Inside this issue

Editors Note

Welcome to our December 2019 edition of embraceTALK. Every year we say it: "where did the year go?" Looking back we realise that 2019 was a really busy year and a lot was accomplished. We look forward to sharing some of these achievements with you.

this edition we focus on and TALK about the Embrace Desktop User Interface and how it delivers an Engaging User Experience (UX).

Jack Welsh, the legendary former CEO of General Electric hit the nail on the head when he said that there are only 3 measurements that tell you everything you need to know about the performance of your organisation. He went on to list **employee engagement** as the first, followed by was listed first., followed by customer satisfaction, and cash flow.

We take great pleasure in presenting our case study on how **WABCO South Africa puts the brakes on inventory overages and shortages with Embrace Cloud ERP** and how moving to the cloud **"has changed their lives".**

We wish you all a wonderful festive season and every success for a productive and prosperous 2020.

Thank you for your continued support.

See you in 2020!

Jeanette

User Experience Takes Centre Stage

"There are only three measurements that tell you nearly everything you need to know about your organisation's overall performance: employee engagement, customer satisfaction, and cash flow." — Jack Welch, Former Chairman and CEO, General Electric.

The latest version of Embrace ERP focusses on facilitating and improving engagement – engagement with colleagues, customers and with the software itself.

Today, almost everyone is using technology. Smartphones, laptops, and tablet devices have made it easier than ever before to access services and content – anywhere and anytime. This new level of accessibility is reshaping the modern workplace. Your hyper-connected employees have grown accustomed to the speed, responsiveness, and usability of the apps they use in their day-to-day lives and are demanding a superior user experience. They want rich, relevant, intuitive and engaging experiences that imitate the way they interact with technology in their personal lives.

The new Embrace Desktop has been designed to meet these demands and help create the engaging working environments that resonate with your tech-savvy employees. Location, platform and device agnostic, Embrace delivers easy anywhere, anytime access to all the information they need.

Time is valuable and with businesses demanding increased productivity, the Embrace Desktop User Interface (UI) places a premium on speed, efficiency, information availability and intuition.

Ensuring the most adaptable, extensible user experience the new desktop embraces diversity, simplicity and personality.

Diversity

Leveraging latest technologies, the Embrace desktop has been written in JavaFX and delivers cross platform capability.

This allows users to run their operating system of choice, e.g. they can run on runs on Windows, Mac and Linux, with options for iPhone and Android. The new user interface is completely scalable and provides a seamless experience from desktop to mobile device.

Simplicity

Simplicity is key to user acceptance. Using modern design principles, Embrace delivers unmatched responsiveness and provides a personalised and role-based user experience across all lines of business, tasks and devices.

The user experience can be streamlined for transaction screens, including custom transactions, with minimal effort. Simpler screens enable users to navigate business processes quickly and easily.

User experience not only increases user satisfaction, it reduces the effort required for training and minimises errors.

Personality

A simple, enjoyable user experience is great; the ability to personalise and make it their own is even better! The on-demand culture that we live in is evidenced in ERP as well. Users want information presented the way they want to view it, with their own formatting, styles, colours, sorting, indicators, trending, etc. Providing a platform with this level of adaptable, extensible user experience (UX) is an important aspect of user adoption of the ERP UX.

The Embrace user interface allows users to add their own style and flair to their desktop and customise their UX. For example, they can adjust their display's colours, contrast, and fonts. They can also specify how many titles and groups display on their home screen, as well as which notifications appear as high priority.

Engaged employees are more productive, more innovative and a lot happier.

Business Benefits of Engaging User Experience (UX)

The Embrace ERP user-centred design concept focuses on the way employees work and offers a variety of business benefits:

● Enhanced productivity

Thanks to responsive design, you can now provide a consistent user experience on any device. This increases the productivity of your employees – whether they're in the office, at home, or on the go

● Reduced errors

Usability is key. With a well-designed user interface, you can save time and reduce the risk of human errors

● Higher user adoption

By providing an attractive user interface that is fun and easy to work with, your employees are much more willing to embrace new solutions and technologies

● Lower training costs

By leaving out all unnecessary features and keeping your UX design simple, you can significantly reduce training costs. You enable your employees to perform tasks themselves, without the requirements for programming skills

A Completely Reimagined Real Time User Experience (UX)

Embrace 15 delivers a completely reimagined real-time user experience.

