ERP

HOW ERP'S DIGITAL CAPABILITIES ARE DRIVING GROWTH FOR MANUFACTURING & DISTRIBUTION ENTERPRISES

For manufacturing or distribution enterprises to grow multifold, they need to infuse technology within their processes and workflows.

In today's digital technology era, companies are beginning to realize the benefits by implementing an e-commerce website or a mobile application that automates their order-to-cash workflow.

This is a small step towards a larger technology adoption, which is an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software laden with digital features and capabilities.

There has been a paradigm shift in how manufacturing and distribution enterprises are looking at modern ERP software loaded with digital capabilities. The Covid-19 pandemic has forced many of them to re-look and modify their business workflows by adopting modern ERP technology.

Nobody would have thought in their wildest dreams that 'Work from Home' which was normal for the Information Technology (IT) industry will become a necessity even for manufacturing & distribution enterprises.

WHAT DIGITAL CAPABILITIES DO MODERN ERP SOFTWARE POSSESS?
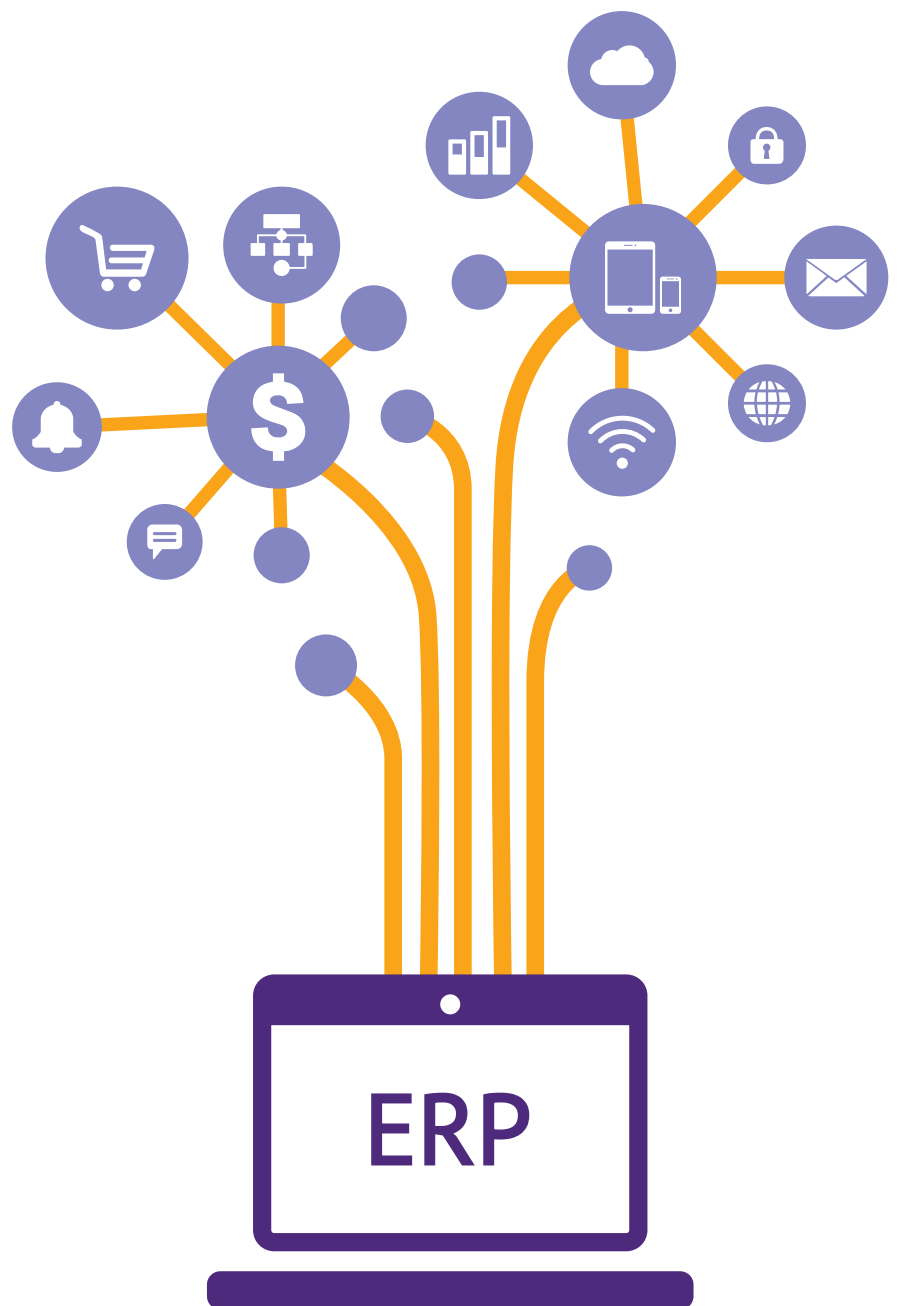
Enterprises need flexibility in the way they operate, enhanced mobility for their workforce, ability to integrate with various industry-class software, real-time data visibility & representation, and advanced personalization for their stakeholders.

