

**GETTING AHEAD
WITH SAP DATA
DISCOVERY**
**A PRACTICAL
MINI-GUIDE**

XMATERIA
DATA-LED SAP TRANSFORMATION

WHAT'S INSIDE

Business transformation involving SAP is hugely complex. Such projects tend to have lots of workstreams running in parallel, involve an army of consultants, and are eye-wateringly expensive.

Data migration is the element of business transformation that most SAP teams dread: data notoriously comes in huge volumes, is messy, and hard to manage. That's why it's often left till late where it can wreak havoc on project plans and jeopardise the timelines and budgets of the transformation project and the related business opportunities.

It doesn't have to be that way. Automating data discovery and doing it early – that is, making a simple change to the order in which you tackle your workstreams – can work wonders for your overall project delivery and the business outcomes you're looking for. That's what this guide is about.

It's for anyone in charge of planning, budgeting for, or delivering SAP transformation projects, and we think it's worth 7 minutes of your time.





YOUR DATA CONTAINS **THE ESSENCE OF YOUR BUSINESS** – AND USEFUL TRANSFORMATION INSIGHT

You might be migrating to S/4HANA, re-structuring your business processes, or selling or buying (a part of) a business: whatever the reason your organisation is embarking on an SAP change, it's safe to say that a fundamental business transformation is underway.

Migrating your SAP data is a huge part of that. By safely bringing over all relevant transactions, schedules, customers, materials, suppliers, and processes, you can ensure the continuity of your business and retain the value you have built up over the years.

We are SAP data migration experts – if you're new to Xmatteria, it's what we do. In fact, it's all we do. We've handled dozens of such projects and we know: in the majority of cases, SAP teams address data late, and, as a consequence, neglect one of the biggest opportunities to seize their change opportunity faster and make their SAP project more predictable, less risky and cheaper, too.

That's what this short guide is about. We've written it for anyone in charge of a business transformation project in an SAP environment (that's SAP change and project managers but also people in a business or innovation role – we promise to keep it jargon-free!).

We hope it will take away any fear or dread of tackling your own SAP data migration and to explain:

- The reasons why SAP transformation projects overrun
- What data discovery is and the insights it delivers
- Why looking at SAP data early on in your project is worth it
- What a data-led business transformation looks like

Ready? Let's dive in.



THE **IMPACT OF SAP DATA** ON YOUR BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION

What is SAP data discovery?

Simply put, data discovery is a complete stocktake of your existing business data prior to migration. It's also what makes many SAP team members want to run for the hills. That's because, as you can imagine, huge volumes of data that have accumulated over the lifetime of a business can be messy, to put it mildly.

In fact, most SAP teams don't know what data exists across the business. The process of manually collecting, assessing and sorting it can eat up weeks of project time and reveal less-than-welcome surprises. Understandably, SAP transformation teams often procrastinate on their data until they absolutely have to face it.

Why is data discovery so important?

As we've said, your data contains the essence of your business: your products, partners, who you sell to, and how you run things.

This is why we advocate for "radical data transparency" which gives you a complete view of things like:

- Data volumes across time periods, organisations, modules, objects
- Data quality
- Data the business are using vs data that can be archived
- Data that's necessary for compliance purposes
- Security issues

Without this, it's nearly impossible to understand what remediation measures are necessary, how long they'll take and how that'll impact your other transformation workstreams.

THE REAL-LIFE COST OF DATA PROCRASTINATION

In many cases, we have seen project costs and timelines explode due to large numbers of consultants working on workstreams that have been delayed due to data issues. And we had one customer who ended up changing their entire transformation approach after the project had been kicked off because they realised they needed to migrate all of their compliance-critical data and their original plan wouldn't work.

If all of the above is making you nervous, don't fret: we've got good news coming up.

We can't overstate how far-reaching the consequences of not understanding your data can be. Granted, it's an extreme example, but we spoke to one business (that later became a customer of ours) where the data migration, which was scheduled to happen over a weekend, hadn't finished in time for go-live. Two weeks later, it still wasn't complete. By the end of the project, data-related issues ended up adding 9 months to what was supposed to be a 2-year programme and costing the business at least 30% in additional technology and consulting spend. But more significantly, it delayed their business transformation and the revenue opportunities attached to it.

Having a complete view of your SAP data won't just influence your data migration. It can inform your entire transformation project, and even impact your choice of SAP transformation approach.





THERE'S A BETTER WAY DATA-LED TRANSFORMATION

If the previous pages painted a picture of the “unknown unknowns” that data procrastination keeps hidden from sight, this one will do the opposite, showing you how to avoid extra cost and risk and plan ambitious but realistic timelines for your SAP change.

It's based on two basic principles – bringing data discovery forward and automating it – and it helps us save our customers (and ourselves!) time, money, and sleepless nights:

Bringing data discovery forward. This is about the right time to do it.

