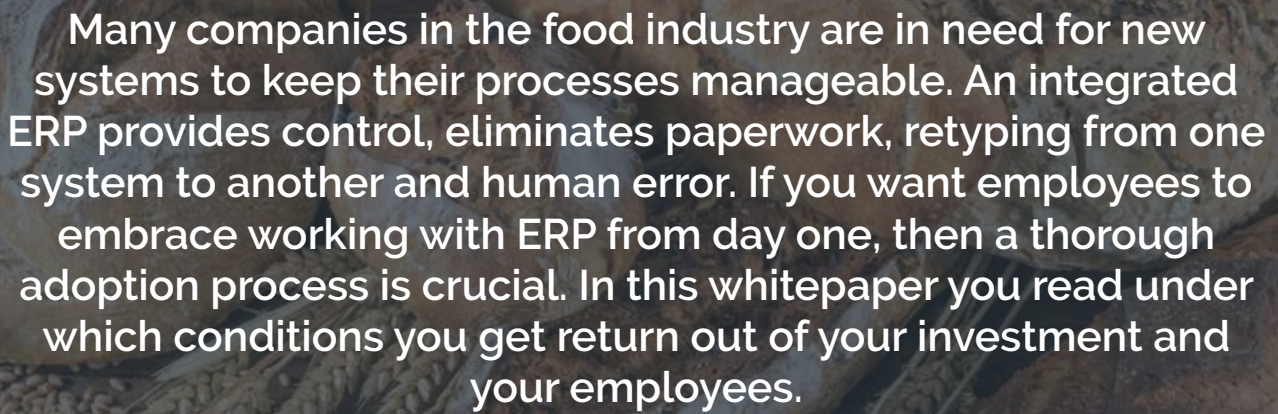




# A thorough adoption process is crucial for a successful ERP implementation

9 conditions for optimum return on your new ERP system



Many companies in the food industry are in need for new systems to keep their processes manageable. An integrated ERP provides control, eliminates paperwork, retying from one system to another and human error. If you want employees to embrace working with ERP from day one, then a thorough adoption process is crucial. In this whitepaper you read under which conditions you get return out of your investment and your employees.

Many companies in the food industry still go through processes in a very traditional way. At both large and smaller companies, processes run via handwritten notes, Excel sheets and all kinds of different systems where the data needs to be copied manually. Old ERP systems are not suitable for paperless work and do not integrate well with existing and new applications. For example, if the accounting system does not communicate directly with the shop floor, things often go wrong. In the meantime, food companies continue to grow, making processes increasingly difficult to control.

### Get a grip on processes and the supply chain

Are piles of work orders still handed out and do employees spend time re-typing prints from terminals on the production floor? These are signs that the company is ready for a different way of working. The current way of working is no longer adequate due to inefficiency, a high risk of errors and a lack of overview. The time is now for a digital transformation to an all-in-one package in the cloud. An integrated ERP package allows to get a grip on the supply chain and processes, led delivery reliability, minimizes errors, closes inventory and links easily with new applications. After the transition to ERP, the shop floor and administration merge together seamlessly. Because Outlook, the shop floor and the ERP system

integrate, you no longer have separate solutions. Instead of the individual solutions, you get one simple truth with dashboards based on the combined data sources. This way, you unlock data from all parts of the company and you make the supply chain transparent. It is time for an integrated ERP that shortens the lines in the company and puts an end to growing pains.

### Adoption turns scepticism into enthusiasm

When initiating into a new ERP platform, companies often forget that they have to help employees on their way. Almost a quarter of the employees do not receive training on the launch of digital innovation. In addition, companies overestimate the digital skills of employees and the drive for change. The result is that with one in five employees, new tools do not produce more efficiency, but more stress and even more work. This creates resistance, a negative atmosphere and you do not get the desired return from the new solution. If you do not assist your employees through the implementation of a new solution, it may even be better not to go live. With a thorough adoption approach you ensure that colleagues are more positive about change, are more enthusiastic about it, do more in less time and the company achieves the ROI faster. Experience shows that these 9 conditions guarantee a successful adoption.



## 01. Choose an IT partner with a cultural match

Find a partner with whom you have a cultural match. You usually quickly sense whether you 'speak the same language'. A switch to an ERP system is a challenging project that sometimes generates some friction. In any case, make sure that there is trust and that you can reflect to each other. You must be able to deliver and receive feedback and then move on together towards a successful implementation. Therefore, ensure honest, open communication.

## 02. Involve the management in the adoption

Making sure that management supports the adoption process, is one of the most important ingredients for success. They are generally the ones who can explain the necessity of the strategy change. To start with, together with the management share what the ambition is and make that known to the employees who have to get started with the new system. Let the management not only explain what the change means for the company's growth ambition, but also what it improves for employees in their daily work. If they find out too late or what exactly they have to do with the change, many of them may fall into resistance. Employees become more enthusiastic if they are offered benefits early in the process.



Come up with a nice slogan for the ERP project. This gives it a name and makes it tangible for the entire organization.

## 03. Form a project team with key users

The transition to a new system is not just an IT party. This is a common misconception leading to only consider the benefits for the IT side of the organization. Summary and the strategic goal regularly often get overlooked leading to such misunderstanding. At the start of the process, appoint someone as the project owner and contact person. This will mean there is always someone who has the lead and should take responsibility. This prevents delays, procrastination and uncertainty during the project. He or she leads the adoption team with the key users. It is a good idea to take a critical look at who you appoint for this. When these are the usual suspects, there is a potential danger that you will get something very similar to what you already had. Instead, someone who thinks differently, is new, or is open to change, can usually make the translation to the solution and best practices easier.

