CASE STUDY:

AMAROK Uses IDC TechMatch to Make More Informed and Efficient Selection of ERP System

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BUSINESS VALUE HIGHLIGHTS

Company
AMAROK

Location
Columbia, South Carolina

Challenge
Establish a more dynamic, efficient, and neutral and less time-consuming process for assessing and selecting the technological solutions that the business requires.

Solution
IDC TechMatch

Financial and Quantitative Benefits

- **387%** return on investment (ROI) for ERP evaluation process

- **55%** fewer ERP vendor evaluations required

- **67%** faster to prepare and present ERP selection recommendation to leadership

- **64%** lower cost than comparable third-party consultant support

- Potential to be **>80%** faster for the entire assessment, review, and selection process than traditional third party–supported processes

Overview

AMAROK, headquartered in Columbia, South Carolina, is a leading provider of integrated perimeter security solutions for commercial and industrial properties. Like most companies, enterprise technologies play an increasingly important role in AMAROK's business success. This requires making proactive and well-substantiated enterprise technology–buying decisions, which can be a resource-intensive and costly process. This study examines how AMAROK used IDC TechMatch to support its selection of a new ERP system.

According to Ashley Spicer, CIO; Hayelom Tadesse, SVP, Strategy and Continuous Improvement; and Richard Greene Jr., Technology Business Analyst, AMAROK began this process to determine how to replace its aging ERP system. During this process, AMAROK was introduced to and began using IDC TechMatch, an AI-powered software sourcing platform that streamlines the evaluation, selection, and procurement of IT vendors by leveraging IDC's research to deliver personalized vendor recommendations and accelerate RFP creation.

These AMAROK team members explained that IDC TechMatch played a key role in allowing them to move forward with a buying recommendation for a new ERP system with confidence and efficiency. They emphasized that IDC TechMatch provides a transparent, data-driven platform that mirrors and validates the findings of their traditional consultant-led process. They cited IDC TechMatch's dynamic modeling, real-time reprioritization, and clear vendor comparisons as enabling faster, more informed decision-making with significantly less time and effort.

IDC TechMatch enabled AMAROK to accelerate its ERP evaluation process, resulting in significant time savings and an estimated 387% ROI. Going forward, AMAROK expects that IDC TechMatch will generate cost savings as the company reduces its reliance on third-party consultants and benefit from additional staff time savings as it incorporates IDC TechMatch into technology assessments for new purchases and renewal decisions at an earlier time to save substantial time on research and customization in support of making technology-buying decisions.

Choice and Implementation of IDC TechMatch

AMAROK became aware of IDC TechMatch during a period of business transformation. At the time, AMAROK needed to replace its aging ERP system, which could no longer keep up with its more complex and digital business. *"We had outgrown our ERP system by leaps and bounds,"* Spicer noted, explaining that AMAROK's unique mix of electric fencing, cameras, alarms, and access control systems required a more robust and flexible ERP solution. Although AMAROK had already engaged a third-party consultant, Spicer saw IDC TechMatch as a way to gain a broader, more balanced perspective on key vendor solutions in the ERP market: *"We were keenly aware that that was one perspective on a very complex market and a critical decision for our company. We don't do things like this lightly because we are growing so fast."*

Once introduced to IDC TechMatch, AMAROK decided to become a user, and Spicer, Tadesse, and Greene Jr. were three core members of a six- to seven-person team responsible for the ERP assessment process. They used IDC TechMatch to input requirements for both ERP systems, as well as finance and warehouse management systems, to supplement the ERP-specific findings.

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> Ashley Spicer,
> CIO

The team was impressed by how IDC TechMatch automated and streamlined what had traditionally been a labor-intensive RFP process. *"In working with IDC TechMatch the first time, we noticed that it automated everything, so we were able to go into the application, capture our own requirements, and immediately get a response that shows how the market leaders and the middle market fall into our top 10 list,"* Spicer said, referring to the old spreadsheet-based evaluations.

IDC TechMatch's flexibility allowed them to adjust priorities related to their ERP assessment and selection process, such as elevating cybersecurity and API availability, and instantly see how those changes impacted vendor rankings. Greene Jr. emphasized the transparency and neutrality of the platform, noting, *"We could see why the numbers were where they were with IDC TechMatch."* Tadesse commented, *"Once we began using IDC TechMatch, we really understood that there is a lot that we can do in this partnership. From a thought leadership perspective, it made it much easier for us to navigate next steps and think more deeply about our top 6 priorities in our overall multi-year strategic initiatives."*

Spicer, Tadesse, and Greene Jr. all reported an overwhelmingly positive experience with IDC TechMatch during the ERP solution assessment and selection process, with the platform significantly accelerating their decision-making process. The team also appreciated the AI capabilities, which allowed them to ask nuanced questions, such as *"Why is a particular vendor so far down my list?"* and receive immediate, insightful answers. Going forward, AMAROK plans to continue using IDC TechMatch for future technology evaluations. The AMAROK team explained that it sees IDC TechMatch not just as a tool but as a strategic partner in navigating its rapid growth and evolving technological needs.

