



“We have managed to consolidate functionalities that were previously widely distributed. In doing so we have fulfilled all of the requirements we set for the SAP Solution Manager upgrade. It has met all of our expectations.”

Gregor Bühler, SAP Basis Manager, Panalpina Management Ltd.

AT A GLANCE

Company

- Name: Panalpina Management Ltd.
- Location: Basel, Switzerland
- Industry: Logistics service providers
- Products and services: Forwarding and logistics services
- Revenue: SFr 9.3 billion (€5.6 billion)
- Employees: 14,304
- Web site: www.panalpina.com

Challenges and Opportunities

- Lack of standardized and centralized test planning
- Absence of consolidated application management functionality

Objectives

- Standardize and centralize test planning management
- Enable monitoring and analysis of SAP® and non-SAP applications
- Consolidate application management functionality
- Lay groundwork for smooth release upgrade of SAP software

SAP Solution and Services

SAP Solution Manager application management solution

Implementation Highlights

- Quick upgrade project duration of less than 1 month
- Seamless implementation of latest release of SAP Solution Manager
- Minimal downtime

Why SAP

- Panalpina's depth of knowledge and experience with SAP software
- Wide range of functionality provided by SAP Solution Manager to serve all of Panalpina's requirements

Benefits

- Streamlined and standardized testing
- Consolidated software landscape
- Increased availability of corporate portal
- Accelerated support processes by 200%
- Freed up IT personnel for more value-added activities
- Provided stable environment for future upgrades

Existing Environment

SAP R/3® software (functionality now found in the SAP ERP application)

Third-Party Integration

- Database: IBM Informix, IBM DB2
- Hardware: IBM
- Operating system: IBM AIX

PANALPINA

SAP® Solution Manager Helps Logistics Service Provider Standardize and Centralize Processes

Logistics service providers realize that key to their success is the depth of knowledge of industry processes that keep the wheels of global freight management turning. With an increasing reliance on automation of supply chain processes, businesses are only as strong as their IT infrastructure. For Basel, Switzerland-based Panalpina Management Ltd., maintaining state-of-the-art SAP® software is just as much a unique selling proposition for its portfolio of forwarding solutions as is its comprehensive industry know-how.

However, as any global company knows, no matter how sophisticated its software is, geographic and commercial expansion requires continuous improvements and upgrades to software. This, in turn, necessitates having the right tools and resources to ensure low costs of solution operations and maintenance. When Panalpina decided to update its tool for standardizing and centralizing its SAP software landscape efficiently, it knew immediately what the right choice would be: the SAP Solution Manager application management solution. By implementing this solution, the company now has a fully uniform implementation management strategy and can tap the full potential of new functionality for monitoring and analyzing software to ensure high performance and availability of its IT infrastructure. And by deciding to do all this with its own resources, Panalpina also managed to alleviate time and costs considerably.

Global Commerce, Centralized IT

Panalpina is one of the world's largest logistics service providers, with a network of approximately 500 offices in more than 80 countries and employing more than 14,000 people worldwide. In 60 further countries, the company cooperates with selected partners. To manage the entirety of its IT operations, Panalpina's IT infrastructure is highly centralized, with four software competence centers distributed across several continents. Because

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**Gerd Rieger, Competence Center Manager,
Panalpina Management Ltd.**

the company specializes in intercontinental air freight and ocean freight shipments and associated supply chain management solutions, its software needs to accommodate a whole range of internal requirements. Via the SAP ERP application, which Panalpina runs around the world, the company also needs unrestricted access to external networks – especially in conjunction with communication to customers or agents via its corporate portal, which is based on the SAP NetWeaver® Portal component. For Gregor Bühler, SAP Basis manager at Panalpina, this means his team has to be on its toes constantly to ensure seamless operations.

Distributed Test Management

In a global IT environment such as Panalpina's, implementing and improving solutions means constantly having to test and document configuration settings in line with implementation plans. Yet, with a geographically distributed infrastructure, this type of documentation is sometimes difficult to realize. “Before implementing SAP Solution Manager,” Bühler explains, “our documentation was based on Microsoft Word, and test plans were on Excel sheets, which weren't interactive. We had to maintain several different sheets for planning implementations – one in each competence center.”

Comprehensive Requirements

Even though Panalpina stored test documentation, each competence center would run tests differently, with each center more or less free to manage its change requests and release changes independently. The challenge involved consolidating the SAP software landscape on the basis of a single, central platform management solution. Besides needing an environment for test planning, Bühler and his team also required a solution with diagnostics functionality that would enable them to monitor non-SAP applications on the corporate portal. On top of that, the implementation had to be fast and smooth to ensure seamless operation. In 2004 Panalpina implemented SAP Solution Manager, with functionality for documentation, testing, and customizing. In 2006 the upgrade to the latest release of SAP Solution Manager followed, with new monitoring functionality.

Out-of-the-Box Implementation

Besides meeting all of their requirements, SAP Solution Manager fit well with Panalpina's application management strategy, owing to the company's extensive experience with SAP software. In less than one month, Bühler and his team managed to implement the latest release of SAP Solution Manager all by themselves. As Gerd Rieger, competence center manager at Panalpina, explains,

“We simply copied the earlier release to test the upgrade. Upgrading SAP Solution Manager went completely effortlessly. There were no interruptions to the productive application. And we only needed one test run. It was almost all out of the box.” In terms of customizing, later corrections were minor and were resolved quickly and easily.

Expectations Fulfilled

The advantages are best seen on a project basis, where SAP Solution Manager lets Panalpina monitor, analyze, and test all manner of transactions for various business processes. SAP Solution Manager offers a precise range of testing options, so

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Gregor Bühler, SAP Basis Manager, Panalpina Management Ltd.

that no transaction tests are excluded. This makes release changes more secure. Because the tests are more comprehensive and take less time, implementations are also a lot less costly. “We have definitely seen a great improvement in the quality and availability of solution operations,” says Bühler. “We have managed to consolidate functionalities that were previously widely distributed. In doing so we have fulfilled all of the requirements we set for the SAP Solution Manager upgrade.”

Excellent Feedback

For test plan management, the response from key users involved in release change projects has been excellent. The test plans for the competence centers are now determined by IT headquarters. “We were able to give them guidelines on what needed to be tested, and we also have the option of evaluating centrally where problems have arisen,” explains Bühler. “We have integrated the whole of Europe into this test plan. The feedback has been positive from all of our offices. This documentation is very valuable for our release management, as we can reuse configuration settings for all manner of new processes and implementations of support packages, and so on.” All Panalpina has to do is create tests plans once in SAP Solution Manager, and they can be generated again and again.

Faster Support for the Future

This reduction in the number of steps required to plan projects has alleviated the need for extra resources, allowing Panalpina to improve IT performance elsewhere and to prepare for release changes to its SAP software infrastructure. With a view to implementing functionality for change management, Panalpina recently started utilizing the help-desk functionality of SAP Solution Manager, which relays support messages to the SAP Active Global Support organization directly. “This method has led to 200% quicker processing than before. Now that we can document and monitor all of the new processes introduced at Panalpina and establish all of the test scenarios centrally, all of our initial expectations have been met, and we are definitely open to implementing further functionality,” says Bühler.

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