ASAP methodology: Final Preparation

The final preparation phase is the fourth step of the ASAP methodology.

It's purpose is to finalize the readiness of an SAP ERP system, which also includes BI, for going-live. Beside the technical aspects of this phase, it also concentrates on the user training, the knowledge transfer and the creation of a go-live plan.\(^1\)

Placement in ASAP methodology

The five steps of the ASAP roadmap guides through the whole implementation process of a system. Within the first three steps project preparation, business blueprints and the realization (including simulation and validation) have been succeeded. Till this point the project has been planned, an organization established and the project standards determined.\(^2\) A detailed business process analysis follows during the blueprint phase. Relevant business practice and functionality get aligned with the SAP processes. In the realization phase business blueprint gets converted into reality. After the fourth step of realization, the last step includes go-live and support.

Final preparation phase details

The final preparation phase of the ASAP methodology includes all activities which need to be done before turning the ignition key on the new system.\(^3\) This covers various details which have to happen in parallel and can’t be conducted in a step-by-step manner.

Refine the system

With the conversion into reality of step three, in this stage the system is ready but not ready to use: in the final preparation phase the system still undergoes testing as every change (e.g. caused by inserting a new interface) needs to be tested. This is necessary as every change could create a problem up to breaking a process. Due to the integrated nature of an ERP software this could break down the whole system.\(^4\)

Prepare Go-Live plan

Switching over from the retiring legacy system to the SAP system demands a well-prepared, realistic and detailed planning of the last weeks before go-live. This plan is mainly known as cut-over plan and includes all activities, tasks and procedures as well as their interaction and connection. The plan needs to be approved by project management, technical team leads, business leads, corporate senior management and the steering committee.\(^5\) In order to cover planning details of all relevant parties.
End-user training

The introduction of a new ERP system is always connected with huge amount of changes within the IT system of a company. New skills, procedures and processes need to be learned and because of the integrated nature the effect of the own action is always influencing the work of others. This means a big change for the end-user who compared to the project team members did not receive training up till now. Sometimes training all end-user directly by professional trainers is not possible. In this case a ‘train-the-trainer’ concept is advisable. Here a limited number of trained ‘power-user’ train other end-user within their functional areas.

Knowledge transfer

Normally the main knowledge of the implementation stays with the consultants who are the technical drivers and leaders during the implementation but leave the company after the go-live. It needs to be ensured that this knowledge is made available to the company’s employees to guarantee their full understanding of the system. The easiest way is to document all details of the implementation by the consultants for the support of the system after the go-live. Also an assignment of a team member to every consultant from the beginning of the project helps supporting this.

System administration

System tests as stress and performance tests need to be done on the server and other hardware within the final preparation test.

Data Migration

Remaining business data needs to be transferred to the new system in step-by-step manner before it is validated there. This procedure is called data migration.

Final testing and fine tuning

During the whole phase the complete system is tested and fine-tuned by e.g. integration tests, verifying migrated data, checking interfaces or volume and stress test. Also equipment which needs to be docked on the new system is tested (e.g. printers).

Related topics

- AcceleredSAP
- Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP)
- Cube
- Business Intelligence (BI)
- Data Migration
- Data Warehouse
References

- Khan, Arshad. SAP and BW Data Warehousing, how to plan and implement. Lincoln: iuniverse, 2005.

External links

- http://www.sapfans.com/sapfans/asap/be_06_e.htm
- http://www.sdn.sap.com
- http://www.cogentibs.com/pdf/cogsap08/SM.pdf *

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5) Khan, Arshad. SAP and BW Data Warehousing, how to plan and implement. Lincoln: iuniverse, 2005. P. 82-83
7) Khan, Arshad. SAP and BW Data Warehousing, how to plan and implement. Lincoln: iuniverse, 2005. P. 85