



RUNNING AN ENTERPRISE PORTAL WITH SAP NetWeaver®

**Effective Portals Increase Productivity and
Unify Information Access**

Information technology is often overwhelming for business users. Documents, data, and information are located in many different repositories. Applications are disconnected and user interfaces are inconsistent. Business processes are implied or poorly documented. This is not only frustrating; it slows your business down. With the SAP NetWeaver® platform, IT can integrate these resources and processes, providing a work environment that makes it easier for people to get things done.

Business users are inundated every day with information and tasks from many sources and directions. Their daily work processes require them to jump in and out of many different applications. Simply finding a document can require users to search several document stores, their hard drives, and their e-mail folders. Making sure a task has been completed can take several phone calls and voice mails. A lot of time is wasted in meetings, organized just to make sure everyone is on the same page. All of this is complicated by constant change in the business.

The impact of user productivity issues is magnified when the enterprise looks beyond its own four walls. Customers and partners also use the applications and solutions deployed by IT. For them, disconnected processes and information represent a severe competitive disadvantage.

Users need a way to bring together the right information, applications, and people, and manage the role each person plays in the business process. The SAP NetWeaver® Portal component delivers this simple, integrated interface, enabling each person to work at the highest possible level of productivity. The portal's adaptability helps the user to stay focused even as the business itself changes.

Powered by SAP NetWeaver

SAP NetWeaver Portal is 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 enterprise services architecture (ESA), SAP NetWeaver allows organizations to evolve their current IT landscapes into a strategic environment that drives business change.

How an SAP Enterprise Portal Improves Productivity

An enterprise portal solution built using the SAP NetWeaver Portal helps users and groups improve their productivity through enhanced collaboration, optimized knowledge management, enterprise search, business task management, and personalized access to critical applications and data. With SAP NetWeaver, organizations can develop, configure, and operate an enterprise portal that not only serves employees but also provides an external-facing portal, and can enable business-to-business activities with partners and information sharing in Web communities.

SAP NetWeaver Portal improves productivity by providing:

- Single point of access for all information and applications
- Intuitive interface, personalized to the needs of each user
- Fast access to information from many enterprise sources
- Automated knowledge capture and distribution
- Collaboration across teams and enterprise boundaries
- Integration with SAP and non-SAP enterprise applications
- Extensibility through business packages and the SAP xApps™ family of composite applications
- Flexible customization and composite application development
- Support for customer, partner, and global deployment requirements

A Unique Interface for Every User's Unique Needs

Simplicity is a core element behind an enterprise portal. A portal provides unified Web-based access to any kind of application, information, resources, and services that the end user may need. Work is much less complicated with one interface, since there is one navigation scheme to learn, a single sign-on, and just one search tool to access information in many enterprise repositories. The real advantage of the portal, however, is that the right **combinations** of information and application functionality can be presented to each user at the right time.

Personalization is a key portal feature. With SAP software, you can tune the portal content to meet the exact needs of the user and your organization. Corporate elements, role-specific pages, and page-specific content, as well as content chosen by each individual user, are all brought together to give each person precisely what he or she needs.

For example, access to e-mail, up-to-the-minute industry news and customer profiles on a single page, at the office or on the road, could help your sales team to stay in touch with key accounts. It is easy to build a portal page containing iViews (sometimes called portlets), which provide a window into the necessary information sources or applications.

SAP NetWeaver Portal takes productivity to even higher levels through **composite applications**. Here, iViews are combined interactively as part of a business process to support a specific activity or task. Imagine supporting the same sales team with an application that gives a list of potential customers that have not been called recently, highlights specific industry or company news items that may be of interest as the sales executive selects each account, and prepopulates an e-mail form with appropriate text and attachments. When the e-mail is sent, the application “checks off” that account and prepares a similar e-mail for the next one on the list, continuing until all of the work is done. The productivity benefit can be enormous. This weekly activity that once took an entire morning can now be done in minutes, with much more personalized communication to each prospective buyer. Again, SAP NetWeaver Portal provides the framework for composing, delivering, and modifying these applications, not only improving user productivity but also increasing flexibility and reducing IT development and maintenance costs.

An enterprise portal delivers many informational pages and applications to each user, tuned automatically to his or her unique role and needs. The portal provides intuitive **navigation** tools such as links and drop-down menus to help the user navigate between them. The portal also delivers a consistent look and feel across all pages and applications. These features reduce learning time and help the user to get to the right resources quickly.

Fast Access to Critical Information

SAP NetWeaver Portal brings together resources from a variety of repositories, such as document management systems and file servers, to provide a single view of information. Documents and other content can be classified automatically into **taxonomies**, which are hierarchical folders that help users browse, by topic, to the right resources. SAP technology classifies content automatically based on rules or training examples. The content is also indexed so that users can find what they need from a single search tool, rather than having to look through each source repository separately using different search interfaces. These features help people to access the information they need quickly. For information workers this can potentially save hours of work every week.

