AVANTRA

Transitioning Observability and SAP Ops to Cloud ERP

Overview

The adoption of Cloud ERP presents significant business opportunities in the form of a composable highly scalable ERP solution that's more flexible to business needs, offers better options for customization and upkeep and can reduce customer operational responsibilities.

This transition is more than a technical upgrade; it's an operational transformation introducing a mission-critical dependency on observability. As traditional operations tools like Solution Manager, Focused Run and Landscape Manager reach the end of support, customers migrating from ECC to Cloud ERP must adopt a new strategy for how their environments are managed and run. This means Cloud ERP success now depends on having a new plan – one designed for today's hybrid and cloud-native SAP.

As SAP Ops Tools Sunset, Monitoring Carries On

The current trio of SAP operations solutions – Solution Manager, Focused Run and Landscape Manager – were designed when SAP ran almost exclusively on-premises. Each technology has a slightly different final destiny, but all three reach regular end of support in 2027, and all but a possible Focused Run 6.0 have seen their final release. For many SAP customers, Cloud ALM, the SAP designated replacement for Solution Manager, will be sufficient. Cloud ALM is designed for a cloud-centric and cloud-first customer with a much simpler SAP estate than the traditional on-premises large enterprise deployment. The majority of new SAP implementations with 1st time SAP customers fall neatly into this category. For the existing large enterprise customer with a complex SAP estate, a full migration project with retirement of existing ECC systems is measured in years. Until the final retirement of existing legacy systems, requirements for observability and operations don't change. During migration, the requirements of managing both legacy and Cloud ERP environments create additional complexity.

Experienced SAP operations teams will expect a single point of control for the entire SAP estate, regardless of where it runs. And it's reasonable for those expectations to cover monitoring, management automation, notifications and most SAP operational tasks. Where Solution Manger and LaMa worked well for on-premises deployments, Cloud ALM now supports Cloud ERP deployments, but the solutions were never designed to singularly cover both environments with a single point of control.

Mission Possible

So what's needed? For Large Enterprise customers, a common set of requirements for SAP operations across existing on-premises and new Cloud ERP solutions includes:

- Provision, copy and refresh across legacy and cloud
- Observe, engage and act from a single point of control, anywhere SAP runs
- Integrate with existing enterprise tooling such as ServiceNow
- Automate many common activities including security patching, system configuration checks and regular run-book activities
- Leverage AI for alerting, potential issue identification and accelerated issue diagnosis and resolution

Watch this Space

Observability will be top of mind for SAP customers adopting Cloud ERP. The basic requirement is a single point of control across existing on-premises landscapes and new Cloud ERP technology, to include BTP and other cloud services as part of the total ERP architecture. In practice, this is challenging as the architectures of existing on-premises ERP systems and Cloud ERP – and even between different cloud ERP options – vary substantially.

For customers using Solution Manager or Focused Run, there's no simple option to integrate Cloud ERP metrics, and no natural architecture within these solutions for managing the differences typical of a Cloud ERP environment. For some kinds of monitoring, SAP Cloud ALM offers integration with Focused Run and Solution Manager, but this leaves the customer maintaining two monitoring solutions, possibly upgrading and redeploying the on-premises solutions, integrating them, and still facing a 2027 end of support date unless extended support is purchased.

Keep One Eye on the Kernel

Cloud ERP is often portrayed as reducing the solution (basis) management requirements for customers. For SAP customers moving to a public cloud solution, this can be true. However, there's complexity in the transition to Private Cloud worth exploring, and this is especially true for customers with a complex existing SAP estate. The assignment of responsibilities for common SAP operations tasks varies depending on the Private Cloud product selected and any additional options purchased.

While a detailed analysis of each Private Cloud version and customer responsibilities is outside the scope of this blog, common across most versions of Private Cloud and On-Premises solutions is the management of tasks at the ABAP layer and below.

At the ABAP layer, activities including job maintenance, client maintenance, batch job monitoring, certificates and RFCs make up some common activities, and at a combination of the ABAP layer and below are SAINTS packages, kernel upgrades, Systems Parameters, SAP Notes and HotNews. As cloud systems come online, BTP becomes a critical part of the ERP infrastructure, often first for integrations, but ultimately as a core technology for user interface/ experience and business process.

An Eye for an Eye... and a Log for a Log

Large enterprises with complex estates and managed service providers have long automated provisioning and landscape management. Tasks ranging from provisioning additional servers to creating project N+1 environments, even leveraging Ansible integrations for complex infrastructure management tasks are common in mature environments.

Mixing these capabilities across on-premises and cloud environments isn't possible with standard tooling. Imagine creating an N+1 environment for incremental clean core work on-premises from a production Private Cloud ERP instance, then automating the system copy and refresh, transport reimports and other activities. This type of automation across hybrid landscapes should be a staple of large enterprises and complex migration projects, yet it's not supported by legacy tooling, and not the focus of newer cloud-centric solutions.

Caught Between a Stack and a Cloud Place

Existing SAP solutions, as good as they are for the environments they are intended for, are not designed to do these tasks for both on-premises ERP and Cloud ERP from a single point of control. And the next generation of solutions from SAP, Cloud ERP and Cloud ALM, are specifically focused on a cloud-centric and cloud-first approach.

So the challenge is the transition and visibility across the most complex hybrid environments. How does an existing SAP estate, complete with ECC other legacy SAP applications, incrementally move to Cloud ERP and successfully manage the transition without an explosion in the number of tools and before the expiration of support for existing solutions?

Avantra is up to the challenge. The Avantra 25 platform features monitoring, automation and integration specifically designed for managing SAP operations on premises, in the cloud, and most importantly during the transition. And, Avantra leads Cloud ERP operations management with support for BTP across SysOps, SecOps and FinOps – an essential new category for managing cloud infrastructure.