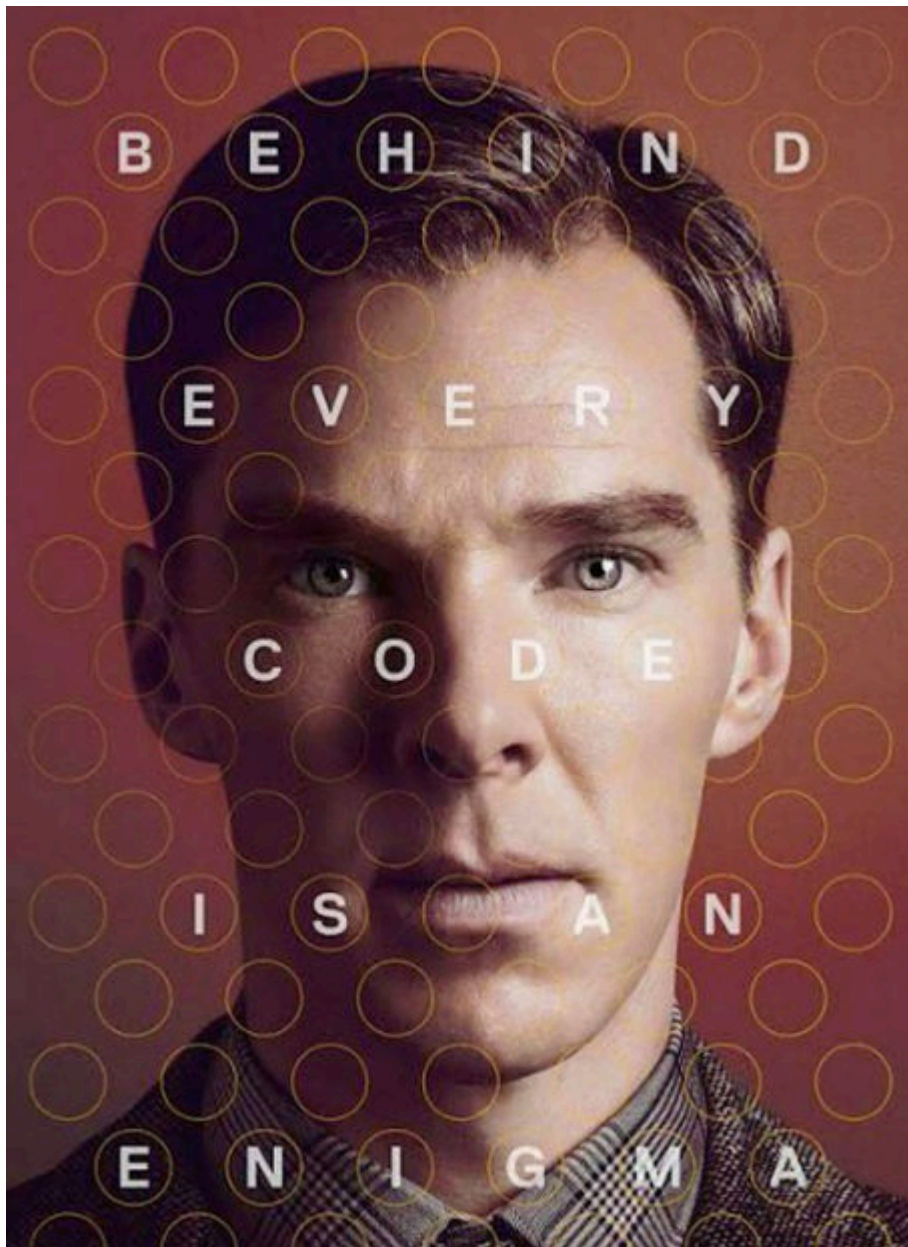
This is the simple approach that states **when** “X” happens **then** we do “Y”. This analysis is relatively easy with your ERP as you can model these scenarios. For instance, the implications of hitting £1M in revenue and then hiring an additional sales resource. All these elements can be seen in the budget and a linear plan used to trigger the next action when the target is achieved.

The savvy amongst us, will look beyond the “When / Then” as well as the “What/If” to question the “If/What”. This translates to – **if** we exceed target and revenue, **what** is the implication on production and supply chain. This kind of planning will give you the insight to review all elements of the supply chain that might otherwise prevent you from over-achieving, as it will reveal weaknesses in the production lifecycle.

This kind of contingency planning allows you to have a backup, such as lining up additional suppliers, planning an overtime regime to increase production, and ensuring transport is available to guarantee delivery.

Business planning and trend analysis is all about having backups and contingencies, be that for a surge in demand, a security hack, or system failure.

Prepare to be prepared.

