



## Why Keeping Abreast of Technology Innovation is a Must for the Humble ERP Consultant

Welcome There

As the hype about AI increases, we sometimes feel like the poor ginger-haired stepchild in ERP land as things simply don't move quite so fast. As ERP is at the heart of most enterprises, there is a resistance to change for change's sake. Although I am not saying that AI is a fad, as there are many ways in which it is already enhancing productivity and increasing efficiencies. Here is an example of how a [Leading outdoor furniture manufacturer leverages Infor AI and automation](#). However, there are other priorities which require working through to finesse the ERP.

ERP is no longer the property of the back office as it now has a ubiquitous reach into sales, marketing, operations, and all aspects of the business, from machine

room to the board room. It all starts with the data where ERP systems hold key company-wide information which provides the single version of the truth for peripheral functions and activities.

This means that those individuals responsible for an ERP system need a wider business and industry understanding to be able to interpret the technology and how it affects real-life business. To do that, they need to keep abreast of trends, and AI is certainly on the list, but there are other aspects of ERP that are driving more discussions and likely to be on your priority list.

### **IDC 2024 Top ERP Trends**

1. Cloud Deployment
2. Digital Transformation
3. The Internet of Things (IoT)
4. Analytics
5. Industry-Specific ERP
6. Mobile ERP
7. Two-Tier ERP
8. Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Everyone will have their own list of priorities, and they will probably be in a different order, but the point is we can never stop learning and exploring how technology is advancing and seeing where and how (and in some instances “if”), we can implement those innovations into our businesses.

We have a series of articles to help you stay abreast of ERP Trends [HERE](#)

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## **Tackling Cloud Deployment**

Globally there are still a vast number of companies still running their ERP on-premise and the move to a cloud solution will invariably mean a re-evaluation of the vendor supplier. This is the time to review the **user experience**, the application **requirements** and the **migration** costs. Right up there in most people's list of "Must haves" are the **analytics**. There is a "Constellation" approach that guides those looking for a new ERP through 14 key criteria and 25 suppliers which offers some useful guidelines [Constellation ShortList™ Product-Centric Cloud ERP | Constellation Research Inc.](#)

Analytics features on the Constellation List, however, access to data is only relevant to those that need information pertinent to their roles and job functions. Just because you have HubSpot providing website visitor and impressions data, doesn't mean something to everyone. Analytics are all about providing the right information in the right format to the right people.

The ERP can embed GenAI and process alarming amounts of data, slicing and dicing to your heart's content, but without the end user in mind, it is meaningless. This is where an analytics expert can make all the difference as they can interpret needs and ensure decision-makers are provided with just the right amount of insight and information.

The evaluation of a new ERP especially if you are considering a cloud migration is a complex beast and an independent 3<sup>rd</sup> party can be an invaluable asset to help you navigate the discovery phase; to ensure all the right questions are asked, of all the right people, and everyone's priorities are unearthed.

If you need assistance with an ERP Cloud discovery project - [we can help](#)

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## Industry Specific ERP

This may only be number 5 on the priority list above, but this may be a key priority for you to accelerate your time to value for the ERP as you require an industry specific solution where business sector functionality is hard-wired and built into the solution.

This is where Infor ERP excels and differentiates as their strategy sets them apart from others such as SAP and Oracle by being more industry focused. *“That industry focus, in turn, supports a truly differentiated approach to ensuring that their customers get ongoing value from the business applications they have purchased”* says Kevin Samuelson, the CEO of Infor in an interview with Forbes [Infor's Strategy For Differentiation \(forbes.com\)](#).

The entire approach to technology, product development and customer service is linked to industries and clearly resonates with customers as they are the third largest supplier of [enterprise resource planning](#) software applications.

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## **Key Learnings from a Worldwide Outage**

The return of the blue screen of death that brought industries and even countries to a grinding halt earlier this summer continued to have an impact well after the applied fix. The simple lack of quality control was quite staggering, but it happened, and CrowdStrike didn't properly vet a Rapid Response Content update.

The discussion now revolves around the Windows kernel within every windows PC and should that be made available to outside companies. Legally, yes it can as Microsoft has signed an agreement attesting to that. They are now using the failure to reverse this legislation.

For the record (in case it ever happens again, and you'd just like to know), what was required was a manual restart in Safe Mode, navigate with File Explorer to Windows > System32 > drivers > CrowdStrike, and delete the offending file.

Would Windows be safer if only Microsoft had kernel access? Perhaps not, as Microsoft doesn't have a whiter than white history - [lax security practices that allowed Chinese spies to hack the accounts of high-level government officials](#)

Certainly, it would make sense that the more companies that have access to the kernel, the greater the margin for error. So, there are arguments both for and against the monopoly so who will win that argument?

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## Who has your Back?

Meanwhile, the lesson for all of us humble mortals is business continuity and how exposed we are without a strategic back-up plan in the event of every “What if...” scenario. This instance demonstrated only too clearly that in business the companies that you feel you might trust most explicitly are not infallible. This is a stark reminder of how fragile all businesses and inter-relationships can be, and it is only when things go wrong do you realise that you did not have a sufficiently robust process for that “Uh-Oh” moment.

For instance, were you aware that 88% of security breaches are caused by people, yet only 4% of security budgets are spent on staff training. Being prepared and trained is essential, but so is having a backup plan.

There is reason why Business Continuity is part of being ISO 12772 certified as you must prove you have bullet proof processes to ensure it is business-as-usual no matter what happens. That means that not only do you need to keep data safe, but you need a back-up plan to back-up the back-up. For business continuity that might mean a backup bank, a backup laptop and maybe even a backup manual process should the IT system be frozen.

ERP training of all sorts is one of our specialties - [find out more.](#)

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## Keep on Track with 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](#)
- [ERP Support](#)
- [What is an ERP Implementation](#)
- [ERP FAQs](#)

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## Need Assistance with your Infor ERP? Drop us a Line

ReInforce Technology provides expert consulting services for Infor ERP. Our consultants, developers, project managers and data analysts are highly skilled professionals who specialise in LN, Baan, LX, BPCS, M3, Lawson and other Infor solutions. We extend the life of ERPs and knit together systems and processes, with an integrated approach to data to optimise efficiency.

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