PMG360 | ERP GLOBAL INSIGHTS®

A PMG360 / ERP Global Insights Special Report

ERP's AI Reckoning: *From Promise to Business Value*

As artificial intelligence becomes an expected part of modern ERP platforms, vendors and resellers face a new challenge: demonstrating that AI delivers measurable business results.



SPONSORED BY:

Acumatica The Cloud ERP | aktion associates® | nextec® | paystand® | Sage®

The industry's prove-it moment

The enterprise resource planning industry has reached a turning point in its adoption of artificial intelligence. Once an emerging capability, AI is increasingly an expected component of modern ERP platforms. Vendors are embedding automation, predictive analytics, intelligent assistants and agents into their products, promising to change how businesses manage operations.

But as AI becomes more widely available, the conversation is changing. The question is no longer simply what AI can do, but whether it can deliver meaningful, measurable business value.

For ERP vendors, value-added resellers (VARs) and customers, that shift brings opportunities and challenges. Businesses must determine which capabilities are worth implementing, whether their data and processes can support them, and how to measure impact. Security, governance, accuracy and accountability also become more important as AI participates in financial and operational decisions.

Last year's VAR Stars report examined how AI, cloud computing and industry specialization were transforming ERP and redefining the reseller's role. Industry leaders described a transition from traditional software implementation toward strategic advisory services. A year later, the industry faces a more demanding test: can ERP AI deliver on those expectations?

Where AI is delivering business value

While headlines often focus on transformative AI applications, some of the clearest results are emerging from familiar financial processes. Invoice matching, accounts payable (AP) automation, anomaly detection and financial reporting show how intelligent systems can reduce manual work and strengthen oversight.



Brian Howell
CEO | NexTec Group

Brian Howell, CEO of NexTec Group, identifies invoice matching and AP automation as especially effective because they address high-volume, repetitive activities with measurable before-and-after results.

"A year in, the clearest value is in the least glamorous use case on that list: invoice matching and AP automation," Howell said.

According to Howell, customers using document recognition and automated matching in Acumatica and Sage X3 are spending less time entering invoices manually, closing their books faster and handling increased transaction volumes without adding AP headcount.

"Our advice to any organization starting out is to begin here. Pick the process that consumes the most manual hours, measure it before you turn anything on, and the value will make itself obvious," Howell said.

Anomaly detection is another area producing value, particularly for multi-entity organizations. Flagging duplicate payments, unusual transactions and irregular journal entries can improve financial oversight and audit confidence. Yet the benefit of preventing errors is often harder to quantify than hours saved.

Forecasting has been more difficult. "Forecasting has been the humbling one. The models work. The constraint right now is the data underneath them," Howell said.

Customers with well-structured historical information can improve demand and cash forecasting. Those

Acumatica The Cloud ERP | aktion associates | nextec | paystand | Sage

Acumatica
The Cloud ERP

Join our vibrant partner community



www.acumatica.com

dependent on disconnected spreadsheets and legacy systems are finding that AI cannot overcome an inadequate information foundation.

AI readiness begins with the business

Preparing for intelligent automation requires more than enabling a software feature. Data quality, system integration, consistent processes and clear ownership of outcomes are foundational.



Scott Irwin
CEO | Aktion Associates

“AI readiness is not really about AI. It is about whether the business has the data, discipline, and context to make better decisions with it,” said Scott Irwin, CEO of Aktion Associates.

Irwin says organizations should first identify the decisions they want to improve, assess whether the information behind those decisions is trustworthy and determine who is responsible for acting on the results.

Consider a construction business transitioning to a new ERP platform. Years of historical job-cost information may reveal patterns in project performance, margins and emerging risks. Preserving that history and connecting it with current operations can make forward-looking analysis more useful.

Industry knowledge is equally important. “Industry context matters. Someone still has to understand how the business operates, how the data inputs are structured, and whether the answer makes sense,” Irwin said.

Fragmented information, inconsistent workflows and disconnected systems can cause AI to magnify existing problems rather than solve them. Companies best positioned to benefit know their operational priorities, trust their information and have assigned responsibility for results.

