



AT A GLANCE

Summary

The RAO Publishing Group – based in Bucharest, Romania – is a local leader in its field. RAO chose the SAP® All-in-One ERP package to replace its legacy accounting, reporting, and sales and distribution software. With the support of local SAP partner FAIR VALUE and SAP Consulting, the implementation was completed in double-quick time.

Web Site

www.raobooks.com
(Romanian only)

Key Challenges

- Retire homegrown stand-alone applications
- Eliminate time-consuming data replication
- Improve decision support through real-time reporting
- Enhance data quality

Project Objectives

- Rapidly introduce an integrated, state-of-the-art enterprise resource planning application designed to meet the needs of midsize