Modern ERP software is built considering these requirements and the new digital age in mind. A typical ERP software for today's manufacturing and distribution enterprises consist of:

Powerful
ERP Features

Cloud Capability

Web Browser
Compatibility

Device Mobility

Low Code
Customization

Selective Customization
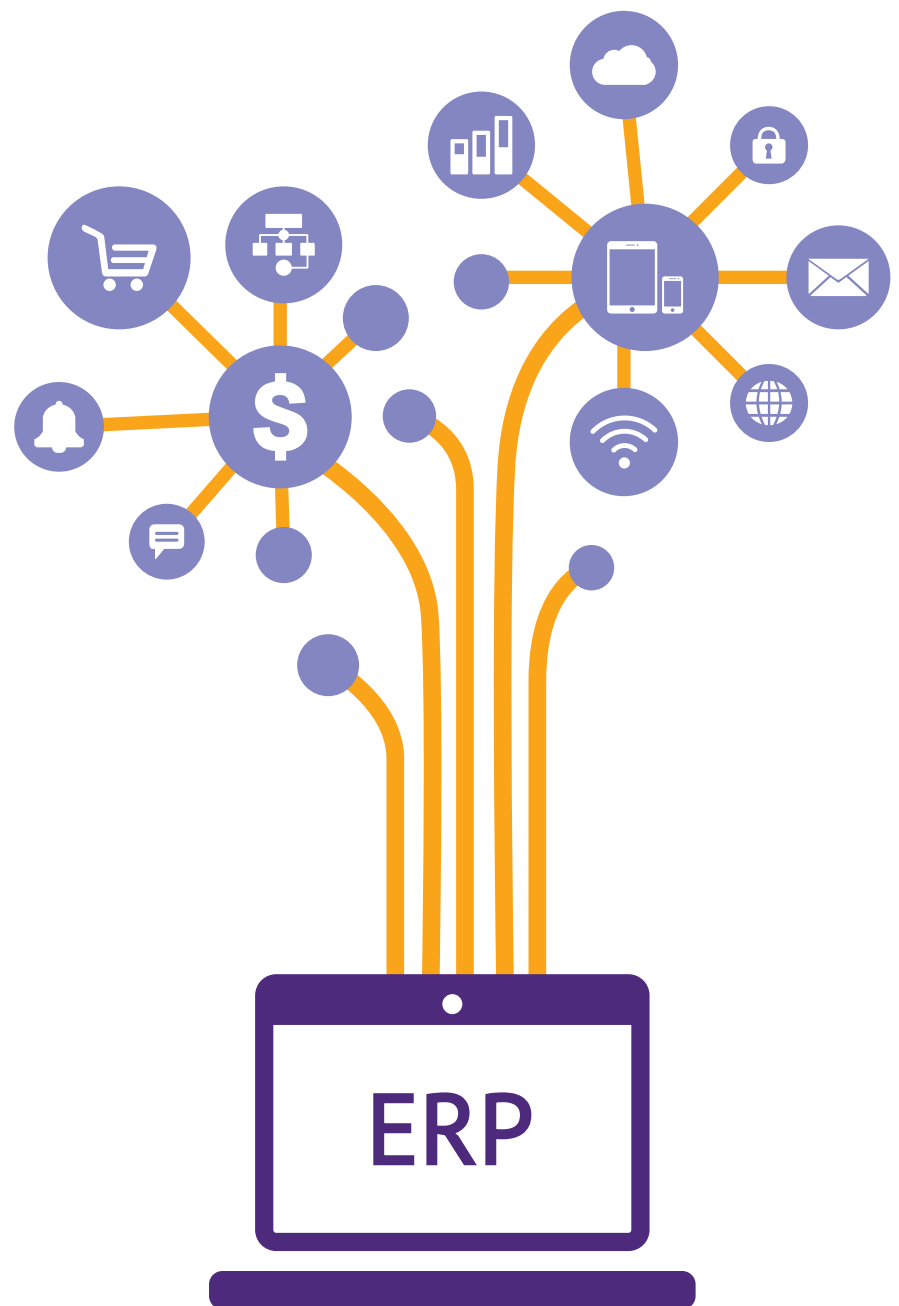& Upgrade

Plug and Play
Integration

Advanced
Personalization

Customer & Supplier
Portals

HOW DO THESE CAPABILITIES HELP MANUFACTURING & DISTRIBUTION ENTERPRISES?

ERP

POWERFUL ERP FEATURES

There is no doubt that an ERP software should consist of all functionalities that manufacturing and distribution enterprises require to operate efficiently. Modern ERPs encompass a wide range of modules such as,

Inventory	Purchase	Sales	Supply Chain	Quality

Planning & Scheduling	Production	Analytics	Tooling & Equipment	Accounting & Finance

Customer Service	Human Resources	Integration	Shipping & Logistics	MRP
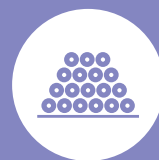
These modules are tightly with each other and connected to a single centralized database, ensuring a seamless data flow & update in real-time.

CLOUD ERP

Previously, a typical legacy ERP software had to be installed on each computer or on multiple computers using a LAN network with the help of an .exe file. It was a time-consuming and labor-intensive process, requiring a team of IT experts to install and configure the software based on customer requirement. But today, the era of legacy ERP systems is over.

With cloud technology, modern ERP software provides the flexibility of installing it on cloud (private or public) or on-premises. If an enterprise has opened a new facility or a warehouse, scaling the ERP across the facility is easy, quick and without any major restructuring & investment.

Installing on the cloud means, enterprises don't have to worry about procuring, storing & maintaining necessary enterprise-class servers, hardware equipment such as, cooling systems, backup servers, and remote-access technology.

Cloud ERP cuts down on IT staff required to perform administration tasks and maintain it. Enterprises can drastically reduce their ERP maintenance costs, improve utilization and ROI of their IT resources by allowing them to conduct value-added tasks.

Earlier, data security meant keeping security measures for the server room such as, security personnel, long passwords and biometric scanning. A cloud ERP eliminates them with multi-layered security, and constant maintenance with security patches and testing. The data resides on the cloud server with adequate security measures in place.

A cloud ERP can be automatically updated across all instances as compared to legacy editions. This reduces time, costs and personnel effort required to deploy ERP updates across all users, branches and warehouses.

