How to Successfully Transition to SAP Cloud ERP:
The SAP S/4HANA Public Cloud for the Process Industry

Cut complexity, unlock your future: How process industry companies achieve scalable growth with SAP Cloud ERP.

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Management Summary:
At a Glance

The wrong ERP – or none at all – slows growth

Mid-sized and fast-growing companies in the process industry quickly reach their limits with outdated ERP systems or a patchwork of disconnected tools. Inefficient processes, poor data quality and missing scalability hold them back. Typical challenges include obsolete systems, manual workarounds, inconsistent dispersed data and long processing times – whether using an on-premise system or operating without an ERP entirely.

SAP Cloud ERP: All processes and data on one platform

SAP Cloud ERP offers a future-ready answer. From finance and production to logistics and sales, it brings all business processes together in real time, creates transparency and automates routine tasks. The solution is scalable and secure (GDPR compliant, ISO certified) and grows alongside the business – without high hardware costs or IT overhead. Companies benefit from standardised processes, real-time insights and seamless integration with third-party applications.

Five steps to SAP Cloud ERP – with PART as your partner

The transition follows five phases. PART, as a certified SAP partner with extensive experience in the process industry, guides organisations through strategy, process design, implementation, go-live and ongoing optimisation. With SAP Cloud ERP, companies gain efficiency, flexibility and future-readiness – at transparent cost and minimal risk. The cloud-based ERP becomes a catalyst for innovation and sustainable growth.

ERP in the Process Industry: Challenges for Mid-Sized and Growing Companies

Sooner or later, many mid-sized or rapidly expanding organisations in the process industry reach a point where business is booming and the company is growing – yet ERP-related challenges start slowing down that momentum.

Some rely on home-grown silo solutions for far too long. Others operate their own on-premise ERP system and run into problems as soon as the key IT personnel become unavailable. The results: inefficient processes, poor data quality and long downtimes.

Scenario A: Excel instead of ERP

A chemical company is thriving. Products meet high quality standards, operations run smoothly and demand is rising.

However, with growth come new challenges. The business has no ERP system in place. Raw material planning and batch documentation are handled entirely in Excel. As the organisation grows, processes become more complex, spreadsheets reach their limits and handling data becomes increasingly error-prone and inefficient.

Scenario B: On-premise instead of cloud

A mid-sized food and beverages company already uses an on-premise ERP, installed and maintained internally for many years. On-premise (or "on-prem") means the software runs locally instead of being cloud-based.

Both scenarios reflect the common pressure points many SMEs in the process industry face when it comes to Enterprise Resource Planning.

Three Typical Challenges

1. Technical Landscape

- Outdated ERP or isolated solutions: Systems are technologically obsolete, difficult to maintain and often not cloud-ready.

- Lack of integration: Data sits in separate systems (CRM, warehouse, production, finance) and must be manually consolidated.

- Missing scalability: Current systems reach their limits when the company expands, enters new markets or introduces new business models.

2. Data Quality & Transparency

- Inconsistent master data: Duplicate, outdated or contradictory records reduce data quality.

- Limited reporting capabilities: Reports take too long, are incomplete or rely on manual Excel sheets.

- No real-time information: Decisions are based on outdated figures.

3. Process & Organisational Challenges

- Manual workarounds: Many tasks happen outside the ERP – via email, on paper or in spreadsheets.

- No standardised processes: Departments work with their own tools and procedures.

- Long throughput times: Media disruptions and manual approvals slow down operations.

SAP Cloud ERP: Cut Complexity, Unlock Your Future

These challenges make one thing clear: to remain competitive and future-ready, companies must modernise ERP-related business processes.

On the path to SAP Cloud ERP, the S/4 Public Cloud supports mid-sized and growing companies in the process industry with a modern, scalable ERP system tailored precisely to their needs.

Best practices and a clear, structured path provided by SAP and PART makes the ERP transition predictable: preconfigured processes and a clear timeline provide the technological foundation for sustainable growth.

What is SAP Cloud ERP?

