Business as usual during complex SAP migration

CUSTOMER
Infrastructure Services Provider

LOCATION
Australia

INDUSTRY
Infrastructure Services / Energy, Utilities, Oil & Gas

Challenge

- SAP relicensing pre-requisite
- Legacy database operating at capacity and infrastructure platform unable to accommodate expected growth
- Critical requirement to maintain on-going customer service

Solution

- SAP environment migration and application upgrade
- SAP Suite on HANA
- DXC Platform-as-a-Service (PaaS) for SAP
- AWS Cloud
- SmartShift

Results

- 50% reduction in development costs, improved test environments, increased system performance and reduced storage costs
- Ability to optimise and monitor the system in real-time; guaranteed security; scalability; 24 x 7 uptime and availability
- On time and budget with minimal disruption to day-to-day operations

Business as usual during complex SAP migration

This large infrastructure services provider employs more than 35,000 people at over 400 sites across Australia and New Zealand.

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>
> — **Digital Services Manager**, infrastructure services provider

The organisation operates around the clock 365 days of the year executing infrastructure projects and services contracts across several key industries, including defence, social infrastructure, water, electricity and gas, resources, environmental services, telecommunications and transport.

The company's service capability spans the full asset lifecycle – from design, minor capital works and operations and maintenance, asset management and facilities management, through to decommissioning – complemented by technology-enabled solutions and technical expertise.

Business challenge

The services provider found itself faced with the need to undertake a complex SAP environment migration and application upgrade. This was influenced by several critical business drivers, including an existing database operating at capacity, and a requisite SAP relicensing requirement.

According to the services provider's Digital Services Manager, "We had a legacy database and infrastructure platform that couldn't accommodate our expected growth. We needed to evolve our SAP solution to give us scalability and 24 x 7 uptime. In addition, we wanted the benefits of a new HANA database and an infrastructure solution that would help us optimise and monitor the system in real-time."

Unlike some organisations that rely on SAP solely for back-office processes, the services provider relies on SAP for its call centres and work management processes across all its operational units.

"Our SAP system is implemented on every contract we run. It is an essential platform, not just for finance and back-office processing but also for managing work orders and other essential services in a real-time environment."
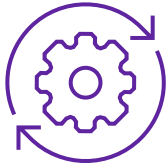
> "We took the platform down, changed the database, moved to a new infrastructure provider, executed application upgrades and put it back into production. Most companies wouldn't attempt to do all that at once."
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> — **Digital Services Manager**, infrastructure services provider

Furthermore, as the Digital Services Manager explains, the organisation's clients expect access to the SAP system. Its ability to offer digital services to both clients and its sub-contractors is one of the company's business offerings.

"Our clients are not just looking for maintenance services to be delivered, but technology services as well. They don't want to manage their own maintenance platforms, so we offer them a portal which provides day-to-day insights into how our services are being delivered in terms of budgets, costs and timelines. The SAP environment feeds the data to that portal, so it was critical that this replatforming project ran to plan."

Solution

The services provider chose DXC Technology to help move its core operating system to an AWS cloud environment along with the implementation of DXC's Platform-as-a-Service (PaaS) for SAP solution.

As a leading SAP solutions partner in Australia and New Zealand, the DXC Practice for SAP works closely with enterprise organisations to help them reimagine their future and accelerate business transformation, enabling tangible business value and maximising return on their SAP investment.

The Digital Services Manager says DXC was chosen ahead of other integrators because of its demonstrated commitment to the organisation's desired outcomes. "DXC's PaaS solution was the best offering we saw. But more importantly, we felt DXC were the best

strategic partner to accompany us on a journey that was going to push the envelope in terms of the challenging project milestones and technical complexity."

Implementation

The services provider needed to undertake the platform migration and application enhancement whilst also onboarding new contracts onto the system. "We had to achieve these objectives but keep costs to a minimum and guarantee security and availability," says the Digital Services Manager. "We didn't have the luxury of stopping our day-to-day activities; it was essential that our business operations were not affected."