Embrace Version 15 leverages cutting-edge technology and design to provide users with all the tools they need to become more agile, dynamic and provide superior customer service. Enhancements include:

✔ Design

Icons – multiple different and new icons bring colour and personality to the desktop.

Modifications Size – large mods buttons (e.g. update, quit, etc.), bring colour to busy programs, making them more visually appealing and user friendly.

Vertical Toolbars – which scale to different screen sizes and frees up vertical space in widescreen environments.

✔ Features

Embrace offers five out of the box features to improve your User Experience:

1) User preference desktop personalisation

Users can customise their Embrace Desktop according to their preference. Some of these features include:

· Users can **choose the columns of information to display,** ensuring the most important is always visible

· Column size and width can be set by the user and **override server settings**

· Session configurations can be saved and restored by users, **saving time**

· Each screen can be **positioned** and **sized** by the user to suit the user's screen and **optimise productivity**

· **Automate repetitive tasks** across related transactions running on Embrace and **boost business productivity**

· Font size **scales the application**, taking advantage of large screens, and making the desktop **easier to read**

· Tables show users **available actions**. They can be **copied to excel** with formatting, and they can be **sorted**

· New navigation controls help users **find where they are** and **organise windows**

2) User Assistance

This feature provides first-time users with a step-by-step guide on how to make the most of the Embrace desktop interface. It also provides ongoing help when users want to learn more about a specific term or tool.

3) Embrace Enterprise Search

Users can enter any reference, from a customer name to a few numbers or characters and instantly receive a list of business items that match their search criteria – either completely or partially.

4) Embrace Default Values

Users can pre-set values that they enter on a regular basis, such as company codes and General Ledger accounts. This allows them to quickly enter and search for data within Embrace modules and applications. This saves a lot of time and boosts productivity.

5) Alert Notifications

Users receive automatic notifications when they need to act. Instead of receiving email notifications that often end up getting lost in their inboxes, users will see all their alerts when they log into Embrace.

✔ System Security

Cutting edge encryption technology ensures only authorised users can access your ERP software and business data.

Secure - One **encrypted channel** between desktop and server.

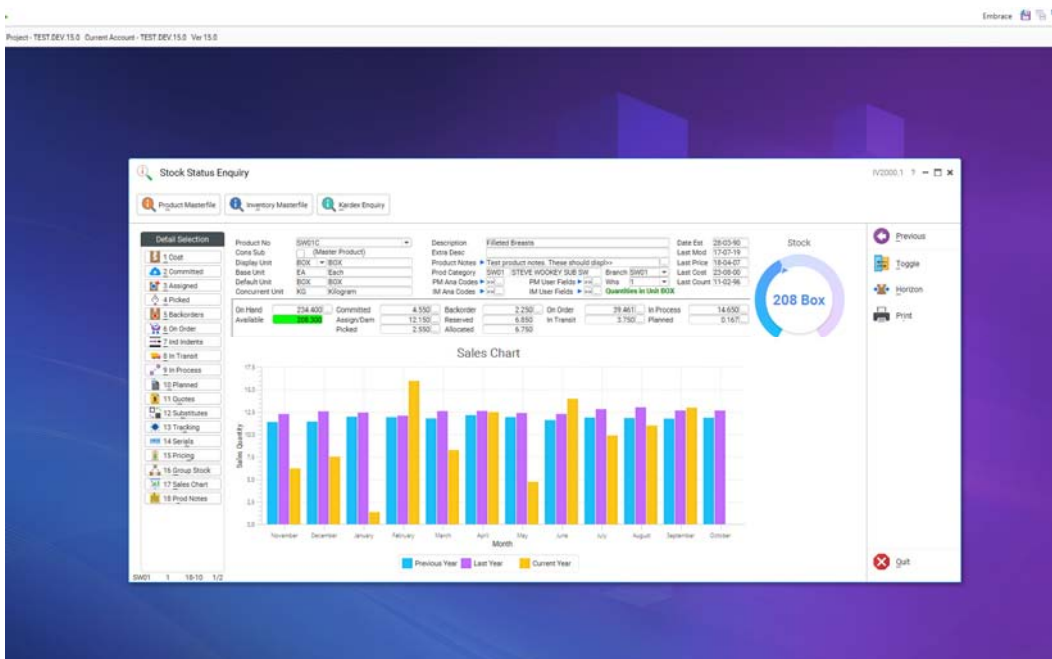Reliable - In-built Bridge **prevents data loss** in unstable networks

