sage

Consolidate your office systems *and eliminate "app overload"*

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Introduction: Tackling app overload

How many business applications do you use on a daily basis? It's probably many more than you'd like.

It's a common challenge for businesses going through growth or change. New applications are brought on board to deal with new business challenges. The proliferation of accessible cloud-based apps means that on top of agreed business applications, employees are also using other preferred apps to manage tasks.

The result? Too many disconnected systems, processes and data. This can create major inefficiencies and an unnecessary gap between the front office and back office.

App overload interferes with collaboration, business visibility, and timely responses to business demands—significantly impacting your ability to compete and grow profitably.

This guide looks at this phenomenon and offers a solution: a "one-office alignment" that consolidates apps and streamlines disparate software systems.

How app overload occurs

You probably suffer from app overload if you're deploying a multitude of apps without a centralized technology strategy—with different teams using differing data to measure key performance indicators (KPIs). It's common among growing businesses.

1. As your company grows, teams grow—and these teams often consist of new people with different technology backgrounds and preferences.

2. Each team continues to select the necessary tools to perform its unique business functions—likely without considering the implications to the rest of the organization.

3. These tools may be on different technology platforms and offered by a multitude of vendors, each generating its own set of data with its own administrative access.

4. Department leaders' awareness of the tools used by other teams—and the speed with which they're adopted—continues to decrease.

If this issue sounds familiar, then you're unintentionally allowing the divisions among your teams to widen while hampering your ability to manage your business efficiently.

3 symptoms, 2 causes, 1 cure

With all the symptoms and causes of app overload, there's a single cure you should be considering.

The symptoms

1. Operational complexity creating a lack of inter-departmental collaboration and preventing a comprehensive and collective view of company performance.

2. Low visibility across—and poor insight into—the business.

3. Slow response times to real-time business demands, such as collecting accounts receivables or managing company cash flow.

The causes

1. Rapid business growth. A focus on establishing revenue streams can leave little time to concentrate on the systems and tools used to facilitate company operations.

2. Out-of-date systems and processes. Hours spent exporting and then rebuilding data detracts time spent focusing on innovation, growth, and profitability.

One cure

Consolidate and connect your customer, accounting, payroll, and financial data on one cloud environment.

Get to the promised land

You already feel the need to respond to market demands faster than ever—and that means having seamless, integrated, accessible information wherever you are, whenever you need it.

Below are six elements that every business needs:

1. A single view of the business that provides access to key performance data in one place—with no data syncing or manual work.

2. Comprehensive view of the customer, from sales to delivery including quotes, expenses, accounts receivables, and profitability.

3. The ability to segment and track financial performance from multiple perspectives such as territory, team, project, customer, etc.

4. Access to company performance data from any device in any location.

5. Customized reports that track KPIs and define workflows.

6. Seamless business operations regardless of country, local legislation, workforce location, or language.

Now, imagine if you didn't have to manually sync multiple sources of information and you could combine all of those elements into one resource that ties directly into accounts payable, finance, and payroll…

Set yourself up to grow more profitably

And imagine how much easier it would be to achieve deeper business insights more quickly—enabling smarter, faster business decisions.

If you want to

- Unify your business data sources.

- Dismantle company silos and eliminate app overload.

- Scale easily as you grow.

- Eliminate low-value tasks.

- Get real-time information to analyze, manage, and run your business the way you want.

Then you need to shift to an integrated, cloud-based accounting solution that

- Consolidates and unifies your business data sources into a single, real-time source of information.

- Replaces disconnected resources with an integrated solution that encourages collaboration among department leaders.

- Automates low-value, repetitive tasks that take hours to complete.

- Makes running your business fit naturally into your everyday lifestyle by completing tasks on any device no matter where in the world your business takes you.

- Synchronizes your front office with your back office so that both entities are aligned with two goals in mind: growth and profit.

Tips to successfully consolidate apps

Transforming your IT infrastructure into just one cloud connected application for managing your financial and customer data will reap huge benefits. But you will need to overcome some hurdles to get there.

Here are our top tips to make the transition as easy as possible:

1. Involve the right people in the decision process

The apps involved were probably chosen to solve particular business challenges and may work well for the needs of the individuals who selected them. It's key to involve these people in a new solution review to ensure they're comfortable with the change.

2. Map out a consolidation plan

What are the timelines? Who's running the project and who are the key stakeholders? What budget is required? Like many projects, the details matter. Having a plan for consolidating applications is vital to achieving the project on time and on budget.

3. Communication is key

For a consolidation project to be successful, it's important to get buy-in from the application's business users. Give fair warning to the entire workforce about the changes to come, and communicate how these changes will benefit the business. Keep people updated on the progress.

4. Launch in a phased approach

A phased approach has many benefits, including the opportunity to get the system up to speed, tested, and then make any improvements before bringing all processes into the one application. This will help to minimize risk and disruption to day-to-day work.

5. Provide the right training

Don't stop talking to users when you launch. Once the new system is in place, the right training can get people up and running more quickly and able to use the new application to its full potential.

How Sage can help

We understand the challenge of maintaining systems and processes as your business grows, and this is why our accounting solutions help solve the growing problem of app overload.

Bring together data from all of your essential apps into a single, highly reliable view of your business, with interactive, real-time reports that make it easy to analyze and extract the data you need to make intelligent business decisions.

Sage offers solutions for all business sizes. This means as your business changes or grows, we are here to support you with the technology you need.

"We have come such a long way in one year with the information we can now access. We've been able to add enormous value to front-line management."

Scott Acton, VP Finance & CFO, Community Nursing Services (Salt Lake City, UT)

"Looking at my revenue in Salesforce and actually have it equal to the penny what it was in Sage Live—that is really powerful. Our consultants, the management team, me—we're all seeing exactly the same information."

Donal De Paor, CEO, Veltig Consulting, Sage Live and Salesforce customer