Happen
BUSINESS

Amazing Things. Happen.

Is ERP the right software for small to medium business?

Jim 2®
BUSINESS ENGINE

| AUTOMATE | COLLECT | PROCESS | ANALYSE | CONNECT | GROW |
| systems | information | workflow | reports | mobile | your business |

Introduction

Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) has undoubtedly become an important software tool for managing business applications across various industries.

Traditionally, the use of ERP was restricted to large enterprises, as the massive investment required to purchase the software was too large for small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs). Missing out on the benefits of the latest technologies, such as ERP, placed SMBs at a large disadvantage in the competitive global market.

Today, ERP software vendors have tailored their product for SMBs. Better still, there are ERP systems such as Jim2 Business Engine that are designed specifically for SMBs so they can take advantage of ERP for maximum efficiency in conducting business.

Since the early 1990s, ERP has helped businesses drive down costs and operate more efficiently. It has helped companies manage their data more effectively, and has also streamlined many business processes, including quoting, planning, manufacturing, services, sales and marketing. It also includes activities like stock control, order tracking, customer service, finance and staff.

With proper implementation of these functions through ERP small businesses can do away with laborious and time-consuming processes, enabling them to broaden their horizons and enter the market more aggressively.

ERP offers flexible and real-time control over all jobs and stock, and offers concise reporting that is integral for managing businesses of all sizes. In fact, current day ERP vendors have developed applications to be less complex to install and more user friendly, which means that companies are spending even less time and money adopting ERP.

Today, many small businesses are already reaping the benefits from ERP. The returns on investment (ROI) are achieved when the implementation procedures are followed properly, processes have been streamlined, and all staff have been trained in the new system. It is not unusual to see ROI within 12 months on implementation.

Immediate savings through proper management of stock ensures that small businesses see reductions in stock write-offs of up to 90 per cent through the serial number tracking functionality of ERP systems.

A good ERP system will be able to show you the comparison between the number of hours worked by professionals or service staff versus the actual number of hours that was billed out as paid work.

ERP users have found they have doubled their service revenue simply by being able to measure and analyse actual billing against the number of hours worked. The workflow function – a quality control system – also ensures that jobs are being conducted the right way, using proper processes, each and every time.

With an ERP system in place, small businesses are able to keep track of product, time, costs, employee activity and overall company performance for a fraction of the cost of having separate software applications and manual reporting.

The flexibility of an ERP system is also a huge advantage for smaller businesses. As businesses change processes and procedures to adapt for growth, an ERP system can also change with the company to match its new policies.

ERP systems can handle modifications across the business, and are able to add value to the company by providing quick access to all files and records, managing security levels on data for better safekeeping, handling multiple access to the same file without corruption of data, as well as time and date stamping every entry.

More importantly, ERP systems will not slow down with the addition of more users, customers and suppliers, letting small businesses create rules that suit their particular needs.

Small businesses thinking about ERP implementation must first identify their business requirements, set aside a budget for the procurement of ERP software and services, and evaluate various ERP software to suit their objectives.

Copy Print Scan (CPS) is a SMB that is benefiting from using ERP. CPS is a large copier dealer specialising in digital document production and management technologies. It was similar to many other copier dealers in that it was looking for a single piece of software to manage a large number of clients under contract.

The software had to have a strong accounting backend, copier-specific reports, as well as an interface and functionality suited to a copier dealer.

CPS had an out-of-date accounting system, combined with multiple spreadsheets and inadequate reporting.

CPS deployed Jim2 Business Engine (Photocopier Edition) and found that it met all CPS' needs.

Chris Weddall, managing director, Copy Print Scan said, "Jim2 has been one of the best things to happen to our business for a long time."

Copy Print Scan experienced immediate benefits from implementing an ERP system specifically designed for SMBs. These benefits included:

- streamlining of billing for customers, for both simple and complex copier meter setups
- centralised handling of multi-party billing (eg. manufacturer rebates, finance company billing, and third-party dealer servicing)
- serial number tracking and tight stock control
- key copier reports produced in seconds, not hours (unlike the old system)
- reduction in errors
- reduced leakage of revenue to zero
- increased revenue that was previously not captured and/or lost
- improved cost control and accuracy of costs recorded and reduced administration
- all accounts billed at the correct rates and margins
- tightened business processes
- increased confidence by management that process is followed
- strong audit trail, both financial (e.g. tax) and operational (who did what and when).

With all these improvements to CPS' business from implementing an ERP system designed for small business, they started operating more like a large organisation than a small business. This new level of sophistication also improved the professional image of CPS.

So you can see, ERP is no longer just for the large enterprise. SMB's can also dramatically improve business process by moving up from using basic accounting software such as MYOB and Quicken and deploying a real ERP system designed especially for SMBs such as Jim2.

For more information on Jim2 Business Engine, please call 02 9570 4696 or visit our website at www.happen.biz

About Happen Business

Happen Business is 100% Australian owned and was established in 1999 to fill a growing need in the market for a comprehensive accounting and business workflow software solution.

The company rapidly established a strong following for its Jim2 Business Engine software, and now has an extensive customer base in diverse industries such as managed print services, IT, importing, distribution and warehouse, sales and service, specialised retailing and manufacturing.

Happen Business offer three tailored ERP/Accounting packages for Australian Business:

• Jim2 Business Engine Premium Edition

• Jim2 Business Engine Managed Print Services Edition

• Jim2 Business Engine Managed Services Edition

For more information, please visit www.happen.biz or call 02 9570 4696.