✔ Cloud Enabled

Simplified and engaging the Embrace user interface has been designed to access Embrace ERP whether deployed on-premise, in the cloud or both (hybrid). Embrace lets you run your business your way through a powerful combination of personalisation and accessibility.

✔ Integrated Analytics for engaging insights

Embedded visualisations and dashboards enable real-time responses, fact-based decisions, and **clearer visualisation of large volumes of data** – opening up entirely new opportunities for your business. Visual data can be expanded and analysed, empowering employee decision-making capability. Drill down into actionable insights and the detail behind each metric by individual role or department to act quickly and proactively for improved business performance.

Embrace 15 introduces a completely new user interface, simplified and intuitive - designed with the end user in mind

● Simplification

Embrace transactions can be complicated, and most users won't need all of the options that are available to them. The new desktop reduces the number of options on the screen so that users only see what is necessary to make quick and informed decisions

● Personalised and role-based user experience

Role-based information delivery ensures the right information, at the right time, for the right person

● Increased user satisfaction

The simple and enhanced Embrace ERP interface gives users a better experience. Since the system works the same way as the end user, employees are less likely to get frustrated and stop using the technology. Similarly, users won't need to call your help desk for support because they will know how to use the system and all the new tools available to them

● Business Optimisation

Achieve business optimisation as Embrace ERP transitions from a system of record to a system of engagement and insight through greater intuitiveness and ease of use – designed with the end user in mind

WABCO

WABCO puts the brakes on inventory overages and shortages with Embrace Cloud ERP

Embrace Delivers Quantifiable Benefits

Empowered employees with anywhere, anytime real-time access

Optimised inventory

Increased visibility into finished products, sub-assemblies and components time for material costing

Maximised competitive edge

The Company

WABCO South Africa distributes air brake components to all the major vehicle manufacturers and distributors of commercial automotive components in Southern Africa and is part of the global company, WABCO Vehicle Control Systems based in Germany.

The company has been trading in South Africa and the Southern African region for over 50 years and has branches in Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town, servicing both the OE Manufacturing and Aftermarket industry sectors.

WABCO SA is fully committed to offering the fleet-operator, trailer-builder and independent distributors the very best in technical support, information and training to ensure that their products provide the ultimate in safety, reliability and braking efficiency, with a low cost of ownership.

To achieve this they use the full suite of Embrace ERP modules. The association between WABCO Automotive South Africa and ACS-Embrace goes back to the early 1990's. **"Embrace is still today an integral part of the operations of the company and has ensured stability and consistent reliability of the daily functions of the business over the years,"** states Enoch Silcock, Area General Manager, WABCO South Africa.

He explains that the company's operation involves a wide range of operational functions from importing, warehousing, financial and counter parts sales to complete brake system assembly and production, all involving a host of small peculiarities to their specific business.

"Embrace has met all the challenges we have thrown at it over the years," states Silcock, adding that the strength of the Embrace ERP system has been its adaptability to customer requirements while maintaining simplicity of function for the user.

The Challenge

Minimise IT Infrastructure Costs

WABCO SA separated from their previous partner with whom they shared an on-premise system. The decision was taken that they would continue to use the comprehensive Embrace ERP business solution. They did not,

however, have the necessary IT infrastructure to implement and support it themselves. Additionally, their server was 10 years old, had reached end-of-life and would need to be replaced.

