



The Smart Leader's Guide to ERP Decisions

*How to Avoid the 7 Most Expensive
Mistakes Companies Make When
Choosing ERP*



www.AccipiterERPAdvisors.com



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Choosing an ERP system isn't just a software decision. It's a business decision with long-term consequences.

If you're here, your company is likely scaling fast, and your current systems are straining. Maybe you've outgrown QuickBooks. Maybe your operations are held together with spreadsheets and workarounds. Maybe your team is burned out trying to make tools talk that were never designed to work together.

So you start looking at ERP.

And suddenly, it feels like stepping into a whirlwind of vendor demos, feature lists, acronyms, and sales pressure.

This guide exists to help you pause the chaos and get clear before you get sold.

Who This Guide Is For

- COOs, CFOs, and operations leaders in growth-stage companies
- Manufacturers, distributors, and product-based businesses scaling past DIY systems
- Anyone tasked with making, or supporting, a major ERP investment

Who We Are

I'm Michael Wakefield, founder of **Accipiter ERP Advisory**.

I've sat on both sides of the ERP decision table as a buyer, as an executive, and as a certified NetSuite ERP Consultant. I've helped hundreds of businesses navigate ERP decisions. Some got it right. Many didn't.

This guide is what I wish every client had before their first vendor call.



The 7 Most Expensive ERP Mistakes (And How to Avoid Them)

1. Buying Before You're Ready

Mistake: Jumping into ERP selection without internal alignment or clear requirements.

Why It's Costly: You end up choosing based on features, not fit, and build on a shaky foundation.

What to Do Instead: Start with a Strategic Scan to define your goals, workflows, and constraints. If you can't clearly explain what you need, you're not ready to buy.

2. Letting Vendors Define the Process

Mistake: Letting ERP sales teams drive the pace and pitch.

Why It's Costly: Their goal is to close, not clarify. You get boxed into timelines and pricing that don't reflect your needs.

What to Do Instead: Lead the process with internal readiness and a neutral advocate by your side. You should be the one setting the agenda, not reacting to it.

3. Comparing Demos Instead of Requirements

Mistake: Choosing software based on impressive demos or flashy PowerPoints.

Why It's Costly: Features don't mean anything if they don't solve your actual problems.

What to Do Instead: Create a prioritized requirement matrix that reflects how your business operates, then test each option against those needs.

4. Underestimating Implementation Readiness

Mistake: Thinking "once we pick the system, the hard part's over."

Why It's Costly: A great ERP can still fail if your team isn't ready to implement it.

What to Do Instead: Treat implementation as a project in itself. Build timelines, align roles, prep data, and assign decision-makers before you sign the contract.



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5. Overbuying Features You'll Never Use

Mistake: Saying yes to everything "just in case."

Why It's Costly: You pay for modules, customization, and complexity you can't maintain.

What to Do Instead: Start with what solves problems today. Build for scale, but don't buy tools your team won't touch.

6. Treating ERP Like an IT Project

Mistake: Delegating ERP decisions to your tech team without involving ops, finance, or leadership, and not allocating enough team members outside of IT to implement each area.

Why It's Costly: The result is a system no one understands, trusts, or uses.

What to Do Instead: Make ERP a business project, led by cross-functional leadership with clear ownership and communication.

7. Not Having a Trusted Advocate

Mistake: Going it alone, or only relying on vendors to guide you.

Why It's Costly: You miss blind spots, accept false urgency, and risk losing control of the entire process.

What to Do Instead: Work with an ERP strategic advisor who sits on your side of the table: no commissions, no pressure, just clear, experienced guidance.

The Bottom Line

You only get one shot at ERP.

Do it right, and it becomes the foundation for the next stage of your growth.

Do it wrong, and you'll spend years untangling the damage.

You don't need more vendor decks or sales pressure.

You need clarity, alignment, and an experienced partner who's been there before.

You don't have to figure this out alone.

Our proprietary ARC Model is how we bring structure, alignment, and clarity to one of the highest-stakes decisions your business will make.



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Next Step: The Strategic Scan

Before any demos. Before any sales calls.

Start with a focused, two-week engagement that gives you:

- ☐ A clear picture of your systems and gaps
- ☐ A decision-readiness checklist
- ☐ A tailored brief outlining next steps and options

➤ [Learn more about the Strategic Scan](#)

➤ [Or Schedule a Call to walk it through](#)

About Accipiter ERP Advisory

We help growth-stage manufacturers and distributors make confident, aligned ERP decisions, without wasting time, money, or momentum on the wrong tech.

We don't sell software. We guide strategy.