For an enterprise to function smoothly and efficiently, each personnel need to have their hands on real-time data. This can happen only when there is a centralized database recording all that data and disseminating it across to personnel across departments, fields and roles. With a cloud ERP, all this is easily possible.
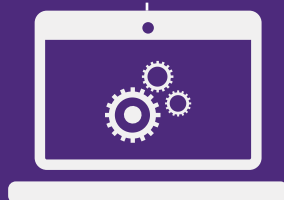
BROWSER BASED ERP

Back in the good old days, any software had to be manually installed on a computer using an .exe file. Same went for an ERP, where it was installed on an ERP-class server and configured on multiple user systems, thereby consuming immense time, labor and cost. Each user had to click on the .exe to open the ERP software. The software would have had to be re-installed in case of .exe file corruption or any other error.

The digital era has ensured that enterprises no longer have to endure the painful process of implementing an ERP within their organization.

Enter the Browser-based ERP!

Web browsers have become more advanced, quick and user-friendly, be it on any computing device. ERP software providers have realized its enormous advantage and have made it a primary medium for users to access the software.

There is no longer a need for users to click on an .exe file to install the application on their computers and click the icon to open the software every time. Just open any browser such as, Chrome, Microsoft Edge, Firefox Mozilla or Safari, click on the ERP bookmark URL, login and access enterprise data. As simple as that.

This has improved mobility as field personnel on the move can access their ERP from anywhere, anytime by opening it in any browser on their hand-held device.

ADVANCED MOBILITY

Browser compatibility means, ERP software providers have solved the most critical issue that manufacturing enterprises faced – Mobility. Accessing data on the move and updating critical data was a huge challenge, as ERP systems were limited to immobile workstations. This meant that operators within the factory had to constantly move from their machines to workstations to access and update data, consuming a lot of unnecessary time and effort. Field personnel had the hardest job as they didn't have access to real-time data and had to rely on the front-desk for latest updates.

Field and service personnel play a major role in efficient service management. For them to be on top of their game, they need instant access to real-time data on their hand-held devices while they are out on the field.

With modern ERP software, they can access and update data from any hand-held device such as, smartphones, tablets and laptops. Customer and service management gets streamlined as field personnel can enter product warranty status, product delivery information, faulty product data, service status etc. from the customer's location itself. They can instantly fetch order and service related updates and communicate to the customer.

Truck drivers and logistics personnel can instantly update product movement data and related info from vendor location.

Senior executives who are always on the move can access critical data and constantly communicate with their team. Plant supervisors who are on the move between factories and warehouses get the flexibility of operating from their smartphones and tablets. No wonder, this feature came as a huge bonus during COVID-19 pandemic as certain departments had to work from home and could access their ERP.