For these reasons WABCO SA considered the Embrace ERP cloud solution and looked to ACS-Embrace to ensure a smooth transition from on-premise to cloud hosted.

Optimise Process for Manufacturing and Sales

WABCO SA imports a wide range of components which are then locally assembled. The company makes-to-order and makes-for- stock and has over 10,000 part numbers on the system with 3,000 line numbers in stock at any one time. Forecasting and inventory control are vitally important to WABCO's ability to fill orders on a timely basis.

Cater for Different OEM and Aftermarket Requirements

OEM's demand specialised brake systems, even if just one or two components differ from the standard Bill of Material (BOM). The Embrace Manufacturing module would provide the flexibility required to meet this and all other complex assembly requirements. New systems can be created quickly utilising existing phantom sub-assemblies as building blocks already in Embrace.

Meet Global Head Office Operations and Reporting Requirements

With WABCO Germany buying out the 51% local share, compliance and reporting requirements became more complex. These requirements, including Sarbanes-Oxley (SOX) compliance, needed to be met.

The Solution

Earlier this year, WABCO Automotive SA deployed the full suite of Embrace ERP modules in a cloud-hosted environment. At the same time, they upgraded to the latest version of the Embrace solution and implemented the Manufacturing, Forecasting and Distribution Requirements Planning modules. Embrace system administration and support have been outsourced to ACS-Embrace.

"The best thing we did was move to the cloud! The connectivity is brilliant, it's fast, in fact, much faster than when we ran on premise. I can now work anywhere, anytime, even at midnight.

We can respond to issues as they arise and deliver improved customer service," adds Silcock.

Local and Available

Wabco SA had been using Embrace ERP for the past 30 years and knew it was a perfect fit for the business, that it offered a lot and would meet all new and future requirements. They also liked the fact that Embrace is a local product, with local support "just down the road".

"We can do anything we want to with Embrace. It works the way we do and it's so easy to customise," states Silcock.

Outsourced System Administration and Support

The ACS-Embrace Outsource Centre provides all support and system administration and includes running day-end, month-end, managing passwords and logging users on or off the system. **"The service and support is superb! All issues and queries are quickly resolved and then followed up with a call to ensure we are happy,"** states Silcock.

The Benefits

"Streamline and Automate Manufacturing

WABCO SA recently implemented Embrace Manufacturing with Forecasting and Distribution Requirements Planning. To accommodate the different OEM specialised brake and valve requirements, Embrace updates the Bill of Material (BOM), rolls up all prices and costs and evaluates the profitability of each customised order.

Each BOM has multiple levels as well as sub-assemblies. "Phantoms" have been created on the system for these sub-assemblies. They can be assembled, changed and adapted as needed and the components are not shown as being in stock. This has cut out a number of steps and saved a lot of time. "**Moving to Phantoms has streamlined our manufacturing process while still maintaining the multi-level structure of the BOM,"** explains Silcock.

Accurate Forecasting Ensures Cost-Effective Assembly Platforms

Embrace filters down to the component level of each item and recommends purchase orders based on sales orders and defined safety stock. Taking lead times and order urgency into account, Embrace suggests whether components be shipped via air or sea freight and calculates the costs accordingly.

With Embrace, WABCO SA has complete visibility over finished items, sub-assemblies and their components and are able to make reliable delivery promises to their customers. **"Embrace has enabled us to accelerate order turnaround by bringing greater efficiencies to order management, forecasting and the manufacturing process,"** states Silcock.

End-to-End Financial Management puts Finance in the Driving Seat

Embrace provides complete visibility into every corner of the business. Any anomalies or issues are quickly identified, enabling immediate action to be taken.

"The ability to drill down from the general ledger all the way through to source transactions is a huge benefit," states Bessie Mampa, Financial Manager.

She adds that Embrace Reporting is comprehensive, gives a true reflection of the business and helps her to effectively manage the department. **"I can get any report I want from the system and I trust the numbers,"** adds Mampa. The IT14SD VAT report has simplified and streamlined the company's VAT reporting and saved her a lot of time.

