

# CLOSING THE IT GENERATION GAP WITH THE SOCIAL MOBILE CLOUD

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For many years, younger and older IT workers have often struggled to collaborate effectively, primarily due to the different technology eras they represent and the specific IT domains they own within their organizations. In many companies, the IT teams are split into two distinct camps – with the older workers managing line of business applications, such as ERP and related servers, while the younger ones handle networking and emerging technologies.

As companies embrace new social, mobile cloud technologies, however, these two camps must come together and work in harmony to further evolve ERP applications. Each has a significant stake in ensuring that these new technologies get widely dispersed and accepted across their organizations – and they need one another to make sure that happens effectively.

As the social, mobile cloud offers new opportunities for younger and

older IT workers to collaborate and learn from one another, here are four tips for closing the IT generation gap:

## **Break Down the Walls**

Gone are the days when IT was two separate camps. There should no longer be a wall between the older workers running ERP and the rest of the IT team handling everything else. The advent of new cloud and virtualization technologies has evolved and expanded into ERP applications, and this gives older and younger IT workers a golden opportunity to work together and learn from one another.

When younger and older IT personnel work together as one team, they can better optimize budgets by combining the same acquisitions for multiple types of applications. Furthermore, when knowledge and ideas are exchanged and shared freely between the older experienced workers and the younger cutting

edge folks, magic can happen. They can take their new cloud and virtualization applications to new heights, embrace social media as a best practice and fortify existing ERP systems with new capabilities such as powerful analytics and business intelligence.

Good ideas become even better ideas when information is not withheld and shared freely. The end result is a high-performance IT team delivering maximum business benefits to the organization while enjoying a more collegial work environment.

## **Accept Strengths and Weaknesses of One Another**

Younger and older IT personnel each have their own core strengths that they bring to the table. More experienced IT veterans have “been there and done that,” making it easier and faster for them to solve challenges, navigate complex regulations and size up ambiguous situations. They have experienced the previous evolution



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of ERP software and already know what works and what doesn't when it comes to enhancements and upgrades. Conversely, younger IT workers are more eager to utilize new technology and don't cling to any preconceived notions of what technology should be based on previous generations and historical processes. Curious and idealistic, younger workers are eager to make improvements and often question the status quo in doing so – which may be just the thing that an established IT department needs to make incremental gains in performance. While older workers typically have a more general computer science or finance educational background, younger IT personnel have taken advantage of specialized university-level courses in new technology such as analytics and business intelligence.

### **Work Together to Improve Processes and Evolve ERP**

It takes the combined power of younger and older workers to properly evolve established processes and ensure that they comply with customer

requirements as well as industry or government regulations. With their deeper knowledge of virtualization and mobile, younger workers can contribute a great deal to the evolution process.

Working together, younger and older IT personnel can evolve the next generation of ERP, making it as easy to use as Facebook on a tablet. ERP is no longer the complicated arcane structure first launched decades ago that focused primarily on businesses processes, financials and manufacturing. Today, new technologies like mobile are enabling new capabilities for ERP, adding new user experiences and user interfaces like voice and touch screens – an emerging sector where younger workers have greater experience.

### **Listen**

Older and younger IT workers really do have a lot of wisdom, intelligence, knowledge and new insight to share with one another. By uniting as one team and committing to open respectful dialogue, these two camps can grow together and benefit

one another while dramatically improving the quality and performance of IT across their organizations.

With cloud computing and virtualization enabling the integration between ERP and mobile, analytics, BI and other applications, we will see ERP continue to evolve dramatically over time. New web technologies further integrate ERP with CRM and social media platforms, giving organizations unprecedented collaboration and communication opportunities not just across the enterprise but with customers and partners as well. Today, users would benefit from the ability to personalize and customize their ERP applications based on their job functions with capabilities such as social networking being front and center.

VAI is excited to see how this new world will evolve – where ERP is age agnostic and demands the combined talents of older and younger workers to take the evolution to a whole new level.



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