

# Modernizing Around SAP Without Touching the Core

How to Accelerate Innovation Without Compromising System Stability

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# **Executive Summary**

SAP landscapes have long formed the digital backbone of large enterprises — offering scale, reliability, and control. But in today's fast-moving environment, these same systems can become bottlenecks to innovation.

# The challenge

how do you modernize fast, innovate at scale, and integrate new technologies — without destabilizing your core SAP systems?

This whitepaper provides a **strategic roadmap** for modernization that enables agility while respecting SAP's clean-core philosophy. Whether through **SAP Business Technology Platform (BTP)** or through **loosely coupled independent applications**, enterprises can modernize on their terms.

You'll learn how to evaluate options, balance cost and control, and stay ready for tomorrow's business needs — from **Al integration** to **ESG reporting.** 



# Addressing Key Modernization Questions

| Category | Question                                                                     | Answer / Insight                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| General  | What licensing factors should I watch for when integrating third-party apps? | Licensing depends on app design — tightly integrated apps may trigger SAP Indirect/Digital Access models, while API-connected independent apps often offer more flexibility. Evaluate impact on existing licenses carefully. |
| General  | BTP or independent apps — what's better?                                     | SAP BTP offers integrated lifecycle management, seamless upgrades, and tighter security. Independent apps offer freedom in hosting, costs, and tech stacks. A hybrid approach often delivers optimal results.                |
| General  | Why does BTP matter?                                                         | BTP enables enterprises to innovate quickly — from app development and integration to analytics and automation — all while maintaining compatibility with the SAP roadmap.                                                   |



| General | What does BTP support?               | CAP/RAP development models, Integration Suite, HANA Cloud, AI/ML tools, business workflow, mobile enablement, event-driven architecture, and identity management. |
|---------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| General | Will ECC support extend beyond 2030? | As of now, mainstream support ends in 2027, and extended support ends in 2030. Enterprises should plan accordingly — don't wait to start modernization.           |

# **Strategic Considerations**

| Question                                              | Answer / Insight                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| How do I decide which legacy apps to modernize first? | Focus on apps with the greatest business value, user friction, or technical debt. Look for processes that impact speed, agility, or customer experience.                            |
| What KPIs should I track?                             | Key metrics include: Time-to-<br>Change, TCO Reduction,<br>Business User NPS, App<br>Adoption Rate, and Integration<br>Downtime. These help<br>demonstrate modernization<br>impact. |
|                                                       | How do I decide which legacy apps to modernize first?                                                                                                                               |



Showcase wins in areas like How do I build a mobile UX, automation, and modernization business case legacy app consolidation. before a full S/4HANA Highlight how these efforts migration? reduce SAP GUI dependence and build cloud-readiness. Most modernization efforts see What ROI can I expect? ROI within 12-24 months especially in automation, workflow, and user interface upgrades. Agile rollouts accelerate value realization.

# **Technical & Execution Considerations**

| Yes. SAP's Integration Suite<br>supports Salesforce, Workday,<br>Oracle, and more. Alternatively,<br>you can use middleware like<br>MuleSoft, Boomi, or custom<br>APIs. |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Adopt Zero Trust, role-based access, and multi-layer encryption. Use SAP IAS or external identity providers. Enable audit trails and monitor API usage.                 |
|                                                                                                                                                                         |



| 07 | What's ABAP Cloud's role?            | ABAP Cloud supports side-by-<br>side extensibility, allowing<br>businesses to build SAP-native<br>enhancements without<br>violating clean-core principles. |
|----|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 08 | Are BTP platform updates disruptive? | No — updates are typically seamless. However, best practices include maintaining version control, continuous testing, and having rollback plans.           |

# **Change Management & Operations**

| No: | Question                                                          | Answer / Insight                                                                                                                                                                   |
|-----|-------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 09  | How do I manage user transition from legacy to modern interfaces? | Create a change champion network. Start with pilot rollouts focused on UX. Offer guided onboarding with digital adoption platforms and provide training in business language.      |
| 10  | What are the common pitfalls and how to avoid them?               | Resistance to change, unclear integration boundaries, and lack of skills. Solutions: executive sponsorship, phased adoption, hybrid integration patterns, and upskilling programs. |

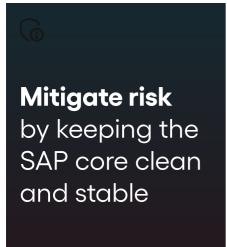


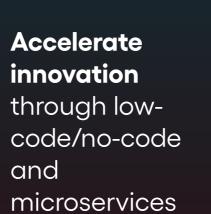
# Future-Readiness & Sustainability

| No: | Question                                           | Answer / Insight                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-----|----------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 11  | How does this help with Alreadiness?               | Decoupled, modern architectures allow you to plug in AI services more easily — whether from SAP BTP AI Core or external platforms. Eventdriven models and clean data make AI integration more powerful.             |
| 12  | Can this support ESG and sustainability reporting? | Yes. Modern architectures expose operational data to sustainability dashboards (e.g., SAP Sustainability Control Tower), helping organizations track emissions, energy use, and regulatory compliance in real time. |



# This approach empowers businesses to:





Prepare for the future with scalable, Already architectures



Drive adoption
with usercentric design
and guided
onboarding



You don't need to choose between modernization and stability.

You can have both.



# Unlock the Future — Without Breaking What Works

Modernization no longer requires a full-blown transformation to S/4HANA upfront.

The most successful enterprises are innovating around SAP, adopting agile modernization strategies that respect the integrity of the core while enabling experimentation, speed, and scalability.

By leveraging SAP BTP or integrating independent apps via APIs, organizations can roll out modern solutions — mobile UIs, automation tools, AI use cases, and more — without disrupting SAP's mission-critical functions.





# Modernizing Around SAP — At a Glance

| Key Focus                            | Your Advantage                                                                       |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Keep SAP Core Untouched              | Maintain stability and compliance while modernizing outside the core.                |
| Use SAP BTP or Independent<br>Paths  | Choose between native BTP tools or flexible external applications — or combine both. |
| Prioritize High-Impact Modernization | Start with apps causing friction or legacy drag. Show fast wins.                     |
| Integrate Seamlessly                 | Connect SAP and non-SAP systems via APIs, BTP Integration Suite, or middleware.      |
| Secure & Govern Effectively          | Apply Zero Trust principles, encryption, and centralized identity management.        |
| Be Future-Ready                      | Build Al-ready, scalable apps with clean architectures.                              |
| Drive Sustainability                 | Enable ESG and sustainability dashboards with real-time data exposure.               |
|                                      |                                                                                      |



# Ready to Begin Your Modernization Journey?

Whether you're just starting to evaluate your options or already have pilot projects underway, the time to act is now.

# Talk to our SAP modernization experts

Let us help you map your unique modernization path — aligned to your priorities, timelines, and budgets.

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