SAP BPC 10.1 ON SAP HANA® UPGRADE
DELIVERS IMPROVED ACCURACY, SPEED AND EFFICIENCY

OPPORTUNITY

Accenture runs its core financial processing on a single global instance of SAP® Business Suite on HANA. As Accenture becomes a more diverse business, it needs to operate with more insight, agility, efficiency and compliance across multiple business units, business processes and applications. This means that both the business processes and IT capabilities must contend with a faster pace of change, growth, larger volumes and diverse businesses—all driving the need to evolve Accenture's ERP to be ready for future needs.

SOLUTION

As part of Accenture's strategic road map and journey to implement a more powerful ERP, Accenture's SAP Business Planning and Consolidation (BPC) application was identified to be upgraded to version 10.1. "The application is Accenture Global Controllership's primary consolidation tool for external reporting and SEC filings," says Melissa Burgum, Assistant Corporate Controller. "SAP BPC supports the financial process and regulatory reports, including more than 5.6 million movements for more than 500 companies each period." Staying current with SAP application upgrades is also in keeping with Accenture's guiding principles and in maintaining its "SAP system as an asset" strategy. For these reasons, Accenture was ready to upgrade to the latest version for managing financial information and its consolidation.

The project team installed SAP BPC 10.1 on SAP HANA® with the objectives to support a broader International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) program with a technical solution for consolidations that enables parallel sets of results; take advantage of Accenture's new SAP Business Warehouse (BW) on HANA system to gain efficiencies in the consolidations business process; and reduce report execution time and consolidation runtime. The installation was carried out following Accenture's internal IT release schedule and standard methodology.

To enable parallel sets of results to support a broader International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) program internal IT explored different SAP BPC architecture options. Internal IT, in collaboration with an SAP consultant, designed a consolidated SAP BPC road map. This road map took into consideration the latest versions, different upgrade scenarios and future direction of SAP solutions. It will be reviewed at future checkpoints to determine when to perform the next upgrade and to which version of SAP BPC. This approach enables internal IT to better understand the state of the art in SAP's BPC product evolution and determine the most appropriate fit for Accenture.

As part of migrating Accenture's SAP BW system to SAP HANA, Accenture chose this opportunity to lead in the New and migrate its first major SAP application to the public cloud. With its SAP BW on SAP HANA on Microsoft Azure, the project team looked to gain efficiencies in the consolidations business process. To achieve this objective Accenture selected the more skilled resources in the business and technology and integrated them in a very collaborative team with a focus on performance improvement. At the same time, the project team worked closely with global controllership to make sure the results satisfied their needs.

To reduce report execution time and consolidation runtime, the project team designed and executed an exhaustive testing plan. This testing revealed that the process of obtaining report information from the SAP BPC repository consumed a great deal of time in validating user access.

To address this performance issue, the project team optimized user roles to reduce the time required to perform validation.

Additionally, as part of the implementation, the project team designed an improved Year-to-Date logic with the objective of reducing the amount of records loaded in an SAP BPC cube each period and saving load time. Instead of loading all records from the SAP system for the current fiscal year, the new logic computes the initial balance for all previous periods into a single set of data added to the current period in month-end close. This in-house development helped Accenture make the close process agile and improved performance.

RESULTS

The implementation of SAP BPC 10.1 on SAP HANA improved Accenture's consolidation process during month-end close, making it better, faster and more cost-effective. "Consolidation is one of the most important processes in SAP Finance under the RTR [Record-to-Report] process," says Scott Wilson, Finance Director – Strategy & Enablement. "This solution improves the real-time status of Accenture financial information adjusted to SEC requirements and reduces efforts."

From a better perspective, the business can now trace data from the original records in SAP Business Suite on HANA to the consolidated information in SAP BPC. Also, quality data is available more quickly. Financial information is pre-consolidated five times during the month end before the final consolidation is done. Pre-close consolidation helps leadership to have updated information during the process for closing the consolidated financial statements. From a technical perspective, SAP BPC 10.1 on SAP HANA provides stronger security through a continued vulnerability remediation process. The project team was also able to implement strong security authentication access to the system.

In terms of making it faster, the delivery life cycle has been reduced. SAP BPC load and consolidation runtime was reduced by 45 percent and BPC report runtime was reduced by 50 percent. In addition, as notes Steve Collins, Managing Director of Accenture's Enterprise Data and Finance Portfolio, "Through the SAP BPC application, several pre-close loads can be performed during month end, allowing global controllers to have actual financial information at key times during these critical days."

Costs have been reduced because the business operates more efficiently and IT spends less time on fixing issues and has reduced the delivery life cycle.

These improvements and benefits help to enable accurate and faster business decisions, eliminate financial consolidation errors and report runtime, and improve the efficiency of the Accenture financial information consolidation process. Moreover, the knowledge IT has gained places Accenture in a better position to perform future upgrades faster and with fewer issues.

ABOUT ACCENTURE

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