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34,005 ▼ -407.40

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ERP must work harder to build competitive advantage for companies: Steve Murphy

 BY [SHELLEY SINGH](#), ET BUREAU | FEB 10, 2018, 03.59 PM IST

Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software market is quite mature and is also evolving to meet the needs of customers. In an interview [Steve Murphy](#), CEO, Epicor Software Corporation discusses how business software is changing, the opportunity that Epicor sees in India and more. Murphy took over as CEO of Epicor in October 2017. Edited excerpts:

What opportunity do you see in the India market?

Epicor's international growth strategy includes expanding our footprint in growth markets such as India, South Africa and Japan. India is the world's third largest economy and likely to achieve strong growth over the next decade. India is an important market for Epicor and the time is right to be here to maximize on the potential and ride this wave of economic growth.

Additionally India's digital economy is rapidly evolving with initiatives like Make in India and Digital India, and the implementation of modern technologies across manufacturing businesses offers a great market opportunity for Epicor.

Who are your customers in India and what kind of services do you provide to them?

Majority of our customers here are global businesses with operations in India, however, there are some local customers that are managed by channel partners.

Epicor is committed to a mutually successful and long-term business partnership with customers. We provide our customers technical and application support using advanced support tools and technology. With our global [technology](#) centers, including the one located in Bengaluru, we offer encompassing 24x7 service support.

How much of Epicor's business comes from India at present. How will it be in the next three to five years?

Epicor is a privately held company and does not report on individual region's business results.

There are quite a few large and small business software providers in India. What is Epicor's USP? Which is your preferred market segment?

Our products have industry specific functionality so customers find our solutions easy to implement. We continuously innovate and improve products, giving customers the ability to apply the latest technologies to their benefit. While we compete directly with the other leading global ERP vendors, our total cost of ownership is considerably less, thereby providing faster ROI to our customers.

For us, the target in India is the mid-market manufacturing segment. As mid-market companies grow and extend their reach into other markets around the world, they require increasingly sophisticated systems to support and run their business. With Epicor ERP, they can use enterprise-grade technology as a competitive weapon, managing costs, introducing efficiencies throughout the supply chain and manufacturing processes, and streamlining and automating business processes across the organization.

What will the new tech centre in Bengaluru cater to? What are your expansion plans in India?

In realisation of the technical strengths and the pool of talent available, Epicor set up an off-shore development facility in Bangalore in



One of the key opportunities for ERP to become far more responsive and useful to its customers is the development of Internet of Things (IoT).

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2015. The facility has been steadily growing handling research & development of several products. The center is enhancing not just [product](#) development but also professional services, customer support, IT, and marketing. The India Technology Centre (ITC) is a key enabler to our global growth plan. This facility today employs over 440 people and with the new expansion expects to grow to more than 550 employees by the end of year.

In addition, we recently announced a distribution partnership with Redington India, a nation-wide distributor with a large reseller network in the country, to reach customers faster with Epicor solutions. The partnership is part of the strategic plan to grow the local customer base for the global enterprise resource planning solution, Epicor ERP, in India.

ERP market is quite mature, but what impact are social, mobile, cloud, big data etc having on business software. How do you see ERP evolving over the next five to seven years?

The advent of modern technologies such as the Internet, mobile, wireless, and indeed the consumerisation of IT have all changed enterprises' expectations of what can be achieved. Focus has shifted from the functionality of software (what it does) to the strategic importance (what it can be used for).

ERP must work harder to build competitive advantage for companies, serving the user and providing information to the right people at the right time, to take action in the right way. With the right development, ERP can help companies become more responsive and collaborative, to add additional value around best practice, building on the knowledge of people and their experiences with business processes.

One of the key opportunities for ERP to become far more responsive and useful to its customers is the development of Internet of Things (IoT). In the near future every aspect of a manufacturing and engineering company's business is set to be revolutionised. Machines used in production are becoming increasingly connected, as are transportation and logistics networks, as well as sales channels.

As people, processes and businesses become more connected through smart devices, wearables and apps, the need to speed up data collection, interpretation and dissemination grows. Modern ERP solutions are well placed to solve this challenge if they can integrate with a company's overall IT strategy, and support business automation and the decision making process in order to help the company get fit for growth.

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