Benefits

IDC TechMatch enabled AMAROK to efficiently validate and refine its ERP selection by replacing a time-intensive, spreadsheet-driven process with a dynamic platform that provides real-time modeling, reprioritization, and transparent vendor comparisons. By confirming the same top ERP candidates as a third-party consultant while offering clearer insights and better customization, IDC TechMatch gave AMAROK the confidence and clarity required to make a well-substantiated recommendation to its executive team.

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> **Richard Greene Jr., Technology Business Analyst**

AMAROK began its ERP system selection process with its traditional approach: engaging a third-party consultant to lead a discovery process that would take five weeks. This third-party consultant–driven process involved extensive stakeholder interviews, process mapping, and requirements gathering across functions such as finance, warehouse, and operations. The AMAROK team was aware of the limitations of this method. *"We had to rely on the questions that our consultants were asking and hope that they were digging deep enough,"* said Greene Jr. Further, AMAROK wanted to have an additional layer of information to evaluate its consultant partner's recommendations.

AMAROK initially decided to use IDC TechMatch to assess finance and warehouse management systems before expanding to ERP. The initial goal was not to replace the consultant's work outright but to gain a second, more dynamic perspective. *"We combined our five-week discovery report with what we received from IDC TechMatch,"* said Tadesse, *"and we used that as a part of our update to the senior leadership team and the decision and the direction we wanted to go."*

AMAROK interviewees all stated that IDC TechMatch quickly proved its value by replacing the manual, spreadsheet-heavy RFP process with a flexible, automated platform. Spicer explained that the platform allowed AMAROK to input detailed requirements, instantly generate vendor rankings, and dynamically adjust priorities. *"You can model it. You can change it. You can play with the requirements and immediately see the impact,"* she said. Greene Jr. echoed this, noting how IDC TechMatch enabled him to "go line by line" through ERP system requirements and considerations and prioritize with precision features such as invoice workflows and integration capabilities.

The AMAROK team cited IDC TechMatch's ability to support iterative refinement as one of its standout features. They explained that AMAROK reworked its ERP criteria at least half a dozen times, each time adjusting priorities based on new insights. *"We bumped up cybersecurity and then availability of APIs in terms of prioritization with IDC TechMatch to see if we would get different results,"* Spicer said. This flexibility was a contrast to the rigidity of the company's more traditional methods of assessment, where reprioritizing required significant manual effort and coordination. For AMAROK, this ease of adjusting requirements compares very favorably with its previous approach, which required additional staff time for research and potentially further engaging its third-party consultant.

IDC TechMatch's ability to test different requirement weightings was particularly impactful for AMAROK. Greene Jr. described how he could shift a feature from "low" to "critical" and immediately observe how vendor rankings changed: *"It was nice to go back and change a criterion with IDC TechMatch from low to critical and understand how much that should change our thought process."* This level of control and transparency helped AMAROK make more informed and assessment-based conclusions and ultimately recommendations.

The AMAROK team also cited IDC TechMatch's AI chatbot, visual outputs such as bubble charts, and RFP assistance tools as highly beneficial. Spicer said, *"You can ask it, 'Why is this vendor so far down my list?' and it'll just come back and tell you."* Greene Jr. added, *"The justification is going to be huge with IDC TechMatch … because all the information is literally at your fingertips to bring the why this and why not that to internal stakeholders."* Tadesse elaborated on the AI functionality: *"The AI chatbot is really nice as well because we're able to ask specific questions about our needs and get a very well-thought-out set of answers and insights specific to the topics or products or capabilities being researched."*

Ultimately, IDC TechMatch arrived at similar ERP recommendations to the consultant, reinforcing AMAROK's confidence in the results while offering greater transparency and speed. These reviews and assessments would have eaten up considerable time for the team responsible for making an ERP recommendation, as Tadesse summarized: *"Instead of asking and putting too much on our team members, we had the confidence in our recommendation with the backing of IDC TechMatch, which made it much easier to have that conversation."*

The AMAROK team ended up valuing IDC TechMatch's role in its assessment and selection of an ERP system for both substantiating the recommendation and speeding up its decision. As a base matter, Tadesse estimated that the assessment and information-gathering activities that took five weeks with a consultant could be replicated in hours over several days with IDC TechMatch. He explained, *"We took a five-week process down to a few hours with IDC TechMatch and got a very similar result but with better insight and better information in terms of how the information was developed and the structure. This gave us significant confidence to present our recommendation."* Further, once the assessment was complete, AMAROK leveraged IDC TechMatch to move considerably faster to make an actionable preliminary ERP recommendation, requiring a week and a half, as opposed to probably needing well over a month without IDC TechMatch.

