ERP NEWS
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Sustainability Integration in ERP:

GREENING THE SUPPLY CHAIN

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Dear Readers,

Welcome to this month's edition of ERPNews, where we delve into the increasingly critical theme of "Sustainability Integration in ERP: Greening the Supply Chain." As businesses globally face the urgent call for environmental stewardship, the role of Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems has transcended traditional boundaries, evolving into powerful enablers of sustainable practices.

The intersection of ERP and sustainability is not just about compliance or corporate social responsibility; it is a strategic imperative that drives long-term profitability and resilience. In this issue, we explore how ERP systems are being harnessed to embed sustainability into the very fabric of business processes—turning green initiatives into measurable outcomes that benefit both the planet and the bottom line.

Our features this month include insights from industry leaders who are at the forefront of integrating environmental considerations into their operations. We look at case studies where ERP systems have successfully facilitated the reduction of waste, improved energy efficiency, and enhanced the transparency of supply chains—critical steps towards minimizing environmental footprints.

Moreover, we examine the latest technological advancements that are making these transformations possible. From data analytics that forecast the environmental impact of certain decisions to AI-driven tools that optimize resource use, ERP systems are becoming more sophisticated in addressing the complex demands of sustainability.

We also bring to your attention the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. While the integration of sustainability into ERP systems presents an array of advantages, it also requires a shift in mindset, from seeing sustainability as a separate initiative to recognizing it as a core aspect of operational strategy.

Our goal with this issue is to not only inform but also inspire. We believe that through knowledge-sharing and collaboration, ERP professionals can play a pivotal role in leading their organizations towards more sustainable practices.

We invite you to engage with our articles, share your insights, and join the conversation about how ERP can be a significant force for good in our journey towards a greener future. Together, let's explore how greening the supply chain through advanced ERP solutions can lead to a sustainable competitive advantage.

Thank you for reading, and we hope you find this issue both enlightening and empowering.

Warm regards,

Pinar SENGUL, EDITOR

ERPNEWS

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Enterprise Asset Management's Evolution will Rely on Automation and Self-Service Excellence

The industry is predicting a paradigm shift in 2024 that will redefine efficiency and productivity across various sectors using technology – and enterprise asset management (EAM) will be a paramount part of the discussion.

According to a report from industry analyst firm Gartner, *Global IT spending* was expected to reach $4.7 trillion last year, up 4.3 percent from 2022 and continued growth is expected. Another industry report predicts that the EAM market is expected to reach 11.24 billion USD by 2032 – *growing at a 10.4% CAGR* from 2023.

What is driving the overall focus and growth in EAM? Some of the most significant trends include the increasing reliance on automation and demands for self-service. Here is a breakdown of these two trends.

Article by
Syed Ali
Founder and CEO, EZO

The rise of automation is a game changer

Automation is poised to take center stage, revolutionizing the way industries handle EAM. We predict a significant surge in the adoption of automated processes, particularly in critical sectors such as emergency services. Police, firefighters, and emergency healthcare providers will increasingly leverage automation to streamline operations and enhance response times.

With an automated EAM system, emergency service workers can seamlessly track and manage their assets in real-time, allowing for quicker and more efficient responses to crises. Automated asset management will not only minimize manual errors but also empower frontline heroes to focus on what truly matters – saving lives. For instance, in a fire emergency, firefighters equipped with automated asset management tools can instantly locate and deploy necessary resources. Whether it's fire trucks, specialized equipment, or medical supplies, automation ensures that every asset is precisely tracked, reducing response times, and increasing the effectiveness of emergency interventions.

The reduction in manual workload translates to increased accuracy, allowing emergency service workers to operate with confidence in high-pressure situations.

Besides emergency services, another important industry that requires automated processes is the education sector. EAM systems can serve education districts to track thousands of assets and require automated procurement and maintenance processes to streamline and implement these workflows in a timely manner. Automated QR code generation and asset tracking workflows also help to ensure that assets are in the right place and with the right person to quickly change custodians and locations.

"The reduction in manual workload translates to increased accuracy, allowing emergency service workers to operate with confidence in highpressure situations."

Self-Service empowers industries to take control

Another noteworthy trend is the growing preference for self-service capabilities within EAM systems. Organizations are increasingly recognizing the need for autonomy, allowing their teams to check in, check out assets, and raise requests without relying on IT personnel for every small task. This shift towards self-service is a testament to the democratization of technology within enterprises.

In the coming year, we anticipate a surge in user-friendly interfaces that empower employees across various industries to manage their assets independently. This not only reduces the burden on IT departments but also fosters a culture of accountability and efficiency. Picture a future where every team member can seamlessly interact with the asset management system, leading to faster decision-making processes and increased overall productivity.

A self-service EAM system is often used to process simple requests such as checking an item out, flagging an issue, and making a service request. However, without a simple self-serve portal, all the burden can be on IT personnel or the main account administrator to process these easy requests – an unnecessary hindrance in the workflow and a waste of time.

The use of a self-service EAM self-service portal can allow users to log requests. checkin/checkout assets and check the status of their requests without having to log into the main system - saving time, which is a highly important value proposition for businesses and institutions alike.

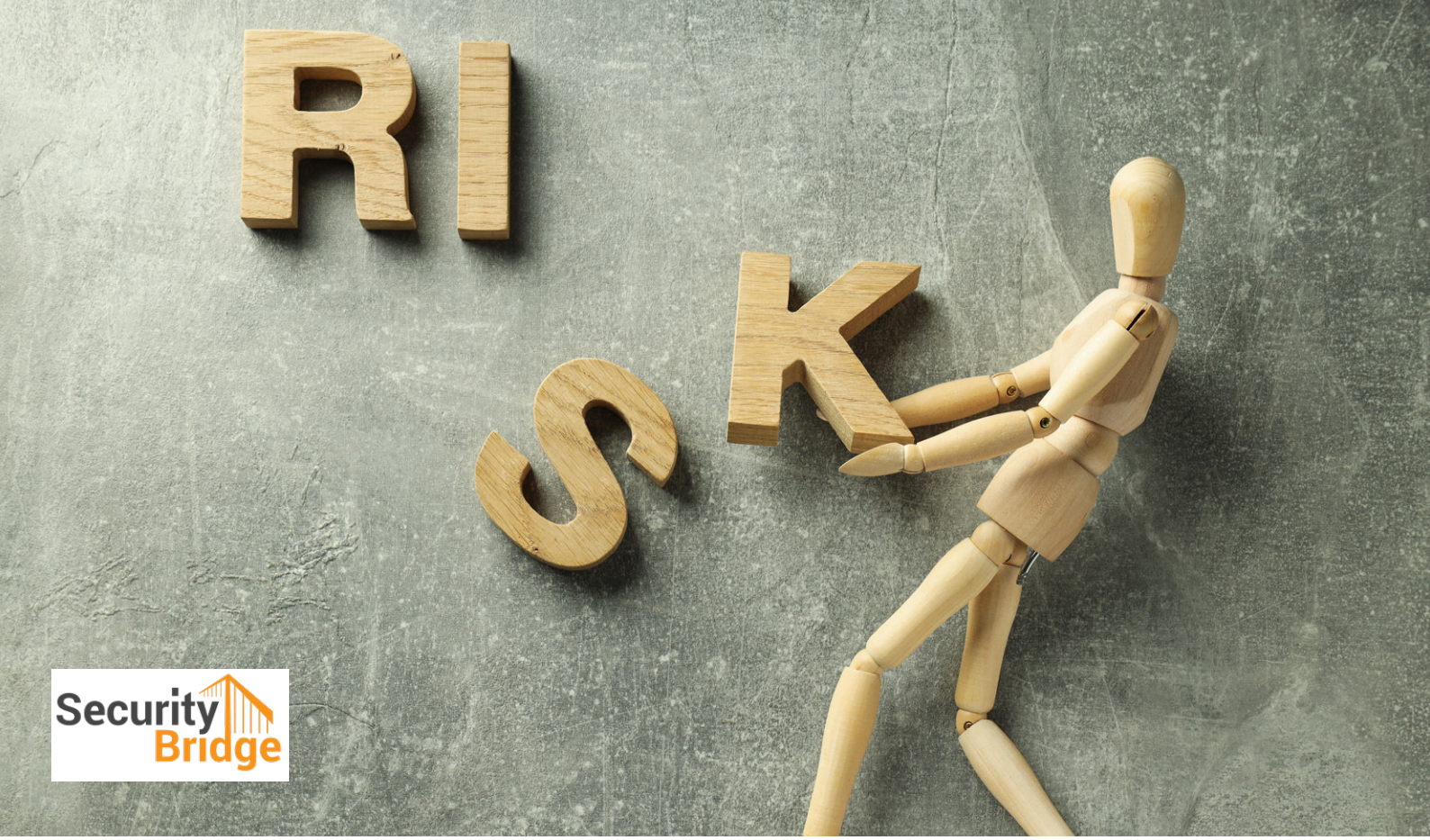
Many organizations, like school districts, businesses, and emergency services struggle with the challenge of optimizing the usage of limited technology resources. Self-service EAM systems will offer a solution by providing real-time insights into the availability and status of assets.

What does the future hold for EAM?

The future holds immense promise for the overall EAM landscape. The convergence of automation and self-service capabilities will redefine how industries operate, bringing about unprecedented levels of efficiency and control. As technology leaders, it is our responsibility to embrace these trends, staying ahead of the curve and driving innovation that propels our industries into a more connected future.

Here's to a transformative year ahead!

Article by Syed Ali



How To Properly Secure SAP Fiori

SAP Fiori is a UI technology designed to enhance the end-user experience for all the related tools and apps that come with an SAP ERP solution. This is important because over 70% of large businesses use an SAP ERP system. All data transmitted to or visualized by SAP Fiori is transacted in real-time and touches nearly every part of a business, such as asset management, human resources, finance, R&D, sales, supply chains, and more. But just like all major technologies, SAP Fiori is also prone to security breaches. In the remainder of this article, we address specific threats and how to mitigate them.

The Risks & How To Mitigate Them

1) Network Security:

One of the primary ways that a cyberattacker can break through is via the network line of communications, from the device to the application layer of SAP Fiori and vice versa. Therefore, the SSL network protocol is one tool that ensures a safe way of accessing the platform. The SSL protocol can be used in conjunction with the regular web protocol, which is HTTP. Once these two are put together, it forms the HTTPS protocol, which ensures—to some degree—that data transmitted back and forth is scrambled. The site's security can be confirmed by checking for the padlock in the "locked" position on the left-hand side of the URL bar. Also, be aware of when the SSL certificate expires so you can renew it beforehand.

Article by
Christoph Nagy
CEO, *SecurityBridge*

2) User Authentication:

Passwords have always been used as the primary means for granting access to portals, intranets, and shared resources stored on servers. However, passwords are also one of the weakest links in the security chain. When protecting information visualized by SAP Fiori, IT personnel need to buttress passwords that are the only means of authentication, with additional security. They must adopt more robust mechanisms, such as an RSA Token or a Biometric Modality like fingerprint recognition. However, the choice of what to use depends upon the configuration of the SAP Fiori client and the attempted connection, such as the SAP Mobile Platform Server or SAP Cloud Platform mobile service. In addition, Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) is a must when dealing with administrative-level accounts. Following these procedures, IT administrators use at least three authentication mechanisms to confirm an individual's identity.

3) Secure Data:

Ransomware is today's most prevalent cyber threat vector– nothing is immune, not even SAP Fiori. In a ransomware attack, the datasets become encrypted by the cyberattacker, and nothing can be done until a ransom is paid. A schedule of regular backups must occur as insurance from hackers separating companies from their data. In addition, large organizations need to consider using Public Key Infrastructure (PKI), which offers the highest level of encryption. Further, these organizations should implement a Mobile Device Management policy for remote workers accessing SAP Fiori.

"When protecting information visualized by SAP Fiori, IT personnel need to buttress passwords that are the only means of authentication, with additional security. They must adopt more robust mechanisms, such as an RSA Token or a Biometric Modality like fingerprint recognition."

4) Native Device Access:

Many SAP ERP systems, including those using SAP Fiori, allow access to devices such as cameras and even the end user's contact book, which can be easily heisted for launching Social Engineering Attacks – this can be a crippling cyber risk. Therefore, only authorized users should have device access if the SAP ERP system controls these items. It's also advised to implement a Mobile Device Management Policy and monitor it in real-time for abnormal network activity. The real-time monitoring can be done with a router or a network intrusion device coupled with an SIEM.

5) Data Privacy:

Data privacy is always front and center. Because of this, businesses now have to contend with legal issues from GDPR and the CCPA mandates; if not, they face exhaustive audits and financial penalties. SAP Fiori has built-in compliance functionality to help organizations abide by these mandates.

6) Overcoming Clickjacking:

In simple terms, clickjacking occurs when an end-user clicks on a link with a hidden link beneath. As a result, they are taken to an erroneous website. In some ways, this is similar to a phishing attack, but in this instance, the different URLs can be seen by hovering a mouse over the original link. To counter clickjacking in SAP Fiori, SAP NetWeaver can be used to deploy sophisticated white labeling strategies.

"Many SAP ERP systems, including those using SAP Fiori, allow access to devices such as cameras and even the end user's contact book, which can be easily heisted for launching Social Engineering Attacks – this can be a crippling cyber risk."

Article by Christoph Nagy

Global Shop Solutions VP of Sales Achieves 25-Year Milestone

Working at the same company for 25 years is a rare occurrence these days. Global Shop Solutions, a leading provider of ERP software for manufacturers around the globe, is proud to announce the latest addition to the Quarter Century Club – Ilya Dynkin, VP of Sales.

When Dynkin joined Global Shop Solutions early in his career, he had no experience with ERP or manufacturing software. What he did have was enthusiasm, motivation, and the ability to find and win new opportunities, bringing in new customers. The love and care he shows to each person he works with isn't just in the sale – it's in the long-term relationships he builds.

"We knew from the start we had a special person in Ilya because of the way he connects with manufacturers on a personal basis, understands their problems, and demonstrates how ERP software can correct them," says Dusty Alexander, President and CEO of Global Shop Solutions. "He truly enjoys his work, and his spirit and enthusiasm for helping our customers simplify their manufacturing rubs off on all who work with him."

Dynkin prides himself on demonstrating how ERP software can help transform manufacturing companies and improve their processes. What he finds most rewarding is when customers have enough faith in him and trust in the company to want to become a lifetime partner.

"At Global Shop Solutions our customers are buying software that will run their entire company from quote to cash, and I want to make sure they understand the importance of partnering with the right company," says Dynkin. "Telling them who we are, the type of relationship they can expect, and the lifelong partner we want to be is an integral part of the process."
Dynkin believes that when a company shows loyalty to its employees, values and mission, it will keep its people engaged and performing their best.

"I am proud of the growth Global Shop Solutions has achieved, but even more so the fact that we haven't become corporatized," says Dynkin. "The company's principles and family atmosphere haven't changed since I first came here 25 years ago. It continues to be a place where we support each other and can have open conversations with anyone, anytime. The family ownership truly cares about the people who work here, and always put them at the front of their decision-making process."

"I love the work," adds Dynkin. "It's gratifying to see the impact Global Shop Solutions has on our customers' businesses, and I feel like I have a measurable impact on our company."

Global Shop SOLUTIONS

About Global Shop Solutions
Global Shop Solutions ERP software provides the applications needed to deliver a quality part on time every time from quote to cash and everything in between including shop management, scheduling, inventory, accounting, quality control, CRM and 25 more. Available in the cloud or on premise, our manufacturing customers benefit from real-time inventory accuracy, improved on-time delivery, lower administrative costs, increased sales and improved customer service. Headquarters in The Woodlands, Texas includes a state-of-the-art R&D facility and Global Shop Solutions training center. Through its offices in the U.S., Mexico, Indonesia, Singapore, Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom, the company supports thousands of manufacturing facilities in over 25 countries and more than 30 industries. For more information please visit globalshopsolutions.com.

Conclusion

While adding SAP Fiori to the ERP system has advantages, one of the other main risks is increasing the attack surface for future security breaches. Even worse, *64% of businesses* experienced a cyberattack with their ERP systems. Therefore, the need to protect your SAP Fiori is paramount. Following the remediations in this article will significantly lessen the odds of being breached.

About Christoph Nagy

Christoph Nagy has 20 years of working experience within the SAP industry. He has utilized this knowledge as a founding member and CEO at SecurityBridge–a global SAP security provider, serving many of the world's leading brands and now operating in the U.S. Through his efforts, the SecurityBridge Platform for SAP has become renowned as a strategic security solution for automated analysis of SAP security settings, and detection of cyber-attacks in real-time. Prior to SecurityBridge, Nagy applied his skills as a SAP technology consultant at Adidas and Audi.

About Security Bridge

Real-time Intrusion Detection and Vulnerability Monitoring for SAP® applications. SecurityBridge is the first and only holistic, natively integrated security platform, addressing all aspects needed to protect organizations running SAP from internal and external threats against their core business applications. SecurityBridge's unique approach to protecting SAP NetWeaver, ABAP, and S/4HANA platforms reveal exploits, and uncovers previously unknown vulnerabilities, directing and enabling remediation before any harm is done.

Inside information: Fortaco Group successfully issues subsequent bonds in an amount of EUR 25.0 million

*Fortaco Group Holdco Oyj (the "**Group**") has, following a bookbuilding process, successfully placed a subsequent bond issue (the "**Subsequent Bond Issue**" or the "**Subsequent Bonds**") in an amount of EUR 25.0 million under the Group's existing senior secured floating rate bond loan 2022/2027 with ISIN NO0012547274 (the "**Bonds**"). Following the Subsequent Bond Issue, the outstanding amount under the Bonds will be EUR 127.5 million. The transaction was met with strong demand from primarily new and existing institutional investors based in the Nordics and continental Europe and was placed at a price of 100.25% of par.*

With reference to the press release issued on 8 March 2024, proceeds from the Subsequent Bond Issue will be applied towards financing general corporate purposes (including acquisitions and capital expenditure). In connection with the Subsequent Bond Issue, the equity of the Group is planned to be strengthened with EUR 10.0 million, by way of either unconditional shareholders' contribution or shareholder loans.

Settlement of the Subsequent Bond Issue is expected to be on or about 26 March 2024. In accordance with the terms and conditions of the Bonds, an application will be made for the Subsequent Bonds to be admitted to trading on the corporate bonds list of Nasdaq Helsinki Ltd.

Pareto Securities AB acted as sole bookrunner and Roschier Advokatbyrå and Gernandt & Danielsson acted as legal advisors in connection with the Subsequent Bond Issue.

Leading the Charge: A Manufacturing Coach's Path from Military Intelligence to Industry Excellence

Welcome to this edition of ERPNews Digital Magazine, where we delve into the fascinating world of manufacturing through the eyes of an experienced coach. Our Q&A session features an individual whose remarkable journey from the Marine Corps to becoming a Lead Coach at QAD Redzone provides unique insights into the dynamic world of manufacturing and operational excellence.

Starting his career as an intelligence analyst in the military, our guest transitioned into the private sector, where he honed his skills at major companies like UPS and Amazon before stepping into the role of a manufacturing coach. His path through various stages at QAD Redzone—from a Readiness Coach assisting new hires to his current position as a Lead Coach—offers a compelling glimpse into the necessary skills and experiences that shape effective leadership in manufacturing.

In this interview, we explore what makes manufacturing an exciting industry, the transformative impact of coaching, and the personal experiences that have defined his coaching philosophy. Whether discussing his most memorable deployment at a family-run candy business or offering advice to aspiring coaches, his stories underscore the profound influence of thoughtful leadership and technological integration in manufacturing environments. Join us as we uncover the challenges, triumphs, and lessons learned on the front lines of manufacturing coaching.

1. Please share a bit about your background and how you became a manufacturing coach.

I spent five years in the Marine Corps as an intelligence analyst in Japan, Thailand, and the Philippines, before being sent to Afghanistan. After I was discharged, I went to college. Then, I worked at UPS and Amazon as an Operations Manager.

I joined QAD Redzone as a Readiness Coach – that's the role the company has for new hires who want to move into coaching but don't have a manufacturing background.

Interview with
Taylor Windatt,
Operational Excellence Lead Coach,
QAD Redzone

So, prior to a launch week, I'd go onsite with the client for two to three days, work closely with the Project Manager to validate signal data, and do some training with the core operator team. You get a good understanding of different factories and manufacturing processes as you move from one site to the next.

I was a readiness coach for about a year before I became an OpEx Coach, which I have done for two and a half years prior to becoming a Lead Coach. I still work onsite with customers but also spend four weeks a year mentoring new hires. I shadow new coaches on their first deployment to provide feedback and guidance and work on strategic projects for QAD Redzone.

2. Why is manufacturing an exciting, dynamic industry to work in?

One thing I really appreciate is the opportunity to work with operators. They might not have received the attention they needed in the past, or they might feel like they don't have a voice in how things are done.

We give them one-on-one support and a tool to connect and collaborate with other team members and share ideas. So now they have a direct line to the Plant Director. If they have an idea, they can submit it, and less than 24 hours later, the Plant Director will read it.

It's exciting to see how workers get empowered and start solving problems. It's also great to see how our new coaches grow and progress and become experts in using QAD Redzone to solve the production, maintenance, and quality issues our customers struggle with.

3. How did you learn about QAD Redzone, and why did you decide to join as a coach?

I was working at Amazon and wanted to make a change. One day, I saw a QAD Redzone ad for a Continuous Improvement Coach on LinkedIn and thought it sounded great. I interviewed for the job and got an offer to join as a Readiness Coach.

"It's exciting to see how workers get empowered and start solving problems. It's also great to see how our new coaches grow and progress and become experts in using QAD Redzone to solve the production, maintenance, and quality issues our customers struggle with."

During the interview, I asked a lot of questions and learned that QAD Redzone had a very team-driven culture which was incredibly appealing to me. It was clear that the company had a good culture and that everyone worked together to help their customers move forward. I knew I wanted to be a part of this.

4. What was your most memorable deployment and why?

Taffy Town is a candy company based in Utah. It's a family-run business. Everyone was super friendly from the leadership level down when I came onsite.
The leadership team really values the operators. They don't see the operators as button-pushers. They see them as individual people who have great ideas and know how to run and fix the equipment.

Taffy Town was a pretty exciting deployment. The operators who work there delivered a 100% productivity improvement over the course of deploying all four QAD Redzone modules.

Most of the production team is Spanish-speaking. They used QAD Redzone's language translation capabilities to share ideas on how to improve processes.

Taffy Town's culture was already outstanding. But now it's fantastic. One thing that's unusual about Taffy Town is they know how to celebrate.

At monthly meetings, the owner comes out with this big wheel with different dollar amounts. So, if the plant has hit a new record, everyone gets to come up and spin it. And whatever dollar amount it lands on, he hands it over to that person.

"Taffy Town was a pretty exciting deployment. The operators who work there delivered a 100% productivity improvement over the course of deploying all four QAD Redzone modules."

