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Assembling leading contributors and industry insiders, Logistics KnowledgeBase tackles the challenges confronting shippers today—from e-commerce fulfillment to tight capacity and supply chain disruption—and applies their considerable expertise and experience to provide insight and clarity.

Knowledge is power, and this section packs a punch. Logistics KnowledgeBase gives supply chain professionals impactful to-dos and actionable takeaways. Get the information you need to drive transformative change at your enterprise today.

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The Business Value of Managed Transportation Services



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Shippers are turning to managed transportation services (MTS) to help address logistical challenges. Here are the advantages.

The mantra of today's freight market is "survival of the fittest," as driver shortages, capacity imbalances and government regulations continue to impact transportation costs. These challenges are further being complicated by consumers demanding greater product variety and availability at the lowest price, which puts pressure on an organization's already strained supply chain. That's why many organizations are turning to managed transportation services (MTS) to help address their logistical challenges.

MTS + TMS = A True Logistics Solution

By partnering with a third party to plan and execute freight moves on its behalf, a shipper can leverage the provider's team of logistics experts to manage those moves instead of using its own internal personnel. They can also leverage the provider's entire network as well as its investment in emerging technologies without having to make internal investments.

An MTS partner can provide additional value by offering its own proprietary transportation management systems (TMS) and other advanced solutions. Combining transportation management, strategic capacity and other trade services can give shippers greater control over transportation operations, enhance shipment visibility and improve supply chain performance. According to ARC Advisory Group, MTS can save shippers between 2% and 10% on transportation spend.

Bringing Clarity to Cloudy Visibility

Companies want to secure capacity at below-market rates while delivering high service levels. They need to know where their equipment is at all times and whether loads will arrive on time. An MTS provider can also address the visibility challenges many shippers face today in order to achieve those goals.

MTS removes the guesswork through advanced technology that automates previously manual processes. With the digitization of the logistics

industry, shipments are monitored by algorithms; capacity is secured via online automated auctions; and scorecards and KPI reporting are distributed automatically each day. An MTS provider also has logistics experts ready to intervene and manage the logistics process to help ensure quality service, provide greater predictability and lower total costs.

Benefits for Each Member of the C-Suite

MTS is beneficial for all stakeholders—from logistics managers to CFOs to CEOs. Here are some of the benefits to each:

- **Logistics Managers** – Shippers save time and money by leveraging the MTS providers' transportation networks, prices, technology, capacity and economies of scale. Instead of juggling activities across 75 different carriers—plus their own network providers—logistics pros simply have to work with a single partner.
- **CFO** – As transportation becomes a larger line item in a CFO's budget, an MTS provider combines world-class technology and freight management to take over the management of those networks and deliver ROI within a year or less.
- **CEO** – With an eye on the bottom line, partnering with an MTS provider alleviates many of the business performance and operational headaches associated with transportation that were formerly handled in-house, draining time, staff resources and budget.

The Time for MTS is Now

MTS will continue to play an increasingly important role in the manufacturing and distribution industries, both of which have been hit hard by government regulations, capacity issues, rising fuel costs and ever-shrinking delivery windows. Now is the perfect time to engage with a reliable MTS partner.

ERP

5 Key Things to Consider in an ERP Software Selection Project



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Here are some key tips Navigator has found useful in helping businesses during the sometimes-daunting process of choosing an ERP system.

Picking the right ERP solution can be tough. Generic ERP solutions that must be customized are being replaced with cloud-based, industry-specific solutions. Also, feature set, configuration and system integration add another layer of complexity to the selection process.

Navigator has helped businesses roll out more than 500 ERP implementations over the past 25 years. Here are some key tips we've found useful in helping during this sometimes-daunting process.

1. Determine Your Specific Industry Needs

An ERP solution should fit your industry vertical and specific business process needs. If not, employees will avoid the solution even after rollout and training, instead opting for spreadsheets and unsanctioned third-party solutions.

As you take the time to define your business, its structure, and how it operates as part of the planning process, assess your current software situation to evaluate integration and customization needs. Take the time to determine specific goals and desired process improvements, too.

2. Consult with Key Stakeholders and Team Members

As you evaluate your business and its needs, you'll need to rely heavily on your key stakeholders and employees who will be using the system on a daily basis. Tap those members of your staff who have an extensive and intimate knowledge of what your business needs from a new ERP system.

This unique staff input not only helps with knowing your company's actual needs, it also helps create a clearer connection between the old system and the new one you ultimately select.

3. Make Sure the Solution Can Grow with You

Your business is not going to stand still, and neither should your backend system. Any solution you choose should be adaptable and able to evolve with your company as it grows.

Cloud ERP is automatically and continuously upgraded, which helps with adaptability. But also look for the underlying flexibility of the system, even if it is geared toward a specific industry vertical. Can it scale? Can it support multiple ways of handling the same business function?

4. Note Any Necessary Third-Party Integrations

ERP works best when it is able to connect with other systems, otherwise its utility as a central nerve system for your business is compromised. Your ERP system should include any necessary integrations and connectivity, or at least be integration-ready with the assistance of an implementation partner.

The best ERP integration for your company depends on your specific business, its current systems, and your integration budget.

5. Keep an Eye Out for Product Support

No matter how much information you gather on ERP implementation and optimization, you're going to need assistance from a partner—whether your vendor or a third party. The right ERP solution partner will help you leverage your committed internal resources, evolve your business systems and processes, and capitalize on your new ERP system.

You'll want to select a vendor that "plays" well with your company and will make a great partner for years to come.

Use Our Evaluation Guide to Get Started

No single factor is more important than a company's self-evaluation efforts. Skipping this key step and not thoroughly assessing your company's situation can result in choosing the wrong solution or having your project go awry before it begins.

We've put together a vendor-neutral ERP Evaluation Guide at bit.ly/ERP_Evaluation_Guide to walk you through all the questions you should ask before selecting an ERP system. The guide will help you understand all you'll need to make the best choice for your business.