

What Australian manufacturers need to consider

in the era of Industry 4.0 technologies



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Technology priorities

Cloud ERP over Industry 4.0 tech

The newest wave of technologies which includes the Internet of Things (IoT), cloud computing, AI and machine learning, 3D printing and robotic process automation — collectively referred to as Industry 4.0 technologies — is dramatically changing the way manufacturers both **produce and distribute** their products.

One only needs to look to the wide range of thought leadership available on advanced manufacturing to understand the magnitude of this change.



But between innovations such as smart sensors and advanced embedded systems, manufacturers today can capture more data from the factory floor than ever before.

To make sense of the enormous amounts of raw data that modern technologies can help capture, manufacturers require equally powerful cloud computing and data integration capabilities.

This is why investing in core cloud-based applications such as enterprise resource planning (ERP) tools is the first crucial step for manufacturers looking to grow by leveraging Industry 4.0 technologies.

Manufacturers and ERP

A cloud ERP solution combines highly granular production floor data generated by advanced manufacturing technologies with broader operational and financial data to give customers a 360-degree view of their business.

This enables manufacturers to:

- ✓ Be more analytical with decision-making
- ✓ Be more responsive to market changes
- ✓ Be more responsive to customer needs
- ✓ Mitigate supply chain risks at an early stage
- ✓ Optimise for efficiency and increase productivity



Industry snapshot

What are the current needs of Australian manufacturers?

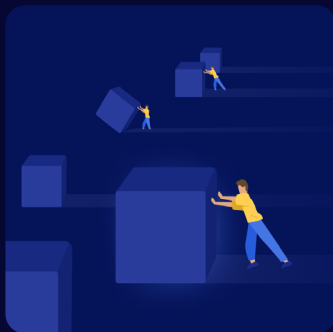
As an award-winning ERP, we work with manufacturing businesses all over Australia and this is what we've learned about their expectations from cloud manufacturing software.

Manufacturing has evolved from being product-centric to customer-centric and manufacturers are urgently seeking better synchronisation between their CRM and supply chain management systems.

They want to be able to see what their customers are ordering, how much inventory there is on hand, and which suppliers have been most reliable — all in one place.



They also seek strong financial management capabilities as growth and recovery become top priorities in a post-pandemic world. Accounting software like Xero can only handle up to 1,000 sales invoices and purchase orders and just 2,000 bank transactions every month. Exceeding this limit can slow the system down, which can be frustrating for growing businesses.

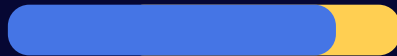


Limits in Xero

1,000 sales invoices



2,000 bank transactions



Also, given the typically low margins manufacturers often work with, finance managers and business owners can no longer afford to make pricing decisions based on estimates or data from spreadsheets that may not be up to date.

Manufacturers also need agility in a volatile market. This means, both, the ability to respond faster to disruptions and adapt to the changing needs of customers – be it around custom manufacturing or achieving lot-size one production capabilities.



While achieving greater consistency and quality, reducing lead times, simplifying production, reducing handling, and automating workflows are high priorities for operations teams, equally important is the security of the network carrying information between key business functions, stakeholders, and systems. And manufacturers today are demanding systems that can guarantee near-zero downtime.

These aren't just things we hear from our customers, it's what drives us as we continue building on the manufacturing capabilities and integrations in Wiise.

Rethink your current setup

4 things to look for in a cloud manufacturing solution

If scaling your manufacturing operations is your priority right now, start by investing in a cloud-based ERP. Don't think NetSuite or SAP – look for a [cloud manufacturing solution](#) that's right for your current needs, but can just as easily be scaled as your business grows.

Look for [flexible packages](#) and get to know the people behind the tech. Importantly, make sure your next cloud manufacturing software offers the following.