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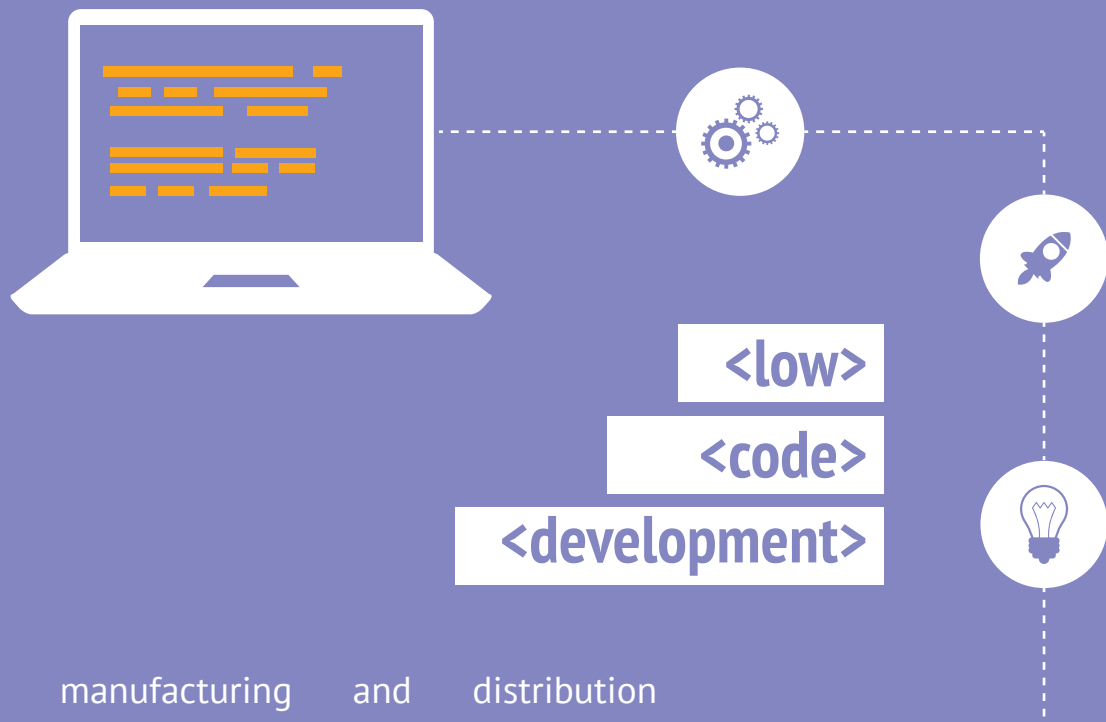
Today's manufacturing and distribution enterprises, especially from the small and medium segment need an ERP software that lets them build and customize based on their requirement in less time and cost. They don't have the resources and budget to hire developers or outsource the customization to vendors in order to customize the ERP based on their needs.

With ERP software's low-code capability, they can build internal applications, customize their ERP, integrate with third-party applications, and configure workflows, processes and business-logic with minimum coding.

This reduces enormous time and effort required to customize a module or create a custom application. Also, enterprises can eliminate out-sourcing their requirement to developers and instead, easily manage their custom requirement through their existing IT personnel & resources. The time taken to build and deploy is less, thereby enabling them to get operational with the new software quickly.
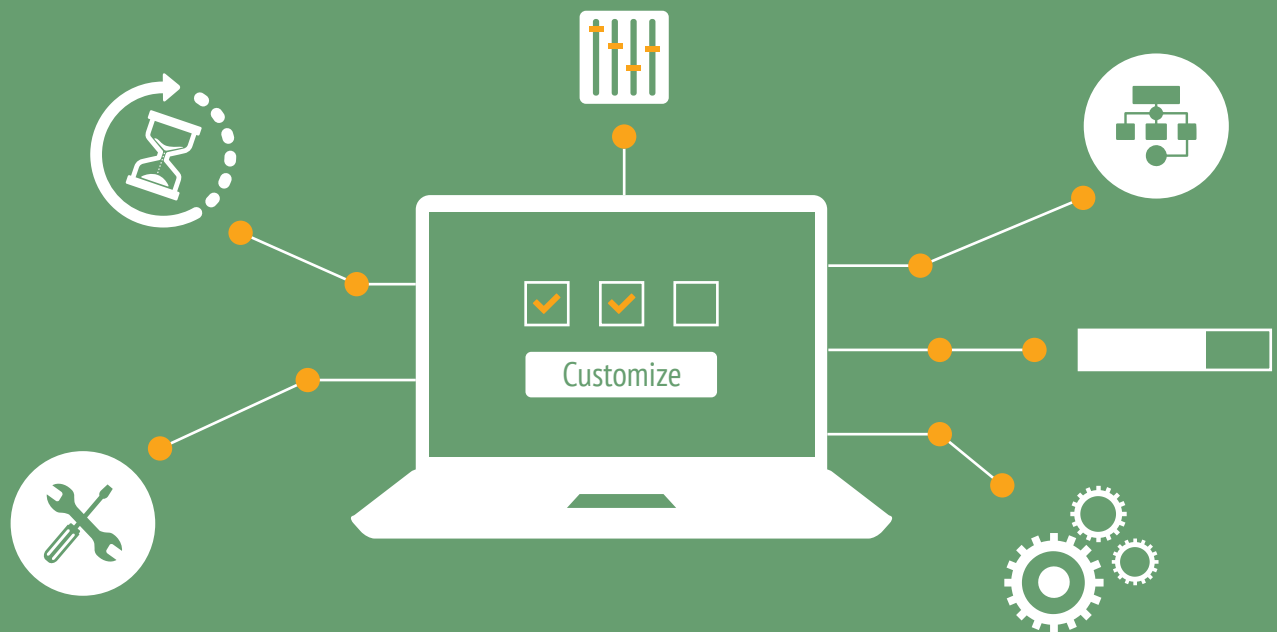
SELECTIVE CUSTOMIZATION & UPGRADE

