

# PrintVis ERP Buyer's Guide



## How to Choose the Right ERP + MIS for Your Print Business

**A Practical Decision Guide for Commercial, Packaging, Label,  
and Specialty Printers**



ERP + MIS Experts for the Printing Industry

Clients First Business Solutions | PrintVis ERP Buyer's Guide | 866-677-6290

## HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide is designed for print leaders who are evaluating ERP and MIS solutions, or questioning whether their current systems are limiting visibility, profitability, or growth.

You can read the guide start-to-finish or focus on the sections most relevant to your role.

**Executives and owners** should focus on margin control, scalability, and risk.

**Operations leaders** should focus on estimating, production visibility, and scheduling.

**Finance leaders** should focus on job-level profitability and reporting.

## WHY PRINT ERP DECISIONS ARE DIFFERENT

Choosing ERP software is a major decision for any business. For print organizations, the stakes are higher.

Printing combines complex estimating, variable production workflows, tight margins, and high material and labor costs.

***Generic ERP systems are not designed for this level of operational complexity.***

As a result, many printers struggle with limited visibility, inaccurate costing, and margin erosion, even after implementing new systems.

This guide is designed to help print leaders understand what truly matters when evaluating print ERP and MIS solutions so they can make a confident, informed decision.

## 1. What Is Print ERP and MIS?

### ***ERP Explained in Simple Terms***

ERP, or Enterprise Resource Planning software, manages the financial and operational backbone of a business. It typically includes accounting, financial reporting, purchasing, inventory, order management, and high-level operational reporting.

ERP systems are excellent at managing transactions and financial control, but they do not inherently understand print production.

### ***MIS Explained for the Printing Industry***

MIS, or Management Information System, is the system that manages how print jobs are estimated, produced, tracked, and measured for profitability.

A print MIS focuses on job-level detail, production workflows, and the comparison of estimated versus actual costs throughout the job lifecycle.

### ***Why Printers Need ERP and MIS Together***

Printers who rely on only one system often struggle.

An MIS without ERP lacks strong financial control and scalability. An ERP without MIS lacks print-specific intelligence.

***The most successful print organizations use an integrated ERP and MIS platform that aligns estimating, production, inventory, and financials in one system.***

## 2. Common Problems Printers Face

Many printers begin their ERP search after encountering recurring issues such as:

- Estimating that relies on spreadsheets or tribal knowledge

- Quotes that take too long to produce
- Actual costs that are not compared to estimates until jobs are complete
- Inaccurate or excessive inventory levels
- Profitability that varies widely with no clear explanation
- Financial reports that arrive weeks after production decisions are made.

***These issues rarely appear all at once. Instead, they quietly erode margin over time.***

### **3. What to Look for in a Print ERP and MIS Solution**

When evaluating solutions, it is important to focus on capabilities that protect margin, not just feature lists.

- ***Accurate Estimating and Quoting***

A strong print ERP solution supports complex print scenarios, accounts for setup time, waste, finishing, and run speeds, and applies consistent pricing rules.

***Accurate estimating is the foundation of profitable print operations.***

- ***Real-Time Job Visibility***

Your system should allow you to track jobs while they are in production, compare estimated versus actual costs in real time, and identify overruns early.

***If issues are discovered only after a job is complete, margin has already been lost.***

- ***Production Planning and Scheduling***

Effective print ERP solutions support press and finishing workflows, capacity planning, and bottleneck identification.

***This improves on-time delivery and reduces day-to-day firefighting.***

- **Inventory and Purchasing Control**

Look for accurate tracking of substrates and consumables, improved purchasing visibility, and reduced waste and rush orders.

***Inventory discipline has a direct impact on cash flow and profitability.***

- **Job-Level Profitability Reporting**

Your system should clearly show which jobs are profitable, where margin is earned or lost, and trends across customers, products, and processes.

***This insight supports better pricing, operational, and strategic decisions.***

## **4. Cloud vs On-Premise for Print ERP**

Modern print ERP systems are increasingly cloud-based.

Cloud ERP platforms typically offer lower infrastructure costs, easier scalability, improved security and reliability, and automatic updates.

***For most growing print businesses, Cloud ERP provides greater flexibility and lower long-term risk compared to on-premise systems.***

## **5. Why ERP Implementations Succeed or Fail**

ERP success depends as much on implementation as it does on software. Even strong platforms fail when print workflows are not fully understood, processes are not standardized before configuration, training is rushed or incomplete, or support ends at go-live.

Successful print ERP projects share common characteristics. They involve industry-specific expertise, phased and realistic implementation plans, clear

ownership and change management, and ongoing optimization after launch.

***Choosing the right implementation partner is as important as choosing the right platform.***

## **6. Questions to Ask ERP Vendors**

Before selecting a solution, print organizations should ask vendors questions such as:

- How the system handles complex print estimating
- Whether estimated versus actual costs can be seen during production
- How specific print workflows are supported
- What visibility leadership will have into margins and performance
- How long implementation typically takes
- What ongoing support is included after go-live

***The answers to these questions quickly reveal which vendors truly understand the printing industry.***

## **7. Signs You Are Ready for Print ERP**

You may be ready to invest in print ERP if growth is stressing your current systems, margins feel unpredictable, decisions rely on spreadsheets or individual experience instead of data, or you want consistent, repeatable processes.

***ERP is not about adding complexity. It is about creating clarity.***

## **MAKING A CONFIDENT ERP DECISION**

Choosing the right print ERP and MIS system is about more than features or price. It is about gaining visibility, protecting margin, and building a foundation for sustainable growth.

**The right solution helps print organizations understand where profit is made or lost on every job, make decisions based on real-time data, and scale operations without increasing risk.**

With the right platform and the right implementation partner, printers gain clarity, control, and confidence.

## **Ready to Learn More?**

[Request a PrintVis Demo](#) **to see how PrintVis helps printers gain visibility and protect margin.**



*ERP and MIS Solutions for the Printing Industry*

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