SAP Cloud ERP is SAP's cloud-based enterprise resource planning system designed specifically for the needs of mid-sized companies. It integrates and manages core business processes – finance, HR, logistics, production, sales and procurement – in a single platform.

- Cloud-based: The software is delivered as a service (SaaS). SAP handles maintenance, updates and security.

- Real-time data: All departments work with the same current data, improving transparency and efficiency.

- Scalable: The system adapts to growing or changing business needs.

- Integrative: Compatible with other SAP solutions and third-party software.

- Process standards: Built on best-practice, industry-proven processes that help companies get started quickly and efficiently.

SAP Cloud ERP und S/4HANA

SAP has renamed its cloud ERP solutions: SAP S/4HANA Cloud Public Edition is now called SAP Cloud ERP – still based on the S/4HANA platform.

The base package includes both Financial Management and Supply Chain Management. The core ERP suite gives users full visibility – from sales and procurement through to finance – enabling fast reactions and automation where useful. SAP Cloud ERP can be expanded with additional functionality depending on specific needs – whether product-centric, service-centric or optimised for professional services.

Scenario A: From Excel to SAP Cloud ERP

The chemical company that has so far been working with Excel spreadsheets instead of an ERP system benefits from SAP Cloud ERP in the following ways: From raw material to finished product, the cloud-based ERP system provides the growing business with seamless batch traceability. Demand planning is fully integrated, and compliance processes can be mapped securely and efficiently.

Particularly significant advantages arise in day-to-day operations: Employees no longer need to switch between different systems and manually transfer data from A to B, which minimises manual errors. Collaboration between departments now takes place on a central data and system basis.

Scenario B: From On-Premise to SAP Cloud ERP

The mid-sized company from the food and beverages sector, which until now has operated an on-premise ERP system internally, decides to move to SAP's cloud ERP. This eliminates the need for complex internal operation entirely. The company saves costs because no hardware investments are required. The IT team also frees up capacity and can focus on other tasks.

The cloud solution adapts quickly and flexibly to new business requirements and grows in line with the company. SAP guarantees high security standards and provides automated, regular updates.

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Seven Reasons to Choose SAP Cloud ERP

1   Unified, streamlined processes

2   Real-time transparency

3   Greater efficiency and productivity

4   Flexibility and scalability

5   Security and compliance

6   Innovation platform

7   Cost efficiency and transparency

Unified and Streamlined Processes

With SAP Cloud ERP, process industry companies bring all their core processes together in one system: procurement, production, warehousing, sales and accounting are all integrated. This eliminates isolated solutions: media disruptions, duplicate data entry and manual effort disappear.

Automated workflows accelerate approvals and process steps, resulting in shorter throughput times. Companies save time, reduce the workload for their employees and achieve greater efficiency and transparency.

Real-Time Transparency and Better Decisions

With SAP Cloud ERP, everyone in the company uses a unified and always up-to-date data foundation. Management reports, KPIs and dashboards are available in real time, enabling not only a new level of transparency but also reliable, data-based decision-making. These decisions are now made on the basis of consistent and current data instead of estimates or Excel worksheets.

Overall, SAP Cloud ERP provides a central platform for customer, supplier and production data, offering a 360-degree view of the business and its customers.

Higher Efficiency and Productivity

SAP Cloud ERP contributes to greater efficiency on multiple levels and increases productivity. The system automates routine tasks such as purchase order processing, invoice verification or stock transfers.

Manual errors are significantly reduced because everyone works with standardised master data, and plausibility checks provide additional safeguards. Working on the same data foundation also improves collaboration between departments – for example by reducing time-consuming coordination in daily operations.

Flexibility and Scalability

As the company grows, SAP Cloud ERP grows with it: the system can be quickly and easily expanded with new modules, functions and integrations. Companies can integrate new sites, markets or languages without major effort. Even if the number of employees (and thus users) increases, SAP Cloud ERP adapts seamlessly.

Quarterly updates automatically deliver new features into the system, ensuring technological future-readiness.

Security and Compliance

SAP combines security and cloud capabilities. Hosting takes place in certified SAP data centres (for example in Germany or the EU), in accordance with ISO 27001, ISAE 3402 and other international standards. SAP Cloud ERP actively helps mid-sized companies comply with GDPR, GoBD or industry-specific regulations.