He does the same thing for birthdays and work anniversaries. The owner is playing music, dancing, and giving out cash. And they always cater food. So, it's

this big party. And he doesn't click through slides. The owner just talks to his team. "We hit this new record. Here's how we're doing on our volume."

Operators will take pictures on their phones or iPads and send them to the overhead TV. So, every morning, when you walk in, you look at the TV and see photos of the people working on the lines. They're smiling. They're doing goofy things. It's a unique culture. They're a real team – that's why they're so successful.

5. What are the key things you are looking for when you visit a QAD Redzone customer site for the first time?

When I sit down for the initial meeting, the first thing I'm looking for is leadership engagement. If the entire leadership team is there, asking good questions and saying, "Let us know what we can do to help support this project," I know it will be a good deployment.

If either the leadership team or operators are disengaged, then I need to do some significant adjusting.

I try to build rapport with the teams I work with. I wear cowboy boots onsite and have my dogs as a screen saver on my iPad. So, before I start presenting, the production team is looking at my dogs. That's usually a bit of an icebreaker.

With operators, we're taking the way that they work and completely changing it. So, a lot of times when I meet with teams initially, they have a lot of passion that's easy to misunderstand as irritation. However, the teams want to do a good job and are trying to understand QAD Redzone and the logic behind it.

It's important to get involved with teams beyond just training them. I talk to operators while they're running the line to understand their concerns. They may not think they have enough time to use QAD Redzone, or they may not be comfortable with the technology. And so, once I know what the issues are, I can address them. It's often beneficial to talk to the operators one-on-one, but a big win never hurts. So, I try to find a pain point for an individual operator or maintenance supervisor and solve it.

At a recent deployment, we had a Maintenance Manager who would sit in meetings with his arms crossed and try and poke holes in QAD Redzone and how it worked. His mindset was very much that operators break things and don't really know what's going on.

Because of his role, it was very important that he buy into how processes would be changing. So, I included him in meetings and had him work with operators to address maintenance issues proactively. The manager went from writing all his work orders on a whiteboard to having them preloaded into QAD Redzone.

He began asking to review his activities. And then the manager said, "I wasn't sure about QAD Redzone. But it has been awesome for us. We've gotten a lot of issues fixed because we now have visibility into what's going wrong. And we're using the ideas that came from the floor to prioritize repairs, which is keeping us from firefighting as much." Before QAD Redzone, the maintenance team sometimes had to come in during the middle of the night to fix the equipment.

6. What is the most satisfying part of your job?

There are two things I really appreciate. One is working with brand-new coaches and being able to help them when they're confused or frustrated. We jump on a quick call, walk through what they're struggling with, and figure out the best way to approach it.

The other thing that's great is to walk into a plant and see how the culture changes with QAD Redzone. On day one, the operators may not be in a good mood. They really don't want to change. And then 90 days later, they're smiling, engaging with leadership, and doing great things with AD Redzone.

7. What would be your advice to those starting their coaching career in manufacturing

When I moved into coaching, I felt like I was on an island. The support structure wasn't there. I don't want anybody else to have to go through that.

My biggest advice is to use your Lead Coaches, team members, and hiring group and just ask questions. There are no stupid questions.

Everybody has been through the same thing. You're onsite with a customer, drinking from a firehose, and trying to get 100 things done each day. Then, you're going back to the hotel at night and focusing on what you will do with the teams the next day.

The great thing about our team is that anyone will pick up a call from another coach, even if it comes in at 9 or 10 p.m. at night. If another coach says, "Hey, I'm struggling. Can you walk me through something?" no one's going to say no. I think that says a lot about our company.

Air Systems International Chooses SYSPRO to Modernize its ERP System and Lay the Foundation for Growth

The manufacturer of air filtration, ventilation, and portable area lighting solutions worked with SYSPRO partner Lonehill Systems and valued the attentive, informed service provided

SYSPRO, a global provider of *ERP software*, announced that *Air Systems International*, a leading manufacturer of air filtration, ventilation, and portable area lighting solutions, has chosen SYSPRO to modernize its ERP platform. SYSPRO worked with ERP service provider partner *Lonehill Systems* on the proposed solution.

Air Systems sought to replace an outdated system they'd been operating on for more than 30 years. The company's goal was to gain stronger control over their supply chain, enable modern MRP and purchasing automation, and deploy a system that would enable them to integrate with electronic data interchange (EDI) so Air Systems could automate orders and invoices from key customers. Additionally, Air Systems wanted a cloud-based system, which would cut their server footprint in half.

After a competitive process that involved multiple major vendors, Air Systems selected SYSPRO and its partner, *Lonehill Systems*. Together, Lonehill and SYSPRO demonstrated they could provide the capabilities the company needed at the right price point and deployed in the cloud. Management also saw firsthand the level of service and attention they would receive as a SYSPRO and Lonehill customer.

"As a small company, we were concerned that we'd get lost and overlooked at a large ERP vendor," said Air Systems' general manager Steve Holt. "SYSPRO and Lonehill were the only vendors who visited our facility, and it was clear that they not only had a strong technology platform, but also understood our business and industry. We know we've found a great partner who can help us build the ERP foundation we need to accelerate our growth."

"SYSPRO and our partners like Lonehill know the manufacturing and distribution business backwards and forwards," said Brian Rainboth, CEO, SYSPRO Americas. "We're built to serve the midmarket, and we pride ourselves on the level of service we provide our customers. We're looking forward to playing a key role in Air Systems' future success."

For more information, visit *https://us.syspro.com/*.

SW Imports Selects SYSPRO ERP Software to Support Expansion, Aiming to Triple the Number of Product Lines in the Next Five Years

With the help of SYSPRO Elite Solutions Partner, Edgeware, the bathroom and kitchen cabinet wholesaler and distributor went live with the SYSPRO platform in just one month

SYSPRO, a global provider of ERP software, announced that SW Imports, Inc., a distributor and wholesaler of bathroom and kitchen cabinets, has deployed SYSPRO ERP to replace QuickBooks and support its expansion. SW Imports specializes in wood kitchen cabinets and countertop distribution, primarily selling to smaller companies, contractors, and various other businesses, focusing on B2B transactions.

SW Imports has opportunity to expand and recognized that QuickBooks lacks the robustness and scalability needed to support their anticipated level of growth. Specifically, SW Imports expects to triple the number of products it distributes over the next five years, adding multiple new locations and warehouses. They needed a system that can provide supply chain and inventory visibility and planning, along with analytics and automation.

SW Imports chose SYSPRO because the platform is extremely flexible and is specifically designed to meet the needs of mid-market distributors, which accelerates time to value since there's far less customization required. Edgeware, a SYSPRO Elite Solutions Partner, led the implementation and SW Imports was able to go live on the platform in just one month.

"Working with Edgeware and SYSPRO has been a great experience. They've both demonstrated they can work at our speed and schedule, which is critical for us," said Amit Khurana, owner and CEO of SW Imports. "Flexibility is very important to us as we move beyond QuickBooks to support our expansion. The SYSPRO ERP platform, especially with its strength in analytics, is clearly the resource to make our growth happen."

"Mid-market distributors have very specific needs when it comes to their ERP platform, and SYSPRO ERP has been designed to meet those needs," said Brian Rainboth, CEO, SYSPRO Americas. "Plus, we have incredible local partners like Edgeware. Their technical capabilities and industry domain expertise enable our customers to get up and running quickly. SW Imports is poised for growth, and we're thrilled to support them with our comprehensive solution."

For more information, visit *https://us.syspro.com/*.

SYSPRO™

About SYSPRO

SYSPRO is a leading, global Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software provider specializing in key manufacturing and distribution industries. For over 40 years, SYSPRO's team of specialists have continued to address unique industry needs and enable customers to easily adapt and grow. The solution is scalable and can be deployed in the cloud, on-premise, or both, and accessed via the web on any device to provide customers with choice and flexibility. SYSPRO remains focused on the success of partners and customers. Our evolving solutions are aligned with industry trends to leverage emerging technology that will enable partners and customers in securing a digital future. With more than 15,000 licensed companies in over 60 countries across six continents –SYSPRO offers guidance and support every step of the way as a trusted advisor.

SecurityBridge Expands U.S. Partnerships With Taciti Consulting Alliance

Combined Efforts Streamline SAP S/4HANA Transformations and Secure SAP Ecosystem

SecurityBridge, a leading global provider of SAP security solutions, announced a new partnership with *Taciti Consulting*, a U.S.-based ERP transformation consulting firm. The collaboration aligns with both companies' commitment to enhancing SAP security through real-time *threat monitoring and detection vulnerability management.*

Taciti offers unbiased and informed advisory services to empower businesses to adapt and grow in the ever-evolving digital landscape. The company has worked with global brands to achieve ERP transformation goals, allowing them to stay ahead of competitors. This partnership underscores these principles by addressing complex SAP security challenges, especially as organizations integrate cloud-based solutions with existing on-premises applications. SecurityBridge and Taciti Consulting will collaboratively offer comprehensive SAP security solutions, enhancing risk management and protecting digital assets against emerging threats.

"The collaboration unites SecurityBridge's robust SAP cybersecurity solutions with Taciti Consulting's SAP S/4HANA-led transformation expertise," said Rishi Handa, Co-founder and Managing Partner of Taciti Consulting. "This synergy creates a powerful combination to navigate the complex security landscape of SAP's evolving cloud, AI, and mobile-based systems."

The partnership is poised to offer stronger security measures and a unified approach to SAP application security. This unity is timely, considering every SAP installation must transition to S/4HANA by 2027. Thus, this partnership presents a significant opportunity for market expansion and brand awareness.

"SecurityBridge and Taciti Consulting are committed to a long-term strategic partnership with plans for further collaboration and expansion," said Christoph Nagy, CEO and co-founder of SecurityBridge. "The alliance is a step toward growth and a shared vision of leading the SAP security domain and empowering businesses to thrive through automated cybersecurity scrutiny and vulnerability gap-sealing initiatives."

About Taciti Consulting

Taciti Consulting is a premier consulting firm specializing in impartial advisory services to assist clients in navigating SAP-led digital transformations. We offer dedicated SAP security services, where we excel in helping clients meticulously assess their application landscapes and identify potential security risks. Leveraging our well-defined, industry-leading frameworks and best practices, we are committed to guiding our clients through the intricate process of enhancing their security measures. Our expertise extends to adopting and implementing robust solutions to fortify security postures, prominently featuring leading solutions like SecurityBridge. For more information, please visit taciti.com.

About SecurityBridge, Inc.

SecurityBridge is an SAP Security Platform provider developing tools to extend the SAP ecosystem. The company takes a radically different approach to traditional security solutions, believing SAP applications and custom code will be infiltrated no matter how diligently security hygiene is applied. In response to this belief, SecurityBridge created its integrated real-time solution for constant monitoring. Powered by anomaly detection, the SecurityBridge platform can differentiate between accurate results and false positives so that security teams can better focus on real issues. For details, please visit securitybridge.com.

The Future Is Now: Top 10 ERP Trends to Watch in 2024

Introduction: As we move further into the decade, the landscape of Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) continues to evolve at an unprecedented pace. Organizations are constantly looking for ways to streamline their operations, gain better insights, and remain competitive in an increasingly digital world. In 2024, we are witnessing a new wave of ERP trends that are set to redefine the way businesses operate. From the integration of advanced technologies to the shift towards sustainability, here are the top ten ERP trends that are making waves this year, highlighting the importance of ERP implementation strategies and the exploration of the best ERP software and ERP tools available.

Cloud-First ERPs: The cloud is no longer just an option; it's the preferred deployment for ERP solutions. In 2024, businesses are adopting cloud-first strategies, favoring the scalability, flexibility, and security that cloud-based ERPs offer. This marks a significant shift in the ERP landscape, emphasizing the need for robust ERP implementation practices to ensure seamless transition and operation.

Mobile ERP Solutions: As the workforce becomes more mobile, ERP providers are enhancing their mobile capabilities. This year, expect to see more robust mobile platforms that provide on-the-go access to critical business processes, showcasing the importance of mobile ERP solutions in modern business environments.

Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning: AI and machine learning continue to penetrate *ERP systems*, automating complex processes, predicting trends, and providing decision-makers with unprecedented insights into their operations. This integration underscores the transformative potential of AI and machine learning in ERP tools, offering a glimpse into the future of ERP.

Enhanced Data Analytics: Data is the new currency, and ERPs are increasingly incorporating advanced analytics to turn vast amounts of data into actionable insights, driving efficiency and innovation. This trend highlights the critical role of data analytics in enhancing the functionality and impact of ERP systems.

IoT Integration: The *Internet of Things* (IoT) is revolutionizing ERP systems by providing real-time data from various sources, including equipment sensors and RFID tags, leading to better asset management and process optimization. The integration of IoT with ERP tools exemplifies the innovative approaches to ERP software, enhancing operational efficiency.

> "Sustainability is becoming a core component of ERP systems, helping companies track and reduce their environmental impact through better resource planning and waste management"

User-Friendly Interfaces: ERP vendors are focusing on improving user experience with more intuitive interfaces, personalized dashboards, and user-friendly navigation to increase adoption rates and reduce training time. This focus on user experience is crucial for the successful deployment and utilization of ERP systems.

Focus on Security: With the rise of cyber threats, security is a top priority. The latest ERP trends include the integration of advanced security protocols and continuous monitoring to safeguard sensitive data, illustrating the critical importance of security in the selection and implementation of ERP software.

Customization and Flexibility: One-size-fits-all is a thing of the past. ERPs in 2024 are all about customization, with modular designs that allow businesses to tailor their systems to their unique needs, reflecting the evolving demand for flexible and adaptable ERP solutions.

Sustainable ERP: Sustainability is becoming a core component of ERP systems, helping companies track and reduce their environmental impact through better resource planning and waste management. This trend underscores the growing importance of sustainability in ERP strategies, including the consideration of ERP alternative software that emphasizes green practices.

Collaboration Tools: Modern ERPs are breaking down silos by incorporating built-in collaboration tools that facilitate better communication and teamwork across departments and with external stakeholders, highlighting the role of ERP in fostering collaboration within and beyond organizational boundaries.

> "ERP vendors are focusing on improving user experience with more intuitive interfaces, personalized dashboards, and user-friendly navigation to increase adoption rates and reduce training time."

Conclusion: The ERP trends of 2024 reflect a shift towards more intelligent, flexible, and user-centric systems. As businesses continue to navigate the complexities of the digital age, the role of ERP systems, including the impact of SAP ERP, has become more critical than ever. By staying abreast of these trends, organizations can leverage ERP solutions to drive growth, adapt to changing market conditions, and prepare for the future. The key to success lies in choosing an ERP system that not only aligns with current trends but also has the capacity to adapt to future advancements. The future of ERP is here, and it's time for businesses to embrace it, considering the comprehensive landscape of ERP implementation, tools, and software options available.

Article from Asar Digital

The Shift Towards Sustainability-Centric ERP

With organisations evolving to become more sustainability-focused, it is now more important than ever to implement sustainable practices across all areas of business, and technology is no exception. That is why Microsoft has just revealed the upcoming release of sustainability features coming to Dynamics 365 Business Central.

Whether it be a result of consumer expectations or evolving industry regulations, sustainability is now becoming a core focus for businesses worldwide. Companies must learn to leverage technology to support them on their sustainability journey, or risk failing to comply with industry standards and falling behind the competition. Moreover, since January 2023 large companies and listed companies have been required by EU law to publish

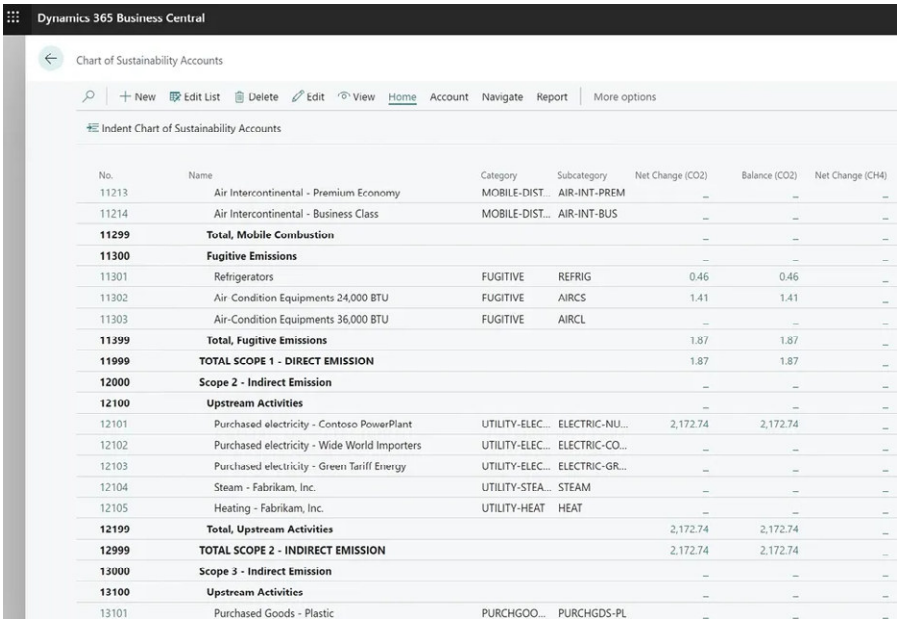
Article by
Conor Flanagan,
ERP Team Lead
storm technology

regular reports on the social and environmental impact of their operations under the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD). To help organisations comply with industry best practices and regulations, Microsoft has just announced that 2024 will see the release of sustainability reporting features in *Dynamics 365 Business Central*. Below we discuss some of the features to come in release wave 1.

Chart of Sustainability Accounts

The Chart of Sustainability Accounts is the structured list used to record all emissions data, helping organisations to organise data more effectively. It is a key tool that allows businesses to track, measure and manage their sustainability-related data and key metrics, such as energy consumption, waste generation and greenhouse gas emissions. Users can customise the chart to suit their specific requirements, adding account categories and sub-categories as needed.

> "The Chart of Sustainability Accounts is the structured list used to record all emissions data, helping organisations to organise data more effectively."



No.	Name	Category	Subcategory	Net Change (CO2)	Balance (CO2)	Net Change (CH4)
11213	Air Intercontinental - Premium Economy	MOBILE-DIST...	AIR-INT-PREM	_	_	_
11214	Air Intercontinental - Business Class	MOBILE-DIST...	AIR-INT-BUS	_	_	_
11299	**Total, Mobile Combustion**			_	_	_
11300	**Fugitive Emissions**			_	_	_
11301	Refrigerators	FUGITIVE	REFRIG	0.46	0.46	_
11302	Air Condition Equipments 24,000 BTU	FUGITIVE	AIRCS	1.41	1.41	_
11303	Air-Condition Equipments 36,000 BTU	FUGITIVE	AIRCL	_	_	_
11399	**Total, Fugitive Emissions**			1.87	1.87	_
11999	**TOTAL SCOPE 1 - DIRECT EMISSION**			1.87	1.87	_
12000	**Scope 2 - Indirect Emission**			_	_	_
12100	**Upstream Activities**			_	_	_
12101	Purchased electricity - Contoso PowerPlant	UTILITY-ELEC...	ELECTRIC-NU...	2,172.74	2,172.74	_
12102	Purchased electricity - Wide World Importers	UTILITY-ELEC...	ELECTRIC-CO...	_	_	_
12103	Purchased electricity - Green Tariff Energy	UTILITY-ELEC...	ELECTRIC-GR...	_	_	_
12104	Steam - Fabrikam, Inc.	UTILITY-STEA...	STEAM	_	_	_
12105	Heating - Fabrikam, Inc.	UTILITY-HEAT	HEAT	_	_	_
12199	**Total, Upstream Activities**			2,172.74	2,172.74	_
12999	**TOTAL SCOPE 2 - INDIRECT EMISSION**			2,172.74	2,172.74	_
13000	**Scope 3 - Indirect Emission**			_	_	_
13100	**Upstream Activities**			_	_	_
13101	Purchased Goods - Plastic	PURCHGOO...	PURCHGDS-PL	_	_	_

Chart of Sustainability Accounts (Source: Microsoft)

Sustainability Journals

Sustainability Journals operate in a similar way to other journals in Business Central, except they are used to record sustainability-related metrics and activities within the business. Users can either manually enter information like emissions data, or use formulas already built into *Business Central* to calculate emissions based on data stored in Business Central. Users can create journals using existing templates with specific configurations to help manage data in the most effective way. Once a Sustainability Journal is posted, it becomes an entry on the Sustainability Ledger which organises all emissions data according to the Chart of Sustainability Accounts, providing a comprehensive view of critical data.

These new features in Business Central are set to transform sustainability reporting processes, with customisable features that help businesses easily monitor and manage emissions and take active steps towards reducing emissions and striving for *sustainable business.*

If you would like to learn more about Business Central, *contact* one of our experts today.

> "Sustainability Journals operate in a similar way to other journals in Business Central, except they are used to record sustainability-related metrics and activities within the business."

Article by Conor Flanagan

7 ERP Implementation Mistakes SMEs Make and How to Avoid Them

Deploying a new enterprise resource planning (ERP) system can seem a daunting task for any company, but especially for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). New technology is a big investment—and you don't want to end up with an ERP project that runs over time and budget.

But what are the most common ERP pitfalls when installing new systems?

To help your deployment run smoothly, we've identified seven frequent mistakes that SMEs make when introducing new *ERP software*. Plus, we've added some advice on how to avoid those mistakes in your next implementation project.

ERP Mistake 1: Not Making a Robust Plan

Imagine constructing a building without a blueprint. It's bound to collapse. Deploying new ERP software without a clear strategy is asking for similar trouble.

Before you begin your installation project, make a robust plan to guide you through the implementation process.

Start with a thorough evaluation of your current systems and workflows and conduct a gap analysis to understand where your new ERP can bring the most benefits. Be sure to set actionable goals tailored to your business needs as well.

Don't forget to include deadlines too. Realistic timelines are the scaffolding for your project's success.

ERP Mistake 2: Trying To Do Everything In-House

The right project team can make all the difference, and you may not have the internal skills to coordinate a new software launch.

Assess your in-house resources and decide whether to manage the project yourselves or to work with an implementation partner. Hopefully you've chosen an experienced ERP vendor, so they may be better suited to managing your rollout.

Make sure you consider both the skills and capacity your internal team can bring to the ERP project, and how their involvement with new software deployment will affect their day-to-day role. The aim is to minimize disruption.

ERP Mistake 3: Carrying Over Old Data

Data migration is a critical phase in the rollout process, but many companies mistakenly think that everything from your current system needs to be moved over to your new ERP.

Software integration is the perfect moment to take stock of your data and have a thorough cleanse. That way, you're only using accurate, relevant information in your new ERP system.

Data quality is especially important if you've chosen ERP software with built-in business intelligence (BI) tools. Your insights are only as strong as the information that underpins them.

ERP Mistake 4: Rushing Through the Testing Phase

Skipping through the testing stage is like driving while wearing a blindfold—a disaster waiting to happen.

To avoid becoming part of the 40% of ERP systems that face *major issues post-launch*, conduct detailed functionality, performance and integration tests before you go live.

