



Buyer Guide for ERP Software

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I. Introduction

The fashion industry is like a constantly spinning carousel, with multiple moving parts, changing trends, and shifting consumer demands that can leave businesses feeling dizzy. To thrive in this landscape, fashion businesses need to have the right tools to manage their operations efficiently. That's where enterprise solutions such as Enterprise Resource Planning ([ERP](#)) and Product Lifecycle Cycle Management (PLM) systems come in.

WHAT IS ERP? WHY DO BUSINESSES NEED IT?

ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) is a software that integrates various business processes into a centralized system, with a shared database and diverse modules to automate and streamline workflows, track and analyze operations, and facilitate better decision-making. It covers everything from finance and inventory to manufacturing, order processing, and human resources, enabling businesses to operate more efficiently and effectively.

WHY DO FASHION BUSINESSES STRUGGLE TO FIND THE RIGHT ERP?

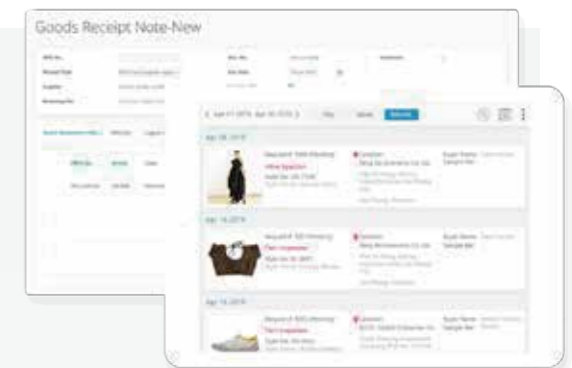
Choosing the right ERP is hard for any business, but it can be especially challenging for companies in the fashion industry. This sector has unique requirements for inventory management, production planning, and speed to market, which makes it crucial to select an Apparel ERP system that is designed explicitly for the fashion and apparel industry adaptable to remain competitive. But with so many options available, selecting the right ERP is no child's play.

What's more, the fashion industry has experienced significant disruption in recent years due to factors like changing consumer trends, increasing globalization, and the rise of e-commerce. As a result, fashion businesses need to be extra agile and adaptable to remain competitive. But with so many options available, selecting the right ERP system is no child's play.

This buyer guide will take you through the crucial factors to consider when selecting an Apparel ERP system for your fashion business. We'll provide you tips and tricks to help you identify your specific business needs, research potential vendors, evaluate the features of different systems, calculate the total cost of ownership, and measure the potential return on investment.

We'll take a closer look at the unique needs of the fashion industry and show you how an ERP system can help you meet those needs. We'll introduce you to **WFX ERP**, a leading ERP system designed specifically for fashion, apparel, textile, footwear, home furnishing and related businesses.

So, whether you're a budding start-up or a large-scale fashion conglomerate, this buyer guide will equip you with the knowledge you need to make an informed decision when selecting an ERP system. Let's get started to see how a Fashion-specific ERP can help your fashion business thrive in today's fast-paced and ever-changing market.



II. Understanding Your Business Needs

You can't build a house without a blueprint, and the same goes for selecting an ERP. It's crucial to assess your business needs and identify the specific requirements you need from a Garment or Textile ERP system. This will ensure that the system you choose is tailored to your business and can help you achieve your goals.

HOW DO YOU FIND THE RIGHT FIT FOR YOUR BUSINESS?

Start with a clear understanding of your business needs. This means taking a closer look at your existing operations and identifying areas where you could use improvement.

- Do you struggle with inventory management?
- Are you having trouble keeping up with sampling requests?
- Do you find it hard to get high level information about your sales orders?

Once you've identified YOUR unique pain points, it's time to get specific about what you need from an ERP system. Your needs will always vary depending on the size and complexity of your business, as well as your long-term goals.

For example, a small start-up may only require basic accounting and inventory management features, while a larger business may need more advanced functionality such as demand forecasting and supply chain optimization.



5 TIPS TO HELP YOU IDENTIFY YOUR SPECIFIC BUSINESS REQUIREMENTS:



THINK ABOUT LONG-TERM VISION

As your business grows and evolves, your needs will change. Make sure you choose an ERP system that can scale with your business and provide the flexibility you need to adapt to changing market conditions.



