



The complete guide to mitigating risks in a **global implementation**



Implementing an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system is a strategic move for organizations seeking enhanced efficiency, streamlined processes, and improved decision-making. However, the journey to ERP implementation is not without its challenges. Numerous risks accompany these initiatives, ranging from budget overruns and timeline delays to resistance from employees towards adopting new systems. There are even more factors to consider when it is a [global rollout](#).

Surprisingly, despite the widespread adoption of ERPs, only a handful of implementations can be labeled as “truly successful”, which involves bringing in long-term value and intended benefits. This discrepancy often arises due to inadequate planning, insufficient training, and a lack of alignment with organizational objectives. Navigating these complexities is crucial for organizations to unlock the full potential of their ERP investments and realize lasting benefits.

There are six major areas that pose higher risks of project failure. Business leaders who understand these risks and take preventive action stand a better chance of not only ensuring the success of the implementation but also deriving more value from their investments.



Six major risks
of a global
implementation
and strategies
to mitigate
those risks

Risk #1:

What to do when you face resistance from key stakeholders?

Change can be difficult, especially when your team is used to performing their tasks in a certain way for years. This is even more complicated when there are key stakeholders resisting the change; you could have a situation where people avoid performing tasks in the new system, don't collaborate across geographies and business entities, becoming generally less enthusiastic about the project.

In order to overcome this risk, you will need to identify people who will be advocates for the impact/effectiveness of the solution, in every country where you operate in, across every business entity, and within each business function. These are the individuals who have full faith in the benefits of the global implementation; they can act as strong influencers for their colleagues in their respective teams.

This group of influencers should also involve people from different levels of the hierarchy, including the senior leadership. Driving this team, keeping them motivated, and helping them explain the benefits of the new system to others will help mitigate the risks posed by those who oppose/don't have trust in the project. You may be able to win over most of them to deliver on the project in an optimal manner.





Risk #2:

What to do when everyone is busy, and you cannot get them to commit time for the project?

The gains from a global implementation are primarily through business process reengineering. But if the subject matter experts are too busy with their routine work and are unable to dedicate time to contribute to this deployment, it will become difficult to deliver the best implementation.

You need a subject matter expert to define the current processes accurately, identify gaps, and then envision the ideal workflow – a partner will use these recommendations or advise improvements based on this feedback. Only with these inputs can technology play a role in achieving the vision.

The way to overcome this challenge is to put together a global project management team that will be responsible for the entire implementation process. Global leaders should have oversight of this team and their work, and where needed, they should step in and reinforce the importance of the project to everyone in the business.



Risk #3:

What to do to avoid incomplete or inaccurate scope of implementation?

The scope of work (SoW) document is an important document in the implementation process. Any element of this document that is vague or requires additional thought should be relooked. All possible situations/scenarios/processes should be accounted for. No gaps should be left for the implementation team to 'figure out' during the implementation phase. It is important to define the change request procedures and reasons accurately.

If the team takes this activity as just another task to be crossed off in a checklist and doesn't give it attention, the number of change requests and their associated costs will affect the ROI of the project due to escalating costs. It will also push the delivery dates. This will delay your ability to gain value from all the investments, and the delays may also impact your daily operations.

The way to mitigate this risk is by deciding on a formal process to oversee the preparation and review of the scope of work document.





Risk #4:

What to do when the project plan is unrealistic?

Coming up with an implementation plan that is realistic in timelines is a science. If you have very tight deadlines, your implementation partner might have to skip important steps that will cost you in the long run.

Get a team that has prior experience in implementation. If you don't want to depend entirely on the opinions of the implementation partner, you can engage an independent consultant to advise you through the entire implementation journey, especially the planning stage.



Risk #5:

What to do when you don't have visibility on project progress?

There is a lot at stake in a global ERP implementation and it is natural for senior leaders to request visibility on the progress. But there are times when you don't get the visibility you need. This could be because the project management team does not want to share any bad news and only wants to share an update when they are able to fix the issues.

There are two ways to fix this challenge. First, it has to be made clear to the project management team that the progress update is an important function and the meeting is a safe place for everyone to speak their mind without fear of reprimand. There will be unexpected challenges in any project and the team should work together to fix them and move on.

Secondly, you shouldn't have such dependencies to gain visibility on the project. The implementation partner should create a self-service option for you to check how each component of the project is going, know the status, and have visibility on challenges and ongoing discussions.





Risk #6:

How do you avoid choosing the wrong partner?

Familiarity with technologies or having a big name is not enough. There are instances where some of the bigger names in the industry have faced project failure while the mid-sized partners have been able to rescue the project and turn things around.

Getting it right the first time around is easier and cost effective. When it comes to choosing the partner, don't go by the brand value or the size. Instead, explore the partner's expertise in your industry and vertical, check if they have a presence in countries where your businesses are located, and see if they have experience in a global implementation. Reading their client success stories and talking to peers about the partner will be a good start in ascertaining the capabilities of the business.

Why choose sa.global for your global implementation

With over 30 years of experience, sa.global has developed tools, framework, and a methodology that enables accelerated global implementation to help you gain faster time to value without compromising on the quality of the implementation.

We have a presence in over 25 countries and our experienced consultants are positioned to meet the unique needs of your business – multi-currency, multi-language, inter-company transactions, and localization needs and ensure compliance with financial, legal, and tax requirements.

With sa.global, you get access to a global project management team who will ensure that your global vision gets translated and implemented across different geographies. Our in-country teams work directly with your local teams while coordinating with the global project management team.

Support is a big part of a global implementation after the go-live phase. Our strategically located Global Service Centers (GSC) in Colombia, Serbia, and India offer 24/7 support with a follow-the-sun model.



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