## 04. Reserve enough resources

Organizations sometimes forget that the adoption process takes time and money. If you want your colleagues to really get started with the new solution, reserve sufficient resources for the employees who will get started with the adoption and testing. Guarantee support from the management by freeing up time and resources to guide colleagues through the new way of working. This is often a challenge in SMEs where few colleagues can take over work from each other. Do not plan the launch of a new solution during the peak season. If you don't have the time, use temporary staff to keep the daily operation going but don't forget to include these costs in the project.

## 05. Communicate the change from start to finish

Through a lot of positive communication, you can keep the excitement and keep everyone engaged. Organizations often do not communicate sufficiently about the implementation project, with little involvement from the organization as a result. It even happens regularly that colleagues are surprised by their new digital working environment when they start their computers. It is not surprising that most colleagues find this rather unpleasant. Working completely different, in a different screen with different colors, formats or terms than you are used to, is not the best start of the week on a Monday morning. If they subsequently find an e-mail with a link to an English language manual in their inbox, that usually does not provide sufficient help. Colleagues cannot get started right away, are annoyed by the lack of empathy and are already longing for the old way of working. A considerable improvement can be made there.

Working with a new ERP platform means a change in behavior. It will take more than just a day to get used to for many colleagues. That is why it is recommended to inform employees of the change before the project has started. The past has shown that communication from the board or management works best. Face-to-face always works better with major changes than a letter or e-mail to the entire organization. Indicate during these informative moments which solution they will use, who the contact points are and outline a time frame. During this process also

keep the key users, the front runners in the various departments, informed of the progress on a weekly basis. Reward good work, emphasize progress, the pleasure of the new way of working and the benefits. Choose the means of communication that fit best to the moment and the company. Progress is fine via mail or intranet, but for important moments it will be better to bring the employees together.



## 06. Detailed training and personalized work instructions

Take time to properly train both the key users and the end-users. The key users must pass on their knowledge and skills to their colleagues, which they can only do if they are well prepared. They need to know the new system well and with easily accessible personalized work instructions everyone can simply continue working if the key user is not available. Always start step by step and avoid an overkill of new information and a steep learning curve. Of course the system must be in order, procedures clear and work instructions good. A good IT supplier checks on location whether these preconditions are present. Ideally, the key users of the company provide first-line support. With this you not only create a self-reliant organization, it is also faster, cheaper, improves continuity and the relationship with the IT partner.

## 07. Celebrate the (small) successes

A successful delivery shouldn't be the only reason to celebrate. It doesn't hurt to celebrate a successful acceptance test with, for example, a short speech and cake. In this way you show that the project is progressing, you attach a positive feeling to it and you support the organization. Be sure to have a brief talk from the management at the launch and some catering, for example with a special cake.

## 08. Don't stop developing after the handover

Has the new ERP-platform been delivered and is everyone working and satisfied with the outcome? The job is done then, right? Well, not completely. Even after the handover and the finishing of the adoption process, you should stay on top of things. Only when you do this, you can make sure that colleagues are optimally using the digital working environment. Don't get too chill, the power is in the people, the change and innovation of a flexible ERP-system.

The possibilities of digital tools change constantly. Appoint someone within the organization who continuously checks what's going well, what employees are struggling with and which new tools could support processes even better. Secure the acquired knowledge in the project team and in documentation, and keep looking ahead.

New, technological applications are continuously arising, which can make work more efficient and easier, giving the company a strategic advantage. Take for example the application of Artificial Intelligence (AI). An involved IT-supplier is crucial, one that constantly looks at technological possibilities and doesn't shy away from working together with new chain partners.

That's how Schouw Informatisering worked together with herb butter producer Laban Foods and the Erasmus University on a tool to achieve better inventory management. By analyzing the weather and 50 indicators with AI, the company can now 'see' 4 weeks into the future. This makes for a better planning, a lot less overproduction and they can better advise the retailers in how much they should purchase.



## 09. Be flexible

The adoption process is not a part of the implementation of an ERP-platform that should be taken lightly. A flexible attitude towards the project is just as important. During the process, wishes change and you will gain new insights. There will be change requests, and these requests should not be experienced as annoying. And a good partner should obviously be flexible as well. After all, it's about the end goal.

Adoption is crucial in turning the implementation of a new ERP-system into a success. By choosing an IT-partner that takes this seriously and personally helps you with the knowledge they have, you increase the chance of reaching that dot on the horizon. Make use of the years of experience Schouw Informatisering has and the robustness, safety and innovation power of Foodware 365. With this ERP-platform you get a grip on current processes and you're ready for the future by integrating with new possibilities.

A man and a woman are sitting at a wooden table in a modern office or cafe. The woman is on the left, looking at a laptop screen. The man is on the right, leaning over her shoulder and looking at the screen. There are several potted plants on the table and in the background. The lighting is warm and ambient.

Do you want your employees to start working with the new ERP-system enthusiastically and well? That's how you get a grip on your processes and you'll produce more efficiently. Choose a future in which you decide on the basis of a platform which you can easily enrich with apps. Visit [foodware365.com](https://foodware365.com) or send an e-mail to [info@foodware365.com](mailto:info@foodware365.com).