Quantitative Benefits

AMAROK's use of IDC TechMatch not only allowed it to move forward with confidence with its ERP system recommendation but also delivered significant time savings related to the actual assessment and selection recommendation, as well as a view of potential time and cost savings for future technology assessments.

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> Hayelom Tadesse,
> SVP, Strategy and
> Continuous Improvement

IDC's interviews with AMAROK executives confirmed the following efficiencies and time savings already achieved in the ERP system selection process:

- **Streamlining the ERP selection recommendation process by 67%:**
  With IDC TechMatch supporting the final stages of assessment and targeted revaluation of potential vendors, AMAROK moved with greater confidence and speed to make an ERP buying recommendation to its broader executive team. According to Spicer and Tadesse, this process took only 1.5 weeks with IDC TechMatch, compared with at least 4.5 weeks without IDC TechMatch. Tadesse estimated that supporting a more prolonged recommendation process would have required at least two additional hours per week for each of the four to five team members driving these activities.

- **Requiring 55% fewer vendor evaluations when moving to make an ERP recommendation:**
  Spicer explained that, because of the strong functionality and trustworthy recommendations that IDC TechMatch provides, her company was able to conduct several follow-up evaluations of vendors, rather than five to six evaluations that it otherwise would have required. She noted that this not only allowed AMAROK to move faster to a decision but saved considerable time — around a week of time per evaluation required — for seven to eight team members responsible for gathering and synthesizing vendor information to drive the evaluation and make a recommendation.

Based only on these benefits, IDC calculates that AMAROK has realized staff time savings and efficiencies that will be worth an estimated 387% ROI through its use of IDC TechMatch for evaluating ERP system vendors.

AMAROK also discussed several ways it will benefit from the future use of IDC TechMatch in making technology-buying assessments and decisions for new purchases and renewals:

- **Reducing reliance on third-party consultants:**
  Using a third-party consultant for technology-buying assessments is often costly, but AMAROK has accepted these costs without an alternative, efficient path to carrying out such detailed technology and vendor assessments. However, Spicer estimated that her company's cost for using IDC TechMatch for the ERP selection process cost around 64% less than the typical cost of a third-party consultant, which should create cost savings opportunities for AMAROK going forward.

- **Shortening the overall technology assessment and recommendation period:**
  While AMAROK used IDC TechMatch to supplement rather than replace its third-party consultant for its ERP system selection, interviewed AMAROK executives stressed that they benefited from very similar conclusions and enhanced flexibility and customization

by using IDC TechMatch over a matter of days rather than going through a five-week evaluation process. If these timing and efficiency gains hold for the evaluation and selection of other technologies, then IDC estimates that AMAROK could shave more than 80% from its typical technology assessment and decision cycle with IDC TechMatch.

Conclusion

This IDC Business Value Case Study shows how AMAROK leveraged IDC TechMatch to streamline and enhance its ERP system selection process, supplementing and replacing in part a traditionally time-consuming, consultant-led approach with a dynamic, AI-powered platform. The tool enabled AMAROK to reduce the number of vendor evaluations required and accelerate recommendation delivery, allowing it to achieve an estimated 387% ROI. AMAROK emphasized that IDC TechMatch's real-time modeling, transparent vendor comparisons, and AI-driven insights have allowed it to make faster, more confident decisions. Going forward, AMAROK anticipates even greater efficiencies and cost savings by integrating IDC TechMatch earlier in its technology evaluation processes for new purchases and renewals.

Business Value Analysis and Methodology

IDC interviewed Ashley Spicer, CIO; Hayelom Tadesse, SVP, Strategy and Continuous Improvement; and Richard Greene Jr., Technology Business Analyst, about AMAROK's use of IDC TechMatch to drive and support its ERP system vendor assessment and recommendation process. Based on these interviews, IDC assessed the financial benefits of using IDC TechMatch using its Business Value methodology and presented these findings for AMAROK's review and approval. The IDC TechMatch team reviewed this Business Value Case Study before publication; however, the IDC Business Value team conducted all interviews, analysis, and discussion with the AMAROK team independently, and the IDC TechMatch team did not influence or affect the research or results.

About the IDC Analyst

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Matthew Marden is responsible for carrying out custom business value research engagements and consulting projects for clients in several technology areas, focusing on determining the return on investment of their use of enterprise technologies. Marden's research often analyzes how organizations are leveraging investment in digital technology solutions and initiatives to create value through efficiencies and business enablement.

More about Matthew Marden

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