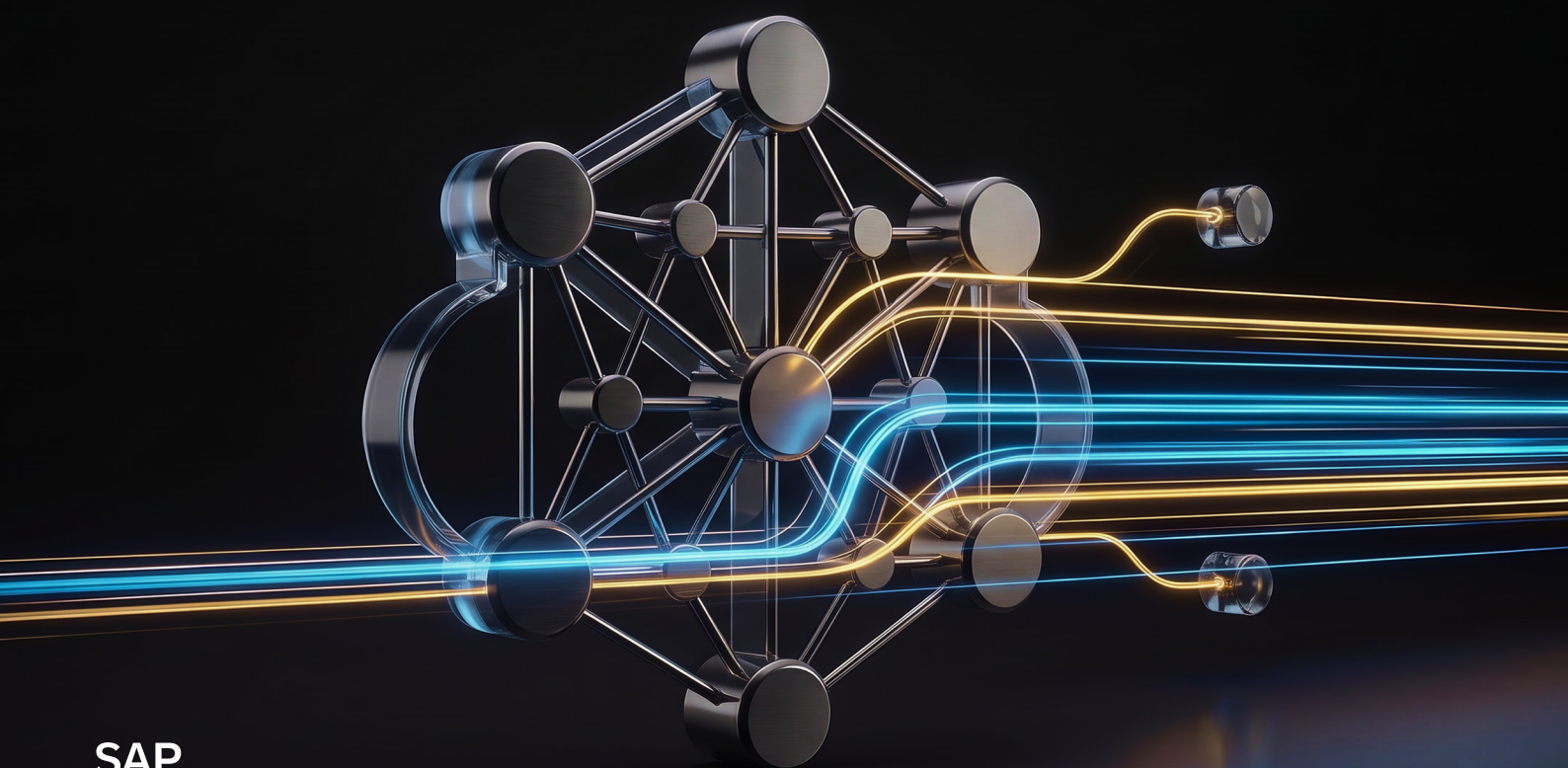


IT leader's migration guide

Master ERP content migration for business agility and modernization



**SAP
Solution
Extension**

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Migrate to modernize

ERP modernization is no longer optional. Legacy platforms that once ran reliably are now a liability. They're expensive to maintain, difficult to secure, and nearly impossible to align with today's digital business requirements.

[SAPinsider's 2026 ERP Migration and Transformation research](#) confirms the shift is accelerating, driven as much by the approaching end of SAP ECC mainstream maintenance in 2027 as by organizations' growing need for [cloud-based, AI-ready ERP](#). For CIOs evaluating next-generation ERP platforms, including SAP Cloud ERP, the urgency is clear: migration is the pathway to agility, resilience, and business impact.