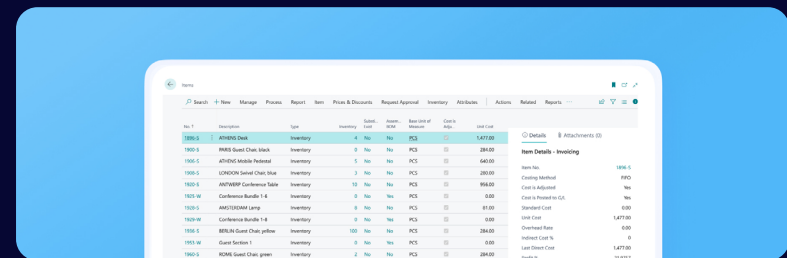


01

Robust data-analysis capabilities

From web-enabled tools offering real-time visibility of your manufacturing assets to tools that perform predictive maintenance to minimise equipment downtime, before investing in IoT, robotics or other advanced technologies, think about how you'll analyse the vast amounts of raw data generated by them and where you'll store it. Choosing a cloud ERP system with powerful built-in analytics can help you make the most of your technology investments.

The same cloud ERP system will also house other business data including your ecosystem of suppliers and distributors, your resources (both people and equipment), sales, inventory, warehousing, and payroll, giving you the ability to be a lot more data-driven when making production decisions, setting margins, and allocating resources.



02

Scalability and cost-effectiveness

Not only does a cloud-based ERP solution make both storing and analysing vast amounts of data more efficient, it's also a much more cost-effective option for small and medium-sized manufacturers when compared to on-premises ERP systems that attract annual maintenance fees and ongoing IT costs.

ERP systems such as NetSuite and SAP often need to be heavily customised to suit Australian banking, tax, and business requirements. Choosing a cloud ERP like Wiise that's designed in Australia for Australian businesses means you won't have to budget for costly customisations. Features like industry-specific Chart of Accounts, landed costing, unlimited transactions, Single Touch Payroll with timesheets, multi-currency capabilities and built-in data analytics are available out of the box with Wiise.

Native integration with Microsoft makes for even more exciting possibilities such as Power BI reporting or the ability to raise purchase orders straight from Outlook. Given the current economic climate, making your investment go further is crucial.

03

Advanced cybersecurity

The importance of cybersecurity in manufacturing isn't often discussed. In May 2021, the world's largest meat processing company, JBS Foods, fell victim to a cyber attack that targeted the company's information systems, shutting down production in its factories around the world, including in Australia. Incidents such as these can create logistical problems up and down the supply chain and put enormous hardships on operations teams.

Rather than being an afterthought or an 'add-on', cybersecurity needs to be hard baked into a modern manufacturer's technology strategy. Choosing business software with strong cybersecurity capabilities is key to safeguarding your business. Look for a cloud ERP solution which can ensure that your data is backed up safely to secure data centres located in Australia and is certified against international security standards.



04

Supply chain digitisation

A transparent supply chain that is fully integrated across finance and operations is the ultimate differentiator in modern manufacturing — the emphasis here is on both ‘transparent’ and ‘fully integrated’.

Having full visibility over the supply chain allows manufacturers to better control the efficiency of their operations — from sourcing raw materials to delivering finished products. This can positively impact both staff morale internally as well as customer experience.

Integrating the supply chain across organisation using an ERP system can offer more benefits such as being able to better schedule deliveries by sharing production data with suppliers, rerouting deliveries when production is disrupted, or using logistics data and predictive shipping to send finished goods to customers just-in-time.



Summary

The last word on modern manufacturing

Successfully transitioning to state-of-the-art manufacturing requires seamless integration between engineering, production, supply chain, sales, and distribution channels.

Cloud-based core applications such as ERP are built to do just that. Investing in an ERP solution built with Australian business requirements in mind can help manufacturers realise business value faster.

Whether it's discrete or process manufacturing, oil and gas, mining, or food and beverage – a cloud ERP solution can help manufacturers accelerate value creation with Industry 4.0 technologies, become more resilient to supply chain disruptions, and deliver a consistent customer experience every time.



Further reading...

[Capital Transport Case Study](#)

[Outgrown Xero? The E-Book](#)

[Why Aussie Businesses Are Choosing Wiise](#)

[How To Futureproof Your Distribution Business](#)

[What To Look For In ERP Software For Multi-entities](#)

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Modernise your operations with real-time inventory tracking, advanced planning capabilities, and live views of production.

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