

# A massive cloud migration —in a flash

SAP SuccessFactors  
transforms itself to help  
other companies  
transform



Call for change

# An opportunity to be a better partner with customers on their business transformations

**Over the last few years, numerous large companies around the world have initiated company-wide transformations to reimagine their businesses and become more competitive.**

SAP, the global enterprise software developer, aims to support these transformations through its end-to-end software suite, which helps companies manage supply chains, finance, human resources, customer relationships, manufacturing, spending, sustainability, and more.

SAP's vision is to enable companies in every industry to become a network of intelligent enterprises. An intelligent enterprise uses AI, automation, analytics, and other advanced technologies to optimize businesses in

real-time—and ultimately helps companies transform. SAP saw an enormous opportunity to support its vision and its customers' transformations by transforming itself—in essence, doing what it encourages its customers to do. As part of its ambitious Next-Generation Cloud Delivery initiative, launched in 2020, SAP redefined its business model to focus on delivering software, services, and support from the cloud—rather than from on-premises facilities.

To drive this transformation, SAP leveraged its next level resilient, scalable cloud computing infrastructure and extended centralized platform, called SAP Business Technology Platform.

The enhanced platform would enable its customers to integrate and extend capabilities from across SAP's entire software portfolio, facilitating their company-wide transformations.



## Call for change

An important part of SAP's transformation initiative was migrating to hyperscalers the nine large data centers that serve SAP SuccessFactors, a customizable, comprehensive suite of human resources management software including core HR, payroll, talent management, and much more. Migrations typically involve addressing a single customer's needs on timing, logistics, and other issues. This project would require communicating and coordinating with SAP SuccessFactors' more than 9,000 customers and 150,000 separate tenants.

A top priority for SAP was ensuring zero service interruptions for SAP SuccessFactors users—more than 120 million company employees in 200+ countries. The migration had to occur entirely during existing 24-36-hour time slots slated for maintenance. That meant it would need to be split into 38 separate runs executed with precision and speed. To minimize extra infrastructure costs, SAP needed each data center to be fully decommissioned in 15 days.

When tech meets human ingenuity

# A phased approach with substantial automation

**When SAP approached Accenture for support on this ambitious migration, both companies knew that assembling large, collaborative teams with the right skills—and doing so early—would be a prerequisite for success. Together, the companies trained and ramped up project staff to more than a thousand employees in just a few months. Accenture created a dedicated focused training facility covering 56 specialized skills.**

Establishing the right technical plan early was also essential. SAP and Accenture decided to split the migration into two phases. Phase 1 would design and build the migration procedures and methodology and refine it

on one of the data centers (Toronto). Phase 2 would apply the lessons learned and tools developed in Phase 1 to migrate the other eight data centers rapidly and reliably.

In Phase 1, the teams developed migration runbooks, which described over 1,000 steps and tasks along with the responsible people and time allotments. The runbooks enabled the teams to identify and resolve technical challenges as well as optimize the efficiency of the steps. The runbooks were the base to build advanced automation tools needed to meet the demanding timeline.



“It was wonderful to see how SAP and Accenture teamed up to meet the massive Next-Generation Cloud Delivery mission and timeline,”

**MEG BEAR**

President and Chief Product Officer of SAP SuccessFactors

## When tech meets human ingenuity

Tools were developed to automate the building and testing of the databases, networking, monitoring, and other components of the migration infrastructure. There was automation for project management tasks such as onboarding new staff, billing, and processing timesheets. The decommissioning of the computing and storage resources at the data centers was automated. This included tasks like deleting data and implementing security measures. Many automation scripts will provide good value and increased efficiency also in the future.

Based on lessons from the Toronto data center migration at the end of Phase 1, the teams refined and optimized processes, runbooks, and automation. All the 38 migration runs in Phase 2 were successful on the first attempt, and the last seven data centers were migrated in less than six months. The very tough decommissioning deadlines were also met in every case. Throughout the project, SAP hosted dozens of webinars to keep its customers informed.

“The excellent collaboration and shared mission have helped us achieve our program with outstanding success. The Accenture colleagues’ expertise played a key role in all of it. Their experts really came through for us. We couldn’t have done it without them,” said Meg Bear, President and Chief Product Officer of SAP SuccessFactors.

“This project is the story of great Accenture and SAP teams coming together,” said Bernhard Schulzki, Accenture’s Managing Director for SAP Cloud and Infrastructure Technology Consulting. “We worked closely with SAP and co-innovated on the processes, runbooks, and automation to achieve a 100% success rate on the migration runs.”

A valuable difference

# Toward a network of intelligent enterprises

**The project migrated nine data centers with a multitude of teams and infrastructure platforms to three major public cloud platforms and SAP's Converged Cloud. This significantly reduces complexity and enables much more efficient operations for SAP SuccessFactors.**

SAP continuously works on its goal of net-zero carbon emissions along its value chain by 2030. The cloud infrastructure is powered by 100% renewable electricity.