Even if you're running behind schedule with your rollout, don't be tempted to cut back on testing time. It's much less disruptive to launch the system a couple of days' late than fix problems with a live ERP.

ERP Mistake 5: Not Investing in Staff Training

The true value of your new ERP lies in its users' hands. A comprehensive training program can alleviate any resistance to change and transform your team into proficient system operators.

You may find it useful to train a couple of super-users within your team, who can carry out peer-to-peer learning once your ERP vendor has shown them the ropes.

"Skipping through the testing stage is like driving while wearing a blindfold—a disaster waiting to happen."

ERP Mistake 6: Trying To Manage Technical Support Internally

Even the most reliable ERP systems encounter problems, and user errors are inevitable. That's why you need ongoing technical support. But does your internal IT person or team have the bandwidth to answer colleague queries?

As part of your implementation project, decide if your super-users can provide sufficient technical support, or if it's more practical to lean on your ERP vendor's expertise. Many SMEs find it easier to let the vendor handle system glitches to stop small issues from snowballing into larger problems.

ERP Mistake 7: Forgetting To Measure Your Success

Implementing your ERP system is just the beginning. To *ensure it delivers return on investment (ROI)*, your organization will need to regularly monitor its performance against your business goals and adjust the way you're using the platform as needed.

Celebrating the wins and sharing successes with your team will help to reinforce the value of your new system. Plus, it creates an opportunity to establish feedback loops with both your colleagues and your ERP provider, to ensure the software evolves with your business.

Steps to a Stress-Free ERP Rollout

When you're busy trying to grow your SME, the prospect of a lengthy or complex software project is unappealing. But, with thorough planning, you can avoid these common ERP implementation pitfalls and enjoy a hassle-free deployment.

And the best part? Once your new software is in place, you'll realize a host of *ERP benefits* that help you drive significant improvements throughout your business.

To make your next ERP implementation easier, we've put together a blog on the *10 Steps to a Successful ERP System Implementation*. It's tailored to SME businesses like yours to ensure your ERP system is fully integrated and drives value for your business from the start.

Article from Aptean

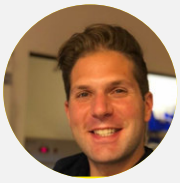
Transforming the Court: IFS.AI at the Forefront of Big Ten Baketball

This March, the Big Ten Women's and Men's Basketball Tournaments were more than just showcases of elite collegiate basketball—they were a celebration of how technology is revolutionizing sports.

As part of *IFS.ai*, we had the privilege of seeing our technology take center stage, not just as a participant but as a central factor in enhancing the sports experience for everyone involved.

Elevating Women's Basketball

During the women's tournament in Minneapolis, the energy was palpable as Caitlin Clark led the Iowa Hawkeyes to an electrifying victory. The Nebraska vs. Iowa game shattered records, becoming the most-watched Women's College Basketball Conference Tournament Game ever on CBS, drawing over three million viewers. Meanwhile, the Michigan vs. Iowa matchup set another milestone on the Big Ten Network, pulling in 1.075 million viewers—making it the network's most-watched women's sporting event. These record-breaking moments, alongside a sell-out crowd, underscored the growing popularity and excitement surrounding women's basketball—an area where IFS.ai is incredibly proud to support.



Article by
Brian Dahm,
Senior Global Brand
Activation Manager, IFS

The Unmistakable Presence of IFS.ai

Our involvement was clear throughout the tournaments. Our strategic TV branding was not only visible at center court but also behind both teams' benches, ensuring that IFS.ai was part of the action every step of the way. More significantly, our Advanced Stats brought a new layer of depth to the analysis during the games, enhancing the fan experience both in the arena and for those following along on social media.

Men's Tournament: A Continuation of Excellence

The momentum didn't stop with the women's tournament. The men's competition saw some major upsets, as the University of Illinois claimed victory. The tournament not only set new viewership records on the Big Ten Network but also showcased the growing integration of technologies like IFS.ai into the broadcast and fan experiences. Redefining how audiences engage with and enjoy the game.

Looking Ahead

As the Official Technology Partner of the Big Ten, IFS.ai is only beginning to unveil its full potential. Our role in the basketball tournaments marks just the start of our ongoing journey of innovation and partnership. With the Big Ten Baseball Championships approaching and new universities joining the conference, we're poised for even more exciting developments. Stay tuned as we continue to push the boundaries of what IFS.ai can achieve, ensuring that our partners and customers excel when it matters the most.

> "As the Official Technology Partner of the Big Ten, IFS.ai is only beginning to unveil its full potential. Our role in the basketball tournaments marks just the start of our ongoing journey of innovation and partnership."

About Brian Dahm

As Senior Global Brand Activation Manager, Brian is responsible for driving impactful sports-based brand activations and sponsorships. With extensive in sports marketing and brand management, he's dedicated to elevating the IFS brand presence and engaging audiences worldwide..

About IFS

IFS develops and delivers cloud enterprise software for companies around the world who manufacture and distribute goods, build and maintain assets, and manage service-focused operations. Within our single platform, our industry specific products are innately connected to a single data model and use embedded digital innovation so that our customers can be their best when it really matters to their customers—at the Moment of Service™. The industry expertise of our people and of our growing ecosystem, together with a commitment to deliver value at every single step, has made IFS a recognized leader and the most recommended supplier in our sector. Our team of over 5,500 employees every day live our values of agility, trustworthiness and collaboration in how we support our thousands of customers. Learn more about how our enterprise software solutions can help your business today at ifs.com.

Article by Brian Dahm

In the Era of AI, Trust Is the Essence of Business

As a business leader, basing business decisions on a new technology model like cloud computing or implementing a new technology like generative AI places a premium on trust.

Paul Saunders, head of Product Strategy and chief evangelist of Cloud ERP for SAP S/4HANA put it this way during a *recent interview:* "Trust is not the engine oil, it's the essence of business."

In the interview, Saunders explains this and other aspects of the changing relationship between humans. The former Gartner analyst believes that this changed relationship has pushed trust to the top of the corporate agenda and made SAP's commitment to relevant, reliable, and responsible business AI all the more crucial.

"The relationship between SAP and our customers for the longest time was transactional," he says. But the shift to the cloud has changed that. From the customer's perspective, in a cloud environment the SaaS vendor is effectively running the business and that requires a whole new level of trust.

As Saunders notes, "When a data center goes down the customer can't just say, 'Hey Bob, get down to the computer room and reboot the box.' Now, with AI, it's not just the data we're providing, but information and recommendations. And some of those recommendations might challenge what the person thinks intuitively."

For example, when Saunders was CIO of a golf cart maker in Georgia that shipped the carts all over the United States, he put in an early AI-based route planning package designed to optimize the deliveries of the carts to customers across the country.

But despite the potential efficiency gains promised by the technology, the CEO who had run the company for 40 years and was accustomed to relying on his own judgment overruled the software and insisted that the drivers follow his preferred delivery route.

> "As Saunders notes, "When a data center goes down the customer can't just say, 'Hey Bob, get down to the computer room and reboot the box.' Now, with AI, it's not just the data we're providing, but information and recommendations."

This resistance to change reflects a broader reluctance to embrace data-driven decision-making, with individuals often interpreting data in a way that reinforces their existing beliefs rather than challenging them.

When faced with the suggestion from a machine to do something different, most people will only follow the advice if they have solid confidence in the accuracy of the underlying data and can retain oversight of the process.

That, according to Saunders, plays to SAP's advantage. He acknowledges that SAP is sometimes considered to be "a little bit old fashioned," but also thought of as "incredibly reliable and trustworthy."

In such a fast-changing and unpredictable environment — one in which many experts, including Saunders, predict that at least one big brand name company will be in the news "for doing something terrible with AI" — SAP's commitment to delivering dependable solutions infused with relevant, reliable, and responsible business AI is key.

For Saunders, the importance of fostering trust and confidence in both the technology itself and the organizations deploying it, particularly in industries where risk aversion and conservatism are prevalent, cannot be overstated.

> "In the end, what really matters to customers is not the technology itself, but the business value that it creates."

But he also believes that organizations need to strike a balance between automation and human intervention, recognizing that while AI can streamline processes and improve efficiency, human judgment and oversight remain essential for ensuring the accuracy and reliability of AI-generated insights.

In the end, what really matters to customers is not the technology itself, but the business value that it creates. "If you go to any CEO or CFO, they will tell you they only care about three things: revenue, cost, and risk. That's it."

Ultimately, he says, "Everything we do has to show the business value."

About SAP

SAP's strategy is to help every business run as an intelligent, sustainable enterprise. As a market leader in enterprise application software, we help companies of all sizes and in all industries run at their best: SAP customers generate 87% of total global commerce. Our machine learning, Internet of Things (IoT), and advanced analytics technologies help turn customers' businesses into intelligent enterprises. SAP helps give people and organizations deep business insight and fosters collaboration that helps them stay ahead of their competition. We simplify technology for companies so they can consume our software the way they want – without disruption. Our end-to-end suite of applications and services enables business and public customers across 25 industries globally to operate profitably, adapt continuously, and make a difference. With a global network of customers, partners, employees, and thought leaders, SAP helps the world run better and improve people's lives. For more information, visit www.sap.com.

Article by Paul Taylor

The Role of ERP in Sustainable Business Practices

In today's rapidly evolving business landscape, the integration of technology and sustainable practices is becoming increasingly crucial. At the forefront of this integration are Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems, sophisticated software platforms designed to manage and streamline various business processes.

ERP systems serve as the backbone of modern enterprises, bringing together functions like finance, human resources, supply chain management, and customer relationship management into a cohesive, interconnected whole. This consolidation enables *businesses to operate more efficiently*, with enhanced data visibility and decision-making capabilities.

Simultaneously, there is a growing emphasis on sustainable business practices. As the world grapples with environmental challenges and societal expectations shift towards corporate responsibility, businesses are under mounting pressure to *adopt strategies* that are environmentally sound, socially responsible, and economically viable. Sustainable practices now go beyond mere regulatory compliance; they are integral to a company's reputation, customer loyalty, and long-term success.

In this context, *ERP systems emerge as a pivotal tool for businesses*. They are not just facilitators of operational efficiency but also enablers of sustainable practices. By integrating sustainability metrics into their core processes, *ERP systems can help businesses* track and manage their environmental impact, optimize resource usage, and make informed decisions that align with their sustainability goals. This blog will explore how *ERP systems can be effectively leveraged to implement and manage sustainable business practices*, thereby transforming the very ethos of modern enterprises towards a more sustainable future.

Understanding Sustainability in Business

Sustainability in business refers to the practice of conducting operations without negatively impacting the environment, community, or society as a whole.

This concept encompasses a broad range of activities aimed at preserving resources for future generations while maintaining profitability and competitiveness. Sustainable business practices often involve initiatives to reduce environmental damage, promote social responsibility, and ensure economic viability over the long term. These practices are not just altruistic; they are increasingly recognized as essential for long-term *business success*.

> "Regulatory pressures are increasing globally, with governments implementing stricter environmental and social governance standards. Examples of sustainability goals include reducing the carbon footprint, which involves lowering greenhouse gas emissions through energyefficient operations, renewable energy usage, and sustainable transportation."

The imperative for businesses to adopt sustainable practices stems from a combination of ethical responsibility and practical necessity. Environmentally, the world is facing challenges like climate change, resource depletion, and loss of biodiversity, which demand an urgent shift in how businesses operate. Socially, there is a growing expectation from consumers, employees, and investors for businesses to act responsibly and contribute positively to society. Economically, sustainable practices can lead to cost savings, enhanced brand reputation, and new market opportunities.

Moreover, regulatory pressures are increasing globally, with governments implementing stricter environmental and social governance standards. Examples of sustainability goals include reducing the carbon footprint, which involves lowering greenhouse gas emissions through energy-efficient operations, *renewable energy usage*, and sustainable transportation. Ethical sourcing is another critical goal, ensuring that the materials and products used by a business are obtained in a responsible and sustainable manner, respecting environmental standards and labor rights

.

Other goals can include reducing waste through recycling and upcycling, conserving water, *investing in sustainable technologies*, and promoting fair labor practices. By adopting these and other sustainability goals, businesses not only contribute to the health and well-being of the planet and its inhabitants but also position themselves as forward-thinking, responsible entities in the eyes of their stakeholders.

ERP Systems at the Core of Sustainable Strategies

Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems are pivotal in knitting together the disparate threads of a company's operations into a seamless tapestry of efficiency and oversight. These systems function as the central nervous system of a business, integrating critical processes from various departments - such as Finance, Human Resources, *Supply Chain Management*, and Customer Relationship Management - into a unified, coherent framework.

This integration is crucial for *businesses aiming to embed sustainability into their core strategies*. By centralizing data and processes, ERP systems provide a holistic view of a business's operations, allowing for more informed and cohesive decision-making.

The *role of ERP in monitoring and managing resource* use is particularly significant in the context of sustainability. These systems enable businesses to track their consumption of resources - be it energy, water, or raw materials - in real-time, offering insights into areas where waste can be reduced and efficiency can be enhanced. For instance, in manufacturing, an *ERP system* can help identify stages in the production process that consume excessive energy or generate surplus waste, pointing towards opportunities for optimization.

Moreover, *ERP systems are equipped with robust data analysis* and reporting capabilities, which are indispensable for sustainability efforts. They can collect and analyze vast amounts of data to produce detailed reports on various aspects of business operations, including their environmental and social impacts. This feature is vital for

Article by Eric Kimberling

> "For example, an ERP system can help a company track its carbon emissions, monitor its supply chain for ethical and environmental compliance, and report on sustainability initiatives in a transparent and standardized manner."

businesses to not only track their progress towards sustainability goals but also to comply with regulatory requirements and communicate their achievements to stakeholders.

For example, an ERP system can help a company track its carbon emissions, monitor its supply chain for ethical and environmental compliance, and report on sustainability initiatives in a transparent and standardized manner.

In essence, ERP systems act as the enabling technology that allows businesses to embed sustainability into their day-to-day operations and long-term strategies. They provide the necessary tools to monitor, manage, and report on sustainable practices, making them indispensable for companies looking to thrive in an increasingly environmentally conscious and regulated *business landscape.*

Challenges and Solutions in Implementing ERP for Sustainability

Implementing ERP systems for sustainability poses a unique set of challenges for businesses. Firstly, there's the complexity of *integrating sustainable practices into existing ERP systems*, which often requires significant customization. Many ERP solutions are not inherently designed with sustainability metrics in mind, necessitating additional configuration to track and manage environmental and social impact data. This can be a daunting task, particularly for businesses with *legacy systems* or those lacking in-house expertise in both sustainability and ERP technologies.

Another challenge is the resistance to change that often pervades organizations. Employees and management may be accustomed to traditional ways of working and skeptical of new processes, especially those that require learning new systems or altering established procedures. Overcoming this cultural inertia is essential for the *successful implementation of ERP for sustainability*.

To learn more about resistance to change in a Digital Transformation, check out our Digital Stratopshere Podcast episode titled - *Change Management Challenges: Navigating Organizational Transformations in the Digital Era*.

The cost of implementing and maintaining an advanced ERP system is also a significant consideration. While the long-term benefits of such an investment are clear, the initial expense and ongoing costs can be a hurdle, especially for smaller businesses or those with limited budgets.

To overcome these challenges, businesses can adopt several strategies. A phased implementation approach, for instance, can help manage complexity and ease the transition for employees. Starting with core functionalities and gradually integrating more advanced sustainability features allows for smoother adoption and minimizes disruption.

Investing in training and *change management is crucial*. Effective training programs can equip employees with the necessary skills and knowledge to use the new system effectively. Simultaneously, a *strong change management strategy* can help to build buy-in, address concerns, and foster a culture that embraces sustainable practices.

Collaborating with ERP vendors and consultants who have expertise in sustainability can also be highly beneficial. These experts can provide valuable insights into how to tailor the system to meet specific sustainability goals, and offer guidance on best practices and potential pitfalls.

For businesses looking to *integrate ERP systems* into their sustainability efforts, it's important to start with a clear understanding of their specific sustainability goals and requirements. This clarity will *guide the selection of the right ERP system* and the necessary customizations. Additionally, businesses should prioritize scalability and flexibility in their ERP solutions, ensuring that the system can adapt and grow with their evolving sustainability needs.

The Future of ERP and Sustainable Business Practices

The future of *ERP systems* and their role in sustainable business practices is poised at an exciting juncture,

marked by rapid advancements in technology. Emerging trends such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the Internet of Things (IoT) are revolutionizing ERP systems, making them not only more efficient but also more adept at promoting sustainability.

AI *integration into ERP systems* offers the potential for predictive analytics, intelligent automation, and enhanced decision-making capabilities. For instance, AI can forecast demand more accurately, reducing overproduction and waste. It can also identify patterns in energy usage or supply chain inefficiencies, suggesting optimizations that lessen environmental impact.

Similarly, IoT's role in ERP systems is groundbreaking. By connecting a myriad of sensors and devices across operations, IoT enables real-time data collection and monitoring. This level of connectivity and visibility is particularly beneficial for sustainable practices. For example, IoT devices can track the real-time energy consumption of manufacturing equipment, or monitor the conditions of goods in transit to ensure they are transported sustainably.

The potential future impact of these technological advancements on sustainable business practices is immense. Enhanced data accuracy and real-time insights can lead to more informed, sustainable decision-making and operational improvements. Businesses will be able to respond more swiftly and effectively to sustainability challenges, aligning operational processes with environmental and social goals in a way that was previously unattainable.

As these technologies continue to evolve, they will likely become integral components of ERP systems, further embedding sustainability into the fabric of business operations. The integration of AI and IoT into ERP systems can transform them from tools that simply support sustainability into drivers of sustainable innovation.

This evolving landscape presents a compelling call-to-action for businesses. For those yet to *adopt ERP systems*, now is the time to consider integrating these technologies as a foundation for sustainable business practices. For businesses already using ERP, the focus should be on upgrading and enhancing these systems with AI and IoT capabilities to fully leverage their potential in driving sustainability. The integration of advanced technologies into ERP systems is not just an operational upgrade; it is a strategic move towards a more sustainable and prosperous future.

"The potential future impact of these technological advancements on sustainable business practices is immense. Enhanced data accuracy and real-time insights can lead to more informed, sustainable decision-making and operational improvements."

Conclusion

In conclusion, the integration of *ERP systems* in sustainable business practices marks a pivotal transition in how companies operate and impact the world around them. As we have explored, ERP systems are more than mere tools for efficiency; they are vital instruments for implementing, managing, and evolving sustainable business practices. The future, fueled by advancements like AI and IoT, promises even greater integration of sustainability into the core of business operations.

Businesses, therefore, stand at a crucial juncture - to either embrace these technologies and lead in the realm of sustainable practices or to remain stagnant and risk obsolescence. As we move forward, it is clear that ERP systems will continue to be central in shaping a sustainable, responsible, and prosperous business landscape.

I would enjoy brainstorming ideas with you if you are looking to strategize for an upcoming *transformation or are looking at selecting an ERP system*. Please feel free to contact me at eric.kimberling@thirdstage-consulting.com. I am happy to be a sounding board as you continue your *digital transformation journey*.

About Eric Kimberling

Eric is known globally as a thought leader in the ERP consulting space. He has helped hundreds of high-profile enterprises worldwide with their technology initiatives, including Nucor Steel, Fisher and Paykel Healthcare, Kodak, Coors, Boeing, and Duke Energy. He has helped manage ERP implementations and reengineer global supply chains across the world.

Enhancing After-Sales Customer Experience by Leveraging Generative AI with Salesforce Automotive Cloud

One of the latest offerings in Salesforce Industry Cloud is Salesforce Automotive cloud. With its launch, most of Automotive industry leaders are looking forward to leverage benefits realized by moving to Salesforce Industry Cloud.

Also, the rise of generative AI has triggered a surge in digital transformation, pushing every industry to adapt and integrate AI in some or the other form. This isn't simply a desire, but a near-necessity due to the transformative power of generative AI.

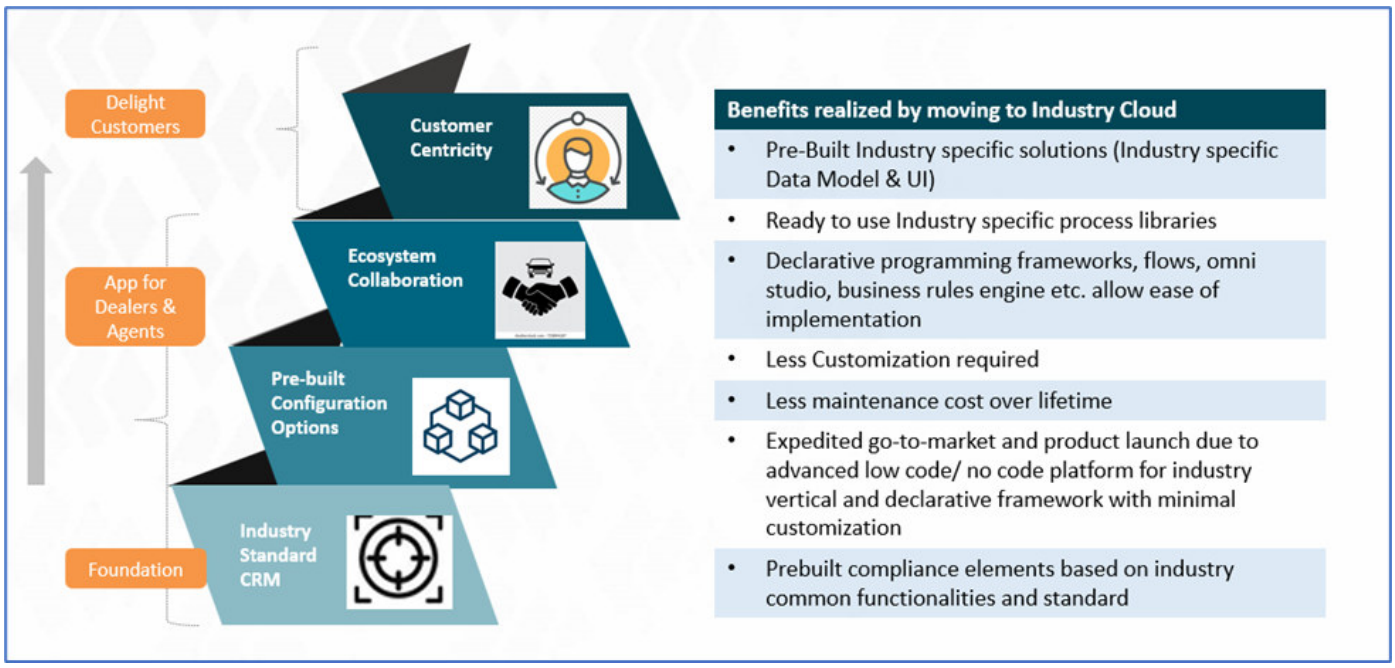
This article illustrates some of the key use cases which can potentially be beneficial in the Automotive space for enhancing customer's After-Sales experience by building Generative AI enabled features in Salesforce Automotive Cloud.

