

## *smERP buying tips...(Evaluation Checklist)*



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**Questions that must be bothering you:-**

1. How to evaluate an ERP product?
2. How to evaluate an ERP vendor?
3. What shall I look for?
4. What features and functionalities are essential for my organization?
5. How can I be confident to go ahead with an ERP implementation?

Please find answers to all your questions in this “ERP Buying Tips and Evaluation checklist”.

**How to use this document?**

1. The table below enumerates a number of parameters/tips which you should take into consideration before deciding on a solution.
2. Take separate printouts of this document for each vendor.
3. Put the name of the vendor and product.
4. Put a tick mark next to the parameter/tip in the column ‘Remarks’ for evaluation. You can add your remarks to the same column for your ready reference.
5. After putting your tick marks, evaluate the sheet and see the implication of each parameter/tip and take your decision.

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Name of the vendor: \_\_\_\_\_ Name of the product: \_\_\_\_\_

SL	Evaluation Parameters/ Tips	Remarks
#1	<p><b>Ensure that the ERP product is web based.</b></p> <p>The first thing you should look for is the technology. Windows based applications are history. Web based solutions are the need of the hour. The ERP product which you are planning to buy should run in a browser like Internet Explorer. If it doesn't, it is not a web based ERP. Web based ERP will allow you to seamlessly work with multiple branches real time without any investment in hardware or connectivity. Many vendors are trying to sell old windows based applications in the name of 'ERP'. Please beware of them. Please do not go for a non web based solution.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
#2	<p><b>Ensure that ERP is running on an RDBMS?</b></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Well, 90% of the Enterprise Applications runs on RDBMS like SQL Server & Oracle. Ensure that your ERP back-end is either SQL Server or Oracle. Do not fall for relatively new concepts like OODBMS and flat file systems. These are relatively new concepts to handle light data, unlike RDBMS which can handle terabytes of information.	
#3	<p><b>Ensure that you see the infrastructure of your ERP vendor.</b></p> <p>Before you handover the order to your vendor, have a look at his infrastructure and establishment. If you don't find the infrastructure up to the mark, do not take risk.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
#4	<p><b>Make sure you take at least one client reference where the product is already running live.</b></p> <p>Try to talk to at least one satisfied customer. Also try to see a broadband demo of the web based solution.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
#5	<p><b>Take a thorough demo of the ERP product. This is a must.</b></p> <p>This is the most critical part of your evaluation process. You should see a thorough demo of the ERP solution you are going to buy. Tell your vendor to show each and every module in detail and you should try to relate it to your business. Try to understand what the GAP is and how much customization is required. Try to evaluate each and every feature. If you are satisfied with the demo and the presentation, if you can see the process being mapped successfully and little or no customization is required, you can opt for the solution. <b>You can use our 'eDominator comparison checklist' for evaluating the product thoroughly.</b></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
#6	<p><b>Buying the solution from a Financial Accounting package seller can put you into lot of trouble.</b></p> <p>Beware of some branded and unbranded sellers who may be good in Financial Accounting package but not in ERP. ERP implementation is no joke. It requires implementation expertise. Some vendors are selling Financial Accounting Package clubbed with Inventory and Payroll in the name of ERP. Beware of them. Buy your solution from a company that is experience in implementing ERP.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#7	<p><b>Try to meet the Owner/Project Director/ Marketing Director of the company before investing.</b></p> <p>Talking to people who have stake in the company will always give you confidence. You should meet them and try to evaluate their vision and experience.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
#8	<p><b>Evaluate the experience of the implementation team.</b></p> <p>You should meet the implementation head and evaluate the implementation experience of the team. Evaluate whether they have the required business knowledge.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
#9	<p><b>Remember that you are not buying a brochure.</b></p> <p>Some vendors carry very attractive brochures that will impress you. You are not paying for brochures.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
#10	<p><b>Go through the product documentation.</b></p> <p>Technical documentation is something which can lead you as well as mislead you. When you read a technical documentation of a product, try to evaluate each and every feature mentioned in the document with the product during the demo. Some vendors do cut/copy/paste of other vendors.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
#11	<p><b>Evaluate the technical strength of your vendor.</b></p> <p>Many small vendors have closed their shop, primarily because the owners of the company were not technical people. The leader of the team should be a highly technical person. This ensures that he is not dependent on his people.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
#12	<p><b>Do not get fascinated by the ‘Money-back-guarantee’ being offered by some vendors.</b></p> <p>Beware of the hoax, ‘Money-Back-Guarantee’. It has never worked out in past, it will never be a reality in future. Moreover, time is money. You will not spend months of your valuable time with your ERP vendor, only to ask him for a refund. So, evaluate the vendor and the product</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	thoroughly before investing.	
#13	<p><b>Find out if the solution is being implemented by partners .</b></p> <p>This is very dicey. Some ERP vendors assign your account to partners and the partners do the implementation, customization and support activities. In some cases, partners have no experience of implementation. They are typical sales people who make all false commitments. Beware of them. Try to ensure that your solution is implemented only by people who have developed it.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
#14	<p><b>Differentiate between sales people and consultants.</b></p> <p>Some sales people who have sold Accounting packages for years have suddenly started selling ERP. Beware of sales guys. ERP is not sold, it is to be implemented. So please differentiate.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
#15	<p><b>Make sure you are buying a product and not a development platform.</b></p> <p>Some ERP products need to be heavily customized. Those products are actually development platform on which vendors develop and deploy solutions. The development platform is provided by the parent company and further development is done by partners. You should ensure that you are investing in a product, not in a development platform.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
#16	<p><b>Opt for a system that has low learning curve.</b></p> <p>EXPAND is an application that runs in Internet Explorer. Being a browser based application, working on eDominer is as simple as surfing the internet.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
#17	<p><b>Core values of the vendor</b></p> <p>It's very important to understand the mission and vision of your ERP vendor. Fair Dealing' and 'Customer Delight' are two core values of eDominer systems. A young, dynamic, energetic and dedicated team is what we have to offer backed by experienced consultants.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#18	<b>Validate the support infrastructure of your ERP vendor</b>  Can your ERP vendor give you remote desktop support? Ensure that your vendor gives you a demonstration of remote support.	<input type="checkbox"/>
#19	<b>Ensure that the system is reliable &amp; scalable by identifying the underlying technology. Ensure that the system is web based and is built on a latest technology which is proven and robust.</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>