

# Six Game Changers About Cloud ERP



## At a Glance

- This paper summarizes six game-changing aspects delivered by Plex Manufacturing Cloud ERP.
- Areas range from the benefits of true ERP integration, to ease of use and the importance of up-to-date functionality.
- In each case, the benefit is an improved and optimized manufacturing process to help the enterprise thrive in a challenging market.

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### Plex Cloud ERP Brings a New Approach to Manufacturing Software

It's a grim reality. Analysts have found that manufacturers relying on legacy, on-premise Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems are caught in a trap.

There's a revolution happening in manufacturing today, and Cloud ERP is its catalyst. Manufacturers are stepping onto global playing fields and winning against much bigger competitors. Cloud ERP brings greater accuracy, clarity, communication and competitiveness to any company, and manufacturers are able to grow stronger and more customer-centric at the same time.

Legacy ERP systems are the asbestos of enterprise software. All great CIOs today are containing them so they don't do any more damage than they already have. Cloud ERP is extending far beyond the boundaries of what legacy ERP was ever able to accomplish. And the result is a revolution in manufacturing. It's time to join the revolution and make your business a stronger global competitor.

The Plex Manufacturing Cloud is freeing manufacturers to focus on what matters most: their business, customer relationships, supply chains, service and quality.

"Plex changes the game by enabling real process improvements."

### Beyond Traditional ERP

Over the last decade, the innovative cloud delivery model has evolved to let manufacturers move beyond traditional enterprise software.

It's a game-changing approach that lets the enterprise avoid costly licenses and complex hardware and software infrastructures. Leading manufacturers use the Internet to access systems that are deployed and maintained off-premise, and enjoy ease of use as well as industry-leading security and connectivity.

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## Changing the Nature of the Game

The cloud ERP model is indeed a game changer, and Plex is recognized as a leading ERP solution — ranked higher than all of the other, more familiar names in the ERP systems space.

Plex changes the nature of the game in the following six key ways:



### 1) Full Integration

An ERP system is most powerful when it is fully integrated throughout the enterprise. Many organizations implement “best of breed” solutions only to find that the data hits a dead end or they must cobble together a custom interface to link systems.

Tightly weaving traditional ERP Manufacturing Execution Systems (MES), quality, supply chain, CRM, tooling, accounting and finance, business intelligence, inventory management, production management and more, the Plex Manufacturing Cloud is delivering value daily to hundreds of customers in 20 countries.

A fully integrated ERP system integrates all aspects of the operation, from supply chain inventories, to production planning, quality, parts traceability to customer orders and shipping. By centrally linking a variety of data sources, including engineering, EDI, HR, and more, the enterprise gains the real-time intelligence required to make timely and effective decisions.

### 2) Unparalleled Visibility into Manufacturing Operations

One can't improve what one can't see. If obsolete inventory blocks a doorway, there's an obvious problem. The key is to make waste “visible” long before that happens. Likewise, if the most up-to-date release requirements from the customer are not easily available, there's no way to meet shipping deadlines. An innovative ERP system provides that crucial real-time insight, making the outdated, overnight batch processing once common with legacy ERP solutions a thing of the past.

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Full visibility means tracking key events as they happen and then putting the right information into the hands of the right people at the right time — whether it's the manufacturing associates who track part numbers on a touch screen through production, or the accounting manager who views global account receivables in a custom dashboard.

### 3) Real Process Improvement

Implementing an ERP system is a high-value opportunity to drive down costs. Instead of simply implementing software to mimic existing processes, Plex Cloud ERP drives real process improvement, and in this way changes the nature of the game.

For example, the system easily shows a production scheduler that material, tooling or labor is not available to run a specific job. This lets the production staff person schedule a job to run in its place, reducing costly downtime. Likewise, if purchasing sees, in real time, that the customer issued a surprise order, they can rapidly adjust order quantities. This is the power Plex provides to the enterprise.

“Capturing and validating data at the point of origination makes for timely, accurate and, therefore, actionable information for all other users in the enterprise.”

The Plex operator control panel validates orders before they go into production by enforcing the setup, ensuring inventory availability, verifying that selected operators have received the correct training, and ensuring that all needed tooling is accessible. This solution also enables root cause analysis and corrective action, including a formalized process for issues notification and problem resolution reporting that extends back to the supplier base.

The Plex Manufacturing Cloud was born on the plant floor doing quality management tasks. The lessons learned over decades of serving customers' quality needs continue to help manufacturers worldwide today.

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#### 4) Ease of Use

What good is a software system that is difficult to navigate and use? Plex is a game changer in this regard as well, offering intuitively designed screens and functions available through a familiar web interface.

Most software products have a limited capability to customize screens, integrate local business terms, build specific data fields, or create unique reports. This often requires costly custom programming.

VisionPlex, a tool within Plex Cloud ERP, empowers the end user to manipulate how important business data (inventory, downtime, accounts payable, shop floor data, etc.) is displayed on screens and reports. The user simply drags and drops columns, data filters, task buttons, security, and other aspects of a screen.

#### 5) Always Up-to-Date

Version control is a nightmare with most legacy ERP systems. Legacy ERP systems are renowned for the costs and time required to keep them up to date so they can operate and contribute effectively. It is common to see manufacturers spending 10 times the purchase price of the software on maintenance alone. Cloud ERP changes the economics of enterprise software for the better, giving the manufacturer more control. It is estimated that fewer than one out of every three manufacturers are operating with the most up-to-date version of their on-premise systems!

Customer driven product development becomes part of the core software and is supported for the long term. The enhancement is also available to other users who decide if they wish to use it or not. This rapid, on-demand development allows continuous improvement of the software during implementations and over time. Other software companies not using the Cloud platform take years to improve and release new versions. With Plex Cloud ERP, this process can take as little time as a few hours or days.

#### 6) Going Beyond Quality

With a traditional on-premise ERP implementation, quality plans and programs are either managed using Excel or with a separate software package. Statistical

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Process Controls (SPC) charts are used for tracking production and quality performance over time.

With Plex Cloud ERP, quality planning documents are living documents that represent the reality of how to control and continually improve quality throughout the production process.

Plex Cloud ERP was designed specifically for manufacturers to increase process repeatability, reduce variation, increase production throughput, and reduce defects.

What's the game changer here? An automatic, paperless and real-time linkage between product and process characteristics, quality control plans, process instructions, checksheets, inspection data collection and SPC, and much more.

“Users benefit from a continuous, seamless, stream of solution improvements.”

## The Game Is On

For today's manufacturers, a flexible web-based solution such as Plex Cloud ERP is truly a game changer.

The Cloud solution gives access to application functionality as an integrated web service, with the ability to manage and monitor entire business operations — including the plant floor — from anywhere, at any time.

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### About Plex

The Plex Manufacturing Cloud is the first and only cloud ERP built to meet the tough requirements of today's process manufacturers. Hundreds of innovative companies, many of them food and beverage processors, rely on Plex to operate their manufacturing businesses and generate profit from every inch of the plant floor. From craft beers to kettle corn, confectioneries to spice blending, the Plex Manufacturing Cloud gives food and beverage manufacturers a competitive advantage with scalable, adaptable, responsive, and affordable cloud ERP from Plex.