

When ERP Implementation and Optimization Are Done Well, the Payoff is Hard to Miss

[Did you know that over 70% of ERP implementations fail to reach their original business case goals?](#)

But it doesn't have to be that way.

Imagine...teams spending less time wrestling with systems and more time making decisions. Data being trusted instead of questioned. Processes flowing instead of breaking at handoffs. Finance closing faster, operations running cleaner, and leadership finally having insight into what's really happening across the business.

That's the promise of ERP – and when it's delivered correctly, it shows up directly in ROI.

Costs come down through automation and fewer manual workarounds. Revenue improves because order-to-cash works the way it should. Growth becomes easier because the system can scale without adding chaos. In short, ERP done right becomes a growth platform, not just an expensive piece of software.

But while ERP offers the prospects of a real ROI, there is something else to consider: [ERP success](#) may have less to do with the software itself, and more to do with thoughtful implementation.

The biggest difference between a successful ERP project and a disappointing one usually comes down to how it's implemented, how it's adopted, and how it's optimized over time. That's where the right consulting partner makes – or breaks – the outcome.

Strategy Planning Execution, Inc. (SPX) is an Atlanta based management consulting firm that drives the increase of shareholder value for enterprise clients through ERP Implementation & Optimization Services. To learn more or find out if we can help your company or organization, [please contact us here](#).

One thing to know going in: ERP is no longer a “big IT project.” It's a business change initiative.

Modern ERP systems touch nearly every part of the organization, including finance, supply chain, sales, HR, reporting, compliance. If your consultant is mostly talking about configuration

and timelines, that's a red flag. The real work is aligning the system to how your business actually operates (and how it needs to operate going forward).

Cloud ERP is now the norm, and by 2026 most companies are either implementing cloud systems or optimizing ones they already moved to. Cloud brings flexibility, regular updates, and easier scaling, but it doesn't magically simplify decisions. You still need to make smart choices about process design, security, integrations, and governance.

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A good consultant helps you make those choices intentionally, rather than defaulting to whatever the software does out of the box.

Data is another area where ERP projects often stumble. Most companies underestimate how messy their data really is until they try to move it. They find they have duplicate customers, outdated products, inconsistent charts of accounts, and more. In 2026, data quality isn't just a technical issue; it affects forecasting, automation, AI tools, and leadership trust in reporting. Your consultant should spend as much time talking about data cleanup and ownership as they do about features and functionality.

Optimization is also a bigger deal than it used to be. ERP isn't something you "finish" anymore. Companies expect automation, predictive insights, and continuous improvement after go-live. If your consultant disappears once the system is turned on, you're likely leaving value on the table.

The firms getting the strongest ROI treat ERP as a living system that evolves with the business.

Then there's the human side, which is still the most underestimated factor. People don't resist ERP because they hate technology; they resist it because it changes how they work. In 2026, successful ERP consultants put real effort into training, communication, and adoption. They help teams understand not just how to use the system, but why it matters to their role. That's what turns usage into results.

Integration also deserves careful attention. Your ERP won't live in isolation. It will connect to CRM systems, reporting tools, industry platforms, and sometimes older legacy systems. These connections are often where complexity, and cost overruns, hide. Experience here matters.

Finally, it's worth paying attention to incentives. Some consultants are closely tied to specific ERP vendors, which can shape their recommendations. Others are more platform-agnostic and focused on fit. Asking direct questions about experience, tradeoffs, and long-term support will tell you a lot.

The bottom line is this: ERP implementation and optimization in 2026 can deliver enormous value, but only when it's approached as a business investment, not a software install. The right consultant helps you unlock that value, protect your ROI, and build a system that actually makes the company easier to run.

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