Eight Reasons to Not Buy Barcode Data Collection Software from Your ERP Provider

Barcode data collection (also called AIDC or factory automation) software has the potential to make a big impact on your business by ensuring real-time, accurate data directly from the factory floor.

The first requirement of the software is that it integrates with your existing ERP system so, of course, the data-collection product that your ERP provider sells must check that box.

Nevertheless, by not comparing with other supported solutions, you may lose the invaluable opportunity to truly improve inventory control and streamline your business processes.

1 It's Just an Add-On

To the ERP provider, the data collection product is just one of many different modules they provide, and those modules are likely all designed to integrate with multiple ERPs.

The product operates as simply a generic add-on to the ERP system, it is not in itself a robust software solution. Having a best-of-breed barcode data collection product is not the ERP provider's priority, and that impacts development, the feature set, customer support, and future software updates at every turn.

2 It's Inflexible

Your company's in-house procedures are apart of its strategic advantage. These processes have been developed through experience and over time to best fit how your business does business. The generic data-collection module provided by an ERP provider, however, may not be flexible enough to work with your company's unique processes.

The product's lack of configurability means your company will be forced to change its business procedures to fit the transactional flow dictated by the module in ways that the ERP provider thinks you should do business but that your factory-floor employees find cumbersome, time-consuming, and inefficient.

3 Expensive Customization

The module's lack of configurability means you may be on the hook paying for expensive customizations just to have the software work the way you need it to.

Software customizations are a time-consuming development cycle requiring spec'ing, programming, debugging, and testing (and frequently going over-budget). Once installed, these one-off customizations are nearly impossible for the ERP's help desk to support, and all future updates to the software will require the expense and hassle of having the customizations reapplied each time.

4 You'll Have to Deal with a Reseller

Although it seems like choosing your ERP provider's product will simplify the purchase decision and process, the ERP provider may actually depend on resellers to sell and implement their products.

These reps are selling multiple ERP systems, modules, and licenses. They are not barcode data collection experts. Once the data collection module is implemented, you are dependent on the ERP's help desk for support. Although if you have customizations, it's back to the reseller to pay to have the customizations reinstalled after every software upgrade. Furthermore, while being dependent on a third-party for implementation, will your issues, feedback, and feature requests ever be conveyed back to the ERP product development team?

Empower your business with efficient, intuitive, easy-to-use barcode scanning transactions that work the way you do.

We Are Nutech Systems, and We Are Your Alternative

Eight Reasons Why

⑤ *You're On Your Own With the Hardware*

Barcode data-collection software does not render the same way on every device browser, so you'll need to give careful consideration to which hardware to arm the factory floor with. However, neither the ERP provider nor the reseller may be equipped or qualified to provide you with the ruggedized handheld devices you need. You'll be left to choose the hardware on your own, and as a result, be forced to turn to (another) third party to supply the devices.

Moreover, guess who'll take responsibility when the hardware doesn't work as expected? Your ERP's help desk doesn't have expertise in the barcode data-collection hardware. Therefore, when technical issues arise, you might have a lot of back-and-forth between the ERP's help desk and the device's help desk with neither taking direct responsibility to fix your problem quickly.

⑥ *The UI Isn't Designed for Hand-Held Devices*

Data-collection transactions need to be designed specifically for ruggedized handheld devices. Screen flow, error messages, buttons, scan strokes, time taken—everything needs to be considered along with the environment of a warehouse like lighting, temperature and noise. A cumbersome, generic module with too many fields, too many inputs and too many screens a user is required to flow through requires too much valuable time spent looking at the screen. What seem like small inconveniences can become big problems on the factory floor.

⑦ *The Factory Floor Will Find it Frustrating*

Having access to real-time information requires that data gets entered where and when it happens—on the factory floor. If users find the screens on their handheld devices overly complicated and think the process is slowing them down, they may create their own ways to work around the issues or flat out refuse to waste time with the product. Additionally, if the factory floor users don't accept and adopt the new solution, project failure will likely follow.

⑧ *You Won't Get the Support You Need*

Your ERP's help desk manages support for multiple ERP products and multiple modules. You may have difficulty reaching a representative with knowledge of the data-collection add-on and/or the hardware it's running on. Expect to repeat your story over and over to multiple reps as you try to work your way up the triage to someone with the expertise to help you.

Moreover, if there is a technical problem on a handheld device, you may feel trapped between calls to the ERP's help desk and the hardware product's help desk with neither stepping up to help resolve your issue.

Compare with best-of-breed barcode data collection

Don't lose this great opportunity for your business to take advantage of the functionality a robust barcode data collection product can provide. A best-of-breed company produces customer-driven sfotware where client requirements are managed through configurability, not expensive customization. When researching barcode data collection software for your company, look for a product that:

- Will integrate seamlessly with your existing ERP system AND provide all the features and flexibility you need.

- Has easily configurable screens so you can choose which fields will be displayed on the handheld devices.

- Is developed by experts in barcode data collection.

- Gives higher ROI by working right out of the box without expensive customization.

- Can significantly extend the functionality of your existing ERP.

- Is implemented by the same company that develops it.

- Is sold by a company that can also supply the ruggedized devices guaranteed to work optimally with the software.

- Is developed by a company that sees their software and the hardware it runs on as an integrated solution.

- Users can learn with minimal training and will not find awkward in their hands on the factory floor.

- Has easily configurable settings so it can operate the same way your business does.

- Is supported by experts you can easily reach with extensive knowledge of both the software and the ruggedized hand-held devices it works on.

- Is developed by a company that will include you on their development roadmap by welcoming feedback and new feature requests.