

SAP Solution Brief

Duet Software for Microsoft Office and SAP Applications

BRINGING SAP® BUSINESS APPLICATIONS TO THE MICROSOFT® OFFICE DESKTOP

Revolutionizing How Information Workers Access Enterprise Applications

Duet™ | for Microsoft® Office and SAP®

For more than 15 years, the partnership between SAP and Microsoft has delivered significant value to customers. Using enterprise services architecture, SAP and Microsoft have now extended enterprise applications into Microsoft® Office Professional 2003 with a jointly developed and designed software product: Duet™ software for Microsoft Office and SAP® applications. With this product, organizations can empower their information workers to work with information and processes supported by the mySAP™ ERP application, seamlessly – in a familiar Microsoft Office environment.

Today, corporate employees must work with information and processes that reside in two different universes: enterprise applications and desktop productivity applications. In fact, most information workers spend the better part of the day within the Microsoft® Office environment, while sporadically accessing enterprise applications.

Constant switching between these two worlds results in time wasted searching for information, redundant data entry, and erroneous information, all of which drains productivity. Without consistent information available on both desktops and enterprise applications, informed decision making suffers. And because not all employees have access to automated processes and enterprise data, the best practices built into enterprise applications are not leveraged to the fullest – undermining the IT investment and risking noncompliance with corporate and industry regulations.

Continuity of Information and Processes

Microsoft and SAP have teamed up to combine their respective knowledge of desktop applications and expertise in supporting business processes. The result: Duet™ software for Microsoft Office and SAP® applications, a product that improves productivity, enhances decision making, and helps organizations gain the most value from their IT investments.

Full access to SAP business applications requires the complete functional capabilities of an enterprise portal. But information workers often require quick access to simple processes such as billable time entry or budget monitoring. By leveraging the openness of enterprise services architecture (ESA) and Microsoft .NET architecture, Duet software for Microsoft Office and SAP exposes selected business processes and information from the mySAP™ ERP application through Microsoft Office Professional 2003. Through ESA, the functionality of mySAP ERP is available as enterprise services, accessible on the desktop through Microsoft Office.

As a result, information workers can perform corporate-driven tasks using the following features.

- **Report distribution** – With Duet software, information workers can display analytic and transactional reports from SAP applications in preformatted or customized Microsoft Excel® spreadsheets. Users can personalize report templates and subscription details, deciding, for instance, whether to receive SAP software reports based on triggered conditions or by schedule.
- **Alerts and notifications** – Preset monitoring thresholds (configured by users) and business rules in self-service processes enable information workers to receive event-based alerts and notifications from SAP back-end applications in Microsoft Office Outlook®. Alerts come in as actionable items, with attached forms and reports that facilitate resolution.
- **Form-based approval process** – To ensure compliance with administrative directives or corporate regulations, users are guided through processes that include standard or customized forms (Office Outlook and Microsoft InfoPath®) to perform business tasks that require form-based approval by authorized users. With online guidance and support, they can reduce data-entry errors and submit data more easily and consistently.
- **Offline capabilities** – With Duet software, an information worker can fill out forms and make data adjustments offline, such as entering time or transferring budget data. When the worker is once again online, data and forms are submitted and synchronized automatically in the back-end SAP software.

- **Personalization** – Users can access and modify SAP transaction data through role-based and personalized access from Outlook. They can personalize SAP report templates, format (Excel or HTML), and the subscription itself.
- **Real-time contextual intelligence** – With Duet software, users can obtain contextual information from SAP applications while performing daily tasks in Outlook. Moreover, data is synchronized automatically between Outlook and the relevant SAP application. For example, because contact information is synchronized between Microsoft Exchange Server and the employee data record in the SAP application, and a single master calendar is maintained in Outlook, the user knows that he or she is always working with the most up-to-date information possible.

