Mastering
SAP Technologies
2016 HOTLIST OF ISSUES
The world of SAP is changing – are you keeping up?

With the pervasiveness of cloud, mobile and big data - and the emergence of augmented reality, smart machines and wearables - the technology industry in 2016 is an exciting place to be. SAP is innovating at a remarkable pace – not only releasing a number of new solutions, but ‘betting’ their entire business on a completely new platform that all SAP customers need to be up and running on by 2025.

The Eventful Group recently ran extensive research with those that live and breathe technology everyday within SAP’s customer organisations. SAP’s marketing mantra is to ‘Run Simple’, but in this hugely transitional phase, it became apparent that SAP technology is a complex space in which to work. Read the rest of this Hotlist to get an insight into the biggest issues, challenges and aspirations the SAP technology community faces today. The topics are listed in order of priority given by the community:

Who was involved in the research?

We led round-table research group discussions with over 80 SAP IT professionals across Australia and New Zealand. Job titles represented include CIO, Enterprise Business Solutions, IT, SAP, Development, Solution Architect, Technical, Basis and Security Managers. Attendees came from the Mining, Utilities, FMCG, Construction, Financial Services, Online, Government and Healthcare industries.

What will this research be used for?

As well as being distributed for general interest within the SAP community, this Hotlist of Issues will determine the program and speaker lineup for the 2016 Mastering SAP Technologies event. All presenters and facilitators will be asked to base their sessions around the topics outlined and the questions posed.
1. Improving User Experience

Simplifying the experience for users is always a top issue in SAP technology teams. Customers and employees are expecting the digital experience that they encounter each day in everything from social media to internet banking. Not only do simplified interfaces improve the experience for users and thus increase adoption but they can also greatly improve productivity.

SAP has released a number of solutions to assist with this, including the hotly-discussed SAP Fiori. Whilst SAP customers are dipping their toes in the use of Fiori apps, they are still looking for an holistic approach that will transform the way users interact with the system.

Strategy & Roadmap

- What is SAP’s roadmap for getting its customers off of GUI and onto UI5? Understanding a clear path to improved UX from an SAP perspective
- NWBC vs. Portal vs. Personas – which tools to use when?
- How is the user’s navigation and SSO experience impacted by the use of different tools / technologies / approaches?
- What is the roadmap for Portal? Will it reach end-of-life? Are SAP still developing the product?
- Is Fiori the be-all-and-end-all? Or is it primarily intended for occasional users? Should GUI still be used for high transaction users?
- How do you approach UI harmonisation across all SAP products including Concur, Ariba etc? What is SAP developing in this regard?
- Starting with your platform strategy as a precursor to your UI strategy
- How should you fit Fiori in with your digital strategy? Should your digital team own it?
- Change the mindset to fix the process before you start customising UIs to fit your inefficient processes
- How do you ensure Fiori doesn’t get put on the backburner in your organisation?
- How to decide which Fiori apps are right for your organisation and which to roll-out first
- What is the role of Personas and what are the system prerequisites? What is the roadmap and why haven’t we heard much about it recently?

Mobile Interfaces

- Understanding exactly how mobility affects user experience – is it always the right option?
- How to manage mobile devices – is Afaria the only option?
- What is the roadmap for SAP Mobile Platform (SMP)? Is it still a preferred solution?
- Putting together a business case for a mobile platform – what’s has worked for others
Project Management

- What is best practice project management for UX improvement and app development? Agile vs. waterfall
- The benefits of wireframing to the business early to receive feedback before you build
- Transforming the delivery mindset – the user comes first!
- How to influence your organisation’s funding model to better suit agile development
- Ensuring testing is undertaken with different personas and user types

Implications

- What are the consistency and performance issues related with different solutions available?
- Understanding the effort required in getting a Fiori app up and running and managing its lifecycle
- Getting to know the Fiori Launchpad and what ‘best practice’ is
- If you customise SAP’s standard offerings in Fiori, what are the implications for upgrades?
- Understanding the support model for UI5
- How does Fiori and Gateway affect licensing, especially with regards to external facing and unnamed users?
2. Skills for Today and Into the Future

With the mainstream emergence of cloud solutions, UI5 and in-memory technology in the SAP landscape, the skills required in your technology team are changing at a rapid pace. How can you make the most of the skills you already have in your team whilst upskilling for the future? What should today’s SAP team look like? What should be kept in-house and what outsourced? What do YOU need to do to ‘future-proof’ your skills?