“The companies that will gain the most from AI will treat it as a business transformation, not software deployment,” Irwin said.

For VARs, the work creates opportunities beyond implementation: data readiness assessments, integration, process redesign, governance and change management. The most productive conversation starts with the business problem, not the product.

Separating intelligent automation from AI hype

As ERP vendors introduce more AI features, customers must distinguish useful innovation from convenient interfaces that leave underlying processes unchanged. Generative AI makes it easier to retrieve information, summarize data and converse with software, but those functions alone may not eliminate manual work.



Christina Wedge
VP, Partner Ecosystems | Paystand

Christina Wedge, Vice President of Partner Ecosystems at Paystand, says companies must understand what they are implementing before measuring return.

“AI is the buzzword everyone is using right now, but there’s a significant difference between true AI-driven automation and a legacy technology stack with an LLM bolted onto it,” Wedge said.

Acumatica The Cloud ERP | aktion associates | nextec | paystand | Sage

Built on Experience
Driven by Industry Expertise.

aktion associates

ERP | DATA | INFRASTRUCTURE | CLOUD | SECURITY



Deep Industry Specialization

Construction | Manufacturing | Distribution | Architecture & Engineering

47
Years of Trusted Expertise

8,500+
Clients Across North America

Choosing the right ERP is just the beginning. Aktion combines industry expertise, leading ERP solutions and integrated technology services to improve performance across your technology environment.

INDUSTRY-LEADING ERP SOLUTIONS

Acumatica Gold Certified Partner

Sage Business Partner Platinum

Deltek PLATINUM PARTNER

infor | Gold Resell Partner

Considering an ERP replacement?

Talk with an Aktion advisor who understands your industry and your entire technology environment.

Aktion Associates | aktion.com | 800.4AKTION | info@aktion.com

Adding a language model to an existing system may simplify access to information while preserving the same workflow and its inefficiencies. More substantive intelligent automation can interpret data, operate within defined parameters, handle exceptions and execute financial processes with less human intervention.

“AI should fundamentally change how financial processes are executed, not simply put a more sophisticated interface on top of outdated technology,” Wedge said.

The distinction matters because customers should judge AI not by the number of features available but by the improvements it produces in day-to-day work.

Measuring the return on ERP AI

Meaningful ROI requires a baseline. Before deploying a capability, organizations need to know their transaction volumes, processing costs, error rates and employee workloads. Otherwise, it is difficult to separate the impact of AI from other operational changes.

Wedge identifies straight-through processing as one of the clearest indicators: what percentage of transactions move from beginning to end without manual intervention? Exception rates and manual touchpoints are another test. If employees still spend the same amount of time investigating discrepancies, correcting errors and resolving exceptions, the underlying process may not have changed.

Cost and processing time per transaction offer additional benchmarks. Businesses can compare the cost and duration of processing an invoice, reconciling an account or collecting a payment before and after deployment.

Accuracy and financial impact matter too: duplicate payments, write-offs, errors, revenue leakage, collections, cash flow and forecast quality. Capacity provides another lens: can the finance team handle more volume without a corresponding increase in staffing?

These benefits must be weighed against implementation, integration, licensing and maintenance costs. The goal is not to automate isolated tasks for their own sake, but to improve the performance and scalability of the process as a whole.

Trust, governance and the limits of autonomy

As AI expands from producing insights to executing workflows, trust and accountability become central to adoption. Finance systems contain sensitive information and support consequential decisions. The ability to automate a step does not automatically justify delegating it.



Nancy Sperry
SVP, US Partner Sales | Sage

“As AI becomes standard in ERP, the question won’t be how much AI a platform has, but what that AI actually delivers,” said Nancy Sperry, Senior Vice President, US Partner Sales at Sage.

Sperry encourages customers to ask what work AI eliminates, which decisions it improves and what measurable outcome it creates—and how quickly that value will appear.

“In finance, speed without trust isn’t particularly valuable. CFOs need to understand how AI reached an answer, be able to verify it, maintain control over consequential actions, and know who remains accountable,” she said.

