

A background image showing a close-up of a person's hands in a business suit. One hand is holding a pen over a document, while the other hand rests on the table. The scene is dimly lit, focusing on the hands and the document.

Infor Sales and Operations Planning (S&OP)

Bridge the gap between strategy and operations

The greatest recurring frustration for many CEOs is the inability to bridge the gap between a firm's strategic goals and its operational execution. That lack of alignment prevents many companies from meeting key business goals and responding effectively to new challenges. Most often, this mismatch is caused by having different departments planning against different sets of KPIs and forecast data, and not having critical data expressed in a common financial language for planning purposes. That incongruence leads to rear-view-mirror strategic planning, which yields even greater difficulties.

Make feasible plans based on real capabilities

Having an unachievable plan is almost as bad as having no plan at all. For many organizations, the operations and sales planning process draws on an assortment of conflicting forecasts based on inconsistent assumptions. The forecast from sales, for example, tends to optimize revenue, while the forecast from operations optimizes costs, with each group thinking in different terms and building on different sets of assumptions. That approach amounts to nothing more than guesswork disguised as planning. It certainly can't help a firm achieve companywide alignment or consistent success.

Infor® Sales and Operations Planning (S&OP) allows you to build a sales and operations planning process on a technology platform that structures collaborative planning across the enterprise. With Infor S&OP, you can generate a feasible plan based on consistent, accurate, common assumptions in order to achieve better alignment and help your company respond better to new opportunities.

Establish a single operating plan for your entire enterprise.

Cope with emerging business challenges

The nature of operational planning has changed in recent years due to an assortment of new forces, including rapid technology changes, changing consumer tastes, and increasingly complex supply chains.

Increase responsiveness

Your planning process and the technology that supports that process need to help you improve key functions. Infor Sales and Operations planning gives you the capabilities to create a more agile business process so you can:

- **Master globalization of the supply chain**—Companies face a new level of supply chain complexity today, caused in part by increasing economic growth in emerging economies. Many companies are responding by positioning more operations and supply sources across a wider geographic area. That increasing global scope can hamper your ability to respond quickly to changes in market conditions or to fluctuations in demand. It also lengthens supply lead times. Technologies with the ability to compare multiple “what if” scenarios and robust analytics capabilities, like Infor S&OP, are essential tools for coping effectively with an increasingly complex global supply chain.
- **Encourage collaborative, cross functional planning**—Silos are still common in most organizations, simply because different departments have distinct goals and processes. Sales people do a very different job than manufacturing, operations, or finance employees. Poor alignment often results from these differences, and that misalignment restricts your company’s ability to respond effectively to new challenges. With a collaborative planning platform, like Infor S&OP, you can foster interaction, not raise barriers to communication.
- **Prevent another failed S&OP attempt**—Unsuccessful “silo optimized” plans often lead to domination of the planning process by one functional group for whom enterprise data is more available, but not effectively used for company-wide operational planning. Your planning platform and process need to support decision making transparency and cohesive planning.
- **Establish a more adaptable and flexible response to fluctuating demand**—To deal effectively with increased consumer demand volatility, you need better visibility into constraints in sourcing, inventory, warehousing, transportation, labor, and distribution. Your technology platform and your business process both need to support that degree of visibility.

Align operations and strategy

Infor Sales & Operations Planning (S&OP) helps your decision makers collaborate to reach consensus on a single operating plan that encompasses the needs of your entire enterprise. With this tool, you can gain a comprehensive view of demand, supply, and finance that helps you match your strategic business plan to your operational capabilities.

When you can streamline and record the flow of planning information across all departments, all functions, and all levels of your company, you'll be able to create a consensus plan that produces the best possible business results. You'll also be more ready to achieve the critical milestones of the strategic planning process, which include:

- **Aggregate your demand data into one set of numbers**—Attempting to build common plans among disjointed, geographically spread teams often leads to disconnected plans based on conflicting goals. By starting with a platform and process that supports all contributors to the planning process, you can create one set of data and make it immediately available across the organization to help orchestrate performance across the company.
- **View plans in financial terms**—When planning data comes in from multiple sources, it's often measured and expressed inconsistently, which makes the information more difficult to use for effective planning. When you have a process that helps contributors consistently structure planning data as they add it to the plan, you can ensure accuracy and close gaps between supply chain planning and business planning.
- **Ensure operations reflect strategic goals**—When key demand and operations data stays isolated in silos, it reduces your ability to view and address real performance, which leads to a lack of alignment between strategy and operations. A fully functional sales and operations planning process helps ensure that all of the company's activities and tactics support the strategic plan.

- **Create E2E visibility**—For merged or acquiring organizations, the inherent complexity of dealing with multiple supply chains can make it difficult to close information gaps between the different supply chains in order to manage costs across the merged enterprise. With an up-to-date S&OP process, you can gain visibility across all supply chains in the organization and identify opportunities to improve performance.

In addition to helping you solve basic operation business processes, Infor S&OP gives you the ability to arm your employees with better:

- **Information**—When all employees have the right information at the right time, through analytics, alerts, and access accurate, common data, your organization can improve responsiveness and boost performance.
 - **Collaboration**—With Infor Ming.le™ as an available option to provide dynamic collaboration and communication across the enterprise and supply chain, employees across all areas of the business can communicate and collaborate, and easily follow the people, assets, and processes that are relevant to the task at hand.
 - **Geographic flexibility**—Infor cloud technologies make your sales and operations planning information and tools available to employees wherever, whenever, and however they need it.
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Plan for outstanding performance

By aligning operations, financial, and marketing organizations around the same strategic goals, you'll be able to more easily match production plans with customer demands and sales objectives. You'll also allow your S&OP process to grow with your business, while reducing costs and improving revenue.



Streamline operations planning, so you can:

- Minimize the risk of variability of supply.
- Reduce the impact of fluctuating demand.
- Improve your business processes.
- Collaborate more effectively.

[Learn more about Infor Sales and Operations Planning >](#)

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