Accenture Software for
Human Capital Management

Confidence in HR Conversions and Integrations

How to manage risk when migrating to SAP SuccessFactors

accenture

Integration is key to success

The advent of digital technologies demands new levels of speed and efficiency for the modern HR department. The scope and scale of many organizations means managing HR systems, which are often a combination of on premise and in the cloud, can be complex and difficult.

From the integration of data models to employee self-service, or from payments to handling the sheer number of employees and organizational changes, the HR role is being tested on a daily basis.

According to Americas' SAP User Group (ASUG)[1], the world's largest independent SAP user group, most HR leaders feel extremely or very confident in the accuracy of their employee data—despite the fact that only 6 percent of respondents surveyed are using a fully automated solution to update their employee records. Yet, the level of confidence weakens the larger organizations become, suggesting that higher volumes of employee data may cause companies to feel more uncertain about its quality.

Frequent data migrations are a fact of life for HR leads—and data integration is the single-biggest factor keeping them awake at night. More than one-third of the ASUG respondents see integrations as a challenge (34 percent), with large organizations, again, struggling more than most.

Data that must be integrated across multiple systems must be kept in sync. Successful migrations demand a close eye on the key stages of data cleansing, conversion, load, validation, testing and—in the case of replicated systems—reconciliation. These checks and balances are not a one-time event—indeed, such tasks can be more complex than many HR leaders think.

Organizations need to embrace validation and reconciliation as fundamental to their HR data strategy—and discover new ways to make those functions both easy and automated.

Definitions

VALIDATION: Verifying centralized employee data to ensure consistency and correctness in system implementations. **Ask yourself: How can I be sure that everything in the source system is now in our target system in the way we expected?**

RECONCILIATION: Maintaining accuracy of replicated data between the cloud (SAP SuccessFactors' Employee Central) and on premise (SAP HCM/Employee Central Payroll). **Ask yourself: Do we always have the right data to run our payroll processes efficiently and accurately?**
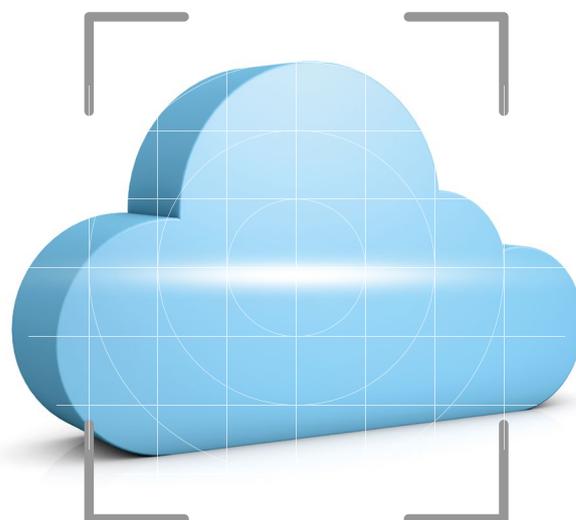
More than a data move

It is vital that on-premise or legacy systems and the cloud system work in harmony, especially when it comes to payroll. Here are some essential considerations when moving data from one system to another.

Validation is fundamental before, during and after migration

All HR teams want to focus closely on the task in hand—making sure data is available and in the right system. But moving data to the right place is only one part of the migration challenge. If it is found to be inaccurate or incomplete, that migration is far from being a success.

Validation can reassure HR users that they are handling accurate, up-to-date data. But it is one of those tasks that is often implemented as an afterthought. To undertake validation manually requires a huge effort—and, with the potential for human error, there are no guarantees around accuracy. The bottom line is that a manual validation incurs considerably higher risk—and can create bottlenecks or delays.

Cloud does not operate in splendid isolation

Once HR users have migrated their data and are fully operational in the cloud, it may still be important to integrate data from other systems, both cloud or on-premise. For example, if HR teams run their payroll in another system, it is an ongoing requirement to perform some kind of integration reconciliation.

Regulation puts pressure on quality and accuracy

The heat is on as a result of European Union General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and other relevant and upcoming legislations. HR professionals cannot focus on just one data segment, they need to tackle it all, holistically. The ASUG survey[1] finds that most companies feel that compliance measures (such as GDPR) will at least somewhat affect data handling processes going forward.