The cost of doing nothing is steep: 96% of organizations already say poorly managed information leads to delays or missed deadlines, and 68% have lost a business opportunity because they couldn't access information fast enough.¹ Layer in mounting technical debt, higher total cost of ownership, and barriers to adopting AI and automation, and the case for moving now only gets stronger. A deliberate migration strategy reverses that trajectory. It creates agility, resilience, and capacity for innovation. More importantly, it lays the AI-ready foundation that intelligent processes and insights depend on.

A proven path keeps that migration on track: prepare your data and strategy, move in phases, and run intelligent operations once you're live. **This guide walks you through five steps that use this prepare-move-run approach.**



¹ Foundry Research sponsored by OpenText, [MarketPulse Survey: GenAI Adoption and Readiness](#), January 2026

Prepare

Step 1: Define a business-aligned migration strategy

Migrations often stall when they are treated as IT projects rather than business initiatives. Without clear alignment to outcomes like faster product launches, improved audit readiness, or lower IT overhead, CIOs risk pouring resources into “lift and shift” projects that fail to deliver lasting value.

Because modern cloud ERP is composable and modular by design, most organizations now forgo a “big bang” implementation in favor of a phased approach that limits risk and preserves flexibility.

For many enterprises, modernization is undertaken as part of broader transformation programs. Whether making a move to the cloud or migrating from legacy systems, the principle is the same: ERP migration must be tied directly to business outcomes, not just technical upgrades.

Take these actions:



Align migration goals with specific business outcomes.



Evaluate modernization approaches, including rehost, re-platform, rearchitect, rebuild, or replace, based on drivers like cost, agility, and risk.



Build a phased roadmap to reduce disruption and deliver early wins.



“Over time, we had built a complex web of application integrations, and we had gradually acquired seven different content management solutions—some of which were out-of-support. While functional, without a unified platform for records, compliance, capture, and workflow, our administration effort and operating expenses were rising.”

Mani Velayudhan,
Director of SAP Operations,
ScottsMiracle-Gro

Prepare

Step 2: Clean and govern data before migration

Migrating “as is” simply transfers today’s inefficiencies into tomorrow’s system. Poor-quality data undermines analytics, automation, and compliance efforts. In fact, 75% of organizations identify cleansed and harmonized operational data across systems as a requirement for a successful move to SAP S/4HANA.² Without proper [data archiving](#), organizations also face extended migration timelines and increased storage costs from processing unnecessary data.

It’s a pattern that shows up well beyond ERP specifically: 72% of organizations say they face foundational challenges with information sprawl and inconsistent data quality, and 89% say the push to adopt AI has accelerated their focus on information governance overall.³ Migration can often be the trigger that gets that governance work funded.

Clean, governed data is not just critical for compliance—it’s also the foundation for AI readiness, ensuring ERP systems can learn, adapt, and scale with intelligence.

Organizations preparing for ERP transformation also consistently find that cleansing and governing data before the move reduces cost and complexity. Archiving, in particular, not only accelerates migration but also supports a “clean core” ERP strategy—keeping systems lean, lowering database size, and ensuring long-term agility.

Take these actions:



Analyze legacy datasets for accuracy, consistency, and business relevance.



Archive or retire data that no longer adds value.



Use metadata and governance frameworks to classify and protect sensitive information.

For security and governance leaders:

Data cleansing and archiving decisions made here directly shape your audit posture later. Classification and retention rules set during migration prep are far easier to get right before go-live than to retrofit afterward.

² SAPinsider, Robert Holland, *Benchmark Report: ERP Migration and Transformation 2026*, March 2026

³ Foundry Research sponsored by OpenText, *MarketPulse Survey: GenAI Adoption and Readiness*, January 2026

“Capitec pursued a cloud-first strategy, aimed at improving the agility and resiliency of our services. In that context, moving our SAP solutions to the cloud was the natural choice, and we selected RISE with SAP. Protecting our invoice data would be just as crucial when we moved our SAP solution to the cloud. So, we looked for a new approach that would allow us to archive our invoices and protect other types of SAP documents in the future.”

Werner Carstens,
SAP Architect, Capitec

Move

Step 3: Move in phases and test relentlessly

Phasing migration avoids the disruption and risk of a one-time cutover. A phased migration approach, with quality checks and use-case validation built into each stage, gives IT teams better control and faster issue resolution than a single cutover.