Automotive Cloud:

A typical Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) has fragment landscape leading to fragmented experiences and not having one source of truth for majority of the data. Also, the selling models have taken a huge trend upwards with customers wanting to customize the offerings from OEM seamlessly prior to purchase and would be interested to get updates w.r.t after-sales (spares, service etc.).

Automotive Cloud focusses around the customer centricity and provides enhanced customer experience. There are quite a few benefits of moving to any industry cloud solutions (Automotive cloud) as illustrated below:

Benefits of Automotive Cloud:

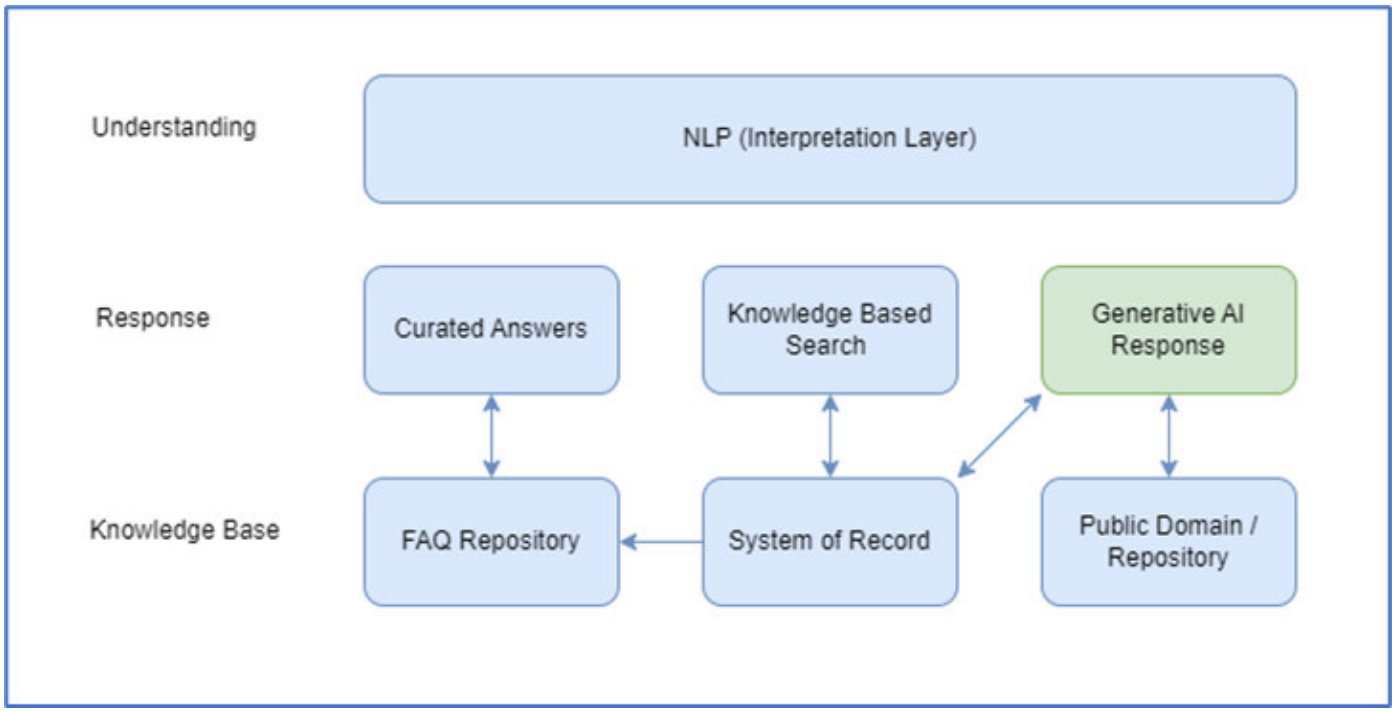


While the automotive cloud offers pre-built solutions, it becomes easier to set it up for any organization. It promotes Low Code/No Code approach, with minimal customization can achieve complex functionalities.

Generative AI:

Generative AI is one of the outcomes of artificial intelligence (AI) that focuses on creating new and unique content rather than relying on existing data. It generates new data based on the training models that we use.

At the heart of generative AI lies a complex network of artificial neurons, mimicking the human brain's structure and function. These interconnected nodes, called a neural network, analyze the data, uncovering the hidden language within. These networks are trained on massive datasets of existing content, allowing them to learn the underlying patterns and relationships within that data.



Once the AI has grasped the essence of its data, it's time to unleash its creativity. Different techniques exist, but two popular methods are:

Generative Adversarial Networks (GANs): There are two actors in GAN – the generator which invents new content and the discriminator which tries to distinguish generated content from real data. As they compete, the generator becomes adept at creating realistic and original outputs, fooling the ever-learning discriminator.

Variational Autoencoders (VAEs): These networks compress the data into a smaller code, like a secret language. They then learn to reverse the process, generating new data points based on this code. Imagine learning a new language for representing images, then using it to paint never-before-seen landscapes.

How Generative AI is disrupting the market:

Generative AI is disrupting the market in several ways by introducing novel capabilities and transforming industries. Here are a few key areas where generative AI is making an impact:

Content Generation: It can automatically generate articles, scripts, or social media posts, translation etc.

Chatbot & Virtual Assistants: Chatbots can generate human-like responses, understand user queries, and help across various domains, ranging from customer support to personal productivity.

Product Design and Code Generation: By generating and exploring numerous design options, it helps with code suggestions there by improving developer's productivity.

Image and Video Generation: Create accurate and realistic Images and Videos with given prompt which can be used across different use-cases like marketing, designing, etc.

Generative AI is a powerful tool that augments human creativity, enhances efficiency, and unlocks new possibilities. It has the potential to reshape industries, create new business opportunities, and drive innovation in ways we are only beginning to explore.

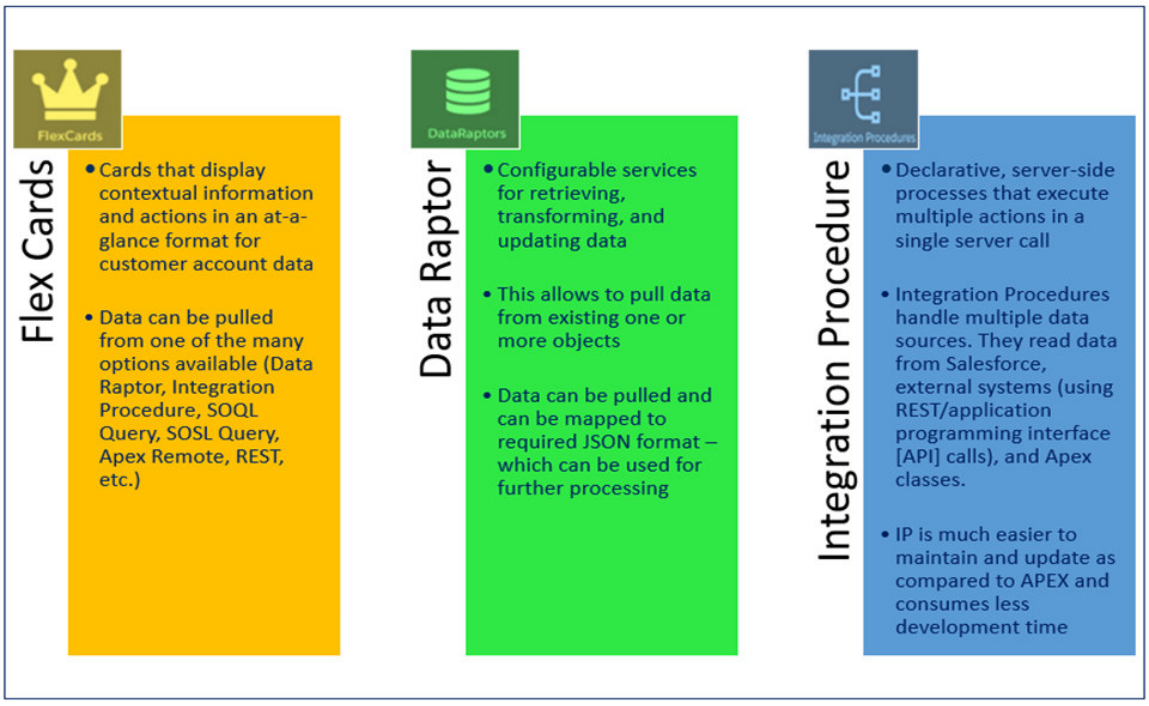
Generative AI with Automotive Cloud:

Leveraging Open AI APIs with Automotive Cloud would give Automotive manufacturers and dealers easier way to enhance the After-Sales experience of the customers. With Omni Studio, being integral part of salesforce industries, the development and integration is easier with LCNC (Low Code/No Code) tools.

For non-industry cloud offerings of Salesforce, it can be achieved using custom LWC (Lightning Web components), were this can be achieved with help of developers writing Components and Custom classes to connect with Open AI APIs.

In this article, some the use cases are listed which can be achieved in Automotive cloud integration with Open AI APIs. FlexCards can retrieve the data using Integration Procedure and Data raptor without a single line of code.

Below would be an implementation approach for the same.



Use Case(s):

Using Open AI with Automotive Cloud, Service Advisors fetch personalized suggestions which they can share with Customers without needing customer to visit the workshop/ service center.

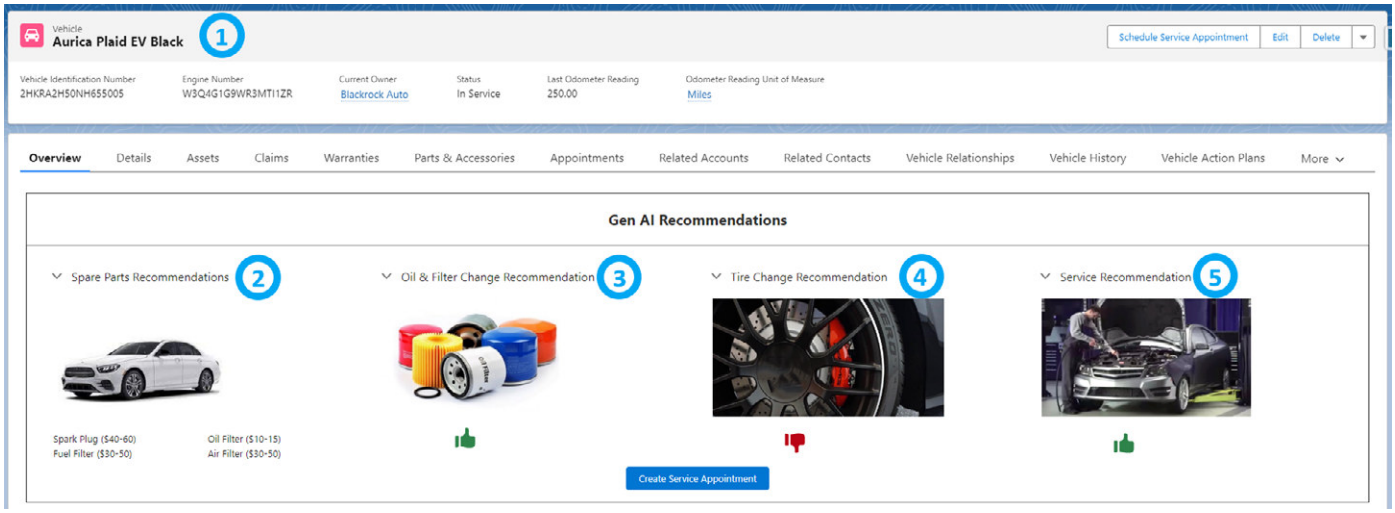
Open AI can guide customers through routine maintenance tasks and schedules. It can provide recommendations for oil changes, tire rotations, filter replacements, and other regular maintenance activities based on the manufacturer's guidelines and the vehicle's usage. Service Advisors can send customers reminders about upcoming maintenance milestones, ensuring they stay on top of their vehicle's maintenance needs.

Get Spare parts recommendations: Create a prompt (example below) and invoke Open AI API requesting for spare parts suggestions with approximate cost.

Prompt:
What parts most likely need to be replaced for a %messageBody:Year% % messageBody:Make% % messageBody:Model% with % messageBody:Milage% miles near % messageBody:City% , % messageBody:State% and average cost by part.

Sample Prompt:
What parts most likely need to be replaced for a 2020 Mercedes-Benz GLA with 45837 miles near Ahmedabad, Gujarat and average cost by part.

Sample Flex Card:
Below Flex card illustrates some Gen AI recommendations



1. Data Available in Salesforce.
2. Spare Parts Recommendations from Gen AI based on current vehicle data.
3. Oil change is recommended as part of initial service by Gen AI.
4. Tire change is not recommended.
5. Service is recommended based on last service date.

Summary:
The application of Generative AI features in Salesforce Automotive Cloud presents an enhanced After-Sales experience to customers. This combined solution allows service representatives to efficiently deliver relevant information on a single page, empowering them to provide more targeted recommendations to customers.

- ***Enhanced Customer Experience:*** Based on available owned vehicle details, Customers receive accurate and personalized recommendations, leading to a faster resolution and a more satisfying interaction.

- ***Increased Service Efficiency:*** Generative AI automates tasks like pulling recommendations based on vehicle information and suggesting part changes/ servicing, freeing up service representatives' time to focus on complex issues and build stronger customer relationships.

- ***Improved First-Call Resolution Rates:*** With all the necessary information readily available due to Generative AI automations, service representatives can address customer concerns efficiently, minimizing the need for repeat interactions.

This ensures value for both businesses and their customers.

Article by Karthik Chakrapani & Sagar Ashokbhai Solanki

Earth Day 2024 Inspires Acumatica's Ongoing Commitment to Sustainability

Earth Day happens just once a year, but its mission is to change the way people live and how businesses operate every day. And Acumatica is all in.

Each year on April 22, the world celebrates Earth Day. This year's commemoration marks the 54th year people around the globe have engaged in communal activities or quietly reflected on our natural resources and the environment's importance to our collective well-being. Over the years, this special day has evolved into the world's largest civic event and has created opportunities to galvanize people's attention, build awareness of key environmental concerns, and mobilize people to protect our planet.

Article by
Todd Wells,
Chief Marketing Officer
at Acumatica

Earth Day 2024 is, therefore, a fitting time to highlight how this annual day of celebration and recognition has contributed to the health of our planet and has inspired Acumatica as a company.

Earth Day's Sustainability Success

Earth Day has grown from being a modest idea put forth by Senator Gaylord Nelson in 1970 to being an international event that inspires billions of people—in 192 countries—to advocate for changes in the way we treat our planet. This day has sparked a movement responsible for the creation of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as well as the passage of significant environmental protection legislation, including the National Environmental Education Act, the Occupational Safety and Health Act, and the Clean Air Act. But that's not all.

Earth Day's legacy includes:

- Planting 100s of millions of trees.
- Providing 7 billion Green School Grants.
- Logging 2.7 billion "acts of green."

And with educators in 149 countries and over 36 million clean-up volunteers, Earth Day's power to motivate people and create a waste-free world has never been stronger.

Sustainability Core to the AcumatiCares Program

Earth Day and the movement it inspired have also catalyzed organizations around the world to thoughtfully consider how to make a positive impact on the environment and commit to broader sustainability goals. Sustainability is at the core of our own AcumatiCares program. It guides our efforts to protect the natural environment and make the world a better, more inclusive place for the people with whom we share it.

This commitment is evident in how we approach our events. For example, since 2021, Acumatica Summit has saved an estimated 12,586 kgs of landfill waste through our reusable landfill efforts, the equivalent weight of about 185 washing machines. Using regionally sourced aluminum over plastic water bottles saved the same amount of energy needed to charge nearly half a million cell phones.

> "Acumatica's commitment to realizing a more sustainable and responsible future is core to the values we share as a company and, together with our partners and customers, the impact we want to make as a Community."

To ensure our annual Summit—which draws thousands of customers, partners, developers, and employees in person and online to connect, learn, and discover—continues to be an environmentally sustainable event, we also:

- Printed all 2024 signage and graphics locally, reducing excess transport miles and fossil fuel burn.
- Owned, rented, and stored for reuse all Acumatica Summit assets, furniture, and décor.
- Utilized "turnkey" exhibit booth materials, which reduced exhibitor shipping and the need for custom construction.

Saved 200 Summit 2023 backpacks for use at Summit 2024 and gifted PET polyester backpacks made partially of upcycled plastic water bottles.

These achievements and the success of all of our ongoing sustainability initiatives have been recognized by *MeetGreen*, a sustainable event management agency, which designated Acumatica as an Event Sustainability Visionary for Acumatica Summit 2024.

Acumatica's Sustainability Success: Everyday Operations

Acumatica's commitment to realizing a more sustainable and responsible future is core to the values we share as a company and, together with our partners and customers, the impact we want to make as a Community. Our dedication to fostering a culture of responsibility lies at the heart of our organization and is reflected in our ongoing commitments in key areas:

Reducing Emissions: We understand the critical importance of addressing climate change and minimizing our environmental impact. Over the years, we've worked diligently to reduce our carbon footprint through energy-efficient practices, responsible resource management, and sustainable operations. In 2022 and 2023, Acumatica received a Silver Medal from EcoVadis, the world's largest supplier of

business sustainability ratings. Our Environment score places us in the top 23% of companies in our industry, which is a testament to our ongoing efforts and progress. But we know our journey is far from over.

Culture of Responsibility: Responsibility is embedded in our company culture. Our approach to sustainability and

our commitment to core environmental, social, and governance principles is factored into all of our business decisions and is reinforced in actions and decisions beyond just profit margins.

Our cloud-based business solution contributes to broader sustainability efforts. For example, small and midsized businesses that replace their on-premises solutions with our cloud ERP product save money and energy while also reducing their carbon emissions. For Acumatica, we ensure peak operating efficiency by having a partially remote workforce, reducing our electricity use, limiting business travel, holding virtual meetings when possible, and actively promoting recycling and reuse programs.

Our ongoing sustainability efforts have enabled Acumatica to proudly become a *Climate Neutral Certified* company.

> "Earth Day 2024 is an opportunity to rededicate ourselves to our ongoing commitment to care for our planet and make a measurable difference to our local and global communities."

Ultimately, we're committed to setting near-and-long-term companywide emission reductions, which are in line with the *SBTi*'s (Science Based Targets) Corporate Net-Zero Standard. We're excited to take part in the *UN Global Compact*, a "voluntary initiative based on CEO commitments to implement universal sustainability principles and to support UN goals."

Moving Forward Sustainably—Together

Through every decision we take, we are forging a path that reflects our dedication to a brighter future for our planet and our people. Moving forward, we intend to continue making huge strides in fostering a clean, healthy environment and a more welcoming, inclusive world. We'll remain proud stewards of our forests and lands by continuing our memberships with *ForestNation* and *Tree-Nation*—two organizations passionately promoting reforestation.

We'll also continue to support global and local organizations with environmental and humanitarian missions, such as *Wellspring Family Services*, *Boys & Girls Clubs*, the *World Central Kitchen*, *The Trevor Project*, and *Pasado's Safe Haven*.

Earth Day 2024 is an opportunity to rededicate ourselves to our ongoing commitment to care for our planet and make a measurable difference to our local and global communities. But even as we do our part, we believe making a true difference takes collective action. Join us in working to make the future bright by visiting EARTHDAY.ORG to find ways to get involved.

ERP Software for Metal Fabrication Companies

The metal fabrication industry is characterized by a high percentage of small to mid-sized fabrication companies that supply larger manufacturers in a wide array of industries, including automobiles, electronics and construction. A single metal fabricator might produce components and sub-assemblies to customers in these different fields, all of whom create products with wildly different end uses. ERP software for metal fabrication companies by abas ERP.

One of the most unique challenges metal fabrication companies face is the need to accommodate different customer preferences in the way the components are delivered. For example, a custom manufacturer may need a metal fabrication supplier to take on a design-to-order project. This means the fabricator will need to have a flexible process that allows for accurate cost estimates and frequent changes to the design - often right in the middle of production.

In other instances, that same fabricator may be called upon to produce a high quantity of a standard part. Regardless, a metal fabricator must be able to handle a number of complex customer requests as efficiently and effectively as possible to stay ahead of the fierce competition that defines this industry.

To do this, metal fabricators rely on robust enterprise resource planning systems that support and augment their sometimes unusual processes without causing delays or unnecessary mistakes. Here are a few of the most important functions that a good ERP software for metal fabrication companies will offer this tumultuous industry:

Article from ABAS

Integration with CAD software

A simple and seamless integration of an ERP system with computer-aided design software is an essential feature for the metal fabrication industry. Any ERP software for metal fabrication companies has to provide the ability to integrate data from a CAD system with the rest of the process - production, scheduling, bills of materials and so on.

> "Metal fabricators need to manage inventory for many of their materials using dimensional units of measurement. They need to be able to switch between these dimensions and standard units of measurement as easily as possible."

This is especially important for custom jobs. A customer may submit a design for a new part, but then need to change the design halfway through the production process. An ERP system that is in sync with the CAD software can instantly take the design changes seen in the CAD drawing and translate them across the entire system, making it easy to get accurate cost estimates for quotes, procure the necessarily materials and schedule labor and capacity for production.

It's extremely important that the system be able to quickly and accurately take customer requirements, create a design, develop an estimated cost, deliver a quote that satisfies the customer and turns a profit for the metal fabricator.

Without that level of flexibility, the slightest change to a project can stall the entire process and possibly lead to financial losses in the event of an inaccurate price quote.

Advanced planning capability

Metal fabricators have similar planning needs to other industries - labor, materials, scheduling, subcontractors and other facets to routine production. Most ERP software for metal fabrication companies have these processes as standard features, but metal fabricators also need their systems to accommodate some more specific functions.

Metal fabricators also need to manage inventory for many of their materials using dimensional units of measurement. They need to be able to switch between these dimensions and standard units of measurement as easily as possible.

For example, most fabricators work with sheets and coils, which are measured in square feet or inches. That sheet will be machined into parts that are measured in standard units. To maximize the use of every sheet and eliminate waste, fabricators must be able to accurately and quickly convert these units of measurements for each specific part. A good ERP system will be equipped to do these kinds of automatic conversions to ensure that materials are used to their fullest potential.

Material management/lot control

As with most industries, quality control is quickly changing from a "nice-to-have" into a "must-do." Because the components and subassemblies manufactured by metal fabricators are used in such a wide range of industries, regulations and standards that govern each end use often call for traceability. The specs and tolerances that metal fabricators must meet are generally very strict, so being able to track lots throughout the entire supply chain is essential for quality control purposes.

For example, if a certain model of automobile is recalled due to defective components, the OEM will want to know who made the components and what vehicles have them. This means that its supplier will also have to determine where the defect occurred, what vendor supplied the material, who handled it, etc.

> "A document management system is a must for a complex industry like metal fabrication. An ERP software for metal fabrication companies should have one integrated, and it must be able to connect these documents to a specific customer, vendor, product or event (a receipt from a customer, shipment notice, etc.)."