WABCO HO reporting deadlines are tight and to meet KPIs, reports need to be submitted within a day after month-end. Embrace enables them to meet these as well as the SOX audit compliance requirements.

Anytime, Anywhere Access

"Moving to the cloud has changed my life! Everything is so much easier and more accessible. I have anytime access. I don't need a VPN connection. All I need is internet access. My team and I can work on the move," exclaims Mampa. Before deploying Embrace in the cloud, she used to have to be at the office before 6am at month-end to start running the reports. Now she starts the report from home, when it suits her, arrives at work at her normal time, no stress and the reports are ready.

Increased Productivity and Efficiency

24/7/365 access to Embrace, along with the upgrade and additional functionality has enabled WABCO SA to become more agile, versatile and competitive. The overall user experience has improved and productivity has increased significantly.

Embrace has boosted efficiency in a number of ways. WABCO SA has aligned manufacturing with the way they function. The entire assembly process has been streamlined. The company has been able to fulfil orders quickly and accurately, while increasing inventory turnover and reducing supply chain costs.

By having accurate and increased visibility into their inventory, WABCO are able to better manage their strict quality control processes.

"Delivering superior customer service is important to us. Embrace ERP helps us to provide our customers with the goods they ordered, at the right place, as quickly as possible," concludes Silcock

Is Cloud ERP The Right Answer?

An Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system is important to running a successful growing business. While many companies are now moving to cloud-based ERP solutions, others might not be quite ready to move from an on-premise deployment.

Which method of accessing your ERP is best? The answer…it depends.

Cloud adoption, viewed as the gateway to modernisation, has reached a tipping point, with most ERP vendors now offering some kind of cloud deployment option. According to Gartner, by 2020, at least 35 percent of new product-centric ERP deployments in large enterprises will be software as a service (Saas). When it comes to deciding whether to implement an on-premise or cloud ERP solution, businesses must evaluate their needs, determine the total cost of ownership and decide which is best for them.

What is driving this increased cloud ERP adoption?

More and more businesses are adopting either a cloud or hybrid approach to ERP as they begin to understand the need for an infrastructure that enables them to deploy new and emerging technologies. This includes mobility, as well as collecting, aggregating, and analysing data.

ERP is quickly levelling the playing field, enabling smaller businesses to rapidly leapfrog older, more established companies. This is because it meets the needs of businesses that want the benefits of an ERP solution without the having to run and manage software applications or invest in servers and infrastructure. Another benefit is the ability to consume ERP on a monthly subscription basis. This gives businesses the opportunity to leverage OPEX as opposed to CAPEX.

Along with improvements in responsiveness, agility and costs, the cloud is helping businesses digitally transform and get fit for growth. As businesses shift away from traditional on-premise systems to cloud-based ERP they are leveraging new capabilities to improve their business and optimise processes.

What are the security implications of cloud ERP software?

Security, understandably, will always be a concern no matter how far technology progresses. Hosting your ERP solution in the cloud offers several security benefits that could outweigh on-premise options for your business.

Your ERP is automatically upgraded by your ERP vendor ensuring you are constantly and consistently safeguarded with the latest security patches. Embrace ERP supports a comprehensive, end-to-end security model. Security is built into every layer of the ERP environment – from physical network interface cards, to user passwords.

World-class global cloud infrastructure uses the latest in artificial intelligence and machine learning to detect and remediate vulnerabilities before they are exploited.

How do companies choose between cloud or on-premise ERP software?

Many companies investing in an ERP solution for the first time choose cloud deployment, to avoid the future transition. A growing trend among enterprises with on-premise ERP solutions is to start their cloud journey by adding specific cloud products (such as e-Commerce or analytics) to complement their core systems.

Whatever your strategy, a phased approach allows you to design your own path to the cloud, where you can move higher priority areas of your business first to gain rapid ROI, revenue growth, and data-driven justification to expand.

While ERP has always been associated with efficiency, today and going forward it's more about delivering intelligence, insights, and predictability to sustain competitive advantage well into the digital age.