Some enterprises begin with finance modules or archiving projects as “low-risk” pilots to prove value quickly. This phased approach is particularly effective for CIOs implementing cloud-native platforms, allowing them to validate processes before scaling enterprise-wide.

Take these actions:



Migrate by business unit, geography, or functional process.



Conduct pilot migrations (“dress rehearsals”) to validate data integrity and workflows.



Refine migration methods with feedback loops to improve each phase.





Run

Step 4: Prepare people and processes, not just technology

ERP migration reshapes how people work as much as how systems run. Without robust training and governance, organizations face resistance, poor adoption, and shadow IT.

“AI initiatives are people projects, requiring sustained investment in change management, skills development, and leadership engagement to ensure adoption. If you don’t invest in change management, you are doomed.”⁴

Preparing for change also means embedding compliance and governance into everyday work. In a cloud ERP model, audit trails, retention rules, and approvals are not bolt-ons. They are built into the system. Teams must be trained to operate confidently in environments where governance is continuous.

Adoption is the ultimate success metric. Migration cannot be declared complete until employees fully embrace new processes, dashboards, and AI-enabled decision tools. CIOs who measure and prioritize user adoption, not just cutover milestones, are the ones who realize faster ROI.

Take these actions:



Provide role-based training ahead of user acceptance testing.



Ensure training includes exposure to AI-enabled tools and decision support.



Reskill IT and business staff for cloud ERP roles in governance, testing, and vendor management.



Establish adoption KPIs and measure success by user confidence and engagement.



Build cross-functional training sessions to reflect new, integrated processes.

⁴ SAPinsider, Robert Holland, [Benchmark Report: ERP Migration and Transformation 2026](#), March 2026.

Run

Step 5: Execute cutover with confidence and retire what's left behind

Cutover is a make-or-break moment. Rushed transitions can leave business units without critical data, expose compliance gaps, or trigger costly downtime. When creating a cutover plan, it's important to consider:

- Processing requirements.
- Impact on existing systems, applications, and processes (some may still rely on data in the old ERP system).
- Support for the new ERP, including monitoring performance and data maintenance.

Organizations planning migration have also reduced risk by separating active from historical data during cutover. Active records move into the new environment, while archived data remains available for compliance and audits. This approach delivers a cleaner go-live and supports ongoing governance, reducing future upgrade costs and giving IT leaders trusted control over ERP performance.

Read-only legacy systems are not a finish line. Every application kept alive for audit access carries license, infrastructure, and security cost long after the business stopped using it. Moving historical records into a governed archive breaks that dependency. Compliance obligations are met, the data stays accessible and defensible, and the underlying system can be shut down.

Take these actions:



Plan cutover during low-activity periods to reduce risk.



Move historical data into a governed archive so legacy systems can be retired rather than maintained.



Establish continuous monitoring and feedback loops for performance optimization.



Resources

[Take a test drive of OpenText Core Archive for SAP with OpenText Content Aviator ›](#)

[Client Story: ENERCON ensures key financial data is available 24/7 ›](#)

The catalyst for high-performance ERP modernization

ERP migration is more than moving data. It's an opportunity to reset the business for agility and innovation. Organizations that delay face rising costs, missed opportunities, and growing compliance risk.

Critical elements of a successful ERP modernization initiative include:

- Significant planning and preparation.
- Positioning as a business initiative vs an IT project.
- Business leader inclusion and alignment.
- Change management and adoption strategies.
- Data clean-up, archiving and legacy system retirement.

When it comes to ERP modernization, SAP and OpenText are the catalyst for high-performance, accelerating outcomes by increasing operational efficiency, assuring regulatory compliance, and delivering an exceptional user experience. This partnership brings together structured process expertise and best-in-class content management to help organizations run smarter and safer.

Streamlined power

SAP and OpenText help enterprises run lean without sacrificing high performance. By uniting data and content into a single source of truth, this partnership reduces complexity, streamlines processes, and gives leaders cloud-first control, so employees move faster and IT can scale with confidence.

Built-in assurance

With compliance and governance embedded by design, SAP and OpenText deliver resilience even in the most complex environments. Backed by three decades of partnership, they provide a unified foundation that adapts as regulations evolve, ensuring compliance is never in question.

Effortless visibility

By uniting SAP processes with OpenText content, work becomes human-centered, flexible, and clear. Complexity falls away, interactions feel natural, and employees are empowered to move from uncertainty to insight, accelerating how work gets done.

Together, SAP and OpenText help CIOs create a future-proof, AI-ready enterprise where content and process run as one, and the work that follows go-live gets faster instead of harder.

[Learn more about what SAP + OpenText can do for your business](#)

