

How to choose the right AMS partner for SAP

Select for ownership. Validate with evidence.



A practical framework for evaluating service governance, SAP expertise, transition readiness and the economics of long-term support.

[SELECTION CRITERIA](#) / [DUE DILIGENCE](#) / [EVALUATION WORKSHEET](#)

01 / THE BUYING DECISION

Buy an operating model. Not a queue of tickets.

The right AMS partner connects technical resolution with business accountability. That distinction should drive the selection process.

An SAP incident may begin in an application, integration or infrastructure component. Its consequences appear in order fulfillment, financial close or another critical business process. A proposal that lists modules and response times does not, by itself, explain who will restore that process or prevent the same disruption from returning.

Start with the business exposure

Identify the processes that cannot wait, their operating windows and the internal decisions needed during disruption. Use that baseline to define coverage and severity before comparing suppliers. A low-volume service can still carry high business risk.

Evaluate evidence, not presentation

Give each shortlisted provider the same landscape, demand history and incident scenario. Request anonymized operating artifacts, named service roles and a transition walkthrough. Score what can be demonstrated and committed to, not what is merely described.

Make the decision contractable

Turn the winning proposal into an explicit scope, responsibility matrix, coverage schedule, transition acceptance criteria and improvement cadence. Record dependencies on the customer, SAP, cloud providers and other vendors before signature.

THE BUYER'S TEST

If a critical business process fails tomorrow, can this provider explain who leads, who acts, who communicates and what evidence confirms recovery?

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Evaluate the criteria (p. 3), test the operating model (pp. 4-6), score the evidence (p. 7), and record a defensible recommendation (p. 8).

02 / SELECTION FRAMEWORK

Seven dimensions. One evidence standard.

Ask every provider to substantiate the same capabilities against your actual scope. Technical breadth should not mask weak ownership or transition risk.

Dimension	Evidence to request	Decision question
Governance & ownership	Named service leader; RACI; severity and escalation model; sample service review.	Who owns restoration when several teams are involved?
SAP & landscape expertise	Relevant application and technical skills; integration map; comparable problem-resolution example.	Can the assigned team diagnose beyond its own component?
Resilience & security	Privileged-access controls; incident coordination; recovery roles; tested escalation procedure.	How are access and recovery dependencies controlled?
Transition & knowledge	Knowledge inventory; runbook samples; shadowing plan; acceptance gates.	What must be proven before service responsibility transfers?
Team & coverage	Named roles and seniority; shifts and time zones; backup and replacement arrangements.	Who is available for the critical operating window?
Economics & improvement	Comparable scope and capacity assumptions; exclusions; reporting; improvement backlog.	What is included, what costs extra, and what improves?
Strategic & working fit	Decision cadence; communication approach; comparable references; collaboration model.	Will this team work effectively with your organization?

Evidence should be anonymized where necessary. Request only information the provider is entitled to share; do not require another client's confidential operational records.

03 / SERVICE DESIGN

Make accountability explicit.

A service-level target is useful only when its measurement, coverage and dependencies are clear.

Ask for a responsibility map that separates service coordination from technical execution and business approval. A provider may lead an incident without having authority to change every component. Those boundaries must remain visible during escalation, not be discovered during an outage.

Control	What the agreement should define
Severity & coverage	Business-impact criteria, critical periods, time zones, holiday treatment and who can declare or reclassify an incident.
Response vs. restoration	Response: qualified engagement and ownership. Restoration: return of the affected service, potentially through a workaround. Permanent resolution is a separate milestone.
Measurement	Clock start and stop events, permitted pauses, evidence sources, exclusions and reporting. Distinguish elapsed time from covered service hours.
Cross-provider ownership	Incident lead, technical owners, communications, escalation to SAP or cloud providers, and responsibility for obtaining customer decisions.
Recovery & change	Recovery dependencies and test responsibilities; approval authority; emergency-change path; rollback evidence and business validation.

Scenario to use in the selection workshop

An interface fails before a critical processing window. Ask the provider to walk through detection, severity, business impact, the incident bridge, third-party coordination, a safe workaround and validation. Require named roles and decision points, not just a promise to escalate.

A USEFUL DISTINCTION

Do not treat an incident restoration target as a disaster-recovery objective. Confirm the recovery scope and dependencies separately, including any agreed recovery time and data-loss objectives.

04 / TRANSITION READINESS

Transfer responsibility only when readiness is proven.

A start date is a commercial milestone. Service acceptance should depend on evidence that the incoming team can operate the agreed scope.

Baseline the service

Inventory systems, interfaces, critical jobs, access, open incidents, recurring issues and support demand. Agree a scope baseline and identify missing knowledge. **Exit evidence:** customer-approved inventory, risk register and accountable owners.

Transfer and demonstrate knowledge

Combine documentation with walkthroughs of real incidents, critical business cycles and escalation paths. Validate that the incoming team can use the runbooks. **Exit evidence:** knowledge coverage log, usable procedures and recorded gaps.

Shadow, then reverse-shadow

First observe the incumbent or internal team. Then let the incoming team lead agreed activities under supervision. Include a simulated critical incident and an emergency-change discussion. **Exit evidence:** demonstrated execution and agreed corrective actions.