Data archiving and document storage are included in ERP software for metal fabrication

A document management system is a must for a complex industry like metal fabrication. An ERP software for metal fabrication companies should have one integrated, and it must be able to connect these documents to a specific customer, vendor, product or event (a receipt from a customer, shipment notice, etc.).

These documents are crucial for accounting and compliance purposes, and they must be easily accessible for effective product management.

Additionally, the document archive should be available, with appropriate security access, to customers and vendors as well. This makes it easy for everyone in the supply chain to view key documents and the complete history of interactions between each stakeholder.

Competition in the metal fabrication industry is fierce, and with outsourcing, logistical and economic pressures mounting, metal fabricators need ways to get closer to their customers, improve operational efficiency and gain a competitive advantage. A robust ERP software for metal fabrication companies can facilitate all of these improvements.

ABAS

Driving Progress in Sustainability, Adoption, and AI: The 2024 SAP Innovation Award Winners

It is no secret that I have had technology in my blood since I was young, having received my first computer at age 12 and learned programming at 14. We founded our first company at 17 and, as time went on, we created our first professional application — a mini ERP system to help photographers with their business. With that, I began to realize the power of technological improvements for businesses and how enterprise software impacts lives in general.

For example, the introduction of low-code/no-code has made application development accessible to everyone in an organization — with or without a technical background — to improve experiences for everyone. Just take Dak, the then 12-year-old junior app developer from Massachusetts, who was part of my *SAP TechEd keynote in 2022*. With SAP Build solutions, Dak was able to develop all kinds of apps and publish them to a wide audience, such as the "Knowledge 4 Ever" app that offers kids a playful learning experience during summer break.

Then, there are cloud technologies that further boost accessibility and offer other benefits. Generative artificial intelligence (AI) has put more power into more hands. Another advancement, composable technology, will make it easier for businesses to quickly assemble, reassemble, and compose solutions to meet their needs and those of their customers.

Article by
Juergen Mueller,
Member of the Executive Board of SAP SE; Chief Technology Officer

Over the course of my 11-year journey at SAP, the SAP Innovation Awards have served as a one-of-a-kind global platform to showcase customers and partners that have used their creativity, teamwork, SAP products, and cloud technologies to achieve remarkable results. This year, though, is a different experience for me. As an executive sponsor of the awards, I've had the privilege of experiencing up close what makes this program and the participating businesses so special.

Today, I am thrilled to announce the *2024 SAP Innovation Award winners*. Out of 170 businesses, one in three were chosen as finalists and now the winners have been announced. These winners come from various industries and locations worldwide. What all of them share is the use of SAP products and technologies to create innovative solutions for their customers, employees, and communities. Congratulations to all participants for demonstrating remarkable abilities and highlighting the importance of curiosity and continuous learning!

AI Plays a Critical Role

Generative AI has empowered more people. Many of the participants have utilized SAP Business AI to boost their businesses. Take the winner *Martur Fompak*, one of the world's leading suppliers of automotive seat systems, which has leveraged SAP solutions, including SAP AI Launchpad and SAP AI Core, to revolutionize cockpit customization. When personalizing cockpit elements such as seats, door panels, and dashboards, OEMs and customers can see the carbon impact of each choice. By providing and promoting more sustainable and environmentally friendly options, Martur Fompak has decreased carbon emissions by 34% for each seat the company produces. AI has also helped the company increase its efficiency to achieve calculations 50 times faster than with manual methods and accelerate data collection by 75 times.

> "By providing and promoting more sustainable and environmentally friendly options, Martur Fompak has decreased carbon emissions by 34% for each seat the company produces."

Sustainability for a Better World Today – and Tomorrow

Technology has significantly contributed to improving lives, both within and beyond business contexts. Numerous winners like Martur Fompak have prioritized sustainability. Let us look at one more innovator in this area: *González Byass S.A.*

A producer of high-quality sherries, González Byass is committed to the circular economy concept of eliminating waste, circulating materials, and regenerating nature. The company deploys sustainable and water-saving agricultural techniques. To assist with eliminating and recycling waste, González Byass turned to SAP and SAP Responsible Design and Production. The company needed a faster, more transparent way to gather and manage data, specifically around the purchase and use of plastic. With SAP Responsible Design and Production, González Byass can quickly and effectively monitor, measure, and act on data. The company recovers 99% of the waste generated during production while recycling 100% of paper, cardboard, glass, and plastic.

Adoption Can Be Challenging

Even top technologies such as AI may need support to gain widespread acceptance. Many of this year's winners have been innovative with their focus on adopting SAP technology. *Vestas Wind Systems A/S* is a prime example.

A leader in onshore/offshore wind energy production, Vestas wanted to improve its supplier and partner collaboration and selected SAP for the task. Vestas began its journey with SAP in 2007 by employing SAP ERP Central Component and consolidating to ONE ERP in 2015. Since 2017, the company has been transforming its digital procurement for supplier collaboration with SAP Ariba solutions. Last year, Vestas began to build out its value chain alongside suppliers and partners with SAP Business Network, enabling data transparency and connectivity in finance, production planning, and logistics management. As a result, 6,000 suppliers were onboarded, US$12.5 billion in purchase orders was executed, 350,000 orders were confirmed, and 25,000 advance ship notices were generated, to name a few transactions — all in 2023.

Article by Juergen Mueller

> "A leader in onshore/offshore wind energy production, Vestas wanted to improve its supplier and partner collaboration and selected SAP for the task."

I am happy to say that the 2024 SAP Innovation Awards honor businesses that have demonstrated their innovation and effective use of SAP products and technologies. They've adapted to and met the ever-changing needs of their customers and communities and, as I wrote earlier, achieved remarkable results in diverse areas. Congratulations to all winners!

The Winners Shine in Seven Categories

If you're curious about the path to victory for our winners, learn more in this article. Thirty winners were selected, covering the following categories:

- ***Business Innovator***, focusing on transforming the supply chain, processes, or business networks using cloud solutions from SAP
- ***Industry Leader***, for employing SAP solutions to address big challenges and change how business is conducted
- ***Experience Wizard***, for achieving business transformation with cloud solutions from SAP to improve employee and customer experiences
- ***Sustainability Hero***, achieving sustainability with leading-edge solutions
- ***Services Supernova***, for outstanding achievements in transforming businesses into sustainable enterprises
- ***Transformation Titan***, demonstrating exceptional innovation and transformational leadership in using SAP Business Technology Platform (SAP BTP)
- ***Partner Paragon***, for accelerating the adoption of SAP BTP

About SAP

SAP's strategy is to help every business run as an intelligent, sustainable enterprise. As a market leader in enterprise application software, we help companies of all sizes and in all industries run at their best: SAP customers generate 87% of total global commerce. Our machine learning, Internet of Things (IoT), and advanced analytics technologies help turn customers' businesses into intelligent enterprises. SAP helps give people and organizations deep business insight and fosters collaboration that helps them stay ahead of their competition. We simplify technology for companies so they can consume our software the way they want – without disruption. Our end-to-end suite of applications and services enables business and public customers across 25 industries globally to operate profitably, adapt continuously, and make a difference. With a global network of customers, partners, employees, and thought leaders, SAP helps the world run better and improve people's lives. For more information, visit www.sap.com.

About Juergen Mueller

Juergen Mueller is Chief Technology Officer (CTO) and a member of the Executive Board of SAP SE. He leads the Technology & Innovation Board area at SAP and has successfully established SAP Business Technology Platform (SAP BTP) as the platform for SAP and as an external business unit. SAP BTP brings together application development and automation, data management, analytics and planning, integration, and generative artificial intelligence capabilities into one unified environment optimized for SAP applications. In his mandate as CTO, he will prepare SAP for its accelerated Cloud growth. In addition to SAP BTP, he is responsible for architecture decisions and innovations across SAP as well as Business Transformation Management with SAP Signavio and LeanIX. Global security and Cloud compliance are also part of his responsibility. Since joining SAP in 2013, Juergen has held distinct leadership roles, serving as the Head of the Innovation Center Network, Managing Director of SAP Labs Berlin, and SAP's Chief Innovation Officer. In 2019, Juergen was appointed to the Executive Board of SAP SE as CTO, taking on responsibilities for SAP's platform and development unit. Juergen holds a diploma in business informatics from the University of Goettingen, Germany, and holds a PhD with emphasis on new applications optimized for in-memory databases from the Hasso-Plattner-Institute in Potsdam, Germany. In 2020, Juergen was included on Fortune's 40 Under 40 and joined the World Economic Forum's Community of Chief Digital Officers.

Protera Deepens SAP Expertise with Managecore Acquisition

Protera Technologies (Protera), a global provider of SAP and Cloud Managed Services, announces the acquisition of Managecore. Based in Franklin, Wisconsin, Managecore is a leading provider of RISE with SAP and broader public cloud-focused SAP services. The acquisition deepens Protera's commitment to SAP and brings strong expertise in Google Cloud Platform, which complements Protera's long-standing partnerships with AWS and Azure. This unique combination of capabilities and global support creates a market-leading specialist for SAP on public cloud.

Since it's founding in 2016, Managecore has built a strong reputation of helping enterprise clients manage SAP in the public cloud. Managecore was among the earliest Google Cloud Platform partners to specialize in SAP and one of the first SAP partners to release a companion solution for RISE with SAP.

Mike BeDell, CEO at Protera, said: "The acquisition of Managecore reflects our strong commitment to SAP and their promotion of RISE with SAP globally. Protera's advanced Cloud Managed Services will now offer an even wider range of hyperscaler choices for our clients. Managecore brings an impressive level of capacity and capability to our already robust SAP practice. We look forward to having Frank Powell, Nick Miletich, and the rest of Managecore team join Protera."

Frank Powell, President/Partner at Managecore, added: "I am excited to announce our acquisition by Protera. This marks a pivotal milestone in our company's journey as we become an integral part of the Protera organization. Joining forces with Protera opens up a new horizon of opportunities for our clients, including access to global support teams and an expanded services portfolio. Together, I am confident we can deliver even greater value to clients and I look forward to working with Mike and team to continue building the combined business."

The acquisition of Managecore is effective immediately.

About Protera Technologies

For over 25 years, our mission has been to empower enterprises to achieve their modernization objectives with improved value, increased quality, and reduced risk. As the next-generation cloud modernization company, Protera's full suite of services range from IT strategy and design to implementation and management. Protera is a global SAP® partner certified in Hosting, Cloud, Application Management, Global Outsourcing, and SAP HANA Operations Services. Visit protera.com for more information, or call (877) 707-7683.

Press Release from Protera

7 Changes Manufacturing CFOs are Making Today

The role of Chief Financial Officer (CFO) has evolved over the years to become a critical player in modern businesses. CFOs are now leading the charge in manufacturing businesses, responsible for ensuring that financial operations run smoothly while also providing insight into the overall health of the business.

The manufacturing industry is undergoing a significant transformation, driven by rapid technological advancements, changing consumer preferences, and evolving regulatory frameworks. Manufacturing businesses are facing unprecedented challenges as they seek to remain competitive, profitable, and sustainable in the face of these changes. CFOs are at the forefront of these changes, playing a critical role in driving strategic decision-making and ensuring financial stability.

White Paper by
Joddi Goertzen
Continuous Improvement Leader
and Senior Financial Consultant
Global Shop SOLUTIONS

Change 1

Embracing Automation

CFOs are increasingly turning to automation to simplify financial operations and increase efficiency. Automation tools such as robotic process automation (RPA) and machine learning algorithms can help automate routine tasks such as data entry, invoicing, and payroll processing, freeing up finance teams to focus on higher value-added activities. With the rise of Industry 4.0 and the Internet of Things (IoT), automation is becoming a key driver of productivity, quality, and safety in manufacturing businesses.

BENEFITS: Automation can reduce errors, improve compliance, increase speed and accuracy, and lower costs associated with manual processes.

CHALLENGES: Implementing automation tools requires significant investment in technology and training and may require changes to existing processes and workflows.

RECOMMENDATIONS: CFOs should assess their current financial processes and identify areas where automation can provide the most significant benefits. They should also work closely with IT teams to ensure that automation tools are implemented effectively and securely.

Change 2

Implementing Data Analytics and Artificial Intelligence

CFOs are embracing data analytics and artificial intelligence (AI) to gain deeper insights into financial performance and drive better decision-making. Advanced analytics tools can help CFOs identify trends, patterns, and anomalies in financial data, providing valuable insights into revenue streams, costs, and profitability. AI can help automate data analysis, predict future outcomes, and improve forecasting accuracy.

BENEFITS: Data analytics and AI can provide CFOs with real-time insights into financial performance, improve forecasting accuracy, and drive better decision-making.

CHALLENGES: Implementing data analytics and AI requires significant investment in technology, data management, and education. It may also require changes to existing processes and workflows.

RECOMMENDATIONS: CFOs should develop a comprehensive data strategy that includes data governance, management, and analysis. They should also invest in talent development to ensure that finance teams have the skills needed to leverage data analytics and AI effectively.

> "CFOs should develop a comprehensive data strategy that includes data governance, management, and analysis."

Change 3

Adopting Sustainability Initiatives

CFOs are taking a more active role in sustainability initiatives, recognizing the importance of environmental, social, and governance (ESG) factors in driving long-term value creation. Sustainable manufacturing practices can help reduce waste, minimize carbon emissions, and enhance brand reputation, while also improving financial performance.

BENEFITS: Adopting sustainability initiatives can help manufacturing businesses reduce costs, increase efficiency, improve employee engagement, and enhance brand reputation.

CHALLENGES: Implementing sustainability initiatives requires significant investment in processes and talent development. It may also require changes to existing supply chain and operational practices.

RECOMMENDATIONS: CFOs should work closely with sustainability teams to develop a comprehensive sustainability strategy that aligns with business objectives. They should also identify opportunities for investment in renewable energy, waste reduction, and carbon footprint reduction.

Change 4

Enhancing Cybersecurity Measures

CFOs are increasingly focused on enhancing cybersecurity measures to protect financial data and ensure business continuity. Manufacturing businesses are particularly vulnerable to cyber threats due to their reliance on interconnected systems and sensitive financial data. CFOs must work closely with IT teams to implement robust cybersecurity measures that protect against data breaches and other cyber threats.

BENEFITS: Enhancing cybersecurity measures can reduce the risk of data breaches, protect against financial loss, and enhance brand reputation.

CHALLENGES: Implementing robust cybersecurity measures requires significant investment in data and risk management practices.

RECOMMENDATIONS: CFOs should work closely with IT teams to develop a comprehensive cybersecurity strategy that includes risk assessment, vulnerability testing, and incident response planning. They should also invest in employee education to ensure they have the skills needed to identify and mitigate cyber threats.

Change 5

Improving Risk Management Practices

CFOs are taking a more active role in risk management, recognizing the importance of identifying and mitigating financial risks. Effective risk management practices can help manufacturing businesses avoid costly mistakes, respond to emerging threats, and protect against financial loss. CFOs must work closely with other stakeholders to identify and prioritize financial risks, develop risk mitigation strategies, and monitor risk exposure.

BENEFITS: Improving risk management practices can reduce the risk of financial loss, enhance business agility, and improve decision-making.

CHALLENGES: Implementing effective risk management practices requires significant investment in risk management frameworks.

RECOMMENDATIONS: CFOs should identify and prioritize financial risks, establish risk management frameworks, and develop risk mitigation strategies.

Change 6

Investing in Talent Development

CFOs are recognizing the importance of investing in talent development to build a high-performing finance team. As the role of finance becomes more strategic and technology-driven, CFOs must ensure that finance teams have the skills needed to navigate complex financial challenges and leverage emerging technologies. CFOs must work closely with HR teams to identify talent gaps, develop training programs, and recruit top talent.

BENEFITS: Investing in talent development can improve financial performance, enhance decision-making, and increase employee engagement.

CHALLENGES: Investing in talent development requires significant investment in training, recruitment, and talent management practices.

"Investing in talent development can improve financial performance, enhance decisionmaking, and increase employee engagement."

RECOMMENDATIONS: CFOs should work closely with HR to identify top talent and where each can improve and then identify programs and plans to retain and grow their employee base.

Change 7

Integrating Financial and Operational Data

CFOs are recognizing the importance of integrating financial and operational data to gain a comprehensive view of business performance. By integrating data from various sources, CFOs can gain insights into operational efficiency, product quality, and customer satisfaction. This can help drive better decision-making and improve financial performance over the long term.

BENEFITS: Integrating financial and operational data can provide a comprehensive view of business performance, enhance decisions, and drive continuous improvement.

CHALLENGES: Integrating financial and operational data requires significant time to identify where all the data is and how to incorporate it for best use. It may also require changes to existing processes and workflows.

RECOMMENDATIONS: CFOs should work closely with IT teams to develop a comprehensive data management strategy that includes data integration, governance, and analysis. Ensure that finance teams have the skills needed to leverage integrated data effectively.

CFOs must take a more strategic and robust role, driving innovation and growth through initiatives such as automation, data analytics and AI, sustainability, cybersecurity, risk management, talent development, and data integration. By embracing these changes, manufacturing businesses can benefit from improved financial performance, increased efficiency, enhanced sustainability, and reduced risk exposure. If CFOs sit on the sidelines, or worse ignore, these changes, you and your business will be left behind.

"CFOs must take a more strategic and robust role, driving innovation and growth through initiatives such as automation, data analytics and AI, sustainability, cybersecurity, risk management, talent development, and data integration."

About Joddi Goertzen

Joddi Goertzen has held the titles of Senior Accountant, Accounting Manager, Controller, Director of Finance & VP of Finance and Business Development during her career. She is now Team Lead and Senior Financial Consultant for Global Shop Solutions' Continuous Improvement Team where she helps customers improve processes and simplify operations.

About Global Shop Solutions

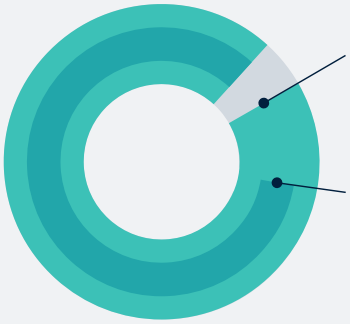
Global Shop Solutions ERP software provides the applications needed to deliver a quality part on time every time from quote to cash and everything in between including shop management, scheduling, inventory, accounting, quality control, CRM and 25 more. Available in the cloud or on premise, our manufacturing customers benefit from real-time inventory accuracy, improved on-time delivery, lower administrative costs, increased sales and improved customer service. Headquarters in The Woodlands, Texas includes a state-of-the-art R&D facility and Global Shop Solutions training center. Through its offices in the U.S., Mexico, Indonesia, Singapore, Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom, the company supports thousands of manufacturing facilities in over 25 countries and more than 30 industries.

How to invest in sustainability by investing in technology— the "Genius of the And"

In 2023, should you invest more in digital transformation or more in sustainability projects? With the "Genius of the And," you can do both. Explore this insight and more from our annual global survey of IT decision-makers worldwide.

If you just have 30 seconds, read this. If you have a bit more time, jump ahead.

In our annual survey of CEOs around the world, we asked about the balance between digital transformation and sustainability projects. While 95% of companies consider sustainability a top or high priority, 84% admit that it takes a back seat to commercial objectives in tougher economic times. In contrast, technology investment remains a mainstay of corporate strategy, with 69% of CEOs planning to divert resources from other areas into their digital transformation efforts, and 27% stating that they already have enough budget for it. Companies that prioritize digital transformation in tough economic times tend to be more resilient and better equipped to weather future storms. However, companies that think about sustainability and digital transformation together, using the "Genius of the And" approach, will set themselves apart.



95% of companies consider sustainability a top or high priority

BUT

84% admit that it takes a back seat to commercial objectives

What now?

Welcome to the 2023 Reality Check

In every challenge, there is opportunity. And the world has not been short of challenges in the last few years. Taking them all on—even listing them—is a monumental task, but we can broadly group them into two buckets: economic and altruistic. On the economic side we see the macro and micro forces that are pushing companies to be more efficient, more diverse and more risk averse. On the altruistic side we see the need to be more conscious of the environment, of society and overall responsibility.

These two seemingly opposing forces have been on a collision course for some time. Creating questions for business leaders around 'how can we do what's in the best interests of all stakeholders'. The 'responsible' or altruistic options are rarely the cheapest, so when faced with a squeeze from an economic perspective, it seems impossible to continue with them whilst keeping investors and shareholders happy with annual or quarterly returns.

While the specifics of the sustainability challenge may be relatively new, the complexity of this kind of decision making is not a new paradigm. It's what *business writer Jim Collins* labelled the "Tyranny of the Or"—the idea that these very different goals have to be in opposition to one another. The solution is the 'Genius of the And': the ability to embrace two extremes at the same time and using dialectic methods to synthesize these initiatives, turning a challenge into an opportunity.

The definition of *digital transformation* is often debated, but we would define digital as being able to collect, collate, analyze, share, operate and act on data. Becoming a truly *connected enterprise* requires the kind of transformation where that data flows throughout every corner of the business and is accessible to anyone. So, what is sustainability transformation? It's very similar. It's the process of bringing together the cultural, technological and process changes needed to be more sustainable. Can these two things be fused with the Genius of the And?

This theory is very easy to buy into, but extremely hard to execute. Especially when looking at balance sheets that show that something has to be cut, something has to skew the numbers back into the right margins. The things that go are almost always the investments that don't directly contribute to revenue coming in, they're on the altruistic end of the scale. As a result, one of the things that is often top of the list is sustainability.