FIND OUT WHAT'S SLOWING YOU DOWN

Every business is different, so it's important to spot the unique challenges you face. Whether it's managing multiple samples or maintaining quality control across different locations, your ERP should address your specific needs.



INVOLVE KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Involve employees from different departments in the assessment process to ensure that you identify all the pain points and requirements. This will also help to ensure buy-in and adoption of the new system.



IDENTIFY CRITICAL BUSINESS PROCESSES

Identify the key business processes that are critical to your business and ensure that the ERP system can support those processes. This will help to ensure that the system meets your specific needs.



MAP OUT YOUR WORKFLOWS

Take a close look at your existing workflows and identify areas where you could use more automation or efficiency. This will help you identify the specific features you need from an ERP system.

III. Researching Potential Vendors

As you embark on your search for the perfect Garment ERP, you'll soon realize that choosing the right vendor is just as crucial as selecting the right software. It's essential to assess multiple factors when researching potential vendors to ensure that the system you choose aligns with your business needs.

5 FACTORS TO CONSIDER WHILE RESEARCHING POTENTIAL VENDORS:



REPUTATION:

Take a deep dive into the vendor's reputation in the market by reading reviews, case studies, and testimonials. Try to look for vendors that have experience working with businesses like yours.



PRICING:

Be mindful of the vendor's pricing structure and any additional costs, such as licensing fees or customization charges. Be sure to compare costs across vendors to ensure you're getting the best value.



FUNCTIONALITY:

Look for a system that aligns with your business requirements, which may include certain industry-specific features, scaling requirements or reporting dashboards.



CUSTOMIZATION OPTIONS:

Consider the extent to which you can customize the system to meet your specific business needs, including adding (or removing) certain modules or features.



CUSTOMER SUPPORT:

Research the level of support the vendor offers, including availability, response time, and customer satisfaction. Look for vendors that offer a dedicated support team to assist you throughout the implementation process and beyond.

Evaluating Cloud vs. On-Premise deployments:

One of the most significant decisions you'll make when choosing an ERP system is deciding between a cloud-based or on-premises deployment. Here are some pros and cons to consider:

CLOUD-BASED	ON-PREMISES
Lower upfront costs	Higher upfront costs
Scalable and flexible	Limited scalability and flexibility
Easy access from anywhere	Requires on-site infrastructure
Automatic updates and maintenance	Need for in-house IT staff
Pay-as-you-go model	Longer implementation time
Potential security concerns	More control over security

It's essential to consider the unique needs of your business when evaluating deployment options. If your business has limited resources for infrastructure or IT support, a cloud-based deployment may be the way to go. However, if you require more control over security or customization, an on-premises deployment may be a better fit.

Keep all of these factors in mind when researching potential vendors and evaluating deployment options to ensure both your ERP system and provider are the best fit for your business.

IV. Evaluating ERP System Features

An ERP system should meet a business's unique needs while providing key functionality to streamline processes and improve efficiencies.

Some essential features to evaluate when selecting an ERP system:

FEATURE	DESCRIPTION
Costing & Budget Management	Develop style cost sheets, accurately predict costs, set procurement budgets and manage color/size level costings.
Material Planning	See which materials you need to order, where they're going, and estimate your costs based on historical data, sales trends and inventory levels.
Purchasing & Procurement	Define supplier price lists by item, color/size pricing for budget-controlled procurement
Sales Order Management	Manage sales processes, from order entry to invoicing and shipping.
Inventory Management	Track roll-wise and/or lot-wise inventory levels, orders, and deliveries.
Quality Control	Execute inspections, set versatile and flexible quality standards based on company and/or buyer requirements.
Time & Action	Identify critical activities, track workloads, task execution and automate task closures for efficient workflow management.
Production Planning	Plan production schedules, allocate resources, and manage production processes.
Accounting & Financials	Automate financial bookkeeping and eliminate manual data entries for goods receipts, dispatch and production.
Business Intelligence & Reporting	Data analytics, reporting dashboards, KPIs, trend analysis, predictive analytics

Note: All these core features and more are available in WFX ERP. [Contact WFX to learn more!](#)

Industry-specific requirements



USABILITY AND CUSTOMIZATION

A user-friendly and customizable interface is important to ensure that employees can easily navigate the system and access the features they need. Look for systems with a modern and minimal user interface.