Upskilling Your Team

- What will the role of developers be in the future when cloud solutions are not highly-customisable?
- Moving to a DevOps environment. Is your organisation mature enough? How can you prepare for this and what change management effort is involved?
- Development personas – what is the ideal development team mix for the future?
- Skills that are required to utilise SAP’s newest offerings in UI5, Fiori and Personas. How do you upskill your current developers?
- What is the right skill balance for a developer going into 2020? Java vs. ABAP vs. UI5 vs. HANA
- Transforming ABAP developers into UI designers and digital specialists
- Should UI design be a separate function within the team? If so, what is the perfect ratio of designers: developers?
- Do the needs for a greater focus on UX and new skills such as Javascript mean we have to attract people from non-SAP and/or non-Enterprise backgrounds?
- Can you (and should you) be leveraging your marketing and digital teams to assist with UX design? Who should own the solution?
- Ways to deal with perpetual knowledge loss – both within your own team and those functions that are outsourced
- What tools can you use to improve the collaboration of your technology teams?
- Overcoming development experience issues – Web IDE is too slow, when will there be free trials for tools that aren’t cloud products?
- How to find and recruit good support professionals and SMEs. Culturally they are not problem-solvers
Managing Outsourced Skill

- In-house team vs. outsourced vs. consultants vs. automation – which resources to use where
- What part of your team should you outsource? BAU vs. innovation
- Overcoming a focus on head-count rather than the cost of skill to enable the right decision for your business
- How to ascertain whether your outsourced development function is keeping up with the latest UI developments and building this into SLAs
- How to build innovation into SLAs for providers. Is this even possible?
- Examples of best practice SLAs
- How to overcome the trust challenges with offshoring development. What role can development standards and naming play?
- What is the value of in-sourcing? Who has done this and what were the outcomes?
- Do we have to limit innovation to outsource?

3. Accelerating Innovation

With new and improved business systems solutions being released all the time, you can guarantee that your business leaders are keeping abreast of what’s out there – even if your IT team isn’t! IT teams need to innovate faster than ever to keep up and remain relevant in the business. But in an industry where the pace of change has traditionally been slow, this is easier said than done.

- Exploring different ways to foster an innovation culture in your IT team
- Working together with the business to come up with solutions
- How do others best enable collaboration between their IT and business units?
- What are some of the processes to innovation?
- What role can hackathons play and how can you harness them in your own organisation?
- The role of design thinking and examples where this has been successful in practice
- How to catapult the culture change required for an innovation mindset in your technology team
- What can we learn from the non-SAP world? There are other areas of IT that are much more advanced in this area
4. System Integration

Integration has always been a hot issue within the SAP community, but with the mainstream emergence of cloud and numerous SAP product acquisitions, there is the need to discover technology that aligns with these newer architectures. There is also some confusion about the integration product roadmap from SAP, with customers looking to find the one tool to rule them all.

- What are the challenges of integrating cloud to on-premise, cloud to cloud, SAP to non-SAP?
- Integration specifics associated with Ariba, Concur, SuccessFactors and Hybris
- Understanding the tools available for integration. Is there one tool to rule them all?
- What is the roadmap for PI and Gateway? Are they still SAP’s solutions of choice?
- Is Odata the best way forward?
- Ways to overcome the knowledge loss of integration in the organisation as developers change their focus to UX
- How you can expose APIs to make revenue for your business
- Best ways of working with non-SAP teams on integration projects
- Migration experiences to PI 7.4. How to create the integration scenario
- How to define the end-point in an agile environment
- Overcoming performance issues of user authorisation and SSO
- Tightly coupled vs. loosely coupled
5. Harnessing S/4 HANA

With SAP’s announcement that support for ECC 6 will run to to 2025, moving to S/4 HANA has now become a reality for every SAP customer. But with very few real-life S/4 HANA migrations in evidence, there is much anxiety over how this transition can be made successfully. Preparing for S/4 HANA and then getting ROI once you have migrated has become a top priority for customers this year.

