

Six things to look for in an ERP Business Solutions Partner

Choosing a business solution can be daunting. Get it right, and you can increase efficiency; get it wrong, and your business may suffer. A good partner will work with you to develop and maintain the system that best meets the needs of your company. This partner helps create a system that works for your business now and accommodates for change and growth in the future.

Here are a few important indicators of a good partner:

1. Is the partner a Certified Microsoft Dynamics Partner?

Certified Microsoft Dynamics Partners are available worldwide to help companies of all sizes and industries select and implement the right business technology—and to provide support through future business change. To become certified, they must prove expertise in Microsoft technology and in specific business areas, such as financial, supply chain, or customer relationship management.

2. Will the partner provide references?

Make sure the partner will supply you with a list of customers in your industry who will answer questions and provide written references to you. If not, the partner is not for you. If the partner does supply a client list, you might want to ask them the remaining questions.

3. Is the partner's business stable?

Find out if the partner is a stable business organization with the technical infrastructure and staff to deploy a solution for your business within your time frame. After the partner implements the business solution, you want to make sure the organization supports your IT staff to fine tune the system and to address any problems that might arise.

4. Is the partner an expert in your industry?

You need a partner who demonstrates a clear understanding of your business concerns and your industry, a partner who can draw from extensive expertise with multiple businesses in your industry. Your partner should suggest strategies and develop your business solution with you.

5. Does the partner clearly consider the features and components you need?

The software solution proposed by the partner should be the right one to address your business requirements. If it isn't, the partner needs to be willing to rework the proposal until you have exactly what you need. For example, does the partner have expertise in working with the database, portal and business intelligence solutions you intend to use? Find out ahead of time about any hidden fees related to revising your solution.

6. Are the partner's consultants technologically proficient?

Make sure the partner uses a proven implementation methodology and configuration tools that speed implementation, configuration, and upgrades. Ask the partner if the person(s) who will implement your solution has been certified by the software vendor on that solution. What kind of certification do they have? To become certified, Microsoft Partners must prove expertise in Microsoft technology and in specific business areas, such as financial, supply chain, or customer relationship management.