REPORTING AND ANALYTICS

An ERP system should offer robust reporting and analytics capabilities to provide insight into business performance and identify areas for improvement. Look for systems that offer customizable dashboards, real-time data visualization, and advanced analytics features.



INTEGRATION CAPABILITIES

An ERP system should be able to integrate with other internal and external systems to ensure seamless data flow and process automation. Look for systems that offer APIs and pre-built connectors to popular software solutions.



MOBILITY

With the increasing trend towards remote work and mobile-first access, it is important to consider whether the ERP system has mobile capabilities that can be accessed from a smartphone or tablet.



SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS

Ensure that the ERP system has strong security features such as data encryption, access controls, and user authentication to protect sensitive data from unauthorized access and breaches.



SCALABILITY

An ERP system should be able to grow with the business, accommodating new users, processes, and data volumes. Look for systems that can scale up or down as needed without compromising performance or functionality.

V. Implementation Process

IMPLEMENTATION STAGE	DESCRIPTION	BEST PRACTICES
Planning	Define project scope, timeline, and budget. Identify project goals, stakeholders, and metrics.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Involve all key stakeholders in project planning. - Clearly define project goals and metrics. - Allocate resources and establish a realistic timeline and budget.
Analysis	Gather and document functional and technical requirements. Analyze current business processes and identify areas for improvement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct a thorough business process analysis. - Document functional and technical requirements. - Identify gaps between requirements and ERP system capabilities.
Design	Develop a detailed project plan and system design. Customize and configure the ERP system to meet business requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work with the vendor to configure and customize the system. - Develop a detailed project plan that outlines tasks, timelines, and responsibilities. - Establish a change management process.
Development	Develop and test customizations, interfaces, and reports. Build integrations with other systems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Follow best practices for software development and testing. - Conduct thorough testing of customizations, integrations, and interfaces. - Develop and test disaster recovery and business continuity plans.
Data Migration	Migrate data from legacy systems to the new ERP system. Validate and cleanse data to ensure accuracy and completeness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop a detailed data migration plan. - Validate and cleanse data before migration. - Conduct thorough testing of migrated data.
Training	Develop and deliver training programs for end-users and IT staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop customized training programs for different user groups. - Conduct training sessions that are interactive and engaging. - Provide ongoing training and support.
Go-Live	Launch the new ERP system and transition from the old system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct thorough system testing before go-live. - Establish a support team to address post-go-live issues. - Monitor system performance and user adoption.
Post-Implementation Support	Ongoing support and maintenance to ensure the system continues to meet business needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish a help desk for users to report issues. - Provide ongoing system updates and maintenance. - Conduct periodic system assessments to identify areas for improvement.

Note: These best practices are general guidelines and may vary depending on the specific ERP system and business requirements.

5 TIPS TO HELP YOU IDENTIFY YOUR SPECIFIC BUSINESS REQUIREMENTS:

ASSIGN A PROJECT MANAGER:

A dedicated project manager will help keep the implementation on track and ensure that all stakeholders are informed and involved in the process.

ENGAGE END-USERS:

Involve employees who will be using the system in the implementation process and encourage them to provide feedback and suggestions.

PROVIDE ADEQUATE TRAINING:

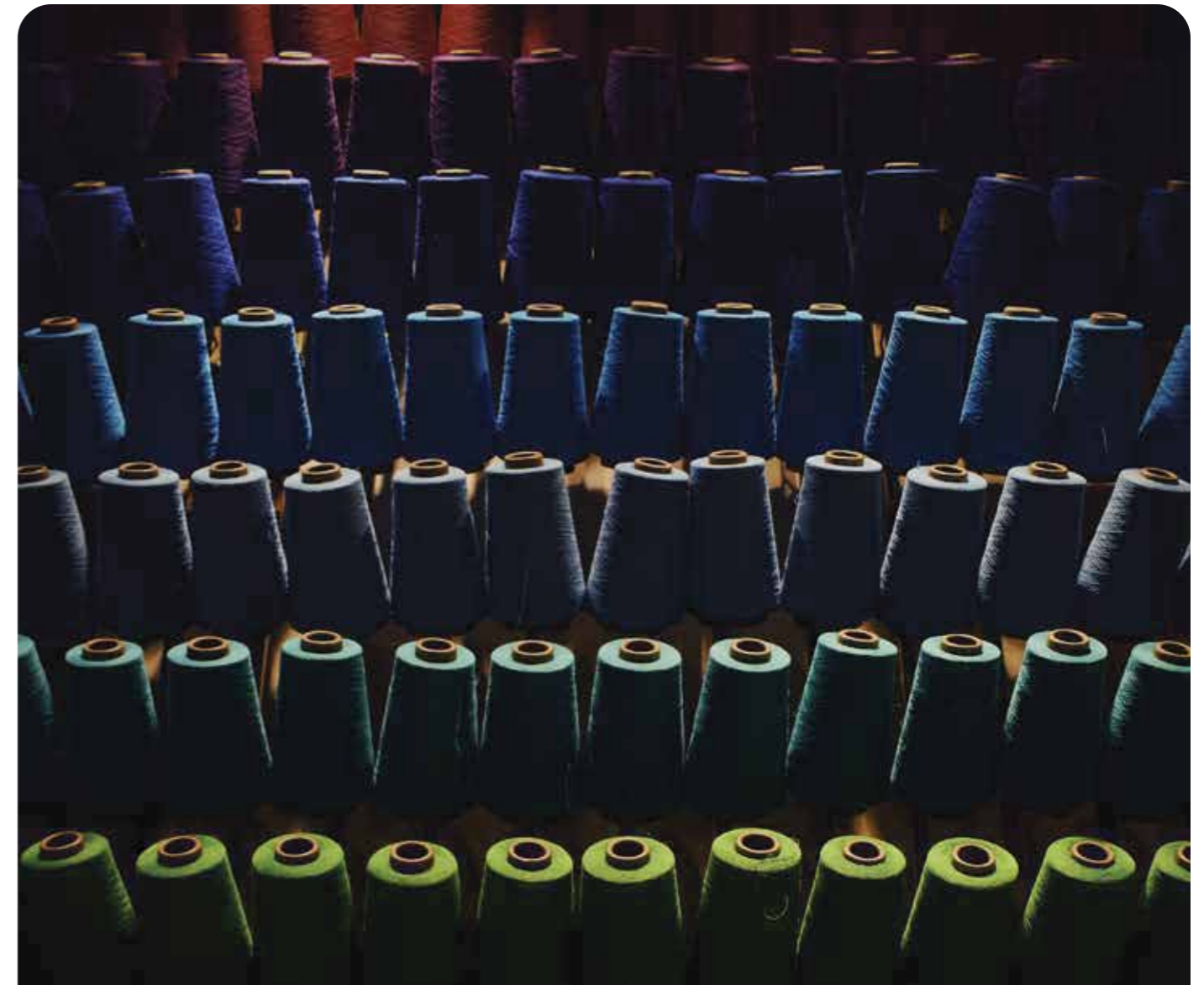
Provide comprehensive training to end-users to ensure they can use the system effectively.

SET REALISTIC GOALS:

Set realistic timelines and goals for each stage of the implementation process.

COMMUNICATE REGULARLY:

Keep all stakeholders informed of the progress, challenges, and next steps throughout the implementation process.



A NOTE ON VENDOR SUPPORT AND IMPLEMENTATION SUCCESS RATES

When evaluating ERP systems, it is important to consider the level of vendor support during the implementation process. Many vendors offer different levels of support, ranging from basic assistance to full implementation services. It is also important to consider the implementation success rates of different vendors. According to the consulting firm [Deloitte](#), as many as 55% to 75% of all ERP projects fail to meet their objectives but this failure is avoidable. The report found that the most common reasons for implementation failure were poor project planning, lack of executive buy-in, and inadequate training. To ensure successful implementation, look for vendors that offer comprehensive implementation services and have a track record of successful implementations. Ask for references and case studies to get a better understanding of their implementation success rates.

VI. Evaluating Total Cost of Ownership (TCO)

When selecting an ERP system, it is important to evaluate the total cost of ownership (TCO) over the lifetime of the software. TCO includes all costs associated with the software, including licensing, implementation, maintenance, and support costs.