She likens it to undertaking open heart surgery with the patient still awake on the operating table.

"We took the platform down, changed the database, moved to a new infrastructure provider, executed application upgrades and put it back into production. Most companies wouldn't attempt to do all that at once. On top of that, we were running our integration program, and onboarding around 30 contracts onto the new SAP platform. System changes were happening throughout, right up to the point we swapped over to the new platform. So, there was a lot of moving parts and change management involved."

DXC leveraged a third-party code engine, SmartShift, to reduce the amount of effort spent on code remediation, which helped protect the delivery timeline.

"DXC has taken responsibility for optimising the system and installing a monitoring regime that alerts us to things that might cause issues if left unattended. As a result, we now have capacity that we can ramp up and down as needed and all the correct security in place. It is an approach that will reduce the total cost of ownership of our SAP investment."

— **Digital Services Manager**, infrastructure services provider

Despite these complications, the services provider was only without the system for two days before go-live. "Most industry people I spoke to said it was an impossible task," adds the Digital Services Manager, "but with DXC it was achieved seamlessly and without any serious impact on our business."

Results and benefits

Hosted by AWS, the organisation is now experiencing improved system performance running SAP Suite on HANA. But as the Digital Services Manager points out, it is also benefitting from DXC's managed PaaS solution.

"We have vastly improved our development and test environments and reduced our storage costs.

"DXC has taken responsibility for optimising the system and installing a monitoring regime that alerts us to things that might cause issues if left unattended. As a result, we now have capacity that we can ramp up and down as needed and all the correct security in place. It is an approach that will reduce the total cost of ownership of our SAP investment."

The Digital Services Manager applauds the speed of the project's delivery, something she puts down to the combination of the company's stringent timeline management and DXC's technical expertise.

"The project ran substantially to time and budget. We did have one delay, but some replanning mitigated that. DXC brought in an impartial senior resource who offered an unbiased assessment of the timeline. Using this feedback, we were able to re-adjust expectations and move forward with minimal interruption."

The company is renowned for setting challenging targets when it undertakes projects, and it ran its SAP re-platforming exercise in the same manner.

"We push hard to hit our milestones and move through each phase. We only amend timelines when we absolutely have to," the Digital Services Manager explains. "DXC adjusted extremely well to our methodology, and I think it brought the best out of the whole project team."

> "I wouldn't hesitate to recommend the DXC Practice for SAP's migration capabilities. They partnered with us successfully on a very demanding, time-dependent project where there was very little room for error."
>
> — **Digital Services Manager**, infrastructure services provider

A platform for growth

The critical assignment was brought to a successful outcome thanks to a partnership of equals. Strong leadership and rapid milestone-orientated project management from the services provider were complemented by expert SAP knowledge and implementation experience from DXC. This combination delivered a secure, high availability, cloud-based SAP platform with minimal disruption to the organisation's day-to-day operations.

"The project's success and the speed it was completed is a testament to the expertise of the people that undertook it," says the Digital Services Manager.

"But it takes more than just good individuals. You have to work as a team. DXC became part of our company —it was a true partnership. No one ever said, 'that is not my problem'. When an issue arose, everyone stepped up and took responsibility for achieving a solution."

DXC's Business Manager, Practice for SAP, Adrian Everett, agrees. "We understood the timeline challenges that the company were facing in delivering a major platform change. Our joint delivery model was critical to protecting the timeline. In that spirit, the services provider supported this project with some strong co-leadership and ensured the right roles and delegations were in place

"The services provider is confident in its ability to achieve the impossible. This drove the team to hit deadlines and achieve objectives. It is the type of collaboration that ensures everyone operates at full capacity, which in the end meant the project was delivered fast and delivered well."

The Digital Services Manager concluded, "I wouldn't hesitate to recommend the DXC Practice for SAP's migration capabilities. They partnered with us successfully on a very demanding, time-dependent project where there was very little room for error."

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