Acumatica The Cloud ERP | aktion associates | nextec | paystand | Sage

nextec

Award-Winning ERP Partner

The Right ERP Partner Takes You Further

For over thirty years, NexTec has been a trusted partner to mid-sized businesses, helping them implement the industry-specific ERP solutions they need to grow and thrive.

600+

Active ERP customers across North America.

4.5 out of 5

G2 rating based on real customer reviews.

50%

of clients switch to NexTec after being dissatisfied with their ERP partner.

Learn more at nextecgroup.com

Acumatica
Gold Certified Partner

Sage Business Partner
Diamond

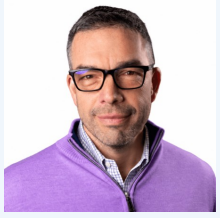
As agents gain the ability to initiate transactions or recommend financial actions, organizations need clear access permissions, approval thresholds, audit trails and processes for validating outputs. Appropriate human oversight is especially important where financial accuracy, compliance or sensitive information is at stake.

“AI should earn trust before it earns greater autonomy, not be given autonomy simply because the technology allows it,” Sperry said.

VARs can help customers determine which processes are appropriate for automation, where people should retain control and how governance can be designed around the realities of each industry.

The VAR becomes an accountability partner

Perhaps the most consequential change is the evolving role of the value-added reseller. Last year, VARs were described as AI navigators: advisors helping customers identify use cases, assess readiness and implement emerging capabilities. Now expectations are moving toward demonstrable outcomes.



Roman Bukary
SVP, Partner Strategy and Programs | Acumatica

“In the past, we’ve focused primarily on helping customers navigate AI. Today, they expect us to help them turn AI into measurable business results. That means VARs have to evolve from guides into accountability partners,” said Roman Bukary, Senior Vice President of Partner Strategy and Programs at Acumatica.

Rather than concentrating on features and implementation milestones, partners increasingly need to work with CFOs and operations leaders to define success before deployment. Goals might include a faster month-end close, fewer manual approvals, lower overtime costs or better cash forecasting.

“It’s no longer enough to recommend tools,” Bukary said. VARs must connect ERP capabilities to outcomes that customers can measure and defend internally.

That requires technical skill, industry expertise, process consulting, data management and continuing engagement. It also opens service opportunities around ongoing optimization, measurement, training and governance rather than only one-time implementation projects.

Sperry similarly sees the partner’s knowledge of each customer as a differentiator: “When AI capabilities are everywhere, the differentiator is knowing where they can create meaningful value for a particular business.”

Irwin offers a complementary vision: “The partner of the future will not simply help customers run the ERP system. The partner will help them turn the information in that

system into better business performance.”

From AI adoption to business accountability

ERP’s AI transformation is entering a more demanding phase. Intelligent assistants, predictive tools and autonomous agents have expanded what platforms can potentially accomplish, but their availability does not guarantee improvement.

Realizing value requires organizations to select suitable use cases, establish trustworthy data, prepare employees, maintain appropriate controls and measure performance against clear objectives. Vendors must deliver more than growing feature lists; customers must

Acumatica The Cloud ERP | aktion associates | nextec | paystand | Sage

paystand

Agentic B2B Payment Network

Financial Operating System for the Office of the CFO

- Accounts Receivable
- Expense Management
- Cross-Border Supplier Payments
- Cross-Border Contractor Payments
- B2B Payment Processing

Get started with Paystand

Visit paystand.com

distinguish opportunities from hype; and VARs must help translate capabilities into results.

The next chapter of ERP AI will not be defined by how many intelligent features vendors introduce or how many businesses adopt them. It will be defined by whether organizations can demonstrate that AI makes operations faster, more accurate, more efficient and ultimately more valuable.

For the ERP channel, the promise of AI is giving way to something more consequential: the responsibility to prove its worth.

