

Mobile flow of information [Part 3]

STREAMLINING SUCCESSES TODAY ARE MORE AND MORE DEPENDENT ON HOW FAST, PRECISE AND EFFICIENT THE INFORMATION MANAGEMENT IS

+ The selection of an application for mobile process design is subject to the same criteria as the selection of a static ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) system. In addition to the definition of the function volume, the software architecture is of comparable significance as is upward compatibility and user friendliness. The technical integration into the existing IT infrastructure should also be checked for data integrity and homogeneity. The definition volume of a mobile solution should reflect all the processes as they are in the ERP system by undertaking to increase cost saving potential and/or information quality with the use of a mobile solution. A representative illustration of an industry-specific ERP vendor's product range for Enterprise Resource Planning is:

Master Data & Administration (M-Data-Administration)	Production (M-Production)
+ User Administration	+ Batch Processing
+ Station Administration	
+ Item Management	Sales
+ EAN Management	(M-Sales)
+ Address Management	+ Order entry
	+ Goods Issue
Procurement (M-Supply)	+ Returns Entry
+ Ordering	+ Cash-Till Entry
+ Goods Receiving	CRM
	(M-CRM)
Warehousing (M-Inventory)	+ Appointment Manager
+ Stock	+ E-mail Manager
+ Stocktaking	
+ Inventory movements	

As soon as a mobile solution is started, numerous requirements for successful implementation become directly apparent. The login process into a mobile system is a basic functionality in user administration as the 1:1 distribution of machine to employee is not feasible from a cost-related perspective and the unique login of a staff member is required for subsequent reports. Login therefore takes place with a user number and an additional password. Further, login takes place in a company-dependent manner if there are multiple companies being used within one system. Multi-language capabilities further challenge a mobile system. Preferably, the user number/user name should not be identical to the password and login data the user has in the ERP system. Not every user works with the entire program range of a system. Therefore, the user menu is designed in a user-specific fashion and only contains the programs that each specific user actually requires. Apart from the user-specific



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menu, the actual ERP system should also regard the user configuration. Settings for the end device (e.g. scanner drivers, IP addresses, etc) as well as user-specific settings are decisive when selecting a flexible and maintenance friendly application. In this case, the station parameters can integrate individual settings within the physical device. User settings can be used to configure the applications in a user-specific manner.

+ Master Data & Administration (M-Data Administration)
Location and time-independent loading or processing of master data creates optimization potential throughout the value-added processes. The EAN number can be administered directly at the shelf in the sales area. The sales representative can create a new address or transfer changes such as address or telephone number on site into the central system. Administrative activities concerning master data is reduced and the quality of the data is increased with time due to the numerous uses.

+ Procurement (M-Supply)
Prepared order suggestions from the central ERP system supports the operative procurement process. The procurement process is triggered by the entry of vendors as well as items in required quantity and for a price that has been agreed upon or provided by the system. Additional order data is entered in the header data of the order. At goods entry, a two-part scroll area will show the update control at shipping. The shipment can be directly processed, taking information into consideration such as, lot number, batch number and SSCC. In this process, price and quantity tolerances can be taken into consideration or partial shipments can be generated.

+ Inventory (M-Inventory)

The process of stocktaking entry usually involves a high degree of manual activity in most companies. Conversely, substituting existing processes with a mobile solution in this sub-process is often very promising. Counting lists can be allocated to individual users/user groups for processing on the basis of stocktaking list generated according to various criteria. Stocktaking is portrayed in a scroll area split in two. The expected inventory is automatically started in the background when processing an item. The item is counted and the quantity confirmed. User settings define whether the employee may close the stocktaking procedure independently or whether this should be done by a staff member with the appropriate user authorizations. In the latter case, the second employee is automatically informed of the any stock differences as soon as the first employee confirms any changes. The program Inventory Postings is used to manually move a certain quantity of a good from one bin location to another, e.g. when transferring a good from a storage room to the sales area.

+ Production (M-Production)

The program Batch Processing combines components for a recipe. The specific components are automatically removed from the stock accounts and admitted into the target inventory as finished product. Automatic weighing can also be regulated by the mobile device as well as shelf conveyors, silo controls, and weighing systems. Administrative activities are reduced to a minimum with the integrated actual time entry.

+ Sales (M-Sales)

In sales especially, detailed information in order entry and goods shipping entry is of immense significance for process control. Whether route data or sales reps, bill-to or ship-to addresses, there are usually no limits for the individuality of orders. The capture of detailed information on site remedies the associated problems in this respect. As the transfer of information is no longer done by means of paper or telephone, response times in order acceptance and picking as well as the quality of the data and customer satisfaction are considerably increased through logistical reliability. Integrated reusables management on site secures the address-specific balancing of reusables. Routes can also be administered directly in the system. An integrated cash book is required for sales drivers to safely administer cash entries.

+ CRM (M-CRM)

The location independence of internal and external business communication of a mobile solution optionally contributes to area-spanning cost reductions. Downloading and processing emails, direct access to the business database containing all vendors, customers, and item information as well as appointment manager are all aspects that increase the degree of mobility of staff contributing to the goal of a mobile workspace. +++

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