Post-migration, SAP SuccessFactors can take advantage of the cloud's many benefits. It can scale its computing resources much more quickly, enabling a larger base of customers.

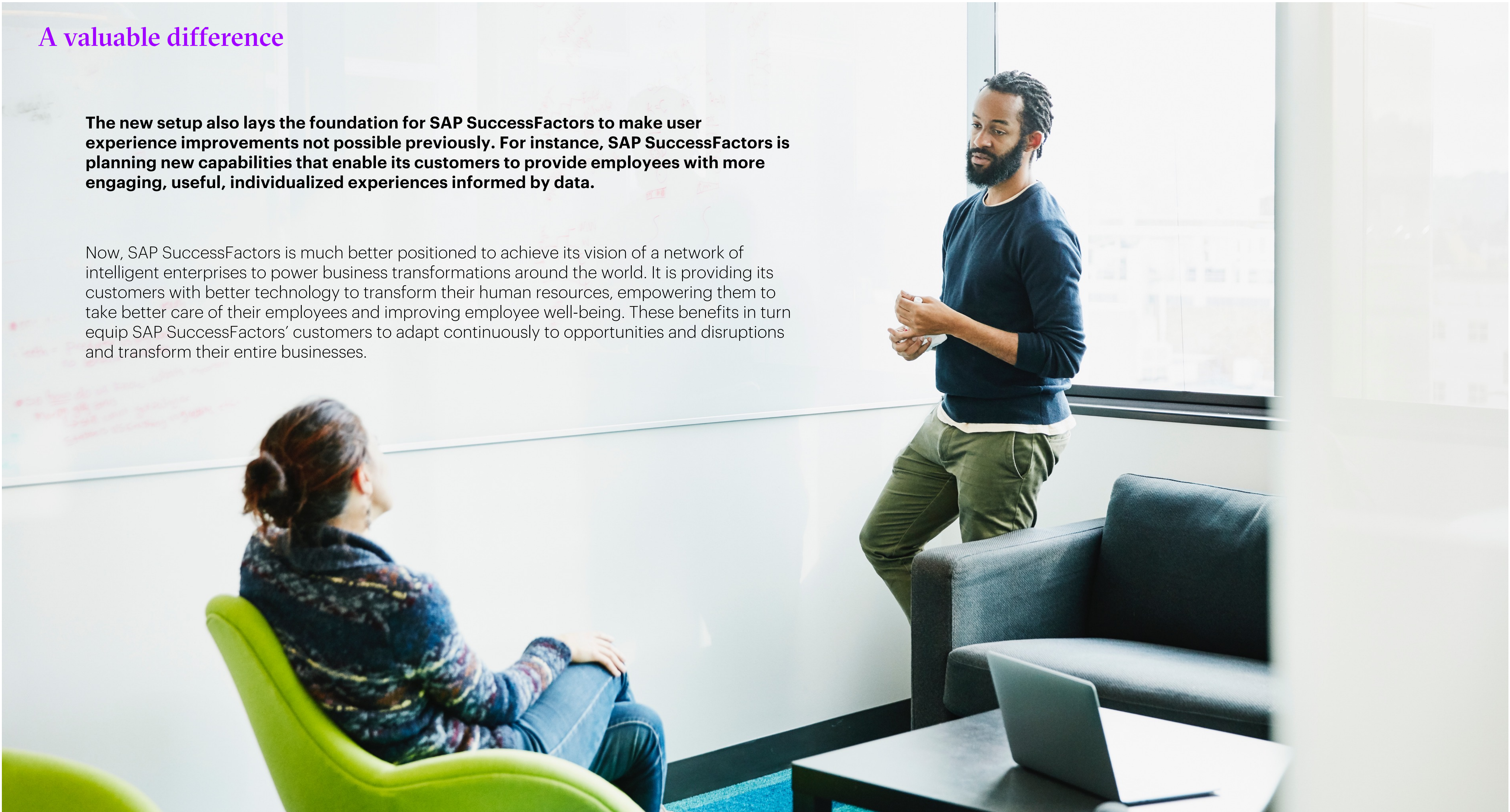
The cloud infrastructure enhances the security, reliability, and performance of SAP SuccessFactors applications.



## A valuable difference

**The new setup also lays the foundation for SAP SuccessFactors to make user experience improvements not possible previously. For instance, SAP SuccessFactors is planning new capabilities that enable its customers to provide employees with more engaging, useful, individualized experiences informed by data.**

Now, SAP SuccessFactors is much better positioned to achieve its vision of a network of intelligent enterprises to power business transformations around the world. It is providing its customers with better technology to transform their human resources, empowering them to take better care of their employees and improving employee well-being. These benefits in turn equip SAP SuccessFactors' customers to adapt continuously to opportunities and disruptions and transform their entire businesses.



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