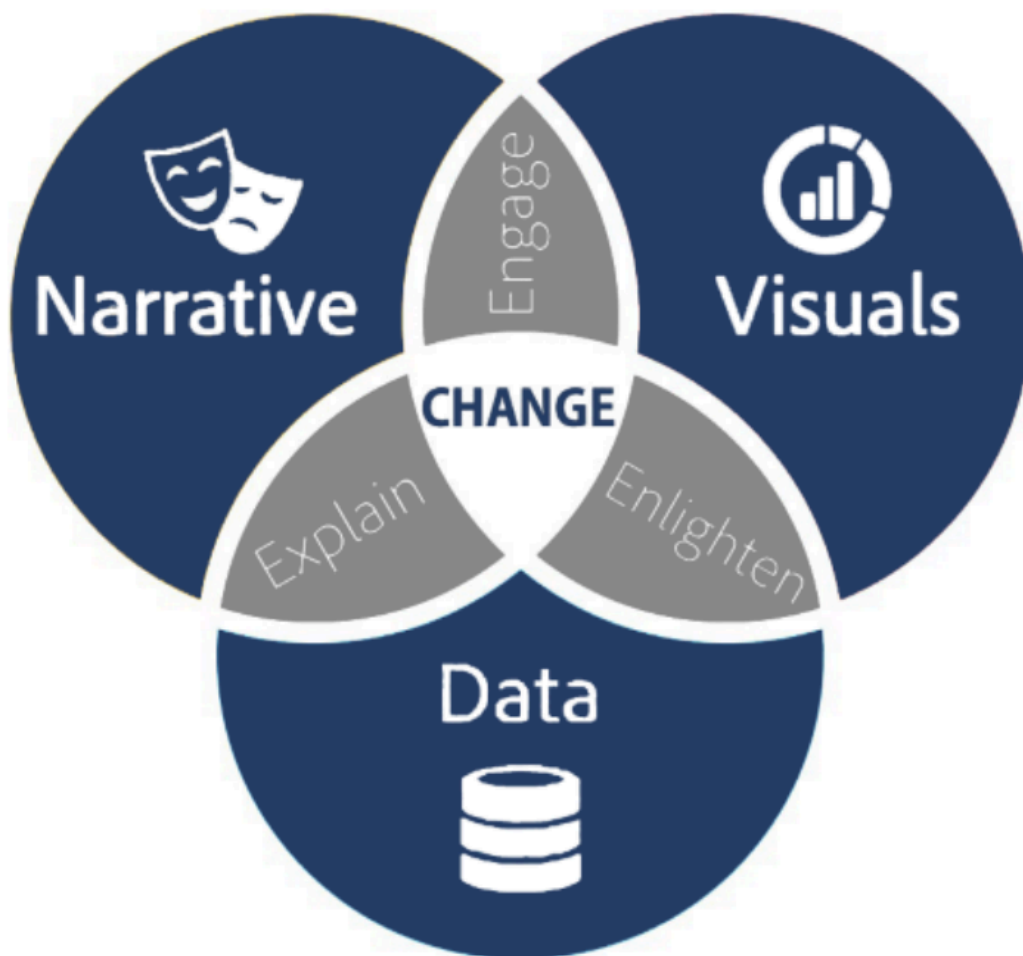


AI versus the Personal Touch

When talking about data and planning – there simply must be something on AI. However, a new figure has been published; that 79% of consumers are likely to switch to a rival if they perceive an excessive use of AI in brand communications, while 55% have a negative view of messages produced by AI. That is not a surprise to me, as I find the use of AI in content so obvious, and I am pleased to see I am not the only one.

Despite technology advances and the clear benefits of AI, it is an undeniable fact that we all desire the personal touch, the one-to-one authentic interaction. Words that are frequently bandied about include trust, security, privacy, customer loyalty and all the elements that contribute to brand loyalty. But it is interesting to observe that despite the inevitable progression of AI in all digital interactions, there is still room for the real me, writing this for you.

An interesting handbook on the personal touch - [HERE](#)



Never Mind the AI What About the Data

Most of us understand that data is the key to running a successful business, especially when that data comes packaged as insight that reveals the story behind the data. The problem with AI and machine learning and the huge increase in computing power has been a surfeit of data. Enterprises are struggling with the sheer quantity of it.

A report from McKinsey predicts that employees will use data in nearly every aspect of their business lives in 2025, so how do we ensure that staff have easy access to the right data? And, how do we enable the right people to access and use that data meaningfully?

To harness the inherent power of data you need a plan.

Each organisation will have vast amounts of data available. This will include financial data, supply chain data, machine performance data, warehousing, inventory, HR, employee data and much, much, more. Once you have identified all the valuable sources of data, it can be fed into user-specific dashboards so that while some can see an over-arching view of the business, others will have fine-tuned data at their fingertips helping them to make smarter decisions – like minimising over-stocking by aligning inventory with customer demand. It all sounds so easy, but it is all dependent upon the right person receiving the right data at the right time.

The repercussions of a lack of data visibility can be immense. Most businesses will be aware of their challenges, but blind spots can still catch you out. Disparate data across different locations, databases and applications can be a major stumbling block and you might fail to connect the dots without a tool or application that looks across these data sources – hence we go back to the main theme - correctly catalogue all your data sources.

