

Executive Summary

The Core Application Strategy for the Enterprise (CASE) project was undertaken in June, 2006 to compare the current UT Austin Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system with major off-the-shelf ERP software systems. The UT Austin ERP includes student, finance, budget, payroll, purchasing, human resource services, development and facilities systems. The CASE project involved 370 people¹, 49 work groups, 7,638 software requirements², three site visits at other institutions using vendor ERP systems, twenty three phone interviews of higher education institutions, and 832 survey respondents.³

The full report analyzes the comparative differences between the UT Austin ERP and vendor ERP solutions in seven aspects:

- Ongoing Support
- Infrastructure
- Controls
- Application Security
- Effect on the University Community
- Reporting and Shadow/Supplemental Systems
- Cost

Ultimately, the manner in which a vendor ERP solution functions is the result of a series of very complex and connected decisions made by institutional management and elements of the product

From the extensive data gathered both internally and externally, the CASE steering committee reached the following broad conclusions:

- Interviews and site visits indicate that end user satisfaction with the UT Austin ERP solution is generally good.⁴
- The UT Austin ERP offers better flexibility and allows for a more rapid and cost effective response to mission specific initiatives, leading to a competitive advantage.⁵

¹ See Appendix R and T for sample feedback from the UT Austin IT community and other UT campus users.

² See Appendix X for a list of all 7,638 detailed features, providing responses to each by UT Austin and up to three vendors per feature.

³ See Appendices J and K for survey results from users at UT Austin and other UT Austin campuses.

⁴ See the “Effect on the University Community” section of this report as well as Appendices J and K for detailed user satisfaction discussion and data.

⁵ See the “Ongoing Support”, “Controls”, and “Application Authorization” sections of this report for detailed discussions of the flexibility and cost effective response comparison.

- The features available in the UT Austin ERP permit cross-functional integration and real time processing.⁶
- The UT Austin ERP offers end users more comprehensive self service than what is offered by comparable vendor ERP systems.⁷
- End user direct access to the data is greater in the vendor ERP solutions than what is currently offered by the UT Austin ERP.⁸
- Consistent with its foundational principles, the UT Austin ERP uses decentralized transaction processing while higher education institutions using vendor ERP systems have centralized processing.⁹
- Data and systems in the UT Austin ERP offer greater flexibility to comply with legal mandates than vendor ERP solutions.¹⁰
- Data and systems in the UT Austin ERP offer better control and stronger compliance with state legislation and university compliance policies than vendor ERP solutions.¹¹
- The hardware and software environment required by a vendor ERP solution is more complex and less flexible in dealing with peak demand processing in a cost effective way.¹²
- The UT Austin ERP costs significantly less than vendor ERP products.¹³

⁶ See the “Infrastructure” section of this report for a detailed discussion of the comparison of integration and real time processing.

⁷ See the forty eight individual business area comparisons and five major area comparisons (finance, student, hr/payroll, systems requirements and advancement) for details supporting this conclusion.

⁸ See the “Infrastructure” and “Reporting and Shadow/Supplemental Systems” sections of this report for a detailed discussions of data access.

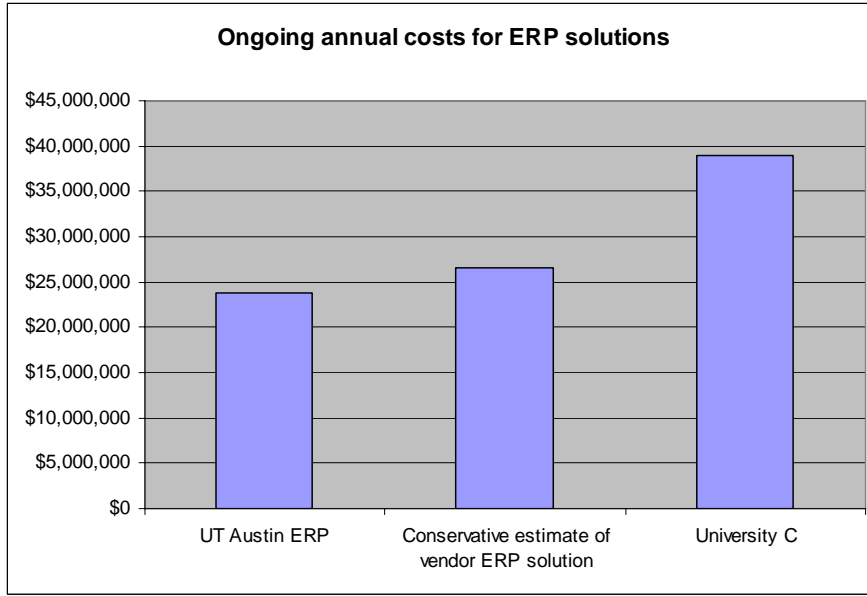
⁹ See the “UT Austin philosophy and principles governing electronic systems” for a list of the foundational principles.

¹⁰ See the “Controls” section of this report for a detailed discussion of controls and compliance.

¹¹ See the “Controls” section of this report for a detailed discussion of controls and compliance.

¹² See the “Infrastructure” section of this report for a detailed discussion of hardware and software comparison data.

¹³ See the “Cost” section of this report for a detailed discussion of cost comparisons.



- The vendor ERP solutions do not demonstrate a strong compliance with Federal 508 accessibility standards whereas the UT Austin ERP does.¹⁴
- Consistency of the user interface in the vendor ERP solutions (offering all web interfaces for end users) is better than in the UT Austin ERP (offering a mix of web and 3270 interfaces for end users).¹⁵

The full report details these conclusions, documents the findings on which they are based and describes the information gathering process that was followed in an effort to ensure their objectivity and accuracy.

This information contained in this report will be used to develop a five to ten year strategy to maximize the effectiveness of UT Austin administrative systems in support of the university’s mission.

¹⁴ See the “Systems” section of this report and the vendor responses in Appendix X item numbers 353912, 353914, 353923, 353924, 353927 for more detail relating to Accessibility.

¹⁵ See the “Effect on the University Community” section of this report for a detailed discussion of user interface issues.

