



One Integrated Business Software or Siloed Applications Which is Better?

WHITEPAPER

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What is restricting your business growth?

As growing companies achieve greater market penetration, gain more customers and grow, they often hit the wall where internal processes struggle to keep up with continued demand. The key challenge to supporting that growth is laying the groundwork to scale the business effectively and efficiently while maintaining customer service and support.

When starting out, most companies solve problems in the quickest, cheapest ways possible, which over time, leads them toward one of the biggest pitfalls for growing organizations - using standalone business applications for varying departmental functions in an ad hoc manner. As the business and its complexity grow, these disparate systems create operational inefficiencies that can be detrimental to the bottom line, damage the customer experience, and impede the company's ability to reach its full potential.

This white paper covers the types of inefficiencies caused by running disparate business solutions and systems for different departments and how an integrated software platform that unifies critical business processes helps companies grow more rapidly and profitably.

Inefficiencies Of Standalone Systems

Businesses that select disparate standalone systems over time for handling different processes can find themselves with a poorly planned architecture that handles short-term tactical needs sub-optimally while holding the company back from scaling efficiently over the long term. These inefficiencies can become so severe that they cripple growth. There are four primary issues that hinder growth when running a business with siloed systems:

Lack of Real Time Visibility: With siloed software applications, you have multiple overlapping databases and cannot easily get a view of business performance in real time. Reports showing performance across your finance, sales, marketing, service, quality, HR and documentation departments are crucial to giving you an integrated view of your company's operations. Most companies simply give up on acquiring this information on a regular basis because of the amount of time it takes to source, extract and analyze this data. For those that do, countless hours are wasted trying to tie unrelated, error-prone and out-of-date information together. Consequently, businesses end up making critical decisions slowly based on inaccurate information, or they make hasty and risky decisions off of gut instinct.

Wasted Employee Productivity: If your employees are bogged down with inefficient and disjointed processes, it increases errors and takes time away from their more important core duties. Important processes can take a lot longer to get completed if too much manual effort is required and are often erroneous. Labor intensive and manual tasks steal away time that could be otherwise spent on helping the company grow and innovate.

Integration Uncertainty, Cost & Complexity: With so many siloed applications, IT wastes an enormous amount of time and money on integrating, maintaining, upgrading, and acquiring new versions of these applications. Once new versions are purchased, even more integration and maintenance needs to be performed for all the different versions of software to work together. Consequently, valuable IT time that could be used to make the business more productive is wasted, while maintenance costs skyrocket. With this in mind, it's not a surprise that the leading analyst firm, Gartner, reports that 91% of IT staff time is spent on software maintenance rather than on innovation.

Increased Customer Churn: Customer acquisition and revenue growth are key pillars to your company's continued success. With fierce competition, it is essential that your company provide an exceptional customer experience or risk having customers take their business elsewhere. When customer satisfaction is damaged, the likelihood of re-purchase decreases, and the risk of negative word-of-mouth increases. An integrated software system ensures that customers have the right information and customer experience they demand, by providing customers with a real-time self-service portal, and by giving all your customer-facing employees instantaneous access to all the customer interaction and transaction information they need to service and sell.

An Integrated Business Software Vs A Standalone Application

When companies first start growing, they have several options to implement the front- and backoffice systems needed. From accounting to CRM to order management and beyond, applications can be implemented in a piecemeal, staged process, or in a process that takes into account how these various systems will interact with each other and what level of integration they require.

As company and revenue growth accelerates, it becomes increasingly more essential to integrate their business software applications and standardize across a single database and business process. The advantages of designing software systems in this manner as opposed to a siloed fashion include tremendously improved business productivity, improved visibility across the organization, and IT cost savings. Let us examine some of the key areas in which fast-growing companies can benefit from implementing an integrated business software.

- * **Process Efficiency across Your Organization:** The key to avoiding manual, duplicative work is to ensure that your core business processes are seamlessly integrated from the front office to the back office. Automating such processes enables you to minimize employee time spent on activities that would otherwise be required to manage these processes, and redeploy staff to higher-value activities to help your business innovate and grow.

- * **Real-Time Visibility and a Unified Customer View:** Getting an accurate view of your company's operations can be a challenge if you have multiple disconnected business systems. Data is frequently fragmented and scattered across these systems, and spreadsheets are often out of date, error-prone and hard to maintain. Efforts to tie together multiple sources of data together can be time-consuming and incomplete. Traditional add-on analytics tools for these siloed applications are expensive to purchase and implement, and often lack the ease of use necessary to make them pervasive.

- * **Significant IT Time and Cost Savings:** Companies with disparate software systems have to contend with several types of applications ranging from accounting to financial planning, order management, CRM, ecommerce, and business intelligence tools. Multiple applications consume valuable IT time spent planning, deploying, managing, integrating, maintaining, and upgrading various systems. Capital-intensive hardware infrastructure and software licenses, combined with expensive, time-consuming upgrades, drive up your expenses and can get out of control the faster you grow. In an integrated business software, IT no longer has to procure, install and maintain multiple systems and the various integrations between them. Operational costs can be significantly reduced while IT time can instead be spent on growing the business and improving the company's business operations.

- * **Accelerated Growth and Expansion:** Expansion to new geographies, markets, product lines, and additional sales channels can be accomplished faster with an integrated system because of unified customer, documentation & employee processes and data.

The Result ...

Today, companies in virtually every industry are using sophisticated business software to manage operations but many are still struggling to keep up with their growth and manage costs effectively because a hodgepodge of siloed software applications is causing process bottlenecks and employee productivity issues. Integrated cloud business management software suites such as LuitBiz are transforming how companies run, and enabling them to transcend growing pains that previously were holding them back from taking their business to the next level of profitable growth. Moreover, responsive integrated business software like LuitBiz allows companies to access their data from anywhere, anytime via any device without downloading any mobile apps or desktop clients thus allowing businesses to function smoothly even while people are on the move.

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