Oracle ERP Implementation Secret

Oracle Business Accelerators – The Secret Ingredient

Oracle Business Accelerators (OBA) are the secret ingredient to implementation success. Using OBAs aligns the software and your configuration to industry process best practices, keeps the implementation scope within the boundaries set to ensure an on-budget, on-time and quality implementation.

Dale Kaplan, Vice President, CAPSCIENT & Sagar Malvankar, Senior Director, CAPSCIENT

Traditional implementation approaches of Oracle’s enterprise-class ERP software solutions can be too expensive and complex, especially for growing companies. Customers that wish to reduce the implementation costs (time) and complexity (effort) without degrading on functional quality or implementation success leverage partner solutions that utilise Oracle developed tools to accelerate all aspects of the implementation life-cycle.

Oracle Business Accelerators (OBA) are powerful, cloud-based implementation tools developed and maintained by Oracle to deliver fully functional ERP software to customers in a fraction of the time a typical/traditional implementation would take. OBAs offer flexible configurations so that the unique requirements of a customer can be incorporated into the application.

Oracle has invested years of research and incorporated extensive experience gained from thousands of implementations developing OBAs into a powerful and flexible tool for any sized implementation. Small to medium sized businesses that have few customisation requirements are a perfect fit for applying the OBA methodology with little modification to scope and business processes being adopted.

Larger enterprise customers are often challenged with large amounts of customisations and integrations, localisations and business processes that may not fit the standard OBA process flows directly. However, even in such cases, using OBAs to drive the implementation process can realise benefits with respect to laying down base configurations quickly, alignment initially to best practice business processes and providing a platform from which to quickly grow and adjust to meet the larger enterprise’s needs.

As an example, the latest OBAs for JD Edwards provides a hosted model whereby implementers can utilise over 1200 pre-prepared industry focused questions and business flows, based on industry best practices, to configure the software based upon each customers unique business requirements. The model is automated and allows the implementer to pick and choose applications modules and business processes, add them to a shopping cart, and ultimately drive an optimal and packaged configuration, downloadable for deployment.

Within each of the main business process areas, Oracle has prepared business process flow diagrams based on industry best practices derived from thousands of prior implementations (see Figure 1). These can be used to kick start the scoping discussion with customers and help drive quick closure for the configuration inputs needed. As an example business process flows, videos and detailed documentation exist for Order to Cash, Procure to Pay, Requisition to Receipt, Record to Report, and other key business processes. OBAs have been developed by Oracle to cover all functional areas of the customer’s business including financial management, sales, purchasing, inventory, order management, and manufacturing operations.

In addition to the OBA toolset, Oracle has included in the web portal a robust implementation program. Only qualified OBA consultants are able to utilise the tools after in-depth training, passing a test and completing a hands-on implementer workshop where they are taken through the full-lifecycle of a live implementation using the OBAs. This rigorous level of compliance toward the OBA qualification and methodology for implementations, provide an assurance and removes risk from
the implementation for customers. Oracle also provides backup support and assistance as well as monitoring and tracking of each and every OBA implementation rigorously to ensure its success.

An Oracle Platinum level partner, CAPSCIENCIENT, a member of the Oracle Accelerate program and qualified OBA implementer, has recently completed three JD Edwards EnterpriseOne implementations using the OBA tools. Using OBAs considerably reduced the project complexity leading to less risk, and reduced the overall effort, duration and cost of these implementations. Certified OBA implementation consultants extended favorable responses to a post implementation survey (see Figure 2 below). It was noted that the new OBA skills and tools kept consultants challenged and focused on the modern methodology for implementations, kept them abreast of the technology and improved their knowledge of industry best practices and configurations for Oracle ERP solutions.

“We’re pleased to see that CAPSCIENCIENT has received qualified status and embraced a strong understanding of OBAs. Successfully adopting modern best practice has never been more important for our midsize customers. Placing OBAs at the core of CAPSCIENCIENT’s Oracle Accelerate solutions for implementations and upgrades drives additional value to Oracle’s JD Edwards EnterpriseOne clients” said Steve Cox, Oracle’s Vice President, Midsize Applications Business.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Typical Implementation Methodology</th>
<th>Estimated % Risk Reduction Over Traditional Implementation Methodology</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project Definition and Scoping</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Planning</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scope Creep</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementer Knowledge of Software / Resource</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time to Value</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Configuration Errors</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process Errors (Fit Gap Risk)</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Delays</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FIGURE 2: OBA IMPLEMENTATION RISK REDUCTION

OBAs deploy the exact same versions of the Oracle software that the largest enterprises use, out of the box, so that a smaller company has the ability to grow into the software and adopt all of the robust functions and modules when they are ready.

