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Accelerate Innovation at Light Speed

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Innovation moves at light speed, so the ability to maintain a competitive edge often depends on implementing the latest technology. But how can SAP customers keep up the pace of innovation while keeping costs down? To help, SAP has developed best practices for solution implementations that address the elements in an implementation project to drive down complexity and cost. The Innovation Control Center (ICC), a new methodology only available through SAP MaxAttention or SAP ActiveEmbedded, can help you take advantage of these best practices in your own SAP solution landscape.

The Control Center Concept

SAP's control center approach to solution management, based on SAP's decades of experience with customer implementations, can help customers achieve effective implementations. This approach involves the following:

- The Innovation Control Center (ICC), which supports implementation and innovation projects with industry best practices
- The Operation Control Center (OCC), which handles orchestration and operations of the SAP solution
- The Mission Control Centers (MCCs), which support the ICCs and OCCs of the linked customers by providing support for innovations, implementations, severe issues, and proactive measures

The ICC is directed by an ICC lead from SAP and supported by functional experts from the customer or the customer's implementation partner. Using SAP Solution Manager, this team works together to follow the ICC methodology in which

“SAP is built like a factory.” This methodology reduces implementation costs and TCO by minimizing software deviations from the standard SAP solution and avoiding unnecessary modifications of the SAP standard as much as possible. The ICC communicates with the regional MCC to ensure that best practices developed at SAP are being used for the implementation. In a later stage of the implementation, the ICC transitions into an OCC, in which “SAP runs like a factory.”

The OCC supports the operation of the SAP solution with a focus on the prevention of problems, immediate reaction to any issues, and the streamlined, efficient operations of the SAP solution. The OCC team maintains communication with the regional MCC to support the ongoing operation of the solution landscape and ensure the continued use of best practices.

The ICC, the OCC, and the regional MCC form the three pillars of SAP's control center concept, but it is the ICC that truly enables a cost-effective implementation and accelerated innovation by establishing best practices early in the game.

How the ICC Works

To understand how the ICC works, it helps to start with the end in mind. The goal of the ICC is to ensure that a customer implementation of an SAP solution is as close as possible to the SAP standard. To accommodate necessary customer-specific requirements, SAP can provide customers with architectural and development guidance on how to develop required objects or functionality, so that the custom code objects neither destroy nor affect the integrity of the entire SAP solution. Let's briefly walk through how the ICC



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The control center concept offers customers a way to optimize the solution landscape and achieve a best-run competitive advantage.

works to minimize factors that can drive up cost and complexity.

The first step is to identify potential functional gaps between the customer's requirements and the solution to be implemented. Since these gaps could result in a modification or custom enhancement of the solution, the charter of the ICC is to prevent such gaps as much as possible. The ICC then communicates all potential gaps to the MCC. With the help of functional centers of expertise sitting within the regional MCC, and with the help of SAP's solution management and development organizations, the MCC then delivers a solution to address the gaps; for example, a way for the customer to configure SAP standard code opposed to making a change to the code.

Next, the ICC ensures the technical readiness of the solution for go-live through Integration Validation, a proven SAP methodology for ensuring that the SAP solutions running your business processes are correctly integrated into your landscape. The Integration Validation covers not only the core SAP solution itself, but also any interfaces and non-SAP components, and addresses any operations issues like scalability, performance, or data consistency. In addition, the ICC manages show-stoppers, top issues, and other critical challenges according to deadlines agreed upon with the customer. Experts from SAP Active Global Support work with the customer to supervise and control the quality gate management process, and weekly project management meetings help ensure an on-time/on-budget project execution and delivery.

Entering the go-live stage, the ICC changes into an OCC. As such, the OCC tracks all operational key figures like system availability, business process availability, end-user performance, exceptions, and much more. Using the root-cause analysis functionality of SAP Solution Manager, issues are resolved quickly.

Reducing Complexity and Cost

By establishing an ICC, you can achieve dramatic reductions in time and effort when it comes to solution implementations by taking advantage of:

- **Avoidance of unnecessary modifications.** By minimizing software deviations from the standard SAP solution, the ICC helps customers eliminate unnecessary and duplicate modifications and custom code. Experiences with pilot customers showed that up to 90% of

modification and custom code development was avoidable. The impact of avoiding development costs and reducing custom code objects also helps unlock all innovations available within enhancement packages.

- **Industry and solution best practices.** Using SAP best practices will cut the length of implementation projects dramatically. Instead of blueprinting on a "blank sheet," customers are conducting the blueprint against the SAP standard, starting right away with the fit-gap analysis. Implementation projects that used to run for years are now running in weeks and months.
- **Guidance for developing custom extensions and integrations.** A well-functioning ICC can reduce the time and effort required for custom enhancements by nearly 60%. Via the ICC, experts from SAP work with the customer to provide guidance on meeting specific business requirements, including guidance on architecture and integration scenarios.
- **On-demand root-cause analysis and automated testing.** The ICC can reduce the time and effort required for root-cause analysis by as much as 50%. Using on-demand root-cause analysis, the ICC identifies issues during the implementation and expedites resolution, helping keep the project on time and on budget. In addition, automated testing capabilities reduce the time and effort needed for the different test cycles.
- **Orchestration for establishing post-go-live support.** Building up the OCC during the implementation phase and integrating it with the regional MCC provides significant cost savings after go-live — sometimes by as much as 60%. Without an OCC connected to a regional MCC, the costs of critical business systems can be significantly higher.

Taking Control and Moving Forward

Available through an SAP MaxAttention or an SAP ActiveEmbedded engagement, the control center concept offers customers a way to optimize the solution landscape and achieve a best-run competitive advantage. With experts from SAP Active Global Support at hand to support your solution implementation and operations, you are well positioned to take control of your SAP solutions and start getting the best return possible on your investment in innovation. ■