Contributors

Brian Howell CEO, NexTec Group

Scott Irwin CEO, Aktion Associates

Christina Wedge VP, Partner Ecosystems, Paystand

Nancy Sperry SVP, US Partner Sales, Sage

Roman Bukary SVP, Partner Strategy and Programs, Acumatica

Acumatica The Cloud ERP | aktion associates | nextec | paystand | Sage

20 VAR Stars to watch

VARStars

An alphabetical watchlist of ERP resellers and implementation partners with recent signs of momentum, from new customer growth to recognition for specialized ERP work.

3Value

Acumatica

Acumatica named the Houston firm a 2026 Strategic Partner finalist, a category for growing practices with fewer than 75 customers.

Acumatica finalists

AccountAbility

Acumatica

A 2026 Acumatica Rookie of the Year finalist whose private equity practice helps portfolio companies select and implement ERP.

Acumatica finalists

Adooma

Oracle NetSuite

NetSuite named this implementation specialist its 2025 Emerging Alliance Partner of the Year.

NetSuite award winners

Adroit North America

Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central

The food and beverage ERP specialist made the 2026 Inc. 5000 with 89% three-year revenue growth.

Inc. 5000 profile

Anton Systems

Acumatica

The construction and real estate ERP specialist won Acumatica's 2026 Growth award, based on year-over-year growth.

Acumatica award winners

Arpana Consulting

Odoo

The U.S. retail and manufacturing specialist was a 2026 Odoo Best Starter Americas nominee.

Odoo award nominees

Asyma Solutions

Sage Intacct

Sage recognized the reseller for leading Canadian partners in year-over-year growth in recurring revenue from new customers in FY26.

Sage award winners

Beyond Cloud Consulting

Oracle NetSuite

The firm reported four NetSuite Alliance Partner Spotlight awards in 2026, including recognition for its work in retail and health and beauty.

Beyond Cloud announcement

Bring IT

Oracle NetSuite

The NetSuite implementation firm made the Inc. 5000 for a sixth consecutive year in 2026.

Inc. 5000 profile

Bryant Park Consulting

Oracle NetSuite

Founded in 2021, the ERP consultancy ranked 716th on the 2026 Inc. 5000 with 479% three-year revenue growth.

Inc. 5000 profile

Acumatica The Cloud ERP | aktion associates | nextec | paystand | Sage

VAR Stars to watch

The watchlist includes newer firms and established specialists building a newer ERP practice. Each profile links to the company and its recent recognition.

Cudio

Odoo

An Odoo implementation firm that integrates retail and commerce systems. Odoo nominated it for Best Partner North America in 2026.

Odoo award nominees

Dynavistics

Acumatica

A 2026 Acumatica Rookie of the Year finalist in a category based on customer acquisitions in a partner's first 18 months.

Acumatica finalists

E3K Solutions

Odoo

The Canadian implementation firm earned a 2026 Odoo Best Partner North America nomination.

Odoo award nominees

Platform Technology Advisors

Acumatica

An Acumatica finalist in both Growth and Cloud Adoption in 2026, with recognition for its work moving customers off legacy systems.

Acumatica finalists

PrenticeWorx

Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central

A 2026 Microsoft Partner of the Year finalist for Agentic Business Operations with Business Central.

Microsoft award finalists

Protelo

Acumatica and Oracle NetSuite

The NetSuite specialist's newer Acumatica practice won Acumatica's 2026 Rookie of the Year award.

Acumatica award winners

QOC Innovations

Odoo

The manufacturing and distribution specialist was a 2026 Odoo Best Partner North America nominee.

Odoo award nominees

Revive ERP

Acumatica

Won Acumatica's 2026 Professional Services VAR award, which recognizes industry-edition sales and customer satisfaction.

Acumatica award winners

S4 Solutions

Odoo

Won Odoo's 2026 Best Partner North America award. Its ERP practice focuses on discrete manufacturing.

Odoo award winners

Volt Technologies

Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central

Won Microsoft's 2026 Partner of the Year award for Agentic Business Operations with Business Central.