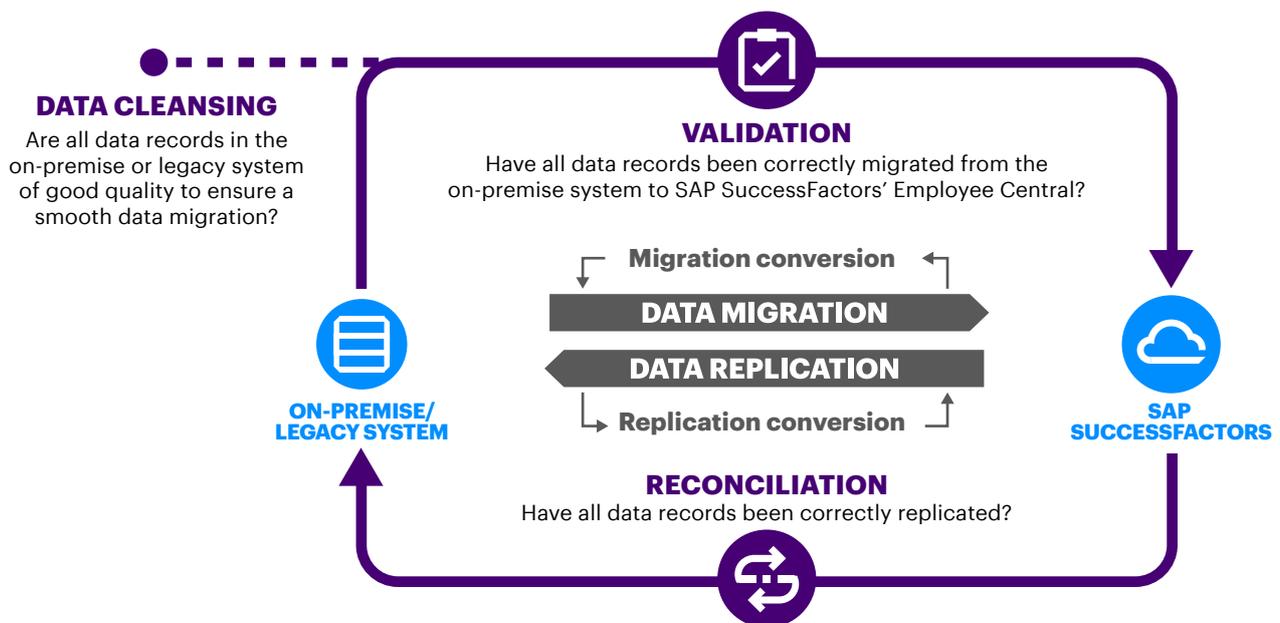### Migration and integration demands a "strategy first" approach

As with any critical business decision, agreeing a strategy for ongoing validation and reconciliation is vital to avoid difficulties in data movement and management further down the line. In our experience, however, few HR teams have such a strategy today; it is an important omission.

Validation and reconciliation should not be considered a short-term task but rather become a "living" process, one that is fluid and adapts to the needs and demands of the organization ongoing.

Follow the data

Whether an organization is planning migration or has already started, there are ways to ease the journey.

Cleansing the data, then validating it, and reconciling it are important steps, so that HR can smoothly and effectively migrate from on-premise or legacy systems to SAP SuccessFactors.

DATA CLEANSING
Are all data records in the on-premise or legacy system of good quality to ensure a smooth data migration?

VALIDATION
Have all data records been correctly migrated from the on-premise system to SAP SuccessFactors' Employee Central?

Migration conversion
DATA MIGRATION
DATA REPLICATION
Replication conversion

ON-PREMISE/ LEGACY SYSTEM

SAP SUCCESSFACTORS

RECONCILIATION
Have all data records been correctly replicated?

What are the pitfalls?

Many HR teams do not pay enough attention to the initial data extraction and conversion steps.

Aside from lacking a strategy, some of the typical pitfalls that can hinder a validation and reconciliation exercise before it has even started include:

- Being unaware if data is correct from the outset
- Underestimating the task or thinking it is a one-off exercise
- Insufficient expertise with the target system to undertake mapping from the old system to new system
- Having a "blind faith" that the data reached the target system correctly—despite understanding that SAP SuccessFactors does not perform extended consistency checks
- An absence of a payroll facility in SAP SuccessFactors which means that the new cloud system needs to be synched with the on-premise HCM system for the payroll to run correctly.

