

Project Note

Process oriented software evaluation

New target architectures for IT environments can provide optimal assistance to workflows and can also be flexibly adapted to changes in the market. Zühlke draw up target architecture specifications after analysing a business's workflows.

Task

The Enterprise Resource Planning System (ERP) of a leading manufacturer of machines for paper processing in the field of high performance printing is no longer maintained by its supplier. Moreover, it only partially meets the company's requirements. In addition to the ERP system, there are also a number of isolated solutions and MS Excel and MS Access applications in use. On the basis of reviewed and optimised business processes, Zühlke is to define a new target architecture for the IT environment. This architecture should support workflows optimally and permit an organic adaptation to future market requirements. The replacement of the ERP system is to be assessed and planned as the first step in the implementation.

Implementation

The Zühlke Management Consultant identified relevant IT success factors during an initial assessment of the company's business strategy. Workshops were then held in which each key process was optimised by consulting with the relevant parties in order to determine the exact nature of the IT support required. Once the core requirements had been established, the project team were able to use these as a basis for the definition and co-ordination of the IT strategy and target architecture. As a result, it was then possible to decide on the scope of the system, which was to be realised in stages, and on the involvement of the subsidiaries. With support from Zühlke, the specialist departments created scripts describing the implementation of the key processes and the requirements in real life case studies. Four selected providers then received these scripts and subsequently presented the future users with a proposed realisation of the workflows using their



products. The relevant staff then assessed, which of the proposed systems was the most suitable. The project team refined this assessment in workshops, supplemented it with an evaluation of the proposals and the comparable investment and maintenance budgets and took a joint decision with the company's management with regard to the new ERP system and the favoured implementation partner.

Customer benefits

- Optimal fit between IT systems and business logic.
- Story boards (similar to use cases) are delineated for the evaluation and these guide staff to new processes and support the adaptation requirements.
- The story boards mean that the product demonstrations are comparable and promote a good awareness of the various products and partners.
- Proposals in between the extremes of "the system should do everything that it was previously able to do" and "the system should do everything automatically" increase the productivity of the system and prevent the need for unnecessary program adjustments.



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