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5 Selection Mistakes in ERP Projects

in the Chemical Industry and How to Avoid Them

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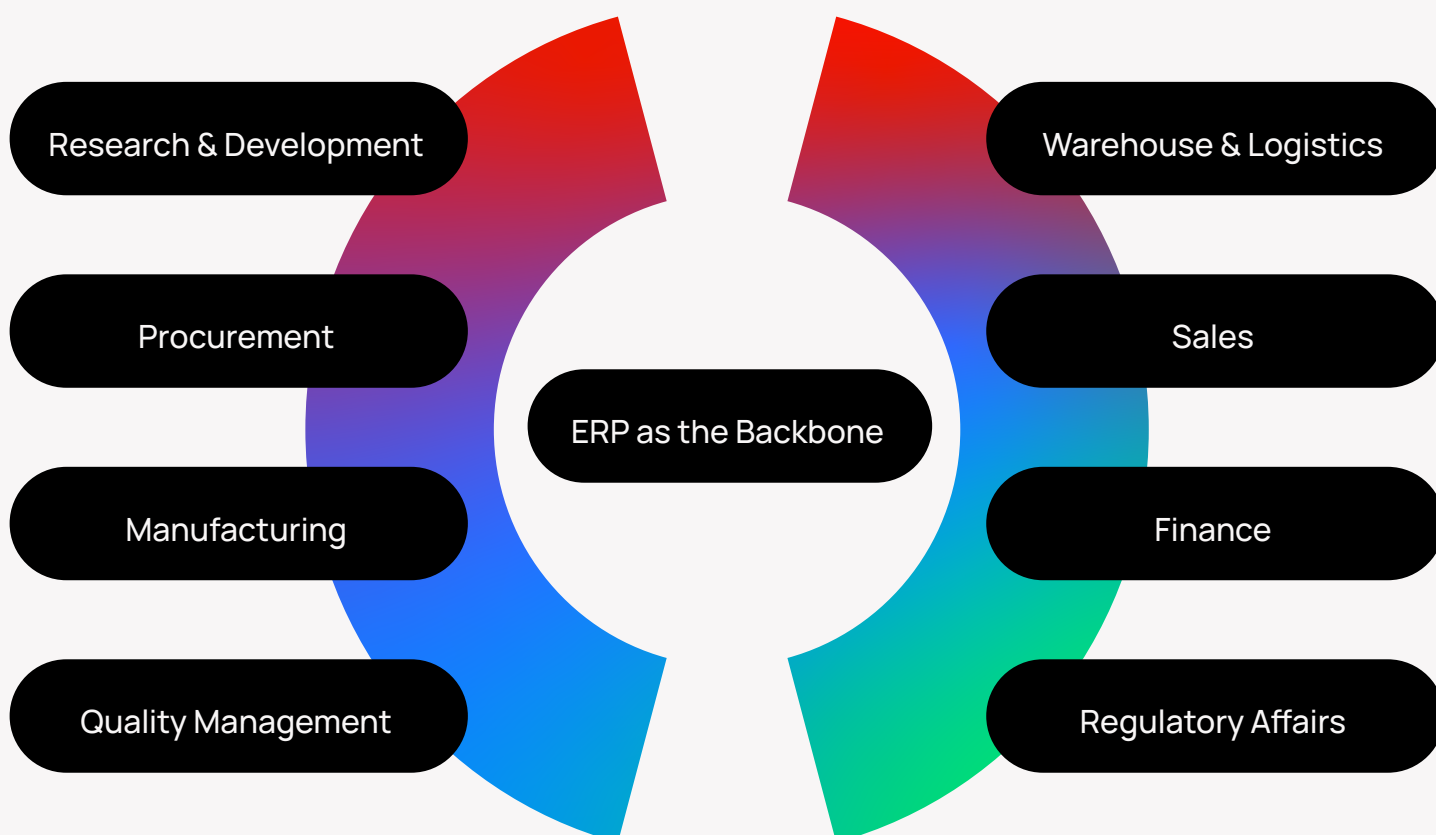
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Why ERP Selection Makes All the Difference in the Chemical Industry

An ERP system forms the strong backbone of all your business processes. From formulation to quality control, everything must work together seamlessly, a demanding task given complex materials and strict regulations.