Whether you are cloud now, cloud next, or cloud future, Embrace offers world-class cloud solutions. We empower you to choose the ERP deployment strategy that works best for your business. Your business is free to embrace innovation at your pace to achieve your growth goals and desired business outcomes.

Partner TALK - System1A

ACS-Embrace and System1A have partnered to deliver an account interactions management system that works easily with your existing Embrace ERP business solution.

System1A is a third-party debtors management system designed to work with any existing ERP system. It is not a replacement for the ERP debtor's system, but an enhancement to it, providing extended management facilities for both the debtors' management team and the end customer.

System 1A can also be used to distribute invoice and statement documents as well as make proof of delivery (POD) scanned documents available on-line on a web portal or via email hyperlinks.

The system is totally cloud based and is hosted on Amazon Web Services (AWS).

Extracts of Embrace debtors and sales information can now be uploaded to System1A from Embrace version 13.1 upwards. The extract process is contained in standard Embrace and resides in the Embrace Debtors module.

It consolidates financial data from the ERP and imaging systems with real-time customer and supplier related interactive feedback.

The system also provides analytical reports in order to make more informed financial decisions. The solution incorporates effective action features to productively engage with customers and suppliers on billing information, account query resolution and payment allocations.

In a nutshell, System1A synthesises salient business-to-business information from accounting, electronic and physical systems into a centralized cloud-based platform, integrated with account management tools developed to efficiently interact with company account management stakeholders, customers and suppliers.

Features include

- Sending of all required documentation to facilitate payments
- Live age analysis with customer feedback notes
- Remittance requests
- Real time client query responses
- Automated cash forecasts, inflows and outflows
- Predictive analysis
- Automated linking of POD'S to invoices
- Detailed account status reporting and monitoring

Impress your customers by having all their account related information at their fingertips and all their queries resolved faster so that they can pay you quicker.

Contact us for more information and/or a demo.

FAQ

Q: How seamlessly does System1A integrate to Embrace?

A: System1A is a seamless integration into Embrace. There is a System1A sub-menu included in their own sub-menu and all of the System1A data extraction and uploading processes are seamlessly incorporated into the Debtors system in Embrace. Patches are available for Embrace 13 and Embrace 14 to provide for the rolling out of System1A on previous versions of Embrace.

Q: Can the System1A solution be deployed as a document management system?

A: In addition to the Debtors and Cashflow management functions, System1A can be deployed as a document management system for the sending of invoices, POD's and statements electronically, with the ability to track client interactions with the Embrace documents you have despatched.

Q: Will we still need to use Embrace Output Management if we implement the solution from System1A?

A: System1A is a complimentary solution to Embrace's Output Management and not a replacement. Output Management provides for the electronic distribution of far more than Debtors related information and is used to archive reports and any other output from Embrace.

Last Word

"An organisation's ability to learn, and translate that learning into action rapidly, is the ultimate competitive advantage."

Jack Welsh
Former CEO of General Electric

2019 Highlights *TALK*

Firstly, and most importantly, we take great pleasure in welcoming **Wolff Logistics, ELCA Engineering and Powertrain Truck Spares** to our Embrace ERP family. We wish them every success with their implementation and continued use of Embrace and look forward to a long and rewarding win-win partnership.

WABCO SA, who has been an Embrace client for 25 years moved from their on-premise to our Embrace Cloud solution and outsourced all support to our Outsource Centre. It was a smooth transition and the benefits were realised almost immediately. **"The best thing we did was move to the cloud!"** - Enoch Silcock, Area General Manager, WABCO South Africa.

In October, we exhibited at the **Finance Indaba**, which was held at the Sandton Convention Centre. It was an exciting 2 days where we were exposed to the latest trends and innovations. We also had the opportunity to catch up with existing clients and partners and meet future clients. Visitors to our stand were blown away by Embrace ERP, not only because of the dazzling desktop interface and UX, but also because of its comprehensive functionality, scalability and ability to meet any business challenge thrown at it.

Our new **Embrace web site** has been launched: https://embrace.co.za with an entirely new look and feel. We think it's really WOW! Take a look and let us know what you think. Also, don't forget to follow us on our social media channels.