

Digital transformation needs a solid foundation and a clear perspective

Greenfield, Brownfield or Other? Information Management!

Is there an ideal migration approach? Many SAP customers hesitate with their answers. Maybe the question is wrong, but the answer could be: system-independent information management and the separation of operative and historical data.

To state it plainly: the question is not wrong, but rather incomplete. When deciding on a migration approach, companies do not only have to consider what to do with configurations, individual customizations, the transfer of existing applications and whether they want to revert back to SAP standard. They also have to consider the massive mountain of data and documents and their business context, amassed over years or even decades. This is another, equally important aspect of the greenfield versus brownfield issue. Is it better to take that mountain, transfer it to the ultimate destination, and build it up again (brownfield)? Or should you walk around it, never look back and start over (greenfield)?

As difficult as these questions may be, answering them ultimately helps with any other migration efforts. SAP customers know that the migration to S/4 Hana and subsequent digitalization projects can be realized faster and easier if only recent data and documents needed in daily operations are transferred to the new software generation.

This is a reasonable approach for applications. However, it is not as easily translated to data as some companies might think. In enterprise applications, data are always stored with their business context.



Thomas Failer, founder of Data Migration Services AG.

For legal reasons, both data and business context have to be stored for mandatory retention periods. Consequently, data need stability, not agility.

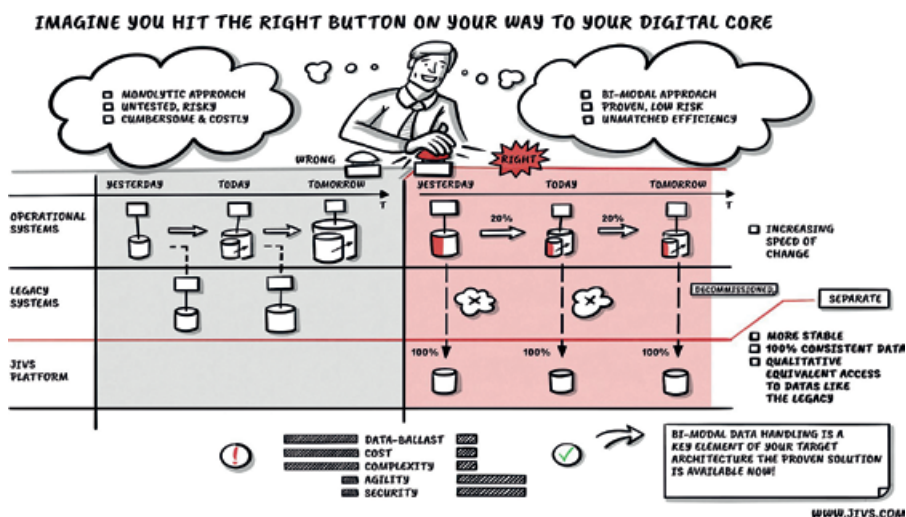
The issue of having to continue to operate legacy systems for legal reasons is not new. However, in the context of SAP S/4 Hana migrations, companies have to deal with it as well.

But how can the seemingly contradicting goals of agility and stability be reconciled? With a new approach: a different architecture of application landscape which separates legacy data and documents from the agile apps of the future.

Key element of this new architecture is a proper, system-independent environment for storing data, documents and their business context which are no longer needed in productive systems. This environment ensures the stability that data requires. Additionally, it increases legal certainty and IT security. This includes the deletion of specific data and documents - a fundamental requirement of the European General Data Protection Regulation (EU-GDPR).

Furthermore, legacy applications can be decommissioned, which leads to operational cost reductions of about 80 percent compared to their continued operation. At the same time, the information is stored 100 percent legally compliant and can be accessed anytime.

A system-independent platform for information management as key component of the planned or desired IT landscape grants companies the financial freedom and liberty of resources they need to accelerate the migration and meet SAP's 2025 deadline. This is especially crucial for companies who want to continue to benefit from individual configurations and customized applications while leveraging SAP's new software generation, therefore choosing a brownfield approach. Leveraging the platform JiVS IMP is the right answer and grants companies the freedom to choose which approach suits them and their business needs best.



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