SOME FACTORS TO CONSIDER WHEN CALCULATING THE TCO OF AN ERP SYSTEM:



LICENSING:

Licensing costs for ERP systems can vary widely depending on the software vendor, the features included, and the number of users. Some vendors offer perpetual licenses, while others offer subscription-based models. It is important to evaluate the licensing options and choose the one that best fits your organization's needs and budget.



MAINTENANCE:

Maintenance costs include the ongoing support and updates to the software. Some vendors offer maintenance as part of the licensing agreement, while others charge separately for this service. It is important to evaluate the maintenance costs and factor them into the overall TCO of the software.



IMPLEMENTATION:

Implementation costs can also vary widely depending on the complexity of the software, the size of the organization, and the level of customization required. Some vendors offer implementation services as part of the licensing agreement, while others charge separately for this service. It is important to evaluate the implementation costs and factor them into the overall TCO of the software.



SUPPORT:

Support costs include the costs associated with resolving technical issues, providing user training, and answering questions related to the software. Some vendors offer support as part of the licensing agreement, while others charge separately for this service. It is important to evaluate the support costs and factor them into the overall TCO of the software.



VII. Evaluating Potential ROI

When evaluating the potential return on investment (ROI) for an ERP system, it's important to set clear goals and understand how the system will help achieve those goals.

7 tips to help you calculate your own potential ROI:

- Identify specific business goals that the ERP system will help achieve, such as increased efficiency, improved data accuracy, or better decision-making capabilities
- Quantify the potential benefits of achieving these goals, such as reduced labor costs, increased revenue, or improved customer satisfaction.
- Estimate the total costs of implementing and maintaining the ERP system, including licensing, implementation, and ongoing support costs.
- Calculate the payback period, or the amount of time it will take for the business to recoup its investment in the ERP system.
- Determine the net present value (NPV) of the investment, which takes into account the time value of money.
- Evaluate the internal rate of return (IRR) of the investment, which measures the profitability of the investment over time.
- Consider the risks and uncertainties associated with the investment, such as potential changes in the business environment or unexpected costs.

Keep in mind that each company's ROI will differ, depending on their individual objectives and challenges. So, let's look at one hypothetical example to understand the nitty-gritty of calculating ROI for your business.

Let's consider a fictional company called XYZ Apparels. XYZ has identified several key business goals that an ERP system could help achieve, including:

- Reducing inventory carrying costs by improving demand forecasting and production planning
- Streamlining the sales order process to improve on-time delivery and customer satisfaction
- Improving visibility into financial performance to better manage cash flow and profitability

To calculate the potential ROI for an ERP implementation, XYZ might estimate the following benefits:

- Reduced inventory carrying costs of \$500,000 per year
- Increased sales revenue of \$1 million per year
- Improved financial management resulting in \$250,000 in cost savings per year

Assuming a total cost of ownership (TCO) of \$2 million over a three-year period, XYZ might calculate the following ROI metrics:

- Payback period of 2 years
- Net present value (NPV) of \$800,000
- Internal rate of return (IRR) of 25%

A holistic approach to evaluating the potential benefits and drawbacks will allow XYZ (or any company for that matter) to make an informed and strategic decision about whether an ERP system aligns with their overall business objectives and will ultimately lead to long-term success.

VIII. Conclusion

All in all, selecting the right ERP system for your business is a critical decision that requires careful consideration of multiple factors. While evaluating your business goals, tech infrastructure, compliance requirements, and TCO is crucial, you should also evaluate the vendor's industry-expertise, support and reputation as well as the system's usability, remote access, and data security features.

WFX ERP is a market leader in the fashion and garment industry with over 20 years of experience serving businesses of all sizes across 50+ countries. Our cloud-based Apparel ERP Software offers robust features, customization options, and integrations to meet the unique needs of fashion businesses, to ensure high success in our ERP implementations. Remember that choosing an Apparel or Textile ERP is not a one-size-fits-all solution, and each business has its unique needs and requirements. But if you're a fashion, garment or textile business looking to streamline your operations, WFX ERP is an excellent choice to consider.

At the end of the day, the success of your ERP implementation depends on choosing the right vendor, and WFX has a proven track record of successful implementations, industry expertise, excellent customer service, and a good reputation in the industry. Contact us to learn more about how we can help you take your business to the next level.



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