HR teams must be proactive to de-risk conversion

The more effort extended to competently validate and reconcile the data, the more successful a migration project can be. By taking a strategic view of the migration and conversion process, you can lessen the load of having to correct errors—or being unable find them in the first place.

What does good look like?

People lie at the heart of successful HR operations, but their skills and expertise can be augmented by the right software solutions. HR leaders seeking to validate and reconcile their data conversions need to consider the following features and benefits:

What do you need to do?

- **Gather data** for use in conversion from SAP and non-SAP legacy systems

- **Perform validations** before loading data to SAP SuccessFactors or post-conversion by comparing source to target

- **Convert delta loads** at the end of cutover by comparing all conversion data to an initial snapshot

- **Provide full analytics for stakeholders** with conversion statistics

- **Use the existing SAP system** without additional hardware or middleware

- **Customize activities** easily without additional time or skills

- Flexibly structure migration to enable **parallel work of all client divisions/systems**

What benefits could you realize?

- **Improved visibility** through using a workbench to provide complete transparency on identified issues at any time, to everybody

- **Better data quality** by retrieving the data model from SAP SuccessFactors—and avoiding the risk of missed fields

- The ability to **manage data more flexibly** from systems outside of the SAP system, such as Excel spreadsheets

- **Clear reporting** that helps you provide up-to-the-minute insights on the status of validation and produce analytics to feed shareholders' interests.

- **Reduced need for preparation** as you compare only successfully migrated employees and filter acceptable differences

- **Ease of use** since no advanced knowledge of Microsoft Excel is necessary to complete the validation and reconciliation processes—less training effort is required to onboard validators

- **Be more clear on errors and progress** by linking detected differences to the corresponding issue ID in the issue tracker for follow-up or tracking the process, simply and easily

"We've achieved 99.98 percent correctness of data migrated using **ACCENTURE DATA COMPARISON MANAGER.** We couldn't do without the tool."

A global consumer software company with more than 80,000 employees.

"The **ACCENTURE DATA COMPARISON MANAGER** has helped us to identify migration errors. Without the Data Comparison Manager software, we would have been unable to check such a large amount of data and be sure it was of high quality. Once set up, you can repeat a test without much effort. With Accenture Data Comparison Manager, we have a 100 percent security and traceability."

German customer with around 160,000 employees from the retail sector.

What are the efficiency gains?

Accenture is dedicated to building software apps for SAP SuccessFactors, Employee Central, EC Payroll and SAP HCM. Over the past 15 years, our software apps have been licensed to more than 1,900 customers who use them on a daily basis in their human capital management productive landscape.

ACCENTURE DATA COMPARISON MANAGER is a software solution that supports data migration from any legacy system to SAP SuccessFactors, and significantly reduces the work effort associated with SAP payroll testing or monitoring of data replication between SAP HCM and SAP SuccessFactors. It is part of a portfolio of extensions for SAP SuccessFactors on the SAP Cloud Platform.

In addition, data cleansing, the lifeblood of any successful migration, can be maintained by **Accenture HR Audit and Compliance as-a-service**— a solution that enables HR departments to maintain personnel data at a consistently high quality in cloud deployments.

Based on our extensive experience with validation or reconciliation projects for SAP SuccessFactors, Accenture Data Comparison Manager has realized the following improvements:

What did we do?

Conversion, data transformation into SAP SuccessFactors

Efficiency gains

Between

25%–35%

less effort

What did we automate and accelerate?

Data transformation, load file creation, pre- and post-mock conversion comparisons

What did we do?

Reconciliation between SAP HCM and a global SAP SuccessFactors' Employee Central system

Efficiency gains

Between

30%–40%

less effort

What did we automate and accelerate?

Ongoing, automated health check/reconciliation between Employee Central and other SAP HCM systems

Where is it working?

Here's how sound validation and reconciliation processes are working in practice:

HR Information System leads from a **large consumer goods and services company** were half-way through a data conversion project when they became aware that the validation process was a vital step which they had not properly explored. After changing their systems integrator, they undertook a second conversion exercise which identified a number of issues with the data. All errors found were then resolved and the data was fully validated so that the company could move forward with the conversion.

A **multinational computer software company** wanted to validate its data conversion from SAP HCM to its SAP SuccessFactors system. It needed to check that the records that were created for the purposes of conversion, transformed, and then loaded, actually made it through the process successfully and resided in the new system. The company realized that it was not enough to simply cross-check the data manually—it needed a comparison tool to automate the process and be confident that the data was migrating successfully and without errors or omissions.