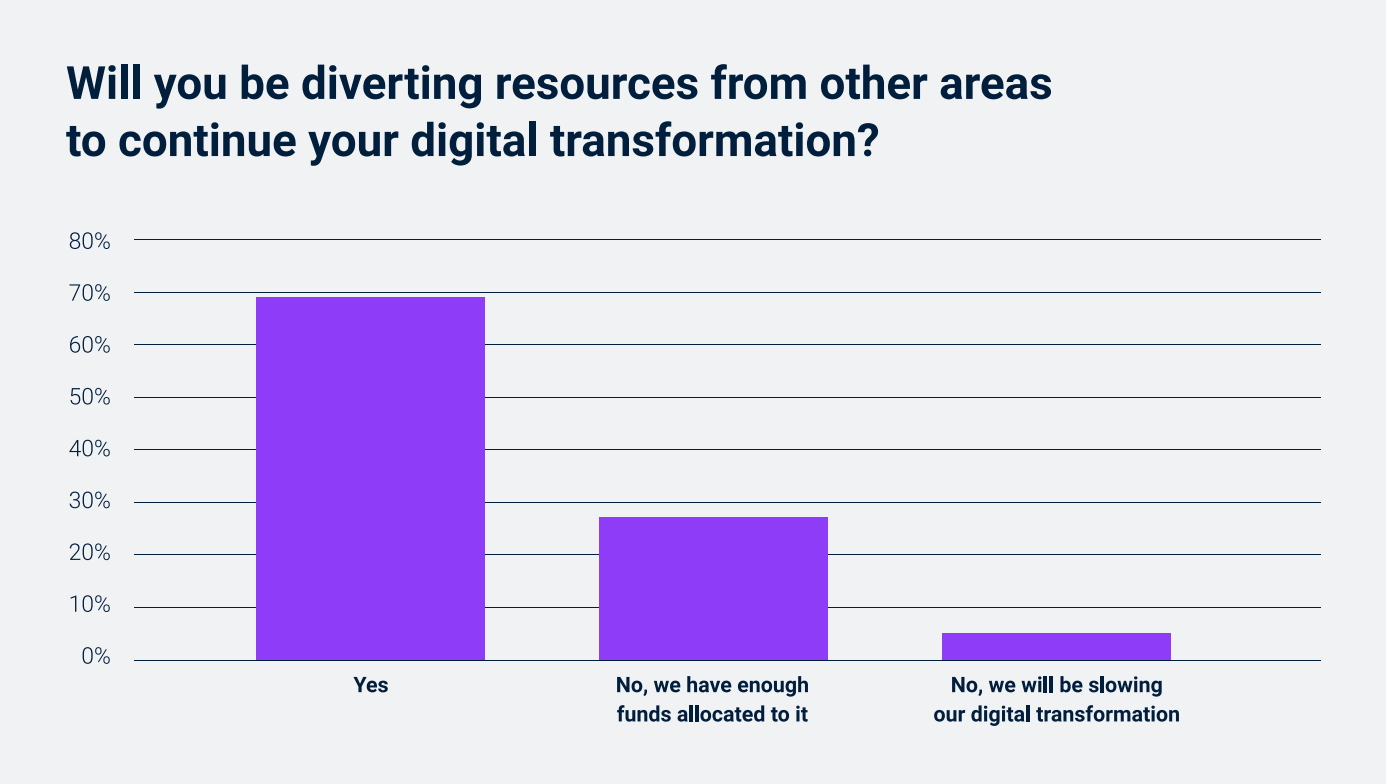
> "One of the first things we found is that companies are no doubt committed to sustainability as a mission —95% say that it is either a top or a high priority."

But does it have to be so? We commissioned some independent research to look into the issue. To try and find out what's stopping companies from achieving more when it comes to *sustainability*. Can organizations find the Genius of the And when it comes to their digital roadmaps?

One of the first things we found is that companies are no doubt committed to sustainability as a mission—95% say that it is either a top or a high priority. But on the surface, they are struggling to truly connect it with other priorities: 84% candidly admit that sustainability takes a back seat to commercial objectives in tougher economic times.

By contrast, technology investment has become a mainstay of corporate strategy. Investment in technology remains high in the face of economic uncertainty, according to a Software AG-commissioned poll of CEOs. A large majority (83%) say that they will, in fact, increase their investments in their existing technology in times of economic downturn. Investments in new tech, new talent and employee development are also slated to increase.

The fact that business leaders are bullish about weathering the economic storm is likely a sign of their experience that these situations pass. They have also seen that investment in digital transformation makes them more resilient. So much so, that 69% of CEOs plan to divert resources from other areas into their digital transformation efforts, with 27% saying that they don't need to because they already have enough budget.



Doubling down on existing investments makes a lot of sense—we know from *previous research* that the COVID-19 pandemic caused a significant increase in *technical debt*. We also know from this year's data that around 21% of IT budgets are being focused on managing that technical debt—an essential part of not only ensuring ROI, but also of optimizing digital transformation.

The investment and confidence shown by business leaders in digital transformation is highly encouraging and should ensure greater resilience for their organizations. However, sustainability does not enjoy the same level of confidence. That could be because 84% of companies see digital and sustainability transformation as separate initiatives. However, that only strengthens the need for the Genius of the And to be applied.

84% of companies see digital and sustainability transformation as separate initiatives.

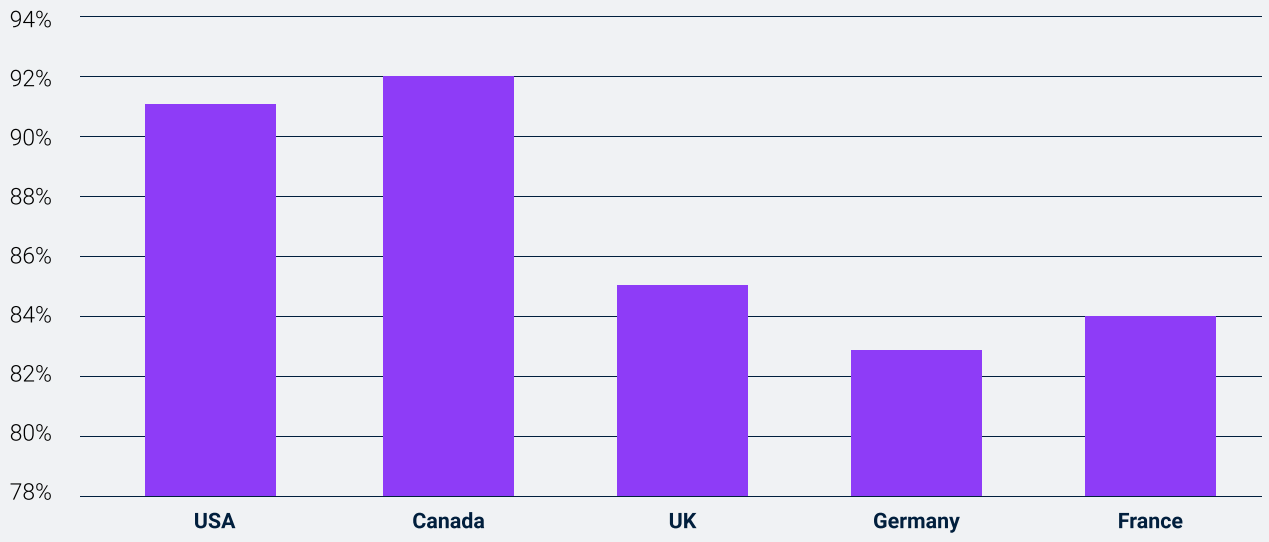
But before we dive into the "Genius of the And" though, let's take a look at why the idea that sustainability can't contribute to the bottom line is a false one. If we can help these initiatives win more hearts and minds, perhaps that will help elevate the status of sustainability.

Why drop sustainability if it's good for business?

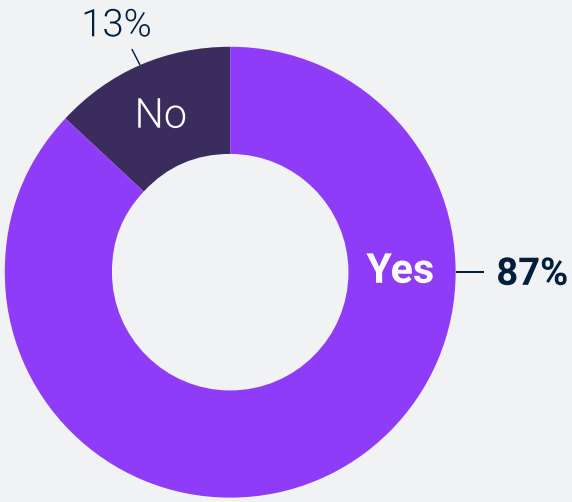
One of the first misconceptions to address is that sustainability initiatives don't help the business. While it's true that the link between sustainability and the bottom line isn't always the most direct one, there are a number of ways in which strong, transparent sustainability initiatives do support the growth of the business.

Companies want to buy from other companies who are serious about sustainability. Almost every one (97%) says that the sustainability credentials of an organization are either essential or important in their buying decisions. The same number say that the sustainability positioning of a product they're buying has a strong influence on whether they will buy it. This is a strong connection between top line sales and sustainability policy and could be enough on its own to prompt more investment. But there's more.

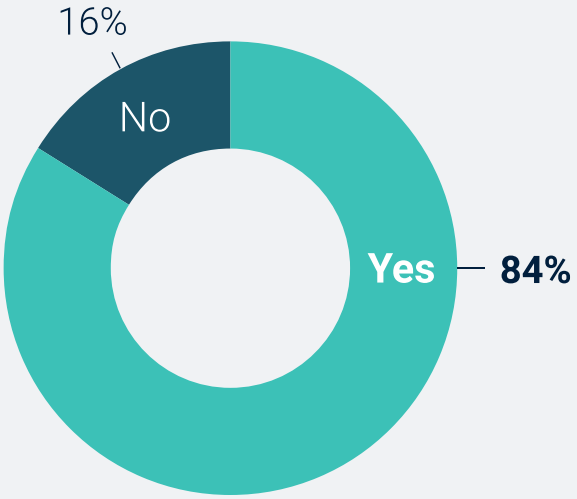
Company will lose investors



Will your company likely lose **investors?**



Will your company likely lose **employees?**



Employees, especially younger generations, value sustainability. In fact 84% of companies believe that they are likely to lose employees without a clear *sustainability strategy*. The skills gap, especially in technology, is vast. Getting the right skills in place is essential for ensuring both efficient operations and high quality products and services for customers. The connection between skills and sustainability is clearly already real. *Deloitte research* shows that 90% of Gen Z and millennials make an effort to reduce their own environmental impact, with only 18% saying that their employers are committed to fighting climate change.

You get a compelling picture when faced with 37% who reject jobs based on personal ethics and 29% who would leave their employer within a year because that company doesn't match their values (the latter data coming from *EY research*). The skills gap is a major issue for organizations, and while a majority are increasing their investments in hiring, they may not be setting themselves up for success if they aren't able to retain that talent. Another strong reason to think about sustainability. And yet, there's more.

Investors will look at sustainability. A large majority of companies (87%) believe that they will lose investors if they don't have a clear sustainability strategy. It's easy to dismiss this stance as overly-fearful, but there are signs of this being institutionalized. In the US, *the Labor Department issued new pro-ESG rules*, the *EU* and the *SEC* have both either issued disclosure rules, or are preparing them, and investment rates in ESG are 'soaring'. While these regulations don't represent the will of individual investors, they are likely to usher in a cultural change that will trickle down.

While the topic of investing on the basis of sustainability or ESG is a fiery one at present, the emergence of *Activist ESG (AESG)* investors gives a signal for the future. These are investors who look for strong financial returns and strong ESG credentials…not one at the expense of the other. That's right, there is a new breed of investor seeking out companies who have mastered the Genius of the And when it comes to sustainability.

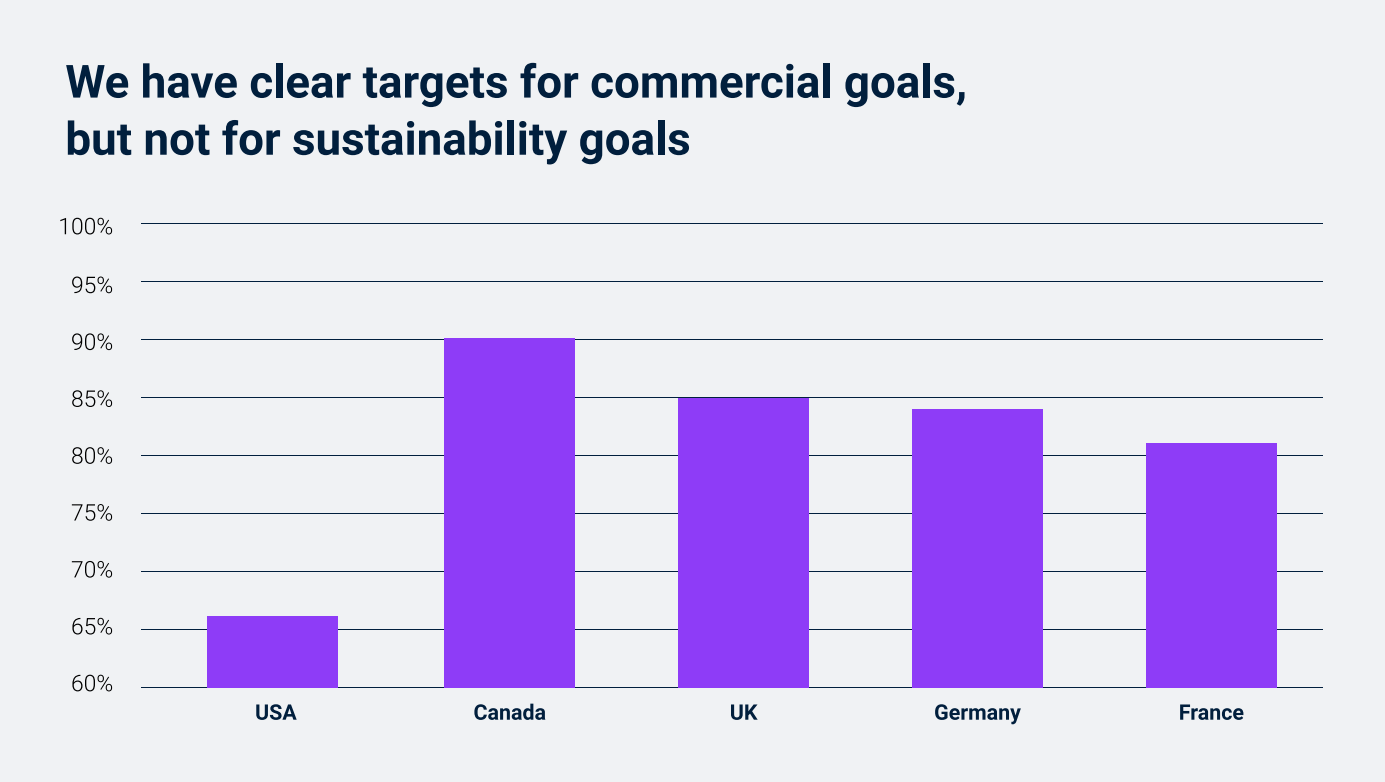
With these factors in mind, we can predict a tension in most organizations. Sustainability can contribute to commercial performance, but is put on the back burner by most companies. Many (82%) would even make the cost-driven decision to pay regulatory penalties instead of spending on sustainability. This points to a perception that sustainability is too expensive or too difficult to take on, on its own merits. But we're here to say otherwise.

The Cultural Change of sustainability

Cultural change has been a critical success factor for digital transformation. The willingness and ability of people within the organization to accept and use new technology is not only hard to win, but also takes a lot of time.

Similar trends affect sustainability initiatives and transformation. Of course, you need buy-in from employees, but at the moment 47% of businesses don't believe that every employee understands the strategy. Most generations will buy into sustainability, but do they know what your goals are? This could be a simple communications challenge, however it's also possible that the strategy itself is too complex or unclear.

To compound the challenges around awareness, sustainability goals are often not baked into the company culture in practical ways. For example, 82% of businesses say that employees don't have clear targets, incentives or reporting on sustainability, the likes of which that are already in place for commercial goals.



A pioneer of this kind of incentivization was *Intel*, which nearly 15 years ago started linking remuneration with sustainability targets. Intel understood that it needed every person in the business to play their part in achieving success. It also knew that people most often do what they're targeted to do. By putting incentives in place it was able to achieve a 35% drop in emissions.

More recently, *Unilever* has made public extensive resources and transparency on how it trains, tracks and reports on its sustainability. It has a thorough process for disseminating its goals and strategy, for example managers are mandated to communicate these goals to their teams, and compulsory training is rolled out throughout the year. In a company of that size, this kind of cohesion is hard to accomplish, but fundamental to success.

This drive needs to start from the top. Only half of business have got their sustainability goals aligned to company processes. When sustainability sits on the outside of the established order like this, it's very difficult to make it stick. But finding ways to include it in company culture and processes—even if that means forcing it at first—gives employees more empowerment to play their part.
But it's not just the cultural barriers that are making sustainability difficult.

Technology for sustainable and digital transformation success

The challenge of cultural change is only relevant if the technology and tools are in place to allow employees to do what's asked of them. If they're unable to do that, the point of cultural acceptance is very much moot. And yet many companies don't have the right technology available—either because it's simply not there (32%), or that it's poorly implemented (47%).

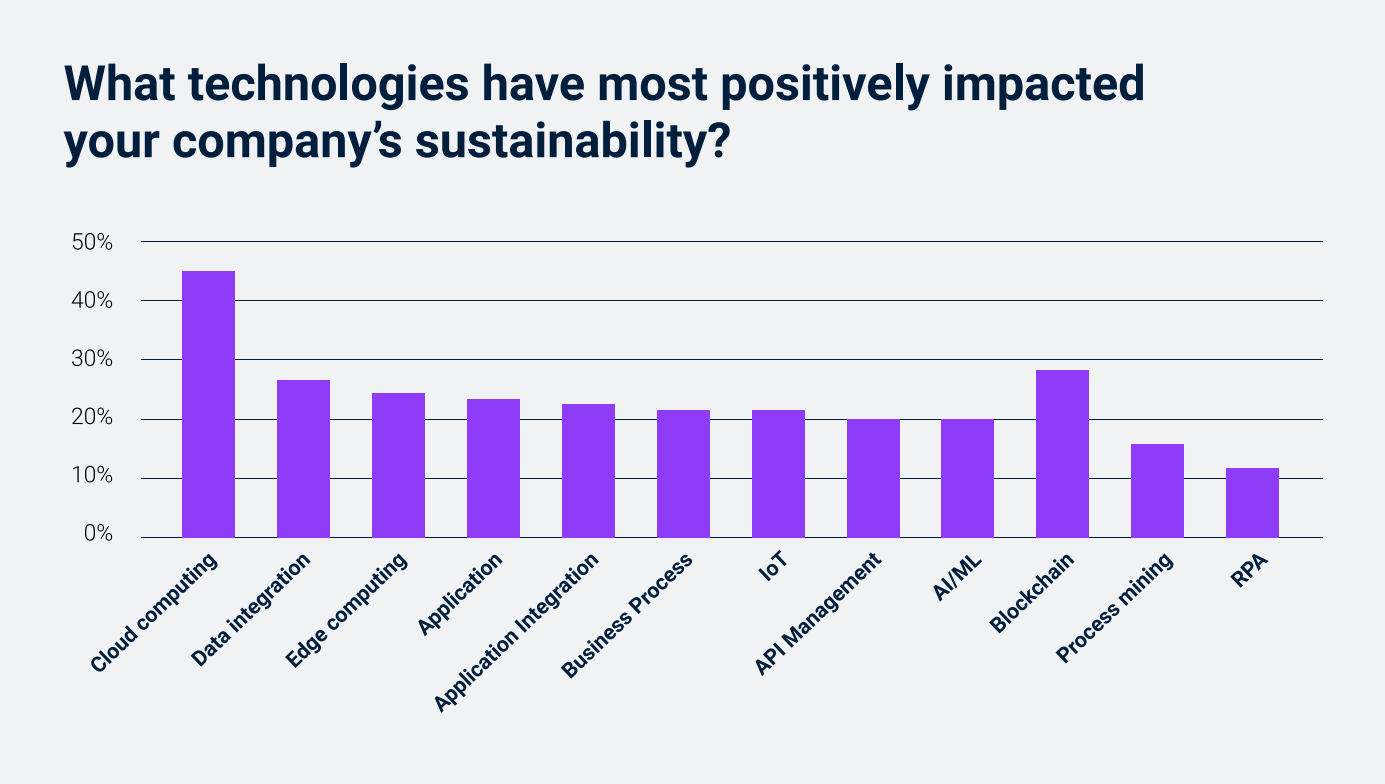
Companies need more or better tools in order to understand the success of sustainability initiatives, with over a third (36%) saying that they don't have them. The barriers here include data collection and analysis issues, monitoring and reporting. Most organizations are able to collect data and perform monitoring and reporting in different areas of their business, though. So is it a case of cultural change holding them back from doing this around sustainability? Or are there some specific technology issues at play that stand in the way of progress despite continued investment in this area?

The root cause of those struggling to get the right tools in place is often that the technology roadmap is separate from sustainability initiatives. When 87% of companies tell us that sustainability and digital transformation are separate initiatives, connecting the dots is going to be difficult.

Most companies see themselves as mature when it comes to digital transformation and they're investing in technology, but it's not making its way through into the hands of those that need it for sustainability purposes.

Some find a way: 33% do integrate sustainability plans into their technology roadmap. Others will have processes in place to secure IT resources for sustainability projects, but this is riskier as priorities can and do change, as we've seen with commercial objectives taking precedence.

Within these different approaches are the examples that we're looking for. The 20% of companies that found a way to integrate sustainability plans into their technology roadmap despite them being separate initiatives. They are the ones mastering the Genius of the And.



Applying the Genius of the And

Some companies are able to do it and many more have the opportunity to apply the Genius of the And. The technologies that organizations tell us have the most positive impact on their sustainability efforts are: cloud (45%), data integration (28%) and edge computing (27%). Is it possible that these three areas are already having a significant positive impact on other areas of the business, giving hope to all organizations that they can find a way to get the best of both worlds?

1. Journey to Cloud:

Moving to the cloud in itself is a sustainability initiative. *Azure cloud* has said that it is 93% more energy efficient and 98% more carbon efficient than on-premises alternatives. On top of that, new innovations within cloud platforms, such as the *AWS Graviton 3 Chip*, helps further reduce energy by 60%. All in all cloud migrations are the equivalent of taking *22 million cars off the road* per year, according to Accenture.

Not all organizations should be trying to move all their technology into the cloud; it's not an all or nothing proposition. In fact, hybrid cloud will be the best of both worlds for most organizations. But it's easy to see why nearly half of companies (45%) have it as a big value add for sustainability.

Functions that benefit the most from cloud are those where data needs to be accessible for multiple groups, or extra computing power is needed on-tap. Making data more accessible and unifying key functions will be a huge help to the third of companies who struggle with data collection and analysis for sustainability.

Every organization will understand that making data available is foundational to its analysis. However, many infrastructures still restrict who can access information, or how they can use it, which hinders this analytical mission. Running these processes through the cloud is the best way to go beyond simply centralizing data

and actually empowering teams with what they need. This also helps the 36% that say that they aren't able to understand the success of their sustainability efforts because they can't track new initiatives effectively.

Cloud technology may be the perfect demonstration of the Genius of the And – it is central and beneficial to both digital transformation and sustainability. As organizations change, so too must their infrastructure. In order to support new ways of working, application modernization, new service models, and rapid innovation are all on the table. They often deliver immediate benefits in terms of total cost of ownership (TCO) as well as long-term benefits in the form of new revenue streams, competitive advantages, and improved performance. But cloud isn't a simple answer.

> "Cloud technology may be the perfect demonstration of the Genius of the And – it is central and beneficial to both digital transformation and sustainability."

As multi-cloud environments become the norm, the requirement to connect all the different parts of the business together is paramount. An Integration Platform as a Service (*iPaas*) does this seamlessly. Not only does it help with sustainability by virtue of having energy benefits, but it connects disparate sustainability initiatives, helping to unite information and processes. In the same way that it does for an array of different functions and industries, including distributed supply chains, service channels, partners networks and internal operations.

Beyond this, an API-enabled, hybrid cloud environment can allow much greater creativity and innovation when it comes to developing services and applications. As more and more companies are delivering to customers 'as a Service', what could be more fundamental than the flexibility to create better service options when they're needed?

