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# Small Projects Can Mean Big Savings

 MARCH 13, 2014  [ANNIK STAHL](#)

It's been said that if women actually recalled, in great detail, the pain and discomfort they went through birthing a baby, every child would be an only child.

I liken these birthing/adoption adventures to moving: If you remembered how absolutely painful and traumatic it was, you'd live in the same house your whole adult life. But moving — and remodeling — are things that almost every American adult must undertake at least once in his or her life. It can be disruptive, and it can take a long time to complete.

## Don't just stand there

Let's talk remodeling. It's definitely a stressful and sometimes unsettling project to undertake, and you may even be forced

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while. What could you be doing to perhaps hurry the process and not sit idly by? A lot, as it turns out. Which brings me to my point: Just because you have a mammoth project going on doesn't mean you can't carve resources for a smaller, less intrusive one that will add value in the long run.

## The situation:

You've hired a vi\$ionary architect to redo your 1960s ranch-style (read: rectangle) home. She's planning to add a big addition to the front of the house that will serve as the main living area. No one will be able to come in or go out for a few months. The back deck was rotted and so it's been torn down. If you wanted to go through the back door, you'd have to climb up four feet onto the tiny back porch and creep in.

This gives you an idea. Why not get your buddy, your pal, your next-door neighbor, [Bob Vila](#) to do it? He told you he'd only charge you for supplies and that he wouldn't really need any other resources.



This would solve two issues: 1) You could get into your house during the remodel; and 2) The money it would save you from not having to ask the contractor to do it would be substantial.

Compared to the massive bills from the architect, the cost of building and design supplies, and the fees the contractor charges for his time and his laborers, having a master craftsman build your deck for very little money is a great way to add value to your house and save yourself from having to do it after the remodel is complete (if it ever is).

You're going to love that deck.

## Transferring that idea to your ERP overhaul

Thomas Wailgum, writing for [CIO Magazine](#), compared consolidating an ERP with having to cut off your own arm to save your life. You know, like in the movie, 127 Hours, in which our hapless and hedonistic hero goes hiking by himself and becomes trapped by a boulder after falling into a slot canyon and has to break — and then sever — his own arm with his multi-tool in order to escape. Sounds delightful, right? Eh, not so much. (But hey, his experience was the [subject of a Hollywood film](#) so it's not all bad...)

As Wailgum gamely explains, many companies find themselves in an analogous position: They're trapped and burdened by the weight of too many applications attempting to



do too many things. Or, you've got many systems trying to do the same thing. For example, if your company has grown through acquisition, you might have ended up with half a dozen incompatible accounting systems. And so while some of these applications are useful, others are simply resource hogs, and, well, they may not be doing anything at all and no one can remember what they're there for... In other words: application bloat.

And so these companies are willing to cut off their arms (metaphorically) in order to prevent a deteriorating system. New ERP, here we come.

## No time like the present

When you're considering, or even on the threshold of, embarking on an ERP consolidation or new install, you're already mired in product planning, implementation, and roll out. It seems the last thing you want to do is think about how the receivables and cash application process is going to work.

But this is *exactly* the time to think about it because how you transition your cash application and the processes you have in place while the roll out is happening will set the stage for how future cost savings will — or will not — ensue. Normally

you'd need to update your cash app process after each step in the process. With Open Scan, your cash application process is stable. We simply update the export file after each change to direct results to the appropriate system.

A cash application system worth its salt is not a wrench thrown into your ERP project. If it's a simple file sharing process, it'll slide onto your ERP project (much like your deck will do) and you'll start seeing a return on your investment (ROI) almost immediately.

So do your research before embarking upon that painful ERP install and make sure you won't waste money implementing other resource-heavy financial modules and still not get the hit rates you were hoping for. Small projects really *can* make a big difference.

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*"To improve is to change; to be perfect is to change often."* — Winston Churchill