- Creating a business case to migrate to S/4 HANA – what have others done?
- Obtaining certainty from SAP on the roadmap for HANA solutions
- What is the true status of S/4 HANA solutions? Are there still bugs?
- Is the Greenfield approach to S/4 HANA the best? What about data mapping approach?
- Road to migration for all S/4 HANA modules - how to be ready, data centre strategy, building your customised roadmap
- Integration of S/4 HANA with other systems - what is the adaptor maturity?
- Cloud and on-premise maintenance implications
- When can you expect ROI from your implementation?
- Do you need to rewrite all of your code needs to optimise for S/4 HANA?
- How to identify and rectify ‘lazy’ development that won’t hold up when you migrate to HANA. What role can SAP Code Inspector play?
6. Implications of Moving to the Cloud

Cloud solutions offer many benefits to SAP customers and they are becoming more and more widespread. However, some SAP customers still struggle with understanding exactly what ‘cloud’ really is and what underlying implications it will have to our businesses. Hybrid cloud is the feasible option for many organisations, but companies are keen to see what others have experienced in their own journeys with cloud.

- What is ‘cloud’? Navigating the many definitions and implications of each type of cloud offering
- What integration issues can you expect to encounter when you implement SAP cloud solutions and how can you overcome them?
- How does a hybrid landscape affect your SAP licensing? Does this increase the complexity?
- Understanding the performance implications of cloud solutions
- In a cloud environment, how do you keep abreast of system changes and communicate them to users? What have others done around this?
- Contestability of cloud infrastructure offerings - Azure, AWS etc. What does SAP recommend?
- What do you need to know about data security in the cloud? What are others doing to mitigate the risks?
- How does moving to the cloud affect disaster recovery and availability?
- How to synchronise maintenance schedules
- PCI compliance
- TDI approach
7. Two-Speed IT

With the advent of newer solutions such as cloud, IT strategists are discovering that new thinking is required to manage them. Trying to have the same processes for your ‘caveman’ and ‘spaceman’ systems is ineffective and dealing with different development speeds in a world that can be both agile and waterfall at the same time is problematic. IT professionals don't have processes that will cater to this ‘two-speed IT’ – ITIL just won’t cut it here!

- New cultures, processes and people required to enable this new type of IT
- How to juggle competing priorities and the speed that new technologies coming in
- Changing the mindset of the IT team to be customer focused at all times
- Bridging the gap between what SAP marketing implies to the business and the reality of implementation timeframes
- Using influence to get IT a seat at the table for the decisions that will affect them
- Should you split your team to cater to each type of technology? Agile and ERP?
- With the consumerism of technology, how can an IT team keep up?
- What role can a Microservices architecture style play to overcome this issue?
8. Creating a Technology Roadmap

Most companies are planning their technology roadmaps one to three years in advance. However creating and maintaining these strategies is somewhat problematic, especially with SAP’s roadmap changing so often. Customers are looking for guidance from SAP on what they should be preparing for and how they can best get there. Moreover, they are keen to hear how other organisations are planning for the future.

Navigating SAP’s Roadmap

- What’s next in the S/4 HANA series? What will come after Simple Logistics?
- Comparing SAP’s on-premise and cloud solutions. E.g. Travel Management vs. Concur, SRM vs. Ariba
- How will acquired solutions such as Concur be brought into the product roadmap and the SAP organisation as a whole? Having a single point of contact within SAP to deal with
- What has happened to tools and modules such as PS (Project Systems), PI (Process Integration)? Is there still planned development in these areas?
- When is end-of-life for tools such as SRM (Supplier Relationship Management) and how do we migrate to the newer options?
- Where are HCP and HEC headed and what’s in the next stage of development?
- How to keep up-to-date with product name changes
- What functionality is available via Fiori applications and when are the others due? How do we choose the ‘right’ functions / apps to be in Fiori?

Building Your Roadmap

- Should you have an IT strategy or a business roadmap?
- How to best communicate your strategy to customers and IT staff
- Experiences in building roadmaps
- How to get the most out of your current SAP investment
- Step-by-step guidelines of what we need to do to migrate to SAP’s highest performing solutions?
- How to factor in SAP’s ever-changing product roadmap into your own strategy. Can you be agile?
- Implementing and revisiting your roadmap as BAU
- How to minimise downtime as you migrate to the newer solutions
- Dealing with end-of-life of modules such as SRM
- Does SAP have a tool to recommend a roadmap for your organisation?
- What are the SAP poster children doing with SAP?
- What are the most common paths being taken in Australian companies?
- How to keep on track factoring in ad-hoc projects that arise and derail your timeframes
9. Solution Monitoring

Operational stability, monitoring and alerting are crucial features of a well-run SAP system. SAP’s Solution Manager tools promise to assist with this, but customers often struggle to make the most out of this. As well as finding out how to better utilise Solution Manager, organisations are looking at other ways to make their solution monitoring more effective.