Today, enterprises prefer to customize only specific modules and functionalities within an ERP based on their operational requirement, without impacting core features. Modern ERP software is designed to be modular in nature to meet this exact requirement.

Previously, manufacturers had to deal with a lot of issues when it came to customizing legacy ERP modules or features. Adding additional customization on a single feature or module would overwrite other existing customization done on other modules.

Modern ERP software eliminates this by allowing enterprises to perform selective customization & upgrade where a single module or functionality can be tweaked based on user requirement. All this, without over-writing existing customization of other modules/functionality. This reduces enormous time and cost required to re-do existing customizations erased by a new upgrade.

PLUG & PLAY INTEGRATION
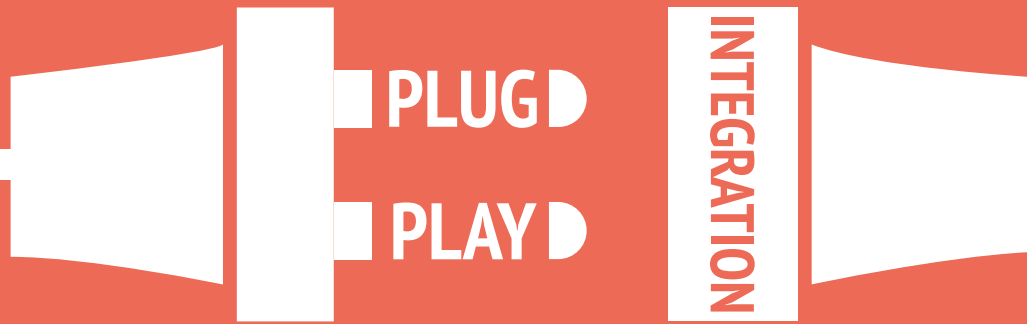
Manufacturing and distribution enterprises today, require a fleet of solutions to manage their planning and operations. Which means, they would require not one, but multiple software solutions that work in tandem with each other.

A modern ERP software of course, holds a wide-range of comprehensive features and capabilities. One of these is the ability to seamlessly integrate with applications such as, nesting, bar-code, shipping & logistics, CAD, quotation, machine monitoring, payment gateway etc. that play a crucial role in manufacturing and distribution operations.

These applications can be quickly integrated with the ERP, enabling enterprises to start their operations in considerably less time. Moreover, it ensures that they automate their workflows and cut down their production cycles, improve machine, manpower and material utilization, reduce costs and increase profitability.

ADVANCED PERSONALIZATION

Every personnel from the top floor to the shop floor needs real-time data tailored as per their department, roles and KPIs. This data keeps them informed of latest happenings on the floor and enables them to make informed decisions. Therefore, it is very important for enterprises to disseminate applicable data to their stakeholders, be it employees, suppliers and even customers.