A data catalogue is an increasingly important asset of the business, listing all your data sources, irrelevant of format, location or Geo.

It is a scary data point that 80% of a business' data lies outside their ERP. This refers to 80% of supply chain data. However, supply chain data is just as important to manufacturing businesses and yet it is far more difficult to monitor and capture, (sometimes lying outside of the ERP with trading partners). This will make lead time planning far harder, but supply chain visibility is key to "What / If" planning.

Insight comes from data, and capturing as much as possible within your ERP is essential. However, to be truly well prepared an audit of all available data will help identify any weak points – not only in the quality of the data but in how it is accessed.

<https://www.infor.com/en-gb/blog/so-much-data-so-little-visibility>



Top 5 Supply Chain Trends in 2024

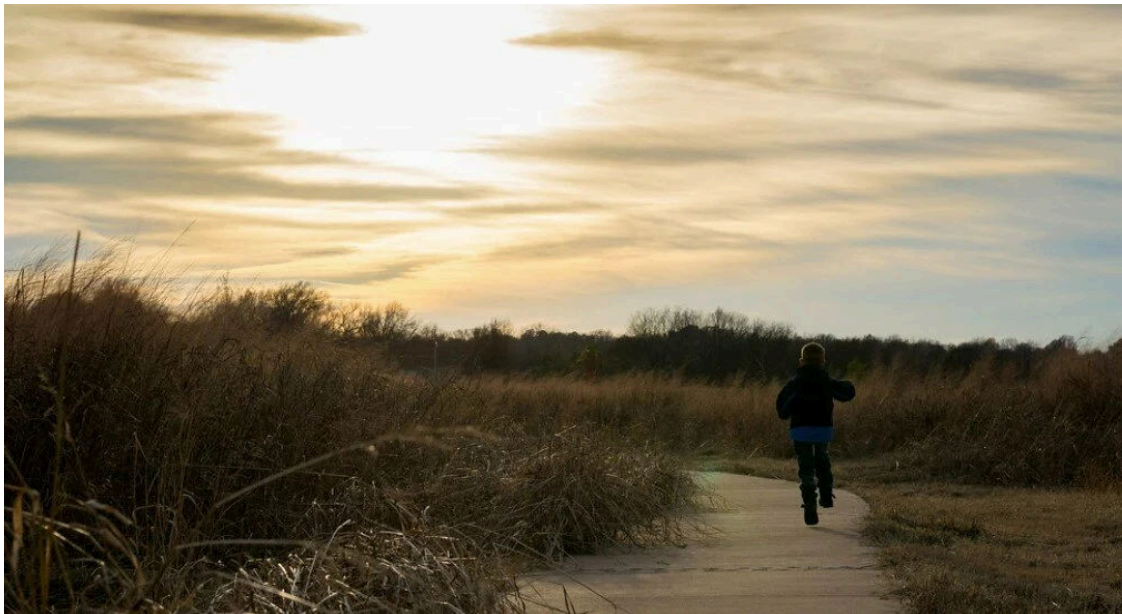
Presented by - Heidi Benko VP, Product Management, Infor Nexus this session should help build more knowledge around the challenges for capturing and managing data within the supply chain. And obviously, there is always something in there on AI.

[https://www.brighttalk.com/webcast/20157/621685?
utm_source=Infor&utm_medium=Social&utm_campaign=621685](https://www.brighttalk.com/webcast/20157/621685?utm_source=Infor&utm_medium=Social&utm_campaign=621685)

This session explores the current dynamic landscape, revealing what they consider to be the Top 5 Trends shaping the supply chain industry.

- Discussions encompass sustainability, resilience, talent optimization, and growth: Regulations Driving Enhanced Transparency - the impact of regulations on transparency
- Exploring the necessity for collaborative environments - robust tracking systems.
- Potential Transformative Generative AI – there has been an explosion of innovation in Generative AI and this session will look at how digital assistants are reshaping supply chain operations.

- Accelerated Digitization of the Supply Chain – looking at the strategic imperative of digitization in response to talent shortages, utilizing AI and ML-driven tools for enhanced decision-making.
 - Prioritizing End-to-End Visibility and Control Towers – looking at the growing emphasis on end-to-end visibility solutions, crucial for navigating disruptions, and bolstering resilience.
 - Strategic Integration of Supply Chain Finance – the boundaries between finance and supply chain processes, uncovering innovative financing solutions promoting sustainability and eliminating all manual processes
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It's a Learning Journey with our Educational Pieces on ERP

We regularly update and continuously expand our range of educational articles and hope you find them, not only useful for those just starting out on their ERP journey, but also as good reference points for those already in the know:

- [How can your ERP help with Regulatory Compliance?](#)
 - [What is Application Management Services](#)
 - [ERP Systems Training](#)
 - [Everything you need to know about ERP Migration](#)
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