

Distribution Management System Evaluation Checklist

Selecting an ERP distribution management and accounting system to run your business is a decision that will affect your company for many years. Many products offer the same or similar features, and it can be confusing to sort out what's important and what's not. This tool can help.

Use this checklist to compare the features and benefits of distribution system vendors across these five categories:

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|----------------------|---|
| PRODUCTIVITY | What can the product do to make you and your staff more productive? |
| FUNCTIONALITY | What features and functions does the product have that actually perform the daily accounting and business management functions? |
| TECHNOLOGY | Does the product leverage technology for usability, customizability, and maintainability? |
| VALUE | How does the product maximize features and functions vs. cost for the usable lifetime of the product? |
| RISK | How does the product minimize risk and facilitate security (both network and financial security)? |



Category	Feature	Benefit	Priority	Acumatica	Vendor #2	Vendor #3
CATEGORY // PRODUCTIVITY						
PRODUCTIVITY	Intuitive	Easy to learn and use.		✓		
PRODUCTIVITY	True universal availability	Access to system from any device, anytime, anywhere to facilitate staff working on the road with customers and suppliers, and at home.		✓		
PRODUCTIVITY	Multi-language	Work in the language that best fits you. Print documents (like invoices) in the language of your customer.		✓		
PRODUCTIVITY	Multi-currency	Work in any currency and convert as needed.		✓		
PRODUCTIVITY	Workflow	Automate business processes, approvals, and notifications.		✓		
PRODUCTIVITY	Wiki's	Share information and company documents among any combination of teams, departments, and external users.		✓		
PRODUCTIVITY	Document Management	Make documents accessible to all key personnel.		✓		
PRODUCTIVITY	Single database	Single version of the truth. No need to maintain integrations between applications.		✓		
PRODUCTIVITY	Better, quicker decisions and fewer mistakes	Comprehensive reporting to make informed decisions without the guesswork.		✓		
CATEGORY // FUNCTIONALITY						
FUNCTIONALITY	Multi Entity	Support multi-company, multi-warehouse, and international companies, including financial consolidations, intercompany eliminations, and reconciliations.		✓		
FUNCTIONALITY	Financial Management	Support standard accounting functions, including General Ledger, Accounts Payable, Accounts Receivable, Cash Management, Tax management, and more.		✓		
FUNCTIONALITY	Quote-to-cash	Create quotes, convert to sales order, check inventory availability, perform credit check, manufacturer (if applicable), pick, ship, invoice, and collect payment.		✓		

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FUNCTIONALITY	Sales Order Management	Split orders across multiple warehouses, allocate inventory, verify credit limits, issue replenishment orders, accept returns, and manage complex pricing/discount policies.		✓		
FUNCTIONALITY	Purchase Order Management	Automate complex procure-to-pay processes involving multiple products and suppliers. Create requisitions and approvals, obtain bids, convert to purchase orders, receive inventory, input invoices, match and pay.		✓		
FUNCTIONALITY	Inventory Management	Manage inventory, plan and manage movement of goods through distribution network, and control customer and transfer orders. Use multiple locations with lot and serial number tracking. Expired items are automatically removed from available inventory.		✓		
FUNCTIONALITY	Warehousing and Fulfillment	Automate routine tasks of pick, pack and ship with hands-free operations. Specify the types of items/transactions allowed, picking priority, and multiple bins and locations.		✓		
FUNCTIONALITY	Cost Accounting	Track inventory and operations costs. Analyze and report actual and expected costs and variances. Post costs to general ledger.		✓		
FUNCTIONALITY	Industry support	Support specific industries including Services (Professional, Business, Repair, and Field), Wholesale Distribution (Durable and Nondurable), Discrete Manufacturing (MTS, MTO, ETO, and Batch), and Retail (online and brick & mortar).		✓		
FUNCTIONALITY	Strong third-party software support to extend product functions	Access to library of enhancements available to extend the functionality of the product to meet your unique business needs, such as your preferred barcoding, advanced warehousing or inventory optimization provider.		✓		
FUNCTIONALITY	Integrated Business Intelligence	Go beyond spreadsheets and use integrated BI to understand what the financial and customer data is really telling you, so you can make informed, actionable decisions.		✓		
FUNCTIONALITY	CRM combined with ERP	Share a single database between ERP and CRM – no need to synchronize two databases with the same information.		✓		

