CASE STUDY

How Vnomic moved ESRI from SAP ECC to SAP S/4HANA on Microsoft Azure

Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI), an international supplier of geographic information system (GIS) technologies, needed to migrate its legacy Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system from SAP Enterprise Central Component (ECC) to SAP S/4HANA, SAP's new generation of business software. Working with the Vnomic automated deployment platform, **ESRI was able to deploy SAP S/4HANA on the Microsoft Azure cloud in just a few hours while meeting all SAP requirements and best practices**.

The Challenge: Migrating a Quarter-Century-Old ERP to the Cloud

ESRI (/ˈɛzriː/), based in Redlands, California, produces GIS software, web GIS and geodatabase management applications. Starting in 1969 as a land-use consulting firm, the privately held Esri is the world leader in GIS software, with 43 percent market share. The $1.6 billion, 4,100-employee firm runs 10 regional offices in the U.S. and manages a network of more than 80 international distributors. ESRI solutions have been adopted by 300,000 customers in 200 countries—with a total of over 1,000,000 users.

However, advantageous on many levels, the choice of Azure for SAP S/4HANA added potential complexity to the migration project. To ensure a smooth transition in what was nothing less than a total ERP transformation, ESRI needed to find a proven approach to placing its critical ERP assets in the cloud.

ESRI has been using SAP systems for over 25 years. They adopted SAP ECC, customizing it extensively and then upgrading it according to the standard SAP software lifecycle over time. As SAP ECC faces end of life (EOL) and the looming loss of support, ESRI decided it was time to migrate to SAP S/4HANA, the modern SAP ERP software that runs atop the SAP HANA in-memory database. In addition to dealing with EOL, the adoption of S/4HANA offered a number of advantages. These include use of the intuitive and productivity-boosting SAP FIORI User Experience (UX) as well as a variety of other operationally beneficial business software features.

ESRI had already made a start on the migration. The company runs its 2TB+ database on SAP HANA already. However, that database was connected to SAP ECC. The migration process would be far from simple. Though SAP provides extensive guidance for migrating from SAP ECC to SAP S/4HAHA, the migration process can be quite complex and challenging.

Twenty-five years of customization created an intricate roadmap for shifting from the legacy system to the newer software platform. In addition, ESRI selected to put its ERP on cloud infrastructure. SAP S/4HANA on the Microsoft Azure cloud platform enables SAP companies to run their SAP landscapes without requiring a large capital investment in on-premises infrastructure. Azure facilitates greater agility and rapid, cost-effective scalability.

Cloud Based Infrastructure Spending
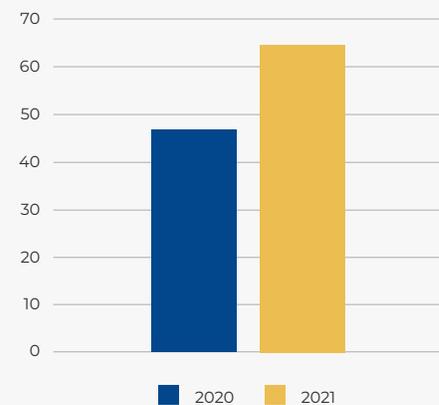
The choice of Azure aligns with global IT spending trends. As worldwide enterprise IT budgets grow by 4.3% to a projected $3.7 trillion in 2021, cloud-based infrastructure spending will leap forward at a growth rate of 27.6%, to $64.3 billion in 2021, according to Gartner, the research and consulting firm.

The Solution: Vnomic Automated, Engineered SAP Landscape Delivery and Governance

ESRI reached out to Vnomic for help with deploying SAP S/4HANA on Azure. Vnomic has been an SAP validated global partner for over 8 years and a Microsoft gold level global partner for over six years. In these strategic relationships, Vnomic has been co-innovating with SAP and Microsoft engineering teams to automate engineered SAP landscape delivery and governance on Azure for global companies.

The Vnomic platform leverages advanced Artificial Intelligence (AI) and a model driven, declarative approach to automate the deployment of an engineered SAP landscape that meets all SAP technical and performance requirements on Azure. This mode of working eliminates manual processes, while meeting all security, governance and compliance requirements for the SAP landscape deployment and resulting cloud-based SAP landscape. Vnomic engineered systems meet all SAP, Microsoft and customer's technical specifications.

To achieve this capability, The Vnomic platform has captured thousands of SAP notes and an equally large number of Microsoft technical specifications in its AI-based automaton models. As a result, Vnomic can automate the computation and deployment of an engineered SAP landscape on Azure end to end, with zero touch.

The Vnomic deployed engineered systems met all of ESRI's sensitive worldwide performance requirements. The project also comprised the integration of all ESRI datacenter requirements, including those dealing with security, governance and compliance. For example, Vnomic automatically deployed ESRI's SAP S/4HANA landscape in a way that integrated ESRI single sign-on (SSO), Azure vault to store and use of all SAP landscape related passwords. This step eliminated potential SAP password security breaches while meeting ESRI strict security requirements.

The Vnomic engineered SAP S/4HANA landscape for ESRI included optimized architecture and design, enforced best practices and enforced reference architectures. The Vnomic platform provided ESRI with advanced tagging along with an optimized high availability clustering solution to meet ESRIs business continuity requirements. By following the patterns set out by Vnomic, ESRI was able to realize an SAP S/4HANA landscape on Azure that featured automated High Availability (HA) resiliency.

Benefits: A Smooth Transition and Fast Time-to-Value

Working with Vnomic, ESRI was able to compute and deploy its new SAP S4/HANA landscape on Azure in just a few hours. Under manual operating conditions, this process might take months and require the efforts of dozens of expensive consultants.

ESRI achieved a far faster time-to-value than it had originally planned in its cloud migration project. The automated approach also eliminated the problem of downtime due to manual errors, which is common with large-scale SAP cloud migrations. Vnomic worked within budget and schedule.

The Vnomic models are dynamic. For this reason, ESRI can continue to operate its new SAP S/4HANA landscape on Azure on an optional basis, even as it inevitably changes over time. The company can adapt SAP S/4HANA to the evolution of its business but be confident that it is operating securely and compliantly in the cloud.

To discover how major organizations successfully working with Vnomic please visit

www.vnomic.com