Many HR users believe that if there are any problems with conversion (say, the data does not load properly, contains errors or is incomplete), the SAP SuccessFactors logs will identify them. But, in many cases, the cloud solution only addresses basic technical errors. As a result, being able to rely on a solution that could validate every single record and field, including transformation rules, from source to target was vital to the success of their go-live. This process paid dividends and was a springboard to better data management going forward for their reconciliation process to ensure successful integration.

The illustration below shows the complexity of a migration to a cloud HR system—there are many different countries involved, various local and legal entities, and large workforce.

Many longstanding internal processes are affected and need to be replaced. Validating HR data is necessary so that all HR processes can run smoothly. Once data is incorrect, there is not only a problem with company information integral to HR processes, but also a knock-on effect across the whole business.

Challenges to integrate SAP SuccessFactors' Employee Central with SAP HCM Payroll

150+
legal entities

90,000+
employees

1,500+
new starters

4,500+
organization changes

100,000+
payments

350+
wage types

10+
employee self-services

15+
manager self-services

35,000+
EC data changes

2,500+
support tickets

500
business rules

50+
integration points

HR goes into the cloud

There is no better example of applying thoroughness and competence to data management capabilities than a study of SAP itself.[2] Businesses around the world rely on SAP systems to keep them running smoothly, their customers in focus, and their people performing at their best. And when it comes to its own human capital management systems, SAP wants the same level of speed, insight, and flexibility that it provides to its customers.

The team working on this major project was a highly virtual one, with members spread across more than 19 locations worldwide. With all the validation results in one tool, accessible from anywhere at any time, it was easier to control and drive the desired outcomes.

During the migration to the SAP SuccessFactors Employee Central solution, SAP worked with long-time partner Accenture. To help ensure a smooth transfer, it used Accenture Data Comparison Manager—built specifically to support data validations between any legacy system and SAP SuccessFactors solutions.

As a result, SAP was able to simplify the data migration and reconciliation, reducing the time needed to run full validation cycles from more than three weeks to as quickly as one week. Not only did this help reduce costs, mitigate the risk of errors, and increase control, it also meant SAP's people were up and running faster using the HR tools they needed to succeed and serve customers better.

Now an important showcase for other large enterprise customers,[2] the HR project has enabled SAP to move from a customized, on-premise ERP system to highly standardized cloud solution offering a similar set of functionalities and minimized country specific legal deviations.

SAP was also able to manage unforeseeable challenges with data migration and validation using ACCENTURE DATA COMPARISON MANAGER to achieve:

2x
more efficient data migration to SAP SuccessFactors Employee Central

up to 66%
faster data validation

3x
more efficient record investigation

100k+
payments each month for 19 global and 524 local wage types

32
self-service HR tools (13 for employees and 19 for managers)

Greater project visibility

"We took ... processes and moved them to the SAP cloud. This movement has never been done before, to such a large enterprise scale like here at SAP."

Andreas Kahlen, IT Project Manager SAP HR Goes Cloud.[3]

"We needed a broad range of skills for this project. And it was only by working with diverse SAP talent all over the world that we were able to get the result we wanted."

Ralph Schneider, Program Manager for HR Goes Cloud.[3]

Ask yourself

To customers who are either planning, just starting or currently undergoing a migration to SAP SuccessFactors, ask yourself these key questions:

1 Does an up-to-date validation strategy form the backbone of your migration efforts?

2 Post-go live, do you have an "insurance policy" for your interfaces, that is, a reconciliation strategy?

3 Did you undertake appropriate data cleansing work before and/or during data conversion?

4 Have you allowed yourself enough time between migration cycles to consolidate, review and correct the outcome of the previous cycle?

5 Have you included milestone checkpoints in your migration approach?

6 Have you considered the need for a payroll regression test as part of your migration?

To HR leaders, the issue is a simple one—they need to make sure they can move data from one system to another successfully and trust that the data is both valid and fully reconciled. To make effective decisions, retain the quality and integrity of their operations and be confident of their conversion, HR teams need confirmation that they have the right information in the right place at the right time.

References

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2,000+
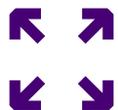Customers

48
Countries

5
certified Apps in the **SAP App Center**

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