From full encryption to role and authorisation concepts to audit trails, SAP Cloud ERP meets all relevant security standards. Security patches are applied automatically through regular updates without any effort required from the company.

Future-Proof Innovation Platform

Whether artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning or predictive analytics: new technologies can be easily integrated via the SAP Business Technology Platform. Companies using SAP automatically benefit from developments across SAP's global community.

External systems are also easy to connect: open APIs allow companies to integrate, for example, CRM, LIMS, MES, e-commerce or other systems.

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Cost Efficiency and Transparency

With SAP Cloud ERP, mid-sized companies rely on a transparent subscription model whose costs are based on the number of users and the functional scope required. There are no hidden fees; monthly or annual charges are fully transparent.

Smaller companies can start with the functional scope they need and expand it later as required. In other words, they do not pay for features they don't use.

Initial investments are low: there are no high hardware or operating system costs. Compared with an on-premise ERP, total operating costs decrease over time, as factors such as maintenance, hardware updates or running your own data centre are no longer necessary.

Roadmap: Step by Step into Cloud ERP

But how does the path to the cloud work in practice? Over many years, PART has gained extensive experience in supporting growing and mid-sized process industry companies on their digital transformation journey. We shape the transition to SAP Cloud ERP with a five-phase roadmap:

Phase 1: Preparation & Strategy: Laying the Foundations for SAP Cloud Success

Before the project begins, the current IT landscape and business processes are analysed using a dedicated DDA (Digital Discovery Assessment), weaknesses are identified and the requirements of all business units are collected.

At the same time, cloud readiness is assessed – both technically and with respect to regulatory requirements such as GDPR. Finally, the project team is assembled and, based on these results, a realistic budget framework for licences, implementation and operations is established.

Phase 2: Target Vision & Migration Strategy: Defining Processes and Approach

Using tools such as the SAP Best Practice Explorer, the project team models the future target processes and aligns them with the standard functions of SAP Cloud ERP. According to the SAP Activate methodology, the project passes through clear phases: from fit-to-standard analysis and process configuration to data migration and integration with third-party systems.

Afterwards, a decision is made as to whether a complete new start (greenfield approach), a technical migration (brownfield approach) or a selective transfer of data and processes (bluefield approach) is the best path forward.