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CATEGORY // TECHNOLOGY						
TECHNOLOGY	True cloud	All functionality is accessible through the internet using a standard browser without the need for any software installation on the user's device. No additional software licensing required.		✓		
TECHNOLOGY	Responsive design	View and interact with every page of the application on any device with a minimum of resizing, panning, or scrolling.		✓		
TECHNOLOGY	User interface	Modern look and feel. Customize screens and dashboards. Easy access to tasks with minimal clicks and intuitive workflow.		✓		
TECHNOLOGY	Customizable and flexible	Ability to modify and customize business logic to meet your company's unique requirements.		✓		
TECHNOLOGY	Customization using industry standard tools	Perform customizations using industry standard tools and programming languages without requiring the use of proprietary languages or compilers.		✓		
TECHNOLOGY	Full relational database	All system data stored in a relational SQL database. Query data for reporting, BI, financial statements, audits, and more.		✓		
TECHNOLOGY	Database export	Access and export relational versions of all data for reporting, backup, and transfer.		✓		
TECHNOLOGY	Upgrade on your schedule	Ability to plan upgrades at dates and times that are convenient to you and your company – not the ERP vendor.		✓		
TECHNOLOGY	Capable of moving to the cloud when you are ready	Not everyone wants to operate in the cloud. The product should support both on premise and cloud deployments, and let you switch deployment models if and when you are ready.		✓		
CATEGORY // VALUE						
VALUE	Multiple deployment options	Deployment methods allow on premise in your facility, private cloud of your choice, or our public cloud using Amazon Web Services (AWS).		✓		
VALUE	Flexible licensing options	Offers subscription or perpetual licensing (depreciable capital expense versus an ongoing operating expense).		✓		

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VALUE	Low Total Cost of Ownership (TCO)	Reduce the total cost of ownership over the foreseeable lifetime of the product (at a minimum 3-5 years), including licensing, support, hardware, upgrade, and hosting costs. Be sure to add the cost of additional products required to run the system (web server, eCommerce platform, database server, collaboration tools, CRM, etc.), which includes all required hardware, licensing, and support costs.		✓		
VALUE	Scale as you grow	Ability to accommodate heavier volumes, more resources, and more users as your business grows. Pay only for what you use. Add more resources when you need them.		✓		
VALUE	Preserve capital for other business initiatives	Cloud deployments reduce the need for initial cash outlay for hardware and software purchases. Cloud deployments also reduce the amount of internal IT staff required for hardware and software support and maintenance.		✓		
VALUE	Charged by resources used, not by user	Vendor charges for the resources used, not by user count, making the benefits of ERP available to all employees, customers and suppliers. Charging by user penalizes growing businesses.		✓		
CATEGORY // RISK						
RISK	Predictable monthly costs	Not vulnerable to spikes in IT costs. Standardizing on a platform allows you to predict your monthly cost for the system.		✓		
RISK	Deploy quickly	Eliminate time delay and risk of unplanned costs by deploying quickly with a cloud solution.		✓		
RISK	Leverage global technology leaders	Ability to utilize the resources of cloud hosting leaders (Amazon, Microsoft, and IBM) for their fast response and uptime.		✓		
RISK	Knowledge of your industry	Reduce risk by using a software vendor with the solutions and knowledge for your specific industry.		✓		
RISK	Customer references	Cites customer successes using their software in your industry.		✓		
RISK	Best-in-class security at no additional cost	Support platform, web, and computer security leveraging expertise at hosting providers.		✓		

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RISK	Data in the cloud	Data on your servers are vulnerable to attack.		✓		
RISK	Backup and disaster recovery	Prepared for the worst – cloud deployment lowers costs for backup, failover, and disaster recovery.		✓		
RISK	Simpler integration with other web apps	Utilize web capabilities to integrate with other web-based business applications.		✓		
RISK	Vendor handles updates and upgrades	Eliminate risk of missing an upgrade with a cloud solution.		✓		

About The Answer Co

[The Answer Company](#) is a leading supplier of business management software and technology consulting services. Since 1994, it has been helping businesses answer the difficult questions with regards to investments in technology and information systems. Working from offices across Canada, they serve national & international clients with a wide range of ERP solutions and numerous complimentary solutions that are powerful & flexible, and backed by industry expertise. The Answer Company's goal is to make businesses more successful at what they do and gain confidence to make profitable moves in their respective industries.

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