

# ARE YOU ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS WHEN SELECTING AN ERP SYSTEM?

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The key to achieving ROI with your Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) solution is to select a solution that is functional and usable.

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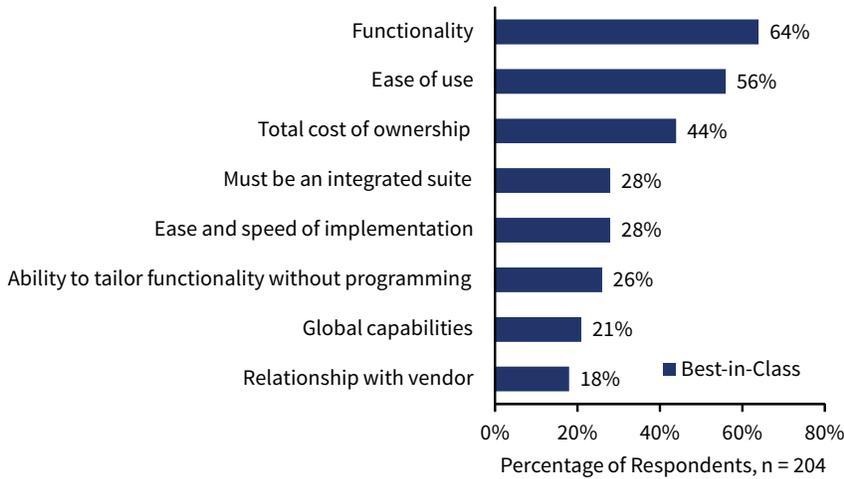
## Are You Getting Full Value From Your ERP?

When selecting an ERP solution it is easy to get lost in the details, but ultimately the decision comes down to two main questions:

- Does the solution have the functionality we need?
- Is the solution usable?

Recent Aberdeen [research](#) on ERP selection uncovered the top criteria used by Best-in-Class organizations when choosing an ERP solution (Figure 1). It shouldn't surprise you, hopefully, that cost is not at the top of the list. Instead, top performers focus on a variety of criteria that ensure the ultimate solution can support the business effectively for a long time. Truly, your organization cannot get the full value out of its ERP investment if the line of business cannot actually use the technology for its intended purpose. Top performing manufacturers select user-friendly, but powerful, solutions that enable users to easily access the information they need, and convert that information to actions and smart decisions.

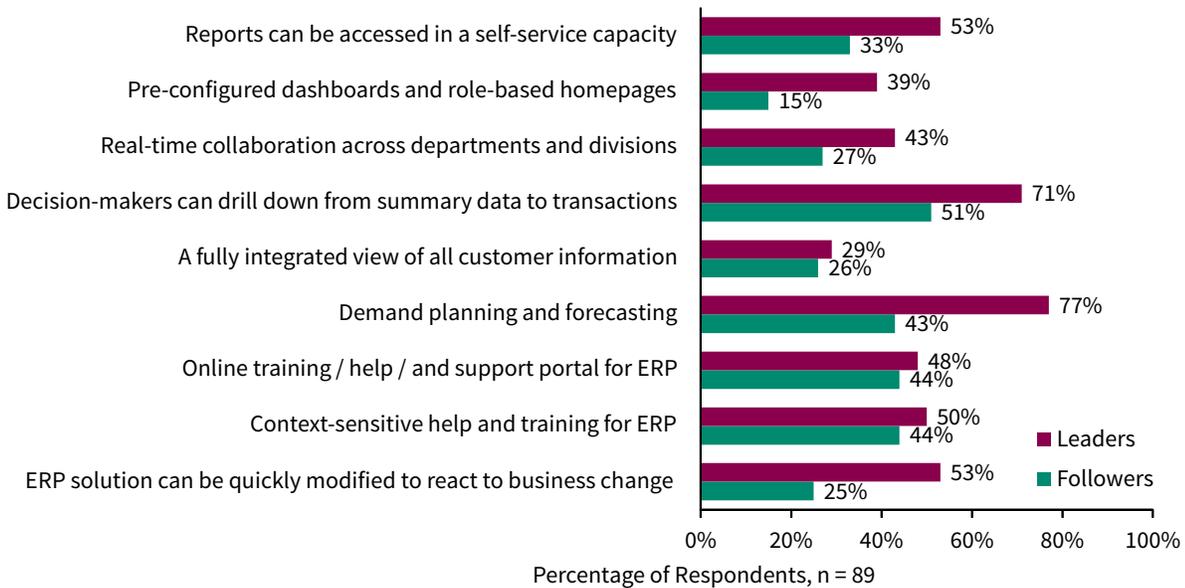
**Figure 1: Top ERP Selection Criteria of the Best-in-Class**



Source: Aberdeen Group, July 2013

So what does a highly effective ERP look like? In Aberdeen's *Creating a Modern, Effective Manufacturing Environment with ERP*, leading manufacturers are more likely to have ERP that features a variety of capabilities that facilitate their employee's ability to get full value out of ERP (Figure 2).

**Figure 2: Usable & Functional ERP Traits**



Source: Aberdeen Group, August 2014

For example, Leaders are 38% more likely to enable users to access reports in a self-service capacity. Rather than relying on IT, they can easily access the information they need for decision-making. Many times, this is facilitated through dashboards or homepages that are specifically configured based on an employee's role. Additionally, usable ERP does not just make it easy for users to find information, but also to share it. In fact, Leaders are 59% more likely to have real-time collaboration across departments and divisions.

There are an infinite number of examples of how more usable ERP can improve your organization's ability to execute. Take special note of those included in Figure 2 when selecting what works best for your particular organization. Leaders are more likely to be able to drill down on reports, access fully integrated views of customer information, and effectively plan and forecast for demand. These are broad capabilities, but imagine how your organization can benefit from these functions that are specific to your industry, such as material traceability.

Regardless of the functionality contained within your chosen ERP, it is essential to ensure that your employees can use it, and that the solution will continue to support your organization for a long time. Balancing the needs of your business today, with the anticipated needs of the future, will also allow you to integrate ERP effectively and increase the benefit of the system to the business. These are the keys to achieving ROI. Leaders have solutions that provide context-sensitive help as well as online learning, and also solutions that are easily tailored to support business change. ERP should be the foundation for your organization's success; your organization needs to do all it can to make the most of it.

## About Aberdeen Group

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