GDF SUEZ: Accelerating Cutover by 300% with SAP® MaxAttention™

GDF SUEZ, a major French utility, recently used SAP® MaxAttention™ services to help make the corporate data changes required by a company reorganization. Cutover took just a weekend, compared with six days of downtime on similar projects in the past. Data quality and robustness were up, and IT effort required was down.

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Executive overview

Company
GDF SUEZ

Headquarters
Paris

Industry
Utilities

Products and Services
Electricity, natural gas, and associated services

Employees
138,200

Revenue
€82 billion

Web Site
www.gdfsuez.com

Partners
SAP Active Global Support organization and System Landscape Optimization group from SAP Consulting

BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION

The company's top objectives

- Carve out 6 company codes and transfer them from one controlling area to another without impacting the other 114 company codes
- Eliminate business downtime by cutting over faster than expected
- Increase robustness of new solution and reduce IT effort

The resolution

- Leveraged SAP® MaxAttention™ services to enable a sustainable transition model
- Engaged the System Landscape Optimization group from SAP Consulting
- Used the group's SAP Landscape Transformation software and methodologies

The key benefits

- Established standard, repeatable processes for facilitating future reorganizations
- Incorporated historical data and preserved project data for the future
- Delivered high-quality, robust data for running the business

Read more

"We are reorganizing a lot more often now. Doing it right is a major part of cost cutting. By reducing cutover time by two-thirds, SAP MaxAttention showed its power in complex technical projects."

Hervé Augendre, SAP Contract Manager, GDF SUEZ IT

TOP BENEFITS ACHIEVED

300%
Shorter cutover time

30%
Less IT effort before going live

20%
Less IT effort after going live

See more metrics

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Executive overview

Company objectives

Resolution

Business transformation

Future plans

Dynamic business requiring frequent reorganizations

GDF SUEZ is a multinational supplier of electrical power, natural gas, and related services headquartered in France. Its business model is based on responsible growth, addressing today's major challenges for the utilities industry: meeting energy needs, ensuring the security of supply, fighting climate change, and optimizing the use of resources. The firm provides highly efficient and innovative solutions to individuals, cities, and businesses by relying on diversified gas-supply sources and low-emission power generation. It has unique expertise in liquefied natural gas, energy efficiency services, independent power production, and environmental services.

GDF SUEZ is a dynamic organization where change is ever-present. Often it undergoes reorganizations because of mergers, acquisitions, subsidiary spin-offs, or simply a desire to improve efficiency. These reorganizations are complex undertakings that require significant restructuring of company data. Every time they happen, IT must make substantial adjustments to corporate databases by splitting off part of the old data, merging in new data, or rearranging existing data.

In the past, the IT team treated these reorganizations as essentially one-off events, with little carryover of data, adaptation tools, and methods from one project to the next. No general framework or methodology was in place. Thus, the staff built custom tools that focused on the current case, and as a result, risks and effort levels were high and robustness of the resulting data suffered. Worse, cutting over from the old data to the revised data took six days – idle time for the entire accounting staff.

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Finding a better way with SAP tools and services

In the past, reorganizations of this nature happened about once a year, but the pace is accelerating. Because of increased merger and acquisition activity and other business dynamics, GDF SUEZ anticipates several reorganizations a year from now on. This meant the company needed a better way to handle corporate data restructuring, and the opportunity recently arose: a reorganization was taking place that required transferring 6 company codes from one controlling area to another. The SAP software that runs the business has 120 company codes in its database, and so the challenge was to split off the 6 company codes without impacting the other 114.

The firm had an idea for the better approach it needed, as Hervé Augendre, SAP contract manager for GDF SUEZ, explains: "We have been using SAP MaxAttention services continuously for eight years and have developed a lot of confidence in them. SAP had explained that in conjunction with these services, it could provide the tools and methodologies of its System Landscape Optimization group for making the company data changes required by our reorganizations. We had been thinking about using this SAP expertise for some time, but convincing our analysts was an obstacle. Finally this time, with help from SAP, we outlined and explained the whole setup internally and brought the analysts onto our side."

The project was complex, but SAP MaxAttention simplified it by employing SAP Landscape Transformation software, the standard set of tools used for projects of this nature. During the conversion, the GDF SUEZ IT group was impacted to a far lesser extent than previously because it had no custom tools to develop and test.

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Robust data immediately available to users

The new data was so clean this time – free of bugs, inconsistencies, and redundancies as a result of the system landscape optimization services delivered by SAP MaxAttention – that cutover took only two days, not six days as in the past. And since GDF SUEZ arranged for those days to fall on a weekend, business users lost no time at all. The IT team was spared not only substantial preparation work before cutover but also a lot of cleanup effort afterward because the data was so robust. Business users benefited as well from such a solid database.

"With SAP MaxAttention and the System Landscape Optimization group on the project, we met all our expectations for schedule, budget, and quality," says Mr. Augendre.

KEY BENEFITS

300%
Shorter cutover time

20%
Less IT effort after going live

30%
Less IT effort before going live

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Unproductive days saved per reorganization

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Tackling bigger, more frequent projects with greater ease

The reorganization project delivered data that for the first time is usable in subsequent projects. That is a good thing, because already another reorganization is upon GDF SUEZ – a four-company merger. "To take advantage of the historical data, as well as the tools and methods that worked out so well, we are using SAP MaxAttention and the System Landscape Optimization group once again, and the project is going well," says Mr. Augendre in conclusion. "In fact, as long as we keep seeing the same kind of successes, we'll use them every time."

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