

# A bit of 'digital detox' will help before that S/4HANA upgrade



Enterprise resource planning (ERP) implementations can be trying. Many IT staffers will remember long workweeks involving painstaking Excel spreadsheet reviews, software testing and company-sponsored food buffets. And while the team-building and bonding activities of the experience may have made third-party consultants feel like adjunct family members, you can probably still recall the challenges and major issues encountered in the implementation process. Aversion to going through that process again has led many organizations to develop custom code over the years rather than consider any further ERP upgrades.

But now SAP has announced that support after 2025 will require S/4HANA, meaning you're going to have to bite the bullet and upgrade at some point. What do you do?

It's time for digital detoxing. Think of it as an opportunity to reduce the functional and technical burdens of your current ERP system. The good news: SAP has rethought S/4HANA from the ground up to simplify the upgrade process.

As we define it, digital detoxing means taking the time to understand your business and process requirements with visibility into your current usage so you can strategically upgrade only what you need. Going through digital detoxing allows for a healthier organization by putting its business needs in harmony with the technology it utilizes. And when it comes to S/4HANA, it can only be achieved through a consolidated migration effort of the SAP Digital Core.

Why is it important? For cost reduction and sustainability. Like social calls for minimalism to reduce the cost of living, IT can and should leverage the same principles. Challenged yearly to reduce overhead costs, most organizations reduce their human capital or outsource some operations without improving their ERP system. Unfortunately, taking this approach reduces their annual system costs but does not improve business processes. Additionally, this is only a short-term solution. Costs and challenges will continue with market volatility, shifting governmental regulations, consumer demand and accessibility — unless IT is approached with a fresh perspective.

## The beginning of a revolution

It is not your fault. The truth is that software vendors have been developing products the same way for years. "Enhancing" software adds small improvements and minimalizes business impacts. However, when one improvement is developed, another becomes obsolete.

Enter S/4HANA, SAP's first effort to break the enhancement cycle. With a new approach, SAP acknowledged that several previous enhancements were challenging. Reporting did not match, reconciliations were required, the user interface was less than intuitive, and it took a team to complete complicated coding and upgrades.

The benefits of S/4HANA are harmony and simplicity with an in-memory platform and a consolidated table structure. S/4HANA provides one data store, reducing long business process cycles such as year-end closing events. Predictive analytics are incorporated to detect, automate, predict and assist with business operations. Data batching is eliminated, allowing real-time access for reporting. A sleek new user interface takes SAP into the mobile age, reducing the need for automatically generated email reminders.

## Migration challenges

If it is really that great, why isn't everyone racing to upgrade? With harmonization and simplification come change and challenges.

SAP S/4HANA eliminates and consolidates tables to make business processes more accessible. The key challenges our clients mention include business partner reductions, new general ledger structures and the elimination of standard transactions.

Additionally, many of the data tables you were leveraging for enhancements over the years are now at risk; the mobile solutions you purchased to improve ease of use may now be costing your organization unneeded licensing fees; and the excessive reporting that is no longer available needs to be reviewed to determine whether it's really needed.

But change is inevitable. Your current ERP system is long in the tooth and requires excessive attention. The time you waste kicking around the decision to upgrade is time your employees could devote to driving your business into the digital age. The migration to S/4HANA is simpler than ever before. Average projects take roughly 16 weeks with the proper business partner in place.

Pick a partner that will help you understand benefits tailored to your needs and challenges. Focus on the value of the implementation and the partner's experience in the ERP field.

DXC's automation expertise, experience and business knowledge can help you ace the migration challenges. We are a company that thrives on change and understands the true value of upgrading today.

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