

Why ERP–WMS integrations fail – the master's thesis

Upcoming episode

Two systems that have to talk to each other, and a project that often does not go to plan. This is my master's thesis from 2025 – what 22 practitioners and four consultants report as the causes of ERP–WMS integration failure, which measures they think work, and why the biggest number is not a technical one.

MAIN TOPICS

- What ERP and WMS are, and why they have to talk to each other
- How the study was carried out
- The technical reasons integrations fail
- The biggest number is not a technical one
- Delays – almost every project
- What actually helps
- Scope creep
- A contradiction in the numbers
- What the study cannot say

QUESTIONS THIS EPISODE ANSWERS

- What is the difference between an ERP system and a WMS?
- Why do integrations between ERP and WMS fail?
- What is the most common technical cause?
- What is the most commonly reported cause overall?
- How often do these projects run late?
- Which measures do practitioners themselves rate highest?
- What is scope creep?
- What is master data, and why does it derail projects?

KEY POINTS

- The most frequently reported cause of integration failure is not technical. Poorly defined business processes comes top at 76.2 per cent.
- On the technical side data synchronisation leads at 71.4 per cent, followed by incompatible APIs at 66.7 per cent.
- A lack of testing before go-live was reported by 66.7 per cent. The fault is then found in production.
- Nine out of ten respondents reported delays in at least one project in ten.
- The most recommended measure was involving end users early – 77.3 per cent.
- Training has to be a continuous process, not a box ticked before go-live.
- Several projects ran without a defined integration strategy. Testing, training and change

management were then handled as they came up.

- Scope creep was described as common, and as a direct cause of delay.
- The study has 22 questionnaire responses and four interviews. It shows tendencies, not figures that can be generalised.

SOURCES AND REFERENCES

- Jan Sindre Heltne – «Which technical and process related factors contribute to failures in ERP-WMS integrations, and what strategies can be used to mitigate them?». Master's thesis LOG950, MSc in Logistics, Molde University College, 20 May 2025. Supervisor Terje Andersen.

AI is used as a tool in producing the text, and everything is read through before it is published. Errors can still occur.