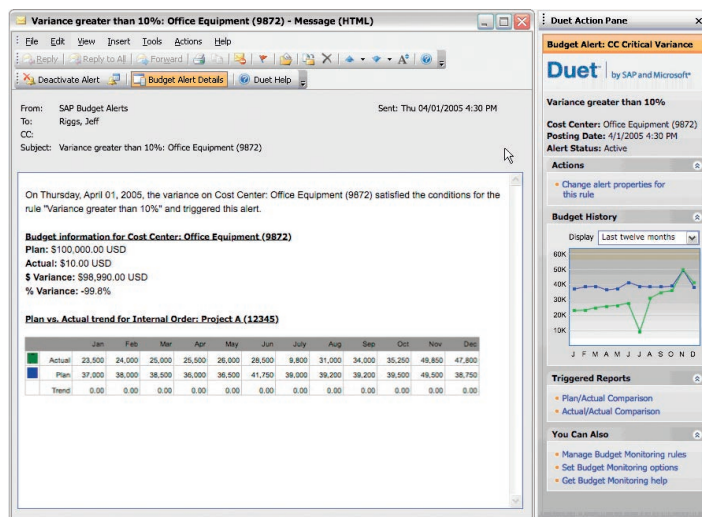


Figure 1: Budget Variance Alert Delivered Through Microsoft® Office Outlook® and Duet™ Action Pane

Simplify Access to Enterprise Processes from the Desktop

Duet software simplifies the way information workers access and use SAP applications, such as self-service functions for managers and employees, while enriching the Microsoft Office experience. With SAP software support for business processes and data access available at the desktop, information workers realize greater efficiency and flexibility in the following areas:

- **Time management** – Using the Outlook calendar to report time in SAP software streamlines time entry while ensuring time-reporting compliance.
- **Budget monitoring** – By receiving reports from SAP software in the Outlook in-box and working with them offline, users can monitor budgets through proactive alerts to time-critical information.
- **Organization management** – Users can access up-to-date information about employees, open positions, and organizational structures, as well as managerial approvals integrated from SAP software into the Outlook contacts area and Microsoft Office documents.
- **Leave management** – Users can make leave requests as calendar items that integrate approval guidelines in SAP software and enterprise-defined processes.

Realize the Benefits of Duet

In combining the best of market-leading productivity tools and best-practice processes for the enterprise, Duet software provides your organization with the following benefits.

Sustained financial benefits – Financial benefits range from day-to-day increases in employee productivity to improved operating margins thanks to the reduced cost of governance. Additionally, service companies can benefit from improved cash flow through reduced days sales outstanding. Duet software optimizes resource allocation, maximizes return on capital investments, and puts in place a service-oriented architecture that will continue to lower total cost of ownership for enterprise applications.

Real-time productivity gains – Users become instantly productive, since Duet software delivers deep access to core enterprise processes with the world's most familiar desktop environment.

Increased data accuracy and reduced redundancy – Duet software eliminates redundant and inaccurate time keeping and other tasks prevalent in enterprise IT systems. The results: higher data accuracy, since data is only entered once; greater compliance with internal policies and systems; and improved efficiency by eliminating the extra steps – and extra time – necessary to keep multiple systems up-to-date.

Greater IT efficiency through service-oriented processes – Duet software brings the benefits of a service-oriented architecture directly to the enterprise, including reusable components and faster time to value, but without affecting the return on investment in existing resources.

Improved decision making – Through Duet software, business professionals are now empowered with previously inaccessible processes and data, enabling them to make better-informed business decisions.

Take Advantage of Our Vision

SAP and Microsoft will continue to bring together the worlds of desktop productivity and enterprise applications. By meeting enterprise requirements for additional information access and control, SAP and Microsoft give more people more access to SAP functionality – and enable more businesses to take advantage of SAP support for industry best practices.

Find Out More

Through easy access to data and applications from enterprise systems, you can offer your information workers greater visibility into and use of business information – all from their desktops.

For more information about how Duet software can help your organization bring together desktop productivity from Microsoft Office and enterprise applications from SAP, please contact your account executive or visit www.sap.com/duet.

Powered by SAP NetWeaver®

SAP applications are powered by the SAP NetWeaver® platform. SAP NetWeaver unifies technology components into a single platform, allowing organizations to reduce IT complexity and obtain more business value from their IT investments. It provides the best way to integrate all systems running SAP or non-SAP software.

SAP NetWeaver also helps organizations align IT with their business. With SAP NetWeaver, organizations can compose and enhance business solutions rapidly using enterprise services. As the foundation for ESA, SAP NetWeaver allows organizations to evolve their current IT landscapes into a strategic environment that drives business change.