For customers looking to deploy in a hosted model (off-premise) to reduce their overall capital spend and move to an operating expense financial model, using OBAs helps to drive quicker and simpler implementations. By moving to a hosted model and utilising for the cloud based configuration tool, customers have the assurance that their specific requirements, captured during the OBA scope confirmation and best practice business process selections are accounted for in the configuration and they can focus on that area rather than concerning themselves with technical deployment aspects and infrastructure considerations.

Cloud-based offerings are popular in today’s marketplace and many trusted partners provide not only the implementation services using OBAs to expedite the implementations but also provide managed services to support the overall solution so that post-implementation support can be provided. Best in class business processes and guidelines designed to reduce the time, cost, and risk of implementing Oracle applications by using OBAs reduce the overall risk of moving to the cloud.

Experience confirms that many customers prefer implementation partners to commit to predictable deployment times and project costs, and OBAs enable implementers to offer fixed fee type implementation contracts, with clearly defined scope details (even down to the actual configured parameter level), and resource plans that designate exactly the skills and resources customers would need to commit at each phase of the implementation.

Customer benefits from using OBAs to implement include:

- **Reduction in the time to scope, plan and estimate projects**
  Over fifty percent reductions in the design, configure, and test phases of an implementation project. This estimate of reduced effort is relevant to companies that have wanted vanilla type implementations with little to no customisations, no significant changes to business processes and that are willing to follow the standard business process flows provided by the OBAs

- **Improvement in business processes and return on investment has increased.**
  Companies that have adopted the OBA best practice business process flows for their industry have benefited and less user issues are reported. This metric is difficult to quantify and has been assessed based on feedback from individual business analysts at customers that used Oracle ERP solutions post the
OBA implementation. Some of the increased satisfaction has come as a result of the new improved system compared to their legacy system; however, without the OBAs the business processes would not have been as smoothly implemented.

- **Reduces overall implementation time, effort and cost by as much as 40%.**
  Since OBAs are aligned with standard Oracle functionality, by implementing Oracle’s applications using OBAs and configuring to best in class business process flows, customers have less need to customise the system. (See Figure 3 for example of a best in class business process flow diagram that can be used to assist with configuration of Oracle applications)

- **Reduction in time to manually input data and perform manual setup configurations for unique data elements.**
  Typically, during implementations, customers are required to perform manual input of data and perform manual setup configurations for data element (in some cases many parameters) which is not only time-consuming but prone to human error. OBAs provide various flexible data upload capabilities using user-friendly “wizards” that facilitate easy upload into the new system. Examples here for a JD Edwards EnterpriseOne customer may be a long list of category codes that has to be transferred from the legacy system to the new JD Edwards EnterpriseOne system.

As with any implementation, there are risk areas that can result in delays, loss of focus, change orders and overruns. With OBAs the implementation flow helps circumvent some of these risks just by the nature of the best practice business processes, however, there are areas that should be given consideration and attention to reduce certain risk areas when using OBAs:

- **Have key data sets ready prior to the start of an implementation project.**
  Preliminary chart of accounts, address book extracts, report samples, and other configuration items should be extracted and ready for the implementation team.

- **Use qualified OBA implementers**
  OBAs require the implementer to follow a rigid process and using a qualified implementer is essential. Having prior experience with OBAs is important and reduces overall project risk. It is suggested that at minimum, one of the team members on the project should have had prior implementation experience using OBAs at a live customer to help guide the overall project.

- **Standardise on global configuration parameters**
  Organisations that have more than a single company must be prepared to enforce a global standard for configurations of parameters like the Chart of Accounts across companies when using OBAs. This common design requirement has to be carefully managed so that consensus is reached prior to deployment of the Chart of Account using OBAs.

The secret to any implementation success is optimising the variable elements inherent in an implementation that can cause projects to go off track. Those areas include project scoping, planning, timeline, resources and project risk. A qualified implementer skilled in using the OBA processes can dramatically reduce overall project risk for a customer and drive rapid time to value. The secret to success is in the details and utilising qualified implementation specialists for OBAs and Oracle’s OBA infrastructure and support team, make sure an implementation utilising OBAs is successful.

**FIGURE 3: OBA PRE-DEFINED PROCESS FLOWS – EXAMPLE IS OF PROCUER TO PAY**