Anyone who compromises on this crucial decision often ends up having to laboriously correct not only individual workflows, but also deep-rooted structures later on. Take a look at the typical stumbling blocks of ERP implementation and find out how to avoid them successfully from the start.





Mistake 1: Requirements Remain Too Superficial

Many chemical industry projects begin with structure but without the necessary depth. They often describe requirements, but fail to accurately reflect the real day-to-day work behind them. The result is a concept that appears plausible during the selection process, but quickly reaches its limits in later operations.

Only in day-to-day operations do the missing details become apparent:

- How exactly are formulations managed and adjusted?
- How do we handle hazardous substances?
- How do production, quality, and warehousing interact?

This creates a system that seems like a perfect fit in theory, but in practice only works with a great deal of additional effort.



Mistake 2: The Chemical Industry Focus Is Underestimated

A standard ERP system offers flexibility, but it has its limits. Anyone planning to bolt complex chemical-specific requirements onto the system afterward is shifting major unresolved challenges into the ongoing project.

This is often underestimated, especially when it comes to:

- Formulation and variant management
- Handling different units and formulas
- Integration of quality controls into production

Without a firm foundation in the standard system, isolated individual processes arise instead of a smooth, end-to-end system. The direct consequence: complexity increases and errors creep in much more quickly.



Mistake 3: Compliance Is Considered Too Late

Project teams often do have compliance on their radar—just unfortunately not early enough. In most cases, it only factors into the evaluation once systems have already been shortlisted or the project is already in full swing.

The rude awakening comes when the team realizes that the new system does not consistently support the strict requirements:

- Documentation requirements are not integrated end to end
- Review and approval processes take place outside the system
- Evidence has to be compiled manually

The cause: poor timing. In the chemical industry in particular, compliance must be at the table from minute one and play an active role in shaping system decisions. Anyone who sees compliance as a constant companion from the very beginning not only saves time and resources, but also secures long-term project success.



Mistake 4:

A System Is Evaluated by Individual Features Instead of Processes

A demo can impressively showcase what a system is capable of - but the real acid test is practice. Far too often, far-reaching decisions are based on ticking off rigid checklists of functions instead of walking through real business processes step by step.

Only in practical use does it become clear whether the different areas truly work together seamlessly:

- Do planning and production run continuously from end to end?
- Are all required quality processes integrated?
- Is data entered or transferred multiple times?

Anyone who skips this practical comparison often ends up choosing a system that looks impressive on paper but creates noticeable friction in day-to-day operations.



Mistake 5:

Price Dominates the True Value

The first glance often falls on pure licensing costs. These figures seem tangible and are easy to compare. But this first impression says little about the tangible added value a system will actually provide in everyday work later on.

The real, often invisible costs are hidden beneath the surface and usually only arise after the purchasing decision:

- for individual customizations
- during integration into existing structures
- in ongoing operations and during updates
- as part of validation

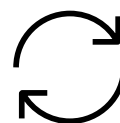
If software does not already support your core processes as part of the standard system, it requires continuous rework.

Foundation Before Function: Your Key to ERP Success

Implementing a new ERP system is a far-reaching decision. Anyone who clearly defines their requirements, includes industry-specific details, and considers compliance from the very first minute is laying a strong foundation. Without this basis, painful compromises in live operations are inevitable. So how do you make the right choice? The key lies in a clearly structured approach:

Real processes instead of long lists

Define your requirements based on real work processes – not rigid feature lists.



Test workflows

Run through business-critical workflows early and specifically, for example in practical demos or a proof of concept (PoC).



Compliance from Day One

Anchor compliance requirements directly as a criterion so that you can carry out a suitable evaluation.



Everyday reality instead of glossy promises

Measure the systems offered against the reality of your company, not against polished presentations.



Value before price

Make your decision based on the long-term added value for your company instead of being guided only by initial entry costs.



This way, you are not just making a well-founded and secure decision. You are creating a stable foundation for an ERP system that supports your processes efficiently, reliably, and for the long term.

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