Accept with explicit conditions

Confirm access, coverage, escalation contacts, reporting, backlog ownership and unresolved dependencies. Time-box any accepted gaps with a named owner. **Exit evidence:** signed acceptance or a conditional acceptance record, with a defined stabilization review.

DO NOT HIDE INHERITED RISK

Separate the inherited backlog from new demand. Agree which defects are included in transition, which need a change request and who owns remediation. Otherwise the first service review becomes a dispute about the starting point.

Timing depends on landscape complexity, access readiness and knowledge quality. Require a provider-specific plan; do not assume a universal 30-, 60- or 90-day transition.

Compare the full service. Not just the hourly rate.

Normalize scope, coverage, capacity and retained customer effort before deciding which proposal offers better value.

Model	Fit to test	Commercial question
Dedicated	Concentrated demand, strong context retention or specific availability requirements.	Which roles are reserved, what coverage remains outside the team, and how are absences handled?
Shared services	Variable demand that can be served through a pooled team and an agreed prioritization model.	How are capacity, queue priority, surge demand and access to senior expertise assured?
Hybrid	A stable core team with shared specialists or flexible capacity.	Where does core responsibility end, and how are specialist hours and handoffs managed?

Normalize the comparison

Use one demand baseline. Include transition, recurring fees, out-of-hours coverage, tools, specialists and exit assistance. Model normal and high-demand months. For bundled hours, clarify consumption, rollover and overage rules.

Keep improvement visible

Agree how recurring problems are prioritized, whether improvement effort is included, and who approves changes. Request a backlog with owners and outcomes; ticket closure alone does not demonstrate a more reliable operation.

Validate the team and the handover

Meet the proposed service leader and specialists. Confirm replacements, knowledge retention and exit documentation. For U.S. operations, specify time-zone coverage, delivery locations and coordination with retained internal or global teams.

Before selection: resolve the assumptions and exclusions that can change cost, coverage or accountability. Record any remaining conditions in the decision.

06 / EVIDENCE-BASED SCORING

A score that can be explained.

Use a common rubric and record the evidence behind each rating. The weights below are a suggested starting point, not an external benchmark.

Rating	Evidence standard
1 / Unproven	No credible evidence, or the requirement is not met.
2 / Partial	Some relevant evidence; material gaps remain.
3 / Adequate	Meets the requirement with usable evidence and manageable dependencies.
4 / Strong	Meets the requirement with demonstrated execution and clear ownership.
5 / Distinctive	Strong evidence plus relevant, validated capability beyond the requirement.

WORKED EXAMPLE / HYPOTHETICAL PROVIDER, NOT A CLIENT RESULT

Dimension	Weight %	Rating 1-5	Points
Governance & ownership	20	4	16
SAP & landscape expertise	20	4	16
Resilience & security	15	3	9
Transition & knowledge	15	4	12
Team & coverage	15	3	9
Economics & improvement	10	4	8
Strategic & working fit	5	5	5
Total	100	-	75 / 100

Formula: points = weight x rating / 5. Total score = sum of all points.

Example: governance contributes 20 x 4 / 5 = 16 points.

Interpretation: this provider earns 75/100 but still has only adequate evidence for resilience and coverage. Validate those areas before selection. The total supports comparison; it is not an automatic approval threshold.

Set weights and mandatory requirements before reviewing bids. Do not average away a failed mandatory control. Treat missing evidence as unproven; remove genuinely out-of-scope criteria only by agreement and reweight the remainder to 100%.

07 / EVALUATION WORKSHEET

Record the decision.

Keep the evidence traceable.

Complete one sheet per provider after the workshop. Use the rubric on page 7 and attach supporting evidence or an evidence register.

Provider: _____ Review date: _____

Evaluators / roles: _____

Dimension	Weight	Rating	Points	Evidence ID / open condition
Governance & ownership	20%			
SAP & landscape expertise	20%			
Resilience & security	15%			
Transition & knowledge	15%			
Team & coverage	15%			
Economics & improvement	10%			
Strategic & working fit	5%			
Total	100%			

Mandatory requirements: Passed / Failed / Evidence pending
Record any failed gate; it takes precedence over the weighted score.

Recommendation: Advance / Advance with conditions / Do not advance

Conditions, owners and due dates:

Decision owner / approval: _____

Business context.

Technical accountability.

Evaluate Nexton against the same standards you apply to every shortlisted provider.

Nexton brings business and technology consulting into the conversation about SAP operations. The starting point is the business process at risk; the service design then defines the application, technical and coordination responsibilities needed to support it.

EXECUTIVE-LEVEL CLIENT REFERENCES

Organization	Reference role
Senoplast Mexico	Managing Director, Mexico
PWO	Chief Financial Officer
Telcel	Director of SAP Applications

Reference conversations can be coordinated subject to each contact's availability and permission. The engagements differ in scope; these references should not be interpreted as identical AMS deployments or endorsements of every service described in this guide.

Use the reference conversation well

Ask about the responsibilities Nexton assumed, how difficult decisions were handled and the customer's retained role. Evaluate relevance to your needs rather than relying on a client name alone.

LET'S DISCUSS YOUR SAP OPERATING MODEL

Bring your landscape, critical business windows and current support challenges. Define the scope and evidence needed for a confident partner decision.

[Explore Nexton SAP Operations \(AMS\) >](#)