Apart from the default reports, modern ERP software lets enterprises to build personalized reports, dashboards, analytical graphs, trends, and charts etc. as per the needs of their stakeholders from the top floor to the shop floor.
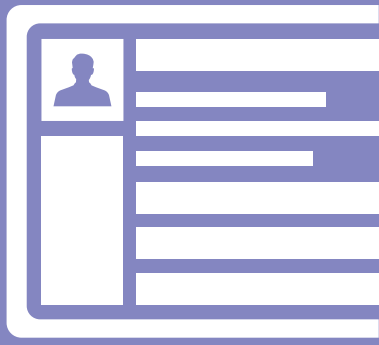
SELF SERVICE PORTALS

Modern ERPs have pulled the manufacturing ecosystem closer to each other by seamlessly connecting via self-service portals accessible to customers, suppliers and employees.

Gone are the days when suppliers and customers had to repeatedly call up the front desk to get the latest information about their respective purchases and orders. Self-service portals cut down the long chain of communication and enable them to access their personal web-based portals through a secure ID-Password system.

Enterprises can provide real-time access to production and inventory related information with their approved suppliers and third party vendors. With this, suppliers can access purchase order details, product configuration, payment and credit info, taxation, invoice details, ASNs and goods receiving data etc. They can also access customer demand, forecasting data and inventory levels for a seamless material purchase and movement.

For customers, self-service portals are absolutely necessary as it enables them to track their orders and shipments. They can access their RFQs, responses, order history, warranty info, quotation and estimate details. They can track their shipment till the product is delivered to them. Also, they can download product manuals, quality certificates and product specifications. They get an option to customize the way their portal looks and change preferences as required. All this takes the load off the enterprise front-desk who otherwise, would have to constantly respond to customer queries and provide relevant info to them.

A customer portal reduces time and effort for both the enterprise and the customer, brings down overhead costs and improves customer satisfaction and market reputation. Employees also get a self-service portal that lets them track relevant information such as, salary slips, pay structure, taxation, bank account info etc. They also have access to leave-related information such as, total no. of leaves, leaves taken, sick leaves, carry forwards etc. They can access their training calendar and track their certification status.

Overall, self-service portals provide the freedom to stakeholders to take informed decisions based on real-time data and improve efficiency of the entire ecosystem.
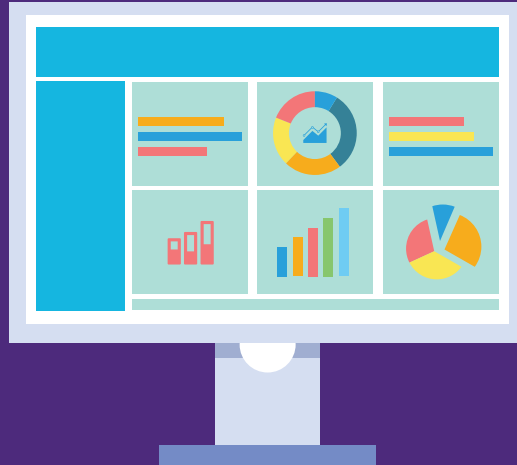
A digitally capable ERP should not only possess advanced capabilities but should be able to unify man, machine and data. When all these components seamlessly talk to each other and function collaboratively, enterprises reap the benefit of maximized returns and unparalleled growth.

About OmegaCube

Since 1999, OmegaCube has delivered enterprise-class ERP software for our customers with a single focus,

"No two companies operate exactly the same and they need flexibility in their systems in order to maintain their competitive edge".

You know your business inside-out and would definitely want your ERP software to treat you in a manner you like, and not exactly as it treats your competitor. Our flagship product, OmegaCube ERP seamlessly adapts to your business. With best industry practices built into the product, coupled with extreme flexibility,

OmegaCube ERP can do things better than you currently do and at the same time, adapt to what you do best. This has helped our customers from diverse industries, realize their strategic goals such as, workflow automation, centralized operations, cost reduction, increase in production, knowledge centralization, and effective resource & manpower utilization. Our strong expertise in advanced ERP technology coupled with immense manufacturing & distribution knowledge allows us to deliver quality enterprise solutions that help you gain competitive edge in the market and achieve your business goals.