Microsoft award winners

Acumatica The Cloud ERP | aktion associates | nextec | paystand | Sage

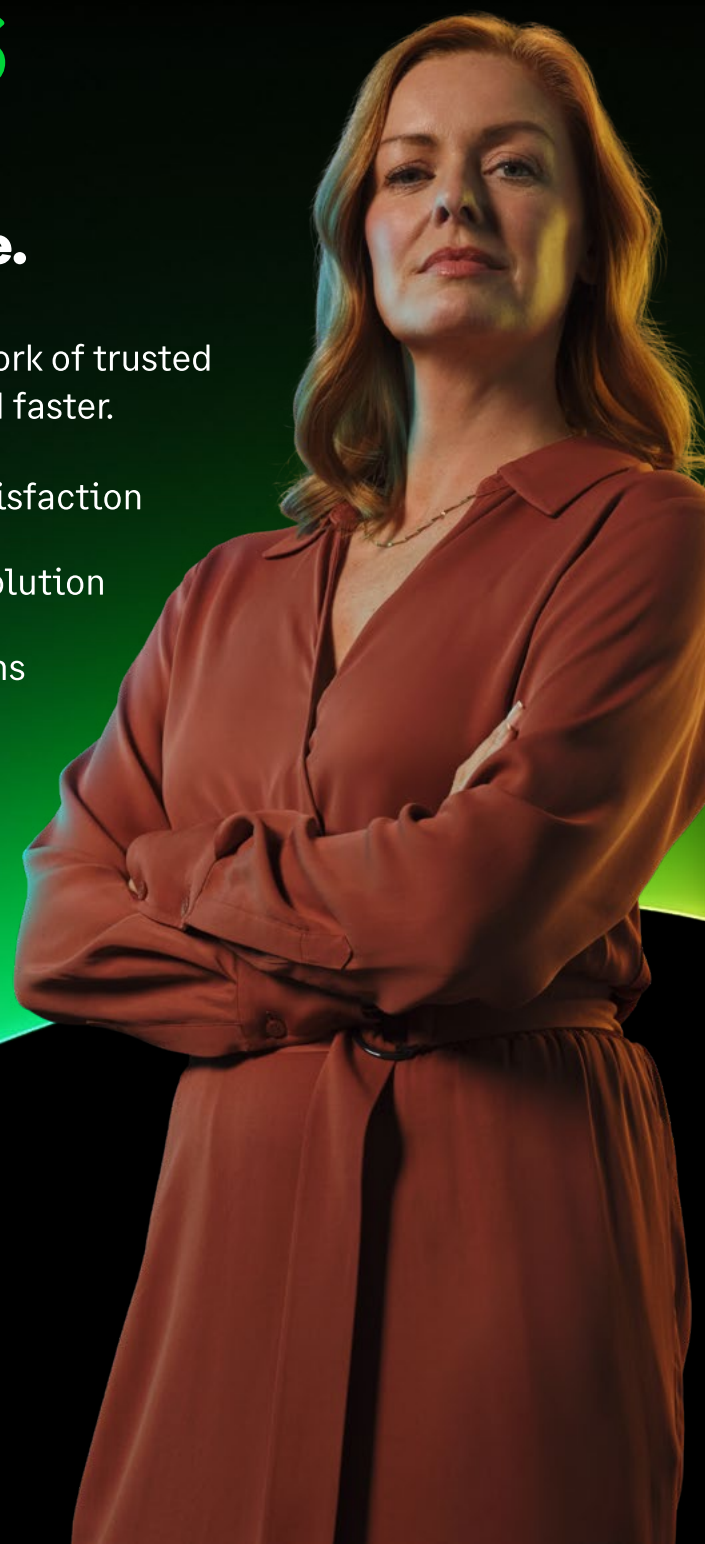
Strong partnerships build great businesses

Ready to grow or modernize your business? Start with Sage.

For more than 40 years, Sage and our global network of trusted partners have helped businesses grow further and faster.

- ✓ Rated **#1** on G2 in accounting for customer satisfaction
- ✓ The first and only **AICPA-preferred** finance solution
- ✓ Trusted by **30,000+** scaling and midsized teams

Let's grow together. Visit sage.com.



Sage

High-Performance Finance Software

POWERED BY Ai