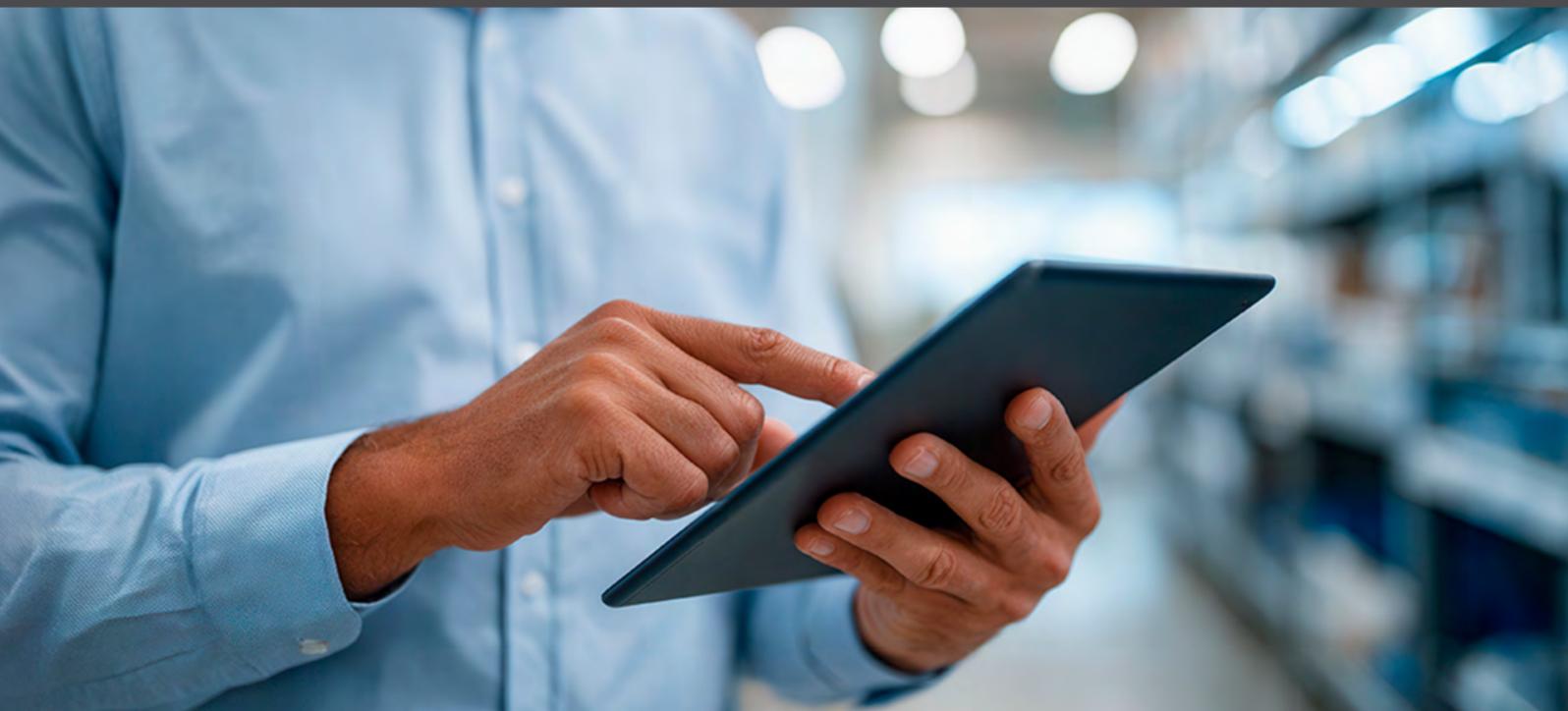### Phase 3: Implementation: From Planning to Go-Live

During implementation, configuration and any necessary adaptations take place, as well as integrations and extensions such as add-ons. Each step is validated through tests and quality gates to ensure the quality and functionality of the solution. In parallel, end users are trained and learn how to use the new system effectively.

Phase 4: Go-Live & Hypercare: Stable Start and Intensive Support

Go-live is carried out according to a detailed cutover plan, including data migration, to minimise operational interruptions. In the first weeks after go-live, the PART team is available for intensive support and quick issue resolution as part of the hypercare phase. This stabilises processes and provides optimal guidance to users.

Phase 5: Operation & Continuous Development – Ongoing Optimisation and Innovation

After go-live, regular updates ensure that SAP Cloud ERP is continuously improved with new features and technologies. Key users receive ongoing training, and change management ensures strong acceptance within the organisation. In addition, the SAP Business Technology Platform enables the integration of new technologies and scaling to further sites or business areas.

PART as an Experienced Partner for ERP Implementation

During the implementation of SAP Cloud ERP, PART supports companies every step of the way: as a long-standing provider for the process industry, PART has a deep understanding of this sector's specific requirements – and assists SMEs with more than 30 years of expertise and as a certified SAP partner.

"In ERP implementations, we support our clients in a partnership-based and pragmatic way,"

says Bernhard Lang, Head of Consulting. "Our consultants stay closely connected with the company throughout the entire project to make complex technology understandable, feasible and genuinely valuable. They provide guidance on strategic and operational decisions and are available for individual questions. This enables us to create – together with our clients – a strong starting point for a scalable cloud future."

Would you like to introduce SAP Cloud ERP and take your company to the next level of transparency, efficiency and scalability? Do you have questions or would you like an individual proposal? We are here to help.

GET IN TOUCH!

About PART

Quality and security – that is our promise. We deliver certified solutions in close cooperation with SAP, the industry leader. We build trust and maintain long-term, mutually reliable partnerships. With fairness and sustainability, we work from person to person to support stable and profitable business development for mid-sized companies – that is what we consider a win-win situation.

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