Bolloré, a French logistics company that transports 800,000 containers over the ocean and 6,000 tons of airfreight every year, *implemented a new transport management system* and overhauled its digital client platform to stay nimble and boost profits. At the same time, Bolloré is continuously moving toward a more sustainable, intelligent supply chain by tracking carbon and other pollutants, reusing materials, and, whenever possible, offsetting emissions, and shifting to low-carbon modes of transport. All of this is driven by data: at any given time, Bolloré monitors 41 sustainability performance indicators.

2. Data integration:

Sustainability is a wide-reaching issue and as such relies on many different processes. To fully understand not only the initiatives in play, but also their success and operational efficiency, requires a level of integration beyond simply laying a pathway between two platforms. This is perhaps why 28% of organizations said that data integration had a significant positive impact on their sustainability efforts—the second highest ranking technology.

Data movement in the past has typically been from A to B. From a system of record with an extensive remit—such as SAP or Oracle—into a platform for analytics. However, the distributed nature of the sustainability challenge means that there is no system of record and therefore no consistent or coordinated source of data. Companies need to establish virtual systems of record—which requires a *data integration platform* with the ability to combine multiple data streams (and the myriad formats that entails) so that they can be analyzed.

> "Companies are more distributed than ever. Delivering a high-quality experience relies on integrating many, many data streams."

A look at the *Green House Gas (GHG) Protocols*, for example, shows how complex the data challenge can be when it comes to some issues of sustainability. The data to properly ascertain performance around sustainability requires the combination of a multitude of sources, translating the data and presenting it for analysis. This distributed nature of information is also becoming more commonplace in other areas: customer experience, supply chains…even HR and employee issues.

Companies are more distributed than ever. This doesn't necessarily mean geographically, although many organizations are balancing their operations 'at home' versus overseas. This means that between the wider web of their supply chains and the increased number of customer touchpoints, delivering a high quality experience relies on integrating many, many data streams.

Add to that, within an organization line of business leaders have more control over their tools and platforms, so more data repositories exist across the business. This isn't a problem if the processes are contained to those systems, but as we have seen, most processes now spread across multiple departments, teams, geographies or platforms. The data streams that are created across these different areas have to be managed, and whether they look like spaghetti, or managed pathways comes down to data integration.

> "Pushing computing power and automated decision making to the point of impact can boost sustainability as well as efficiency, whether it's managing the emissions of a combustion engine, the efficiency of a wind turbine or the output of a particular machine."

The multiplication factor of your more distributed business with the spread of your customers and partners should bring home the requirement to integrate into new systems of record, virtual or otherwise. Sustainability efforts are not alone in trying to get their arms around a broad scope of interests and information.

As part of a plan to achieve net zero emissions by mid-century, the shipping giant *DHL Express is investing seven billion euros in carbon reduction efforts*, including a new fleet of electric cargo airplanes. DHL is also putting its faith in a range of backend technology solutions, including business process analysis and management, in a quest to enable data automation and improve both its business and environmental efficiency through technology.

3. Edge Computing:

We've already talked about how sustainability initiatives require an understanding of a range of different operations, including emissions across offices, efficiencies in the supply chain, effectiveness of manufacturing. Many of these processes are primarily analog—they either don't produce data or they are not technologically enabled. The fact that edge computing is a key contributor to sustainability success is no surprise in this context. IoT sets the table and edge computing operates upon it.

Pushing computing power and automated decision making to the point of impact can boost sustainability as well as efficiency, whether it's managing the emissions of a combustion engine, the efficiency of a wind turbine or the output of a particular machine. For example if power consumption need to be reduced by 1-2% in order to meet sustainability targets, having the capability for a computer to recognize the situation and make the change automatically speeds up the impact of the decision. Relaying data to analytics software and then back to the device could be a process done in stages with batches of data and therefore take hours or days. *Edge computing* solves that challenge by enabling devices to make these decisions when they capture the data. This approach also reduces the requirements for data transmission, further reducing energy consumption.

> "In addition to automating decisions, edge computing can manage the information transmitted back to data centers to better manage energy and gain cost advantages."

It should be no surprise that this is not something that only affects sustainability. Many processes in manufacturing, agriculture, energy and field maintenance of any description benefit from being more digital and automated. In addition to automating decisions, edge computing can manage the information transmitted back to data centers to better manage energy and gain cost advantages.

Australia's *QTRS*, is using IoT for real time monitoring of its refrigerated trucks—which helps reduce foods spoilage, decrease emissions, and minimize agricultural waste. Others, including providers of renewable energy, are using IoT for *predictive maintenance*, which minimizes costly disruptions and reduces the environmental impact of servicing. In all these cases, enterprises are tackling operational risks in ways that benefit the planet and their bottom lines.

Conclusion

The macroeconomic climate has reduced the focus on sustainability for some, but it can't be put on the shelf for a few years without consequences. A wait and see approach goes against what stakeholders and shareholders are expecting: a reduction in environmental footprint and greater societal impact. The research shows that digital transformation maturity helps companies make better decisions and understand their organization more deeply. It's a small leap to make digital transformation work for sustainability gains too. The standardization, analytics and reporting that characterize digital efforts can bring sustainability benefits as well as economic ones.

Dipping your toe into the plastic free ocean of sustainability is far from easy, but also essential. Navigating these waters, on the face of it might seem like a mission of compromise…but it doesn't have to be. Sustainability isn't a discussion about altruistic projects that hinder financial performance, it's a discussion about using the right tools and resources to achieve more meaningful impact. With this mindset, every organization will be able to invest in initiatives that bring multiple benefits. The up-side to technology can be economic, social and environmental all at the same time. And that's the genius that we're all looking to tap into.

Information About Upcoming Merger of Hybris Gesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung into SAP SE

– Information about upcoming merger –

1. It is intended to merge Hybris Gesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung (local court of München, HRB 124384) as transferring company in the course of a simplified group merger into SAP SE as acquiring company. Therefore, the assets of Hybris Gesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung in its entirety together with all rights and obligations are transferred to SAP SE with effectiveness as of 1 January 2024, 0:00 a.m. ("effective merger date"). From the effective merger date to the date of the expiry of Hybris Gesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung pursuant to Sec. 20 para. 1 No.2 UmwG all acts and businesses undertaken by Hybris Gesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung shall be deemed to have been undertaken for the account of SAP SE.

SAP SE is the sole shareholder of Hybris Gesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung. A merger resolution of the acquiring company SAP SE is not necessary pursuant to Sec. 62 para. 1 sent. 1 UmwG. A resolution of the general meeting of Shareholders of SAP SE on the approval of the merger agreement is also not required because SAP SE as the acquiring company holds the share capital of Hybris Gesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung in full. Since SAP SE holds all shares in Hybris Gesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung, the preparation of a merger report, a merger audit and an audit report is not required pursuant to Secs. 8 para. 3 sent. 3 no. 1 a), 9 para. 2, 12 para. 3, 60 UmwG.

2. The stakeholders of SAP SE with a combined holding of one-twentieth of the share capital of the company are herewith advised of their right to request the convention of a general meeting to decide on the approval of the merger (Sec. 62 para. 2 sent. 1, para. 3 sent. 3 UmwG).

3. A resolution of the shareholder's meeting of Hybris Gesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung on the approval of the merger agreement is not required pursuant to section 62 para. 4 sent. 1 UmwG because SAP SE is the sole shareholder of Hybris Gesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung.

4. As of the date of this announcement, the following documents can be assessed by the links below:

The draft merger agreement between SAP SE and Hybris Gesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung.

The annual financial statements and, where required, the annual reports of the companies who are parties to the merger for the fiscal years 2021, 2022, 2023:

2021 SAP SE Statutory Financial Statements and Review of Operations (HGB)

2022 SAP SE Statutory Financial Statements and Review of Operations (HGB)

2023 SAP SE Statutory Financial Statements and Review of Operations (HGB)

2021 Hybris Gesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung Financial Statements

2022 Hybris Gesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung Financial Statements

2023 Hybris Gesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung Financial Statements

Rootstock Software Recognized as Partner in Collaborative Innovation for 2024 Manufacturing Leadership Awards

Honor given for its collaboration with Architectural Fabrication, a customer using Rootstock's ERP solution to scale for growth and drive operational efficiencies

Rootstock Software, a recognized leader in the Manufacturing ERP space, is thrilled to be recognized as a Partner in Collaborative Innovation for the 2024 Manufacturing Leadership Awards. This esteemed accolade highlights Rootstock's role in Architectural Fabrication's "Collaborative Ecosystem" project, which set out to enhance installation scheduling, optimize billing, and streamline its budgeting process.

Rootstock Software closely collaborated with Architectural Fabrication (Arch Fab), a leader in fabricating an array of commercial shading products, such as sunshades, canopies, and awnings. Arch Fab leveraged an integrated suite of technologies that included *Rootstock Manufacturing ERP*, *Salesforce Sales Cloud*, and *Salesforce Field Service*. The synergies created by this ecosystem not only supported Arch Fab's impressive 750% growth rate, setting a new benchmark for what's possible in manufacturing.

"We're thrilled to have our role in Arch Fab's project recognized by the Manufacturing Leadership Awards," said *Raj Badarinath*, Chief Product & Marketing Officer at *Rootstock Software*. "This project underscores the truly transformative capabilities of our Manufacturing ERP. Since our solution is built on the Salesforce Platform and works seamlessly with other solutions in the Salesforce ecosystem, we're able to provide exponentially more value, as evidenced by Arch Fab's ROI of 233% to 316% across different areas of its business."

Jeff Cash, CEO of *Arch Fab*, praised the collaboration: "Our journey with Rootstock Software has been a game-changer, enabling us to scale rapidly while also enhancing our project management and customer experience."

Additional highlights of the collaborative ecosystem project include:

- ***Enhanced Efficiency:*** Operations were streamlined from project inception to completion. Efficiencies generated by this digital transformation helped reduce staff turnover by 50%.

- ***Increased Capacity:*** Project managers have been able to handle an average 300% increase in their project capacity—also contributing to business growth.

- ***Strategic Investments:*** Arch Fab leaders foster continual innovation and improvements in this ecosystem. For example, Arch Fab launched a new Shade Tracker app, which enables customers to receive real-time updates on their projects.

Rootstock Software and Arch Fab will be honored at the Manufacturing Leadership Awards Gala, scheduled for June 5, 2024, at the JW Marriott Marco Island, Florida. The gala is the closing event for *Rethink: Accelerating Digital Transformation in Manufacturing.*

To explore how Rootstock Manufacturing ERP can help revolutionize your manufacturing operations, schedule a demo today: *https://www.rootstock.com/erp-software-demo/.*

About Rootstock

Rootstock Software provides the leading Manufacturing Cloud ERP, which empowers hundreds of manufacturers to turbocharge their operations in today's dynamic, post-pandemic world. Natively built on the Salesforce Platform, Rootstock delivers a future-proof solution. With it, manufacturers gain the agility to continually transform their business to meet evolving customer needs, navigate emerging challenges, and accelerate success. In addition, the "connectability" of Rootstock Cloud ERP gives manufacturers 360° visibility to collaborate with suppliers, trading partners, and the broader value chain. As Rootstock continues to grow, stay tuned to the company's latest customers, career opportunities, and LinkedIn posts.

About Architectural Fabrication

Based in Fort Worth, Texas, Architectural Fabrication (Arch Fab) was initially established in 1991. Over the past decade, the company has evolved and shifted its focus from smaller service projects to manufacturing more complex products, such as extruded aluminum sunshades, commercial canopies, metal and fabric awning systems, and more. Arch Fab works with some of the largest architectural firms, general contractors, and retailers in the United States. Not only does it manufacture and design commercial products, but it also provides custom finishing options and installation.

Hotel Equities Partners with NetSuite

Leading hotel management firm to implement NetSuite to help optimize business processes and improve visibility across its growing portfolio

Hotel Equities, a leading hotel management firm with a growing portfolio of nearly 300 hotels and resorts throughout the U.S. and Canada, has selected *Oracle NetSuite* to support its vision to deliver a comprehensive ERP. With NetSuite, Hotel Equities will take advantage of an integrated technology ecosystem to help increase productivity, automate key business processes, visualize real-time data and analytics, and improve visibility across its operations.

"As our portfolio grew so did the complexity of our operations and that was making it more difficult to scale and adapt in an ever-evolving business landscape," said Eric McCarthy-Zink, CFO, Hotel Equities. "NetSuite will help remove this complexity by creating a single source of truth that allows us to improve the accuracy and efficiency of our business processes as we grow. The combination of NetSuite's powerful business software and its industry expertise will position us for continuous

innovation and growth and allow us to focus on what truly matters – our guests, associates, and ownership partners."

With NetSuite, Hotel Equities will be able to automate workflows, improve insights, and enhance decision-making. For example, the financial consolidation and reporting capabilities within NetSuite can help Hotel Equities streamline financial close processes. *NetSuite OneWorld* can enable Hotel Equities to simplify the management of multiple currencies, and *NetSuite CRM* can help to improve owner partner communication and experiences by providing real-time visibility into transactions, support cases, and pipeline. To further enhance operational efficiency and service standards, Hotel Equities plans to integrate all hotels' property management systems and point-of-sale (POS) systems into NetSuite to provide a single view into its business performance. With a robust integration with *Oracle Hospitality OPERA Cloud platform* and *MICROS Simphony Cloud POS*, the solutions can support future growth. Hotel Equities is also exploring additional NetSuite solutions that leverage AI across *data warehousing*, preliminary financial reviews, and narrative reporting.

"Accuracy and efficiency are critical for hospitality organizations as they seek to create superior guest experiences that generate loyalty and growth," said Sam Levy, senior vice president of growth and operations, Oracle NetSuite. "With an integrated and scalable cloud business suite, NetSuite will help Hotel Equities gain visibility across its entire portfolio, improve business productivity, and identify opportunities to drive future growth."

McCarthy-Zink added, "We are redefining our accounting platform to better serve clients through this more tailored approach which enables Hotel Equities to add maximum value in the services we provide for hotel owners."

ORACLE
NETSUITE

About Oracle NetSuite

For more than 25 years, Oracle NetSuite has helped organizations grow, scale, and adapt to change. NetSuite provides an integrated system that includes financials / Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), inventory management, HR, professional services automation and omnichannel commerce, used by more than 37,000 customers in 219 countries and dependent territories.

About Hotel Equities

Hotel Equities (HE) is an award-winning full-scale hotel ownership, management, and development firm with a portfolio of approximately 300 hotels and resorts throughout the United States and Canada. Fred Cerrone, CHA, serves as Founder and Chairman; Brad Rahinsky serves as President and CEO. For more information on Hotel Equities, visit hotelequities.com.

Morehouse College and Leading Tech Company Sage Launch Program to Help Prepare Next Generation of Tech Entrepreneurs

New course curriculum with hands-on experiences will immerse Sage Fellows in many facets of business ownership

Sage, the leader in accounting, financial, HR, and payroll technology for small and medium-sized businesses, has contributed $100,000 to *Morehouse College*, the nation's only historically Black liberal arts institution dedicated to educating and developing men. The funds will support the launch of a new entrepreneurship course, which will train enterprising students how to succeed as business owners with a focus in technology.

The goal of the initiative is to help increase the number of Black-owned businesses in the tech ecosystem.

The innovative, 15-week "Micropreneurship" course, co-designed by Sage and Morehouse, will immerse students, known as "Sage Fellows," in many facets of entrepreneurship—from the idea stage and market research to financial planning and legal considerations. Fellows will receive customized Sage software training and exclusive access to long-term mentoring opportunities with trailblazing Morehouse alumni working as tech executives, as well as Sage's extensive network of successful business leaders and entrepreneurs. The course will be available in the Fall 2024 Semester as the latest offering of the Morehouse Center for Broadening Participation in Computing.

The Sage-Morehouse partnership expansion comes at a critical time when only 8% of workers and just 3% of executives in the U.S. tech industry are Black, according to a 2023 *study* by the Computing Technology Industry Association. Sage and Morehouse are committed to working together to address this disparity by developing

and promoting a diverse talent pool for the tech industry.

"Morehouse College has an unwavering commitment to developing transformative leaders who thrive as innovators, agitators, and entrepreneurs in existing and emerging fields," said Hodan Hassan, Vice President of Institutional Advancement at Morehouse. "Our ongoing relationship with Sage is an example of the kind of partnership of purpose that Morehouse establishes with bold industry leaders who are willing to collaborate with our esteemed faculty, invest in our students, and equip our classrooms with the tools and networks necessary to elevate our academic programs and help rising Morehouse Men excel in a dynamic business environment."

The Micropreneurship course is a significant expansion of Sage's and Morehouse's *ongoing collaboration* to introduce students of color to lucrative careers in technology. Beyond awarding academic credits and providing mentors, the Micropreneurship experience will also offer networking and career opportunities for students. The initiative supports Sage's commitment to promoting economic development and nurturing a diverse talent pipeline through continued investment in Atlanta, the company's North American headquarters.

"Our goal is to not just educate, but to empower the next generation of business leaders and founders," explained Mark Hickman, managing director of Sage North America. "By fostering entrepreneurial talent and breaking down barriers, we stimulate economic growth and prepare emerging entrepreneurs who are poised to make meaningful impacts on our economy and society.

"This important partnership with Morehouse reinforces our continued commitment to support the broader Atlanta communities in which we live and work."

In addition to the $100,000 gift to establish the Micropreneurship course, Sage has also set up a Student Assistance Fund, which will provide financial support for Morehouse students in need of resources to ease the burden of the rising cost of higher education.

Sage's $100,000 gift to Morehouse is its second contribution in two years to teaching and learning at the Center for Broadening Participation in Computing. Sage made an *$80,000 investment* in Morehouse last year during the Center's launch to help expand Morehouse's software engineering program and provide students with more opportunities to use and study emerging technologies.

"The initial support from Sage had made Morehouse a leading HBCU—if not the leading HBCU—in the space of Generative AI," said Kinnis Gosha, the Hortenius I. Chenault Endowed Professor of Computer Science at Morehouse, who directs the Center for Broadening Participation in Computing. "The course is a game-changer for Morehouse. Not only are students exposed to the skills learned from the course, but we have a faculty that has been trained to teach the course. We anticipate the same type of impact in the space of entrepreneurship."

Working alongside Morehouse's academic staff, Sage and Morehouse developed and delivered Morehouse's first Generative AI course during the 2024 Spring Semester. It is being supported by executive and technical lectures from Sage, in-person events, and student competitions. An expanded version of the course will be offered in the Fall 2024 Semester in addition to the new Micropreneurship curriculum.

"Morehouse students have been immersed in the bespoke Sage GenAI program in its inaugural year," said Aaron Harris, chief technology officer at Sage. "Sage is one of very few companies that has dedicated expert resources working alongside students, intentionally designed to positively impact their preparedness for technology of the future. We're investing in these students and the quality of their education. Through the curriculum we're building, Morehouse students are learning skills to prepare them to be the next generation of leaders in AI-related careers."

To learn more about the expanded partnership and course offerings, please visit the *Morehouse Center for Broadening Participation in Computing* or contact *Sage's website*.

About Sage

Sage exists to knock down barriers so everyone can thrive, starting with the millions of small- and mid-sized businesses served by us, our partners, and accountants. Customers trust our finance, HR, and payroll software to help business flow. By digitizing business processes and relationships with customers, suppliers, employees, banks and governments, our digital network connects SMBs, removing friction and delivering insights. Knocking down barriers also means we use our time, technology, and experience to tackle digital inequality, economic inequality, and the climate crisis. Learn more at www.sage.com/en-us/.

ERP Industry Leaders Zach Nelson and Nancy Harris Join Acumatica Board of Directors

New Members to Deepen Board's Real-World ERP Expertise and Help Guide Company's New Era of Growth

Acumatica, an industry-leading business solutions provider, announced the addition of two accomplished ERP industry veterans to its Board of Directors: Zach Nelson and Nancy Harris. In these roles, Nelson and Harris will apply their years of ERP industry experience, leadership and business expertise to actively guide the company as it launches into a new era of growth, product innovation and market opportunity.

In the Day One Keynote at Acumatica Summit 2024 in January, company CEO John Case spoke of the tremendous growth opportunities ahead for the company, the expansion of the product line and ongoing evolution of the partner ecosystem – marking the beginning of a new era for Acumatica.

"Zach and Nancy's leadership, experience and talents will not only be a tremendous addition to our powerhouse Board of Directors but will also be invaluable in helping us fully embrace this new era of growth and innovation for the company," said Case. "I look forward to benefitting from their guidance and industry expertise and truly believe adding Zach and Nancy to the Board is yet another clear sign that Acumatica has become a formidable force in the ERP industry."

Zach Nelson joins the Board with over 30 years of experience in the technology industry, including leadership positions with Sun Microsystems, Oracle and McAfee Network Associates. Nelson took the helm of NetSuite in 2002 and served as CEO for 15 years, shepherding the ERP vendor's significant expansion, public IPO and ultimate acquisition by Oracle in 2017. His leadership background and experience in ERP equip him with a unique understanding of taking a business to higher levels of growth by considering market trends, customer needs and the competitive landscape. Nelson serves concurrently on the Board of Directors for PagerDuty, Freshworks and Snyk.

"Acumatica stands out to me as a company with great momentum and boundless opportunities for product innovation and business expansion. Joining Acumatica's Board of Directors gives me a compelling opportunity to lend my ERP business experience to a company with such incredible potential as they embark on a path of substantial growth and progress," said Nelson. "I'm excited to work closely with my fellow Board members and advise Acumatica's leadership team on implementing their strategic priorities."

Nancy Harris brings more than 36 years of experience in the software industry, having served in various executive leadership capacities in privately and publicly traded companies. Before her retirement in 2021, Harris served as executive vice president and managing director of Sage North America and managing director of Sage Canada during her 10-year tenure with the publicly traded ERP software provider. Harris began her career at Accenture, a global management consulting company.

In addition to her Board responsibilities with Acumatica, Harris serves on the Board of Directors for Intapp and is a member of the audit, comp and risk committees. She also serves on the Board of Directors for M-Files and is the comp committee chairperson. Harris is actively involved in the Austin community and serves on the board of Any Baby Can, a local non-profit organization.

"Like Acumatica, I've always believed in the power of modern technology in moving the needle for businesses," said Harris. "I'm delighted to join the Board and look forward to being part of a company that's so focused on addressing real-world challenges with innovative and easy-to-use solutions."

Acumatica's Board of Directors is instrumental in guiding Acumatica's innovation, go-to-market strategies, customer success initiatives and partner relations. Their industry knowledge helps establish alignment between Acumatica's strategic goals and market dynamics.

As of March 2024, the Acumatica Board of Directors includes:

- John Case, CEO, Acumatica
- Kim Clarke, Co-Founder, White Rabbit Pty Ltd
- Kathy Crusco, Board Advisor, Non-executive Director
- Nancy Harris, Board Advisor, Non-executive Director
- Robert Maclean, Partner, EQT Partners
- Zach Nelson, CEO, ZE Investments
- Tyler Parker, Partner, EQT Partners
- Jonas Persson (Board Chairman), Chairman of the Board, IFS

To learn more about Acumatica, visit https://www.acumatica.com/.

