Insight

Infor SunSystems system audit and business process review service

Introduction

If a business has plans to expand it needs to ensure that its systems can scale and transform to support its growth plans. If a business wants to move into new territories, again its systems must facilitate this. Importantly if a business wants to stay ahead of the competition its systems and business processes must be joined up to ensure business can be conducted efficiently and without the need for manual intervention.

Some of the key business processes that underpin the growth of any business are those associated with financial management system(s), for example:

- Order to cash
- Source to contract
- Procure to pay
- Transact and analyse
- Analyse and report
- Report to management
- Management to decision
- Decision to outcome

It is these and other key processes that – if optimised – are the enablers of growth.

But if they are operating sub-optimally they can actually hinder growth.

The warning signs of process issues

It is inevitable that over a period of time if these and other processes are left to operate without any tuning or adjustment, particularly if the business has changed, that inefficiencies will creep in. Tell-tale signs you might recognise are:

- Growth in transaction volumes and data from an increasing number of sources
- Duplication and/or re-keying of data between systems or processes
- Too many manual processes and a compelling need for automation
- Work-arounds and spreadsheets are mushrooming
- Lack of integration is becoming costly and disruptive
- You are spending more time checking data quality and integrity and not enough time analysing
- Reporting cycle is getting longer and protracted
- Auditors are asking more and more questions
- Staff are working longer hours to cope with the work load
- There is a general feeling your finance management system holding the business back

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FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SOLUTIONS

62% of organisations want to better respond to changes in business processes and procedures.

The Inefficiency Delta and empirical evidence

This erosion over time of the efficiency of business systems and processes can best be summarised as the "Inefficiency Delta". Quite simply over a period of time the gap between what the business needs from a system and what the system can actually deliver widens, this is the Inefficiency Delta and to close it most people find work-arounds, introduce manual or semi-automatic processes or worse still ignore it leaving the system open to threat and potential abuse.

The Inefficiency Delta
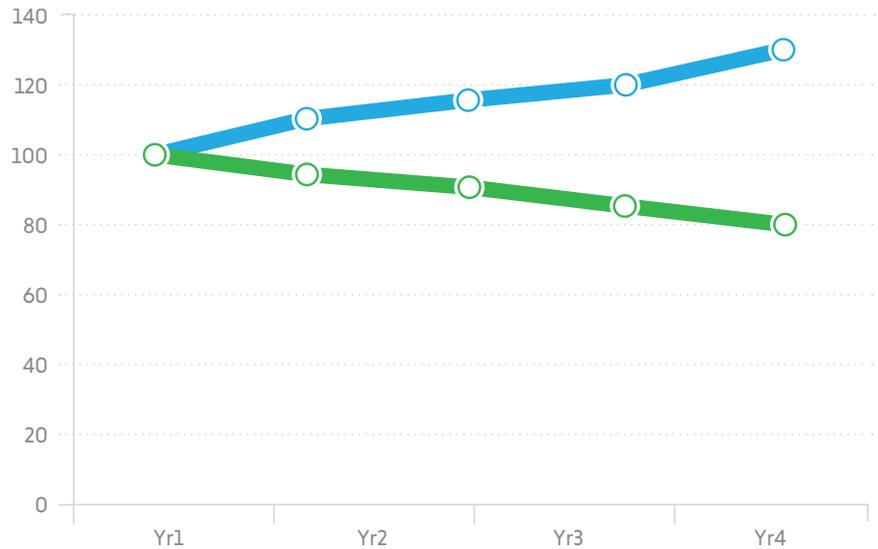
Gain insight into your organisation

At TouchstoneFMS, we firmly believe that every system should within 3-5 years of being implemented be audited and the business processes that feed into it or take output from it should be reviewed for robustness and efficiency.

With this philosophy in mind we have put together our Insight business process review service. Our belief is backed up by not only what our customers tell us but by empirical evidence also. In a survey conducted by the National Computer Centre into why organisations change systems or make significant investments in upgrades, the top three reasons are to respond to changes in the business.

The main drivers for replacing or significantly upgrading finance systems
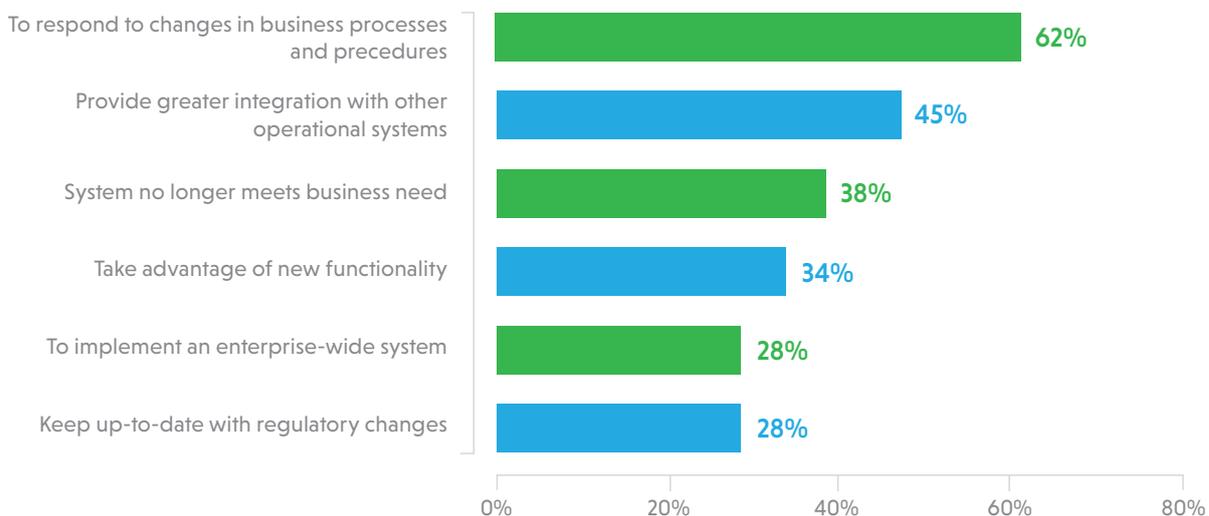
About the service