For example, customer support representatives typically need quick information access from a variety of different sources. Product documentation, support incident reports, technical bulletins, and other critical information could be located in several independent repositories. Searching in one place, rather than having to know about, connect to, and search each repository independently, can both save time and improve the customer's perception of the organization's responsiveness. This resource repository can also be made available for customer self-service via a support Web site.

Helping People to Work Together

Collaboration through an enterprise portal is crucial to help break down boundaries between teams, departments, silos, and even enterprises, while ensuring security and business integrity are preserved.

SAP NetWeaver Portal supports knowledge capture, content publication, and collaboration, enabling people to share and approve new documents and information, work together on documents or in team workspaces, and organize all their information so that it's routed to exactly the right people. All of this is done through tools designed for everyday users.

SAP software provides support for real-time collaboration such as instant messaging and application sharing, asynchronous collaboration such as secure document management, plus virtual rooms or workspaces that can easily be created using a wizard. Task-management functions enable activities occurring in different locations to be coordinated and executed quickly from a central location using a single user interface. The portal includes a collaboration launch pad with presence detection to show who is available to collaborate, plus groupware integration and adapters to plug in third-party collaboration tools.

Accelerating Your Business

A true enterprise portal provides access to business resources as well as information resources. As a single point of access, an enterprise portal delivers the enterprise applications appropriate to each user's work. SAP offers unmatched integration between portal and enterprise applications, and also enables integrated access to business intelligence (BI) and rapid extensibility to meet changing business user needs.

SAP NetWeaver Portal is the user interface for the newest generation of SAP's enterprise applications, providing intuitive, Web-based access to HR, financial, customer relationship management, product life-cycle management, and other critical applications. As a unified interface to these applications, the portal provides the same benefits, helping each user to quickly access the right resources in order to be as productive as possible. SAP software can also interface with third-party applications via adapters and extend enterprise applications with specialized solutions for the portal such as the SAP Employee Self-Service and SAP Manager Self-Service applications. In addition, more than 100 business packages are available that link groups of iViews and resources designed for specific user roles, industries, and business needs. The portal also acts as the framework for deploying customized composite applications designed by SAP and its partners to span systems and silos in order to support cross-enterprise processes and meet your specific business needs.

These functionalities shorten the time frame for your portal deployment and application projects and enable IT to be more responsive to the business, developing and modifying applications more quickly. With these resources at your disposal, an SAP enterprise portal will deliver value for business users more quickly and at lower cost than custom development approaches. Your organization can deploy more resources and applications without overwhelming the user, and the components of these extensions can be recombined as your business needs change. For example, imagine a manager dashboard application that provides information on a manager's team from the enterprise HR system, plus policies, a view of recently completed tasks and contributed documents from each team member, and a view of the contribution each person has made to the business – generated from the enterprise BI system. The dashboard could provide task management and support collaboration with both team members and HR to streamline the completion of the quarterly review cycle.

By combining the right components, a process that could take weeks can be reduced to days. An SAP enterprise portal enables your organization to assemble, deploy, and manage such business tools quickly and cost-effectively, making each person as productive as possible.

Meeting the Toughest Demands of the Enterprise

Enterprise portals are deployed today into complex, global environments. Your enterprise portal must serve many audiences, such as employees, customers, and business partners. Portals give users access to sensitive information that must be protected. Large companies may have deployed multiple portals and need to integrate or consolidate these investments. Finally, the enterprise must be confident that its portal investment will continue to pay returns, be easily maintained, and not become outdated.

An enterprise portal built with SAP NetWeaver addresses these challenges. SAP NetWeaver Portal supports the deployment of corporate, customer, and partner portals. SAP enables the development of a federated portal network, where multiple portals are connected, and resources are shared even between SAP and non-SAP portals. SAP provides key technologies including user management, security, and a broad range of development tools with which you can add to or change the functionality and scope of your enterprise portal. SAP has also made significant investments in integrating with third-party software and in the development of standards to ensure the long-term value of your enterprise portal investment.

A Key to Productivity and the Future of Enterprise Solutions

Portals are an investment priority for CIOs, and as a key component of SAP NetWeaver and a key enabler for your organization's adoption of ESA, the SAP NetWeaver Portal is not only an investment that will produce immediate returns in productivity but also an important step toward the future flexibility of your IT architecture. With thousands of deployments and the industry's closest integration with business processes and applications, the SAP NetWeaver Portal is the right choice for the world's best-run businesses.