About Acumatica

Acumatica Cloud ERP is a comprehensive business management solution that was born in the cloud and built for more connected, collaborative ways of working. Designed explicitly to enable small and mid-market companies to thrive in today's digital economy, Acumatica's flexible solution, customer-friendly business practices and industry-specific functionality help growing businesses adapt to fast-moving markets and take control of their future. For more information, visit acumatica.com or follow us on LinkedIn.

Acumatica
The Cloud ERP

Press Release from Acumatica

Atlassian Unveils Rovo, a New AI-Powered Tool to Unlock Enterprise Knowledge

Atlassian Corporation, a leading provider of team collaboration and productivity software including Jira, Confluence and Trello, has launched Atlassian Rovo, its new product that leverages generative AI to help teams find, learn, and act on information dispersed across a range of internal tools. This product which turns information into action at an unprecedented speed, was unveiled at Atlassian's annual flagship conference – Team '24.

Rovo, powered by ***Atlassian Intelligence***, takes human-AI collaboration to the next level and teams can:

- ***Find:*** Search helps teams find the exact information they need across huge volumes of data. Rovo Search can pull information from popular tools, including Google Drive, Microsoft Sharepoint, Microsoft Teams, GitHub, Slack, and Figma, to deliver even more comprehensive answers.

- ***Learn:*** Gain a deeper understanding of their company's data through AI-driven insights, knowledge cards, and AI chat for deeper data exploration.
- ***Act:*** Add specialized agents to workflows to handle time-consuming tasks and to complete projects.

A common data model called 'teamwork graph' is Rovo's secret sauce, which connects data from Atlassian tools and other SaaS apps to unlock a comprehensive view of any organization's goals, knowledge, teams, and work. With every new tool connection, team action, and project event, the teamwork graph draws more connections and expands its knowledge to deliver increasingly relevant results.

Mike Cannon-Brookes, co-Founder and co-CEO, Atlassian said, "AI presents a huge opportunity for Atlassian. We have over 20 years of insights into knowledge work - how teams go about planning and tracking work, goal setting and unleashing knowledge. A year ago, we launched Atlassian Intelligence to help teams boost productivity with AI. Since then, we've woven AI into the fabric of our products across the Atlassian portfolio."

"We're thrilled to announce Atlassian Rovo at Team '24 - our first product built in and for the AI era. It will solve the highly complex problem of search and knowledge discovery, and be able to act on this information across both Atlassian and third-party tools. Rovo adds the power of infinitive AI-driven teammates that you can customise

to your team's needs. It's a game changer, and we can't wait to share it with our customers," he further added.

Find answers faster with an AI-powered search

Rovo can provide answers in seconds and the search results are personalized and contextual. Permissions are fully respected, so employees see only the information they're supposed to see, while restricted data remains private.

Its API will be designed to let you connect niche and home-grown apps., to deliver relevant answers for any team or industry.

Get accurate, in-depth answers from any company's unique data

When answering questions, Rovo surfaces related topics and follow-up questions teams can use to tease out more details. Plus, it's an awesome jargon-demystifier.

With Rovo Chat, teams can engage in interactive conversations to ask questions until they get the answers they need, generate new ideas, get helpful feedback, and resolve issues while they work.

AI-powered enhancements to the Atlassian product portfolio

At Team '24 event, Atlassian also made other product related announcements:

- ***AI-enhanced Editor:*** Available across Trello, Bitbucket, and Jira Product Discovery, AI-enhanced editor allows users to generate pull request summaries, release notes, and other key pieces of information.
- ***AI Summaries:*** Coming soon to Jira, AI summaries will allow users to get a summary of third-party links directly from a Smart Link hover card. And on Confluence, comment summaries will enable users to sort through dozens of comments.
- ***AI Breakdowns:*** Atlassian Intelligence takes users' top-level work items and proposes a way to break it down into actionable pieces.
- ***Task Automation:*** Coming to all Jira products, task automation will enable users to use natural language to create automation rules.
- ***AI Analysis:*** New predefined queries and chart templates now make reporting and analysis easier. With AI-powered chart insights, key trends are automatically identified so users can act on them quickly.

For further details around the announcement, please visit the blog - *https://www.atlassian.com/blog/announcements/introducing-atlassian-rovo-ai*

ATLASSIAN

About Atlassian

Atlassian unleashes the potential of every team. Our agile & DevOps, IT service management and work management software helps teams organize, discuss, and complete shared work. The majority of the Fortune 500 and over 300,000 companies of all sizes worldwide - including NASA, Audi, Kiva, Deutsche Bank and Dropbox - rely on our solutions to help their teams work better together and deliver quality results on time. Learn more about our products, including Jira Software, Confluence and Jira Service Management at https://atlassian.com.

Mercedes-AMG PETRONAS Formula One Team: Accelerating Tomorrow

Discover the Joint Vision of the Mercedes-AMG PETRONAS Formula One Team and SAP

Official Team Partner

AMG PETRONAS FORMULA ONE TEAM

The Mercedes-AMG PETRONAS Formula One Team has a remarkable history of success in racing, having achieved seven consecutive World Drivers' Championships and eight consecutive World Constructors' Championships. Lewis Hamilton, one of the most accomplished drivers in Formula One, has contributed significantly to the team's accomplishments by securing seven World Drivers' Championship titles. Together with SAP, the Mercedes-AMG Petronas Formula One Team continues their momentum, driving forward and Accelerating Tomorrow through the power of technology.

7

Consecutive double Drivers' and Constructors' World Championships from 2014 to 2020.

14,500

Components are used to build the Mercedes-AMG PETRONAS Formula One W14 E race car.

37M+

Social media followers across Instagram, X, Facebook, and YouTube.

Racing for efficiency in all areas

The Mercedes-AMG PETRONAS Formula One Team competes in one of the most challenging environments in global sports. Combining elite teamwork, modern technologies, high-performance management and exceptional driving skill, Formula One is a technologically innovative form of motorsport, where incremental gains yield significant results and can be the difference between winning and losing.

Efficiency is the cornerstone of success in Formula One – from the pit stop to the management of physical and financial resources. At the center of financial efficiency targets is the F1 cost cap, which restricts how much teams can spend on their cars each season and can incur severe penalties if exceeded. While presenting a challenge, the cost cap also provides an opportunity for the Mercedes-AMG PETRONAS Formula One Team to showcase its resourcefulness and adaptability. It's a careful balance of managing high performance and cost efficiency, to demonstrate the team's agility in navigating complex financial and regulatory landscapes. This turns the efficient management of financial and physical resources within the cost cap into a key factor for a team's success.

To be successful in the rapidly changing Formula One landscape, a team needs to quickly adapt to new technologies, regulations and strategies, thereby securing competitiveness in the future. A future-proof cloud environment is therefore crucial in the fast-paced racing world to cope with the multitude of different challenges.

> "Innovation thrives under pressure, and the F1 cost cap pushes us to develop cutting-edge technologies that redefine the limits of performance. We must monitor the cost cap down to the last screw."
>
> *Toto Wolff_*
> *Team Principal & CEO,*
> *Mercedes-AMG PETRONAS Formula One Team*

Teaming up with a joint vision

With a shared vision for the future and a long-standing relationship, SAP and the Mercedes-AMG PETRONAS Formula One Team join forces to upshift their IT infrastructure and become future proof. Together with SAP, the team will tap into cloud solutions, infrastructure, and services that will enable to them to thrive on and off the track.

Efficient resource planning is the key to coping with the F1 cost cap and to providing the team with a foundation for success. This is why the collection of all necessary data, including the validation and optimization of the inventory, as well as the reporting process, are mission-critical for the Mercedes-AMG PETRONAS Formula One Team. To navigate the complex F1 cost cap framework, the team will use *SAP S/4HANA Finance* to allocate, save and use resources more efficiently. By leveraging the power of *SAP Business AI*, the Mercedes-AMG PETRONAS Formula One Team will be able to forecast costs, predict the final budget needs, and optimize stocked items in seconds.

> "Formula One is one of the most technologically innovative sports in the world, where incremental gains yield significant results. Given the extreme conditions under which Formula One teams operate, motorsports provide a global platform to showcase skill and engineering excellence. But beyond the race day performance, there's a lot going on behind the scenes. SAP is proud to partner with the Mercedes-AMG PETRONAS Formula One Team to make sure its operations are as fine-tuned as its cars."
>
> *Julia White_*
> *Chief Marketing and Solutions Officer, SAP SE*

The Mercedes-AMG PETRONAS Formula One Team's aspiration is not only to efficiently manage current challenges, but also to look ahead into the future. By elevating the IT landscape from an on-premise environment to *SAP S/4HANA Cloud, private edition*, the Mercedes-AMG PETRONAS Formula One Team unlocks the potential of a cloud based architecture to enable real-time data analysis and decision-making. One key contributor for the success of the team is that it never rests on its past success, but continuously drives innovation. By taking advantage of *SAP Build* and *SAP Business Technology Platform*, the team can ultimately increase flexibility and to be ready for future challenges.

Speck Pumpen Walter SPECK GMBH & CO. KG

Abas ERP Ensures 50% Shorter Delivery Times and Impresses with Maximum Flexibility and Customizability

Since their founding in 1909, the Speck Group has been one of the primary drivers of innovation in the field of liquid and gas pumping. Today, their portfolio includes various pumps, compressors and motors for diverse industrial applications: From medical technology, the chemical, pharmaceutical, plastics and automotive industries to wind turbines and temperature control and cooling devices. The company manufactures their products primarily on an order-by-order basis and according to individual specifications and supplies OEMs and plant engineers in over 80 countries worldwide. Production not only takes place at the headquarters in Roth, near Nuremberg, Germany, but Speck also operates its own production facility in China and sales companies in France, Spain, Thailand, Japan, Taiwan, Australia and the USA. Due to continuous growth and a high variety of products, the pump specialist is dependent on an agile IT infrastructure capable of being adapted to individual processes with as little effort as possible.

Speck therefore decided to implement abas ERP back in 2008 and has benefited to this day from the high flexibility and user-friendliness of the solution for midmarket businesses. In particular, the ease of customization while maintaining update-compatibility delivers great added value: Speck can also map special processes in the software without jeopardizing the future security of the system.

> "In the abas world, the motto really is: 'Nothing's impossible'. Even if many processes are near to the standard, there are always deviations somewhere that have to be mapped quickly in an ERP system."
>
> *Torsten Hahn_*
> *COO and Authorized Signatory*

Three Companies - One ERP Client

The challenge for Speck in Roth lies in three individual companies divided by product groups that require a common ERP client but are strictly separate from an accounting perspective. Thanks to the tried-and-tested 7-step abas GIM (Global Implementation Method) methodology, the implementation went smoothly and the ERP system was able to go live according to plan. "I was initially opposed to the implementation method, in part because I felt that I already knew our requirements and what we needed. But the experience was eye opening and I can only recommend the procedure to everyone today," explains Torsten Hahn, COO and authorized representative of Speck Pumpen Walter Speck GmbH & Co. KG. The software has been supporting the mechanical engineers in all areas of the company for more than 13 years without any downtime and forms the data-supported basis for all business processes. Compared to the isolated solutions that the mechanical engineers had used previously, abas ERP delivers a significantly improved workflow organization, streamlined processes, and a high level of information transparency.

Delivery Times Halved Thanks to Abas ERP

A major benefit can be seen in the area of sales planning, since abas ERP contributes to a significant improvement in the delivery deadlines situation: Manually managing production orders is a thing of the past and the entire process is fully automated. This is not only an advantage when changes are made to orders, since reworked plans are automatically adjusted and production errors avoided - the ERP solution also drives process efficiency across the board. This way, Speck was able to reduce the delivery time from around 3 to 5 months to around 6 to 10 weeks and thus achieve a time saving of about 50%. In addition, the sales planning has helped to reduce inventories in the long term and has proven to be a valuable safeguard during the delivery difficulties caused by recent crises: Because the required end products are divided directly into BOMs by abas ERP, Speck can commission vendors with sufficient time buffers and react significantly faster.

Multisite Creates Efficiency

Due to their strong international orientation, the group of companies also achieves significant added value thanks to the Multisite and the multi-client capability of abas ERP. The connection to the foreign locations enables master data to be exchanged in real time: For example, when selling to the US branch, the appropriate incoming packing slips are generated directly in their system and downstream processes, such as scheduling and delivery date calculation, are automatically triggered after the order is released. As a result, Speck benefits from significant relief in the area of administration and can handle these processes more easily and in a shorter time.

Guatanteed Upgrade -Compatility Customizations

Another important feature for Speck is the adaptability of the ERP software. abas ERP's high level of customizability makes any number of special features achievable, for example, a large number of variants can be mapped effortlessly and the system can be adapted to new requirements as they arise. "In the abas world, the motto really is "Nothing's impossible"," according to Torsten Hahn. "Even if many processes are near to the standard, there are always deviations somewhere that have to be mapped quickly in an ERP system." At Speck, this includes quality management and the area of service. For example, the mechanical engineers use their own service module that maps the entire process, from the recording of a warranty claim to the return of the goods, including damage reports, photos, and descriptions of the parts in question. One USP Speck in abas ERP compared to other ERP systems is the guaranteed upgrade-compatibility of their customizations: Because the software architecture keeps the core functions separate from the flexible adjustments, the latter are automatically adopted during release changes. "This is really unique and still impresses us to this day," says Torsten Hahn. Because it makes it possible to implement the new version in just a few days and without risking system outages. In addition to the customization options, the company benefits not least from the connections to external systems, which also include a product configurator. This enables the sales department to create a completely new product with just a few clicks, for which abas ERP in turn automatically generates the BOM and the work plan. The product configurator generates 3D models and dimensional drawings. abas ERP then embeds the dimensional drawings in sales order documents and the 3D models are recorded in the product. The system-side specification of the steps to be followed helps to minimize the risk of errors, while simultaneously increasing the process speed. As a result, Speck is able to reduce the quotation phase from 14 days to 15 minutes.

Together Into the Future

With abas ERP Speck has a flexible software that grows to meet their increasing requirements and ensures the company is optimally equipped to meet the challenges of the future. "All in all, we are very well positioned with abas ERP and thanks to the high level of customization, we also have the security of being able to optimally react to potential requirements with flexible adjustments," summarizes Torsten Hahn. For this reason, the pump manufacturer would like to continue investing in the cooperation with the German software provider and the next plans are already in development: The introduction of the new version abas ERP 21 is coming up. Furthermore, the expansion of the project management add-on, which is currently in the test phase at Speck, is also on the agenda. Last but not least, the company is working on a joint project with FORCAM, which involves replacing PDC terminals with direct data acquisition on the machines.

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Bayer brings its manufacturing operations' OT security up to date

Client Profile

Bayer AG, headquartered in Leverkusen, Germany, is a listed chemical and pharmaceutical group with over 100,000 employees at more than 170 locations worldwide. The operating business is managed through three divisions: Pharmaceuticals, Consumer Health and Crop Science.

Summary

Bayer AG wanted to improve the visibility and transparency of the complex Operational Technology (OT) environment in their Pharmaceuticals Division, which is spread across the company's 15 largest sites worldwide. The goal was to increase asset availability and protect critical infrastructure from potential cyberattacks. The chemical and pharmaceutical company selected Guardian appliances and the Central Management Console from Nozomi Networks. Our security experts designed, implemented and rolled out the solution globally.

Vision

Bayer wants to protect its critical infrastructure from interruptions

In the development and construction of a production plant, the functional requirements are the first and foremost priority. Availability around the clock is of the utmost importance so that production does not come to a standstill. However, the integration of the corporate network increases the need to protect such OT systems against cyber risks. Companies that are considered operators of critical infrastructures need to protect themselves through the latest technologies so that they

can respond at the earliest signs of attacks and anomalies within the network.

> "We need to be able to constantly detect attacks and anomalies in our production network as early as possible in order to prevent a system failure."
>
> *Jürgen Focke_*
> *Global Program Manager Manufacturing IT-Security, Bayer AG Division Pharmaceuticals*

Bayer AG's Pharmaceuticals Division also faces this challenge. While Bayer already had well-established security policies and protocols in place, in light of the rapid increase in cyberattacks they wanted to better protect themselves against new threats, as well as prevent data from being compromised or from intellectual property falling into the wrong hands. For Bayer, the issue of product safety – and therefore patient safety – is a top priority. Since the company's supply chain is spread across several production sites and countries, the transparency and security of OT processes and networks required further optimization. Although Bayer had an overview of the number of individual devices in its networks, the IT team was not able to identify how they communicate with each other and where vulnerabilities and risks lie. Meanwhile, those responsible were faced with the challenge of standardizing security processes across IT and OT.

The new solution, as an additional building block in securing production facilities, was intended to help Bayer Pharmaceuticals find weak points and detect and respond to attacks at an early stage. Additionally, Bayer wanted a uniform management level to consolidate global risk monitoring and OT visibility across all sites in order to optimize workflows.

Transformation

Advanced detection capabilities identify potential cyberthreats and vulnerabilities in the plant

Bayer selected us to implement the Guardian solution with Nozomi Networks' Central Management Console (CMC). To begin the project, a Guardian appliance and virtual management console were initially installed at a selected production site as part of a proof of concept (PoC) to demonstrate the solution's features and capabilities. Nozomi Networks' Guardian appliance automatically tracks OT and IoT assets and monitors communications and device behavior to gain insight into the network and its activity patterns. In this way, it detects anomalies in behavior as well as attacks and identifies the respective vulnerabilities with the appropriate priority. In doing so, the CMC consolidates OT and IoT visibility and risk monitoring across all sites to streamline workflows and accelerate incident response. The results of the PoC impressed those in Bayer's inhouse OT security team: Guardian not only automatically creates a comprehensive asset inventory, but also creates full transparency of all operations in the company's own network, which supports optimized network configuration. The security team is thus able to reduce manual troubleshooting and forensic efforts, speeding up the response to potential vulnerabilities.

NTT's security experts handled the design, implementation and global rollout of the solution at all production sites in close coordination with Bayer. NTT's tried-and-tested project method was chosen for the implementation, in which eight so-called work packages were "worked through" step by step. The project started with a kick-off and the general design of the architecture. This was followed by an initial inventory and a rough design for each individual site, defining where the appliance

> "As a major supplier in the pharmaceutical sector, providing patients with their medications is our top priority. An intrusion detection system is an essential component of our strategy, which we have successfully integrated, together with our partner NTT."
>
> *Jürgen Focke_*
> *Global Program Manager Manufacturing IT-Security, Bayer AG Division Pharmaceuticals*

would be inserted into the network and what data traffic would be monitored. The next step was configuration and – as soon as the number of alarms had been reduced and all false alarms had been fished out – final fine-tuning, including activation of the protection mode. All further measures were then implemented, including real-time reports, dashboards, audits, integration into the central Security Operation Center (SOC) and final training sessions for the security managers at Bayer.

Results

Bayer now has visibility of its complex, globally distributed OT environments

With the new solutions, Bayer AG has the capability to optimize its network security in a highly targeted manner. Network communication and behavior are constantly monitored in order to detect anomalies and possible attacks, which allows for a swift response to potential incidents before they can disrupt operations. Advanced threat intelligence capabilities identify cyberattacks as well as production risks early. The included threat intelligence service continuously updates Guardian appliances with the latest data and analysis. The pharmaceutical company is thus always kept up to date on emerging OT and IoT threats and can promptly detect and prevent the spread of potential infiltrations across its networks. This allowed around-the-clock availability of the production plants, which is essential for the pharmaceutical sector. The central console at the main site in Leverkusen also gives Bayer's managers a consolidated overview of all production sites around the world, providing company-wide transparency. With the help of our experts, the systems were also configured in such a way that false alarms and operating costs are reduced to a minimum.

"Technology plays a crucial role in driving business outcomes, which is why 85% of the Fortune 500 companies come to us. Find out how our full range of capabilities will empower your people, strategy, operations and technology to achieve your business modernization and transformation goals."

SAP Ariba and SAP Business Network Seamlessly Integrated into SAP for Me

SAP for Me is our digital companion for our customers, providing them with a personalized one-stop shop across their SAP product portfolio. And now it's available to SAP Ariba and SAP Business Network customers and partners.

SAP for Me provides a central access point to solution support. The portal offers a user-friendly interface with improved functionalities that can enable better and faster interaction with SAP support experts and can provide immediate guidance to solutions for daily business tasks. It aims to make detached information a thing of the past on the customer and partner journey to an intelligent enterprise.

Since November 6, 2023, an English-language experience has been available for customers and partners to begin their exploration before the migration. And as of today, SAP Ariba and SAP Business Network knowledge-related content on SAP for Me is available in over 20 languages.

SAP for Me provides an integrated and comprehensive platform to help meet the diverse needs of its users. The Services & Support dashboard features an SAP Ariba card that helps direct users to multiple resources on the legacy SAP Ariba Connect *platform*, including SAP Ariba and SAP Business Network release readiness information, product documentation, announcements, and specific content related to adoption and deployment.

When getting started with SAP for Me, know that:

- SAP Ariba Connect S-user authorizations are automatically carried over to SAP for Me – no additional access authorization is needed to use SAP for Me.

- The portal gives access to personalized content in the most used languages – English, German, Japanese, Simplified Chinese, French, Portuguese, and Spanish.

- SAP for Me offers intuitive cards that categorize and bucket information for your convenience. Support-relevant cards are mainly located in the Services & Support and Systems & Provisioning dashboards.

- The availability, maintenance, and subscriptions for SAP Ariba solutions and SAP Business Network can be found in the availability section of Systems & Provisioning.

- You can get a holistic view of licenses, orders, and consumption status.

- SAP for Me is also available on mobile devices. The mobile app will be enhanced with additional features and the ability to create and manage a new case.

- The get support application is your primary touchpoint with support.

Get Support, Easier and Faster

The get support application helps guide customers through technical product issues in real time or reaching SAP experts through an AI-enabled framework. It can provide an integrated and personalized support experience to help simplify and streamline the case creation process. AI can automatically recommend solutions during the interaction, predict the right product categorization, and recommend the most suitable support channel, like Expert Chat, SAP Community, or Ask an Expert Peer, when available for the selected product.

Access SAP Support on the Go

With the SAP for Me mobile app, support interaction can be possible anywhere and anytime to complete tasks and access information directly on a smartphone. The mobile app can be downloaded from the Apple Store and Google Play Store.

In conclusion, SAP for Me puts customer and partner interests into focus. While partners can manage their pipeline and customer success, the portal also serves as the central entry point for all support-related topics and questions for customers. It allows access to relevant information, self-services, and consumption status connected to any purchased product portfolio.

The SAP for Me migration for SAP Ariba solutions and SAP Business Network is a significant milestone as we tap into the next generation of AI opportunities to create an effective experience for our customers while delivering a seamless consistency in the look, feel, and delivery of critical *support services.*

SAP for Me is made for you. Follow SAP for Me on LinkedIn and bookmark SAP for Me on SAP Community to stay updated.

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