Insight is our system audit and business process review service designed specifically for Infor SunSystems users. SunSystems is found at the heart of the financial systems landscape in many organisations; it may have been implemented several years ago and since then very little may have been done to it to adjust, tune and optimise it.

Over that period the likelihood is that the business has changed significantly and SunSystems is not operating as efficiently as it once did, possibly even to a point where it is now causing the business serious operational issues.

Insight is a packaged consultancy service designed and delivered by our business consultants who have many years' of SunSystems experience covering both implementing brand new systems as well as re-engineering/upgrading existing systems.

They can bring existing systems back up to a level where they are delivering what the business needs, ensure they are fit for purpose and underpin growth by building in much needed headroom.

Discovery

We will have an initial 2-3 hour discovery meeting with you to get a better understanding of your business as it is now but also what it might look like in 3-5 years' time. We will ask you to be candid and share with us any future growth plans. We will spend time with you talking about your existing business systems, what they do, how they operate, how they integrate and what their shortcomings are. We'll want to know what improvements you feel are key, but more importantly understand your vision of the system landscape: put simply "what good looks like" for you.

From this initial discovery meeting we will make a formal proposal to you on how much time we will need to spend carrying out the audit and business process review. The output of this will be a report of recommendations needed to improve, enhance and enrich the system. This includes a cost proposal for our service days and any additional software that might be required.

Approach

Our approach is fully tried and tested and is based on how we approach new system implementations. To enhance your business's efficiency, you must first understand where you currently stand. Our Insight service begins with an evaluation of your current practices, which is done through an analysis of your software, technology, processes and people.

The goal of a business process review is to follow and document the current processes used within the business which handle daily, periodic, and ad-hoc activities. Our consultants, will where necessary "shadow" an identified process (taking notes, screenshots, and samples of the various forms and reports used in the process or produced by the process), including interviewing those involved and asking for explanations as to why something is done or not done.

It is therefore vital to conduct a multi-phased interview approach:

- Interview top to bottom: follow the processes vertically

- Interview side to side: follow processes that span boundaries

- Interview from outside to inside: follow all processes from start to finish, including customers and suppliers

By interviewing across boundaries and spans of control, a fuller and more detailed picture of the environment the company's processes are conducted within will begin to emerge.

Some of the key people-related areas that are covered include:

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Managing SunSystems effectively at the technical and database level to keep it running efficiently.

SYSTEMS ACCOUNTANT SKILLS

Managing SunSystems effectively at the application level and understanding its full capabilities.

SYSTEM SECURITY AND COMPLIANCE

Ensuring relevant staff are skilled and have the knowledge to deal with the audit and tax authorities.

PERSONALISING SUNSYSTEMS

Ensuring all users can personalise SunSystems for their daily use and collaborating with other users.

USER SKILLS

Ensuring users have the knowledge to use the system effectively in daily use and feel confident in doing so.

REPORTING AND INQUIRY SKILLS

Ensuring users have the knowledge to write and manage their own inquiries and reports.

SELF-SERVICE AND SUPPORT

Equipping users to be self-sufficient through the use of the Touchstone FMS and Infor customer portals

A packaged consultancy service from the experts dedicated to Infor SunSystems.

Critical success factors

We will agree upon the critical success factors (CSF) - the areas where an organisation must perform well in order to be successful and how we get you there. We will identify existing or potential problems within a particular area and potential solutions to those issues.

Some of the key functional areas that are covered include:

Current systems & IT infrastructure	Document management
Spend control	Financial accounting static data
Management & financial statutory reporting	Sales invoicing & debt management
Entity & organisational structures	Payments, receipts & cash management
Consolidation and allocations	Data warehousing & business intelligence
Multi-currency processing	Electronic payments & bank reconciliation
Budgeting & planning	Fixed assets & asset management
Interfaces with external systems	Workflow & business process management

The ultimate goal is to realise benefits from any improvements. During the review we will work with you to identify the potential benefits that can be realised as part of the project and when the benefit can be realised.

In conclusion

At Touchstone we have been implementing financial management and business management systems for over 30 years. During this time we have accumulated a wealth of skills, experience, tools and resources that allow us to implement new systems, efficiently, effectively and within agreed budgetary constraints but more importantly in delivering these systems we are underpinning your business strategy and vision of the future.

Using this experience and having dealt with hundreds of businesses, we believe we are also the right organisation to work with you to help optimise your use of SunSystems, streamline the business processes that surround it and maximise your return on investment. It is all too easy to "blame the system" for inefficiencies and gaps in business processes and to rip and replace it, before you do that we would urge all SunSystems users to stop and speak to us.

We are confident through our Insight Business Process Review Service we can make significant improvements to your implementation of SunSystems and other associated software and in so doing save you significant time, energy, money and enable growth For further information please contact us using the methods below.