



The benefits of integrating enterprise-wide systems

When you have multiple enterprise systems kept in separate database “silos”, information isn’t easily shareable. Your organization is missing a valuable piece of the puzzle: communication between enterprise systems. In this guide, you’ll find the solution to your organization’s inter-system

AssetWORKS

Is there anything more frustrating than just about finishing a jigsaw puzzle and discovering **that you're missing a piece?**

You dedicate so much of your time and brain power to the puzzle, only to find out that you'll never actually complete it.

For fleet and asset management professionals, there are many frustrations that plague everyday life at the office; however, duplicate data entry across multiple enterprise systems is not only frustrating for you, but also for staff members across your entire organization.

When you have multiple enterprise systems (Budget, Procurement, Spatial Data, Accounting, etc.) kept in separate database "silos", information isn't easily shareable. Your organization is missing a valuable piece of the puzzle: communication between enterprise systems.

So how do you find a solution, or the missing puzzle piece, to your inter-system communication issues?

The solution.

For your organization, the best solution is integrating enterprise systems so that key data can be shared and communicated easily.

Enterprise Application integration (EAI)

Definition: The sharing of critical data and business processes among applications, or within an application, in an enterprise in order to simplify and automate business processes to the greatest extent possible.

Why Should I Integrate?

There are many benefits to integrating your enterprise systems, including:

Operational benefits:

- Automating basic, repetitive operations
- Improved data quality
- Reduced costs

Organizational benefits:

- Builds common vision
- Empowerment
- Supports organizational change

Strategic benefits:

- Supports business growth
- Supports departmental alliances

Managerial benefits:

- Improved decision making and planning
- Better resource management
- Performance improvements

Types of data shared between systems.

Are you unsure whether your organization even needs to integrate its enterprise-wide systems? Here are some examples of different data that can be shared across your systems.

- **Human Resources:** Employees, operators or labor/usage rates, staff skills, licensing, certifications
- **Financials/Accounting:** Accounts, journal entries, inventory adjustments, parts, labor and service charges.
- **Purchasing:** Requisitions, purchase orders, vendor contract management, inventory receiving, requests/responses for bid/quote/proposals, vendor management with vendor contract management
 - Parts/Materials, fuel/fluids, services
- **Assets:** Equipment, components, Fleet equipment, stationary assets, linear, rail,
 - Mobile, linear, point and polygon assets, subsystems and parts
- **Spatial Data:** Asset location information, geography and geographic relationships

Technical decisions.

When researching enterprise-wide system integration vendors, make sure the one you select can suit all of your technical needs and will work with you to define the specifics for each element of your interfacing needs..

- Frequency of each interface: Scheduled or real-time?
 - Would scheduled or real-time interface frequencies better suit your organization? If you're not sure, ask if the vendor can support both.
- How will the two systems "shake hands" and pass data between the two systems?
 - Are you worried that your systems are too different to integrate seamlessly? Find a vendor that can support whatever methods are required, whether they be web services, staging tables, flat files, etc.
- What if the coding between the two systems is different?
 - Again, this is why vendor selection is so important. Vendors use tables to "translate" codes as transactions are passed back and forth.
- Are new Operational or Managerial process needed?
 - Workflow capabilities can help to streamline operations.



Implementation pitfalls

At the Enterprise Application Integration Industry Consortium, EAIC European Chairman Steve Craggs said that enterprise application integrations fail approximately 70% of the time, but not for the reasons you might assume. "None of them are really technical," Craggs said, "Almost all are management issues."

While starting the integration process, keep these common implementation pitfalls in mind:

- 1. Change is constant:** No matter how long you plan for your enterprise system integration, there's no way you can be prepared for everything. The only constant in these integrations is change. While constructing a game plan for your business is important, it's just as important to save room for changes along the way. Traditional life-cycle models are changing as a result of technologies that support integrations with other systems.
- 2. Not many EAI experts:** Integrating your enterprise systems won't be easy. Chances are, you'll have many questions along the way, but who will you ask? There may not be a member of your staff boasting experience with enterprise system integrations. This is why finding a skilled vendor is vital to the integration process.
- 3. Accountability:** Since each department has unique and conflicting requirements, there should be clear accountability for the system's final structure. Moving away from disparate systems operating in parallel towards a more common shared architecture really is a team effort.
- 4. Territorial staff:** While sharing data across enterprise systems will greatly improve your business processes, you might see staff members or entire departments unwilling to share their data with others. Make sure to fully explain both the short- and long-term benefits of integration to your staff so they don't feel forced or blindsided. Making the entire organization a part of the solution helps to bring them together and start to act and work as a common unit.
- 5. Lost information:** Even if certain data seems unimportant at the beginning of the implementation process, it might be crucial at a later date. Make sure to save all information in case it's needed later in the process.

Source: http://www.ebizq.net/topics/int_sbp/features/3463.html



AssetWORKS

AssetWorks EAM is a comprehensive asset management system that handles all aspects of public infrastructure management including complex networks of linear and boundary-based assets such as roads, pipelines and parks. EAM addresses day-to-day tasks like work order management and real-time labor tracking. Inspection recording and future planning—such as complete life-cycle analysis and capital budgeting—is also managed. These features offer an improved level of transparency that allows organizations to better manage various risks and capitalize on opportunities.

Furthermore, the system integrates seamlessly with AssetWorks comprehensive fleet management, fuel management and GPS systems to provide organizations with an end-to-end solution.

For more information on how AssetWorks EAM Solution can help you improve Asset Management, [click here.](#)