- Weighing up the pros and cons of outsourcing solution monitoring. What have others done?
- What's in the latest version of Solution Manager? Identifying the best bits!
- What has happened to ChaRM? How are others getting benefit from it?
- How have others found value from SAP’s upgrade predictor tool? Has this affected the need to undertake full regression testing?
- How does SAP’s Max Attention facility help with solution monitoring. What is the value?
- End-user experience monitoring - what is the SAP solution? How will this work with cloud?
- Best tools for business process monitoring. Is there something in the latest version of Solution Manager that can help with this?
- Better understanding of the true performance impacts of monitoring your system landscape

10. System Support Strategy

System support – both internally and from SAP – remains a real issue for the community. In-house support is costly, but outsourcing has its problems too. Organisations are looking to hear from other SAP customers on how they manage support and what’s worked for them.

- Assessing the range of options and models available for system support
- What is the recommended support model for cloud solutions?
- Challenges of outsourcing support and tactics to overcome them
- Grading of outsourcing companies and what to look for when selecting one
- Managing support vs. governing support
- Tips and tricks on getting to the right person within SAP - not one that just asks whether you’re on the latest support packs, or suggests it’s a consulting issue
- Building support testing into your go-live - testing SAP response times
- What are the differences between standard and enterprise support? Is it worth it?
11. Navigating Analytics Options

With the ‘big data’ phenomenon far from wavering, the hunger from the business for high-quality and intuitive analytics solutions is ever-increasing. SAP has a variety of tools that can be exploited, each with their pros and cons. But with self-service and HANA, IT’s management of BI is in question for the future. Shrewd IT strategists need to plan for change and upskill their team members where necessary.

- SAP now has so many analytics tools to choose from, which one is right for your organisation or situation?
- HANA Live - experiences, capabilities and limitations
- How does SAP BusinessObjects work with HANA?
- What are the implications of S/4 HANA? Does this mean we no longer need BW?
- How to push analytic capabilities down to the end user with self-service
- Harnessing analytics to provide actionable insights on system performance and usage
- With self-service and no BW, how to take your BI IT resource on the HANA journey and upskill them
- Is BW inflexible and if so, what is the best way to overcome this?
- Licensing issues with non-SAP data
- 3rd party options for analytics and comparing them to SAP’s tools

12. Software Development Lifecycle

Traditionally, the journey from development to production is a slow one in SAP. But the business today is requiring solutions faster than ever before. What tools and processes can we leverage to bring solutions to our customers faster?

- Building trust in the products pre go-live and the change management aspects around that
- What can DevOps processes do to assist with speed-to-customer? How do you implement the practice successfully?
- Dealing with the greater testing requirements with mobile apps, given there are more possibilities with browsers and orientations
- How to create a good tool chain that supports all new technologies
- Tips and tricks to decrease complexity during implementations
- Harnessing Solution Manager TMS and ChaRM - are they working for people? What’s coming next?
- Assessing the value of 3rd party testing tools such as Panaya
13. Upgrades

Upgrading an SAP system has always been deemed a bit of a ‘necessary evil’ with the complexity around planning and undertaking upgrades being feared by most of the community. But with many of SAP’s latest tools requiring you to be on the latest Enhancement Pack, organisations are keen to get there.

- How to ascertain where your current system sits – what functionality you have and what you need
- Which Enhancement Packs are pre-requisites for SAP’s newest tools?
- What is the upgrade path to S/4 HANA?
- Understanding the upgrade approach for fragmented systems with cloud bolt-ons e.g. Ariba
- Tips and tricks to decrease complexity in planning and undertaking an upgrade
- What is available in Solution Manager to assist with upgrades?
- Does your development team need to be retrained for ABAP on HANA? Are there changes to the way custom code has to be written for HANA?