By taking a complete inventory of your SAP data before you finalise the project timeline and kick off your project (and start paying armies of external contractors), you benefit from all the insight hidden within it:

- You'll understand exactly what data you have, across systems and organisations
- You'll see how much of it is in use (and what could be archived or left behind)
- You get to assess its quality (so you can make plans for cleansing and improvement)
- You can plan your project with greater awareness of potential obstacles, ensuring realistic timelines and project plans

It's also worth pointing out that data discovery has to be done at some point anyway. By doing it early on, you create no additional cost. You just move it to the beginning of your project timeline. And that delivers the radical data transparency you need to make the entire project more predictable and less risky.

THE RIGHT TECHNOLOGY - PIONEER

Automating the heck out of it. This is about, you guessed it, the right technology.

If you've read the above and thought "but how does doing it earlier change the tedium of manual data discovery work?", then you'd be absolutely right (and we would know you've been paying attention). It doesn't. Having your highly skilled team and consultants manually go through your system is frustrating and probably not a good use of their time.

Thankfully, data discovery can be automated. We, for instance, use our proprietary software

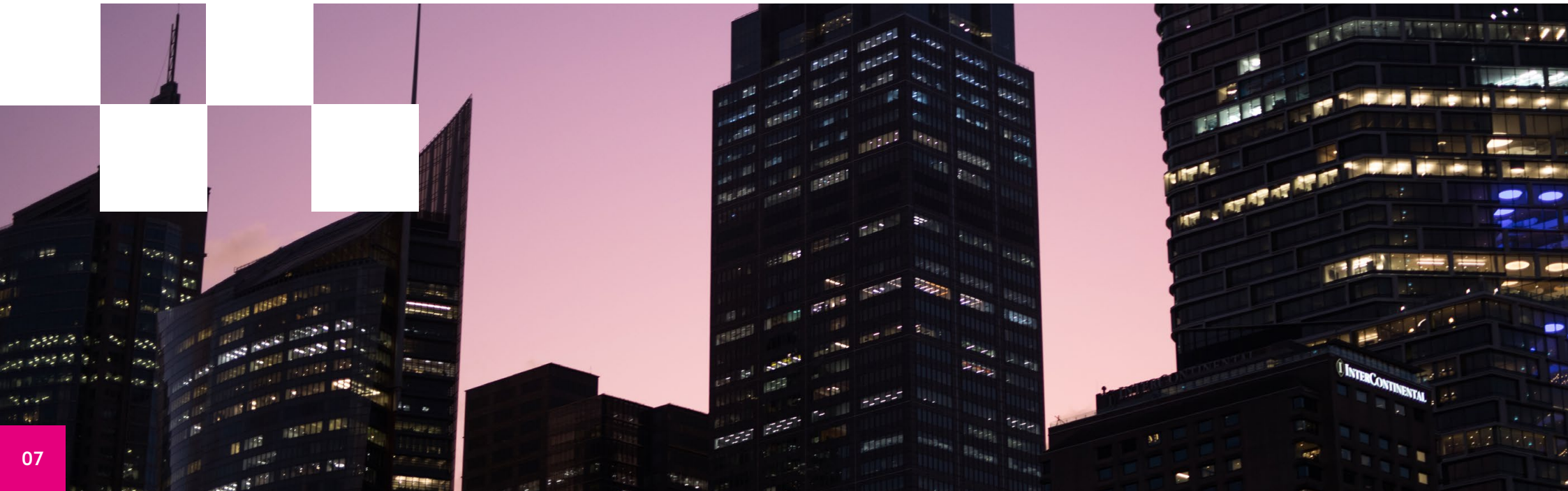
Pioneer to thoroughly drill into complex SAP data, uncover patterns and insights in it and accelerate the process by 90%.

This delivers a complete picture of your data estate and frees up your teams (and indeed ourselves) to ask the really important questions, such as:

- What critical data assets do we have across systems and organisations?
- What data can we retire or archive (and how)?
- How much of our system needs to be carved out (in a divestment)?
- What opportunities do we have to simplify the estate?

In short: with a data-led business transformation, you and your team get to use your time to work on the problems you originally set out to solve.

Your migration partner gets to advise, support and deliver instead of fighting fires. And you get to design a smoother, more predictable project that's less likely to be derailed or stopped by urgent, ad hoc problems so you can deliver value to your business sooner. We think that's a no-brainer.





THIS ISN'T EVEN ABOUT DATA, REALLY. IT'S ABOUT SEIZING OPPORTUNITIES

We hope we've been able to show that even though this guide is mainly about data migration – only one of several workstreams in your SAP transformation – this will have a significant, direct impact on the bigger project. Ultimately, this is about seizing the opportunities attached to your business transformation sooner and more reliably. And we've yet to meet an organisation that thinks this can wait.

We hope this has been useful. And if you have any questions about data discovery, our software Pioneer, data migration advisory or data migration delivery, we'd love to hear from you.

Key takeaway:

SAP data contains hugely valuable information that can guide your wider transformation project and inform the entire project plan. By using automation to take stock and analyse their data early, SAP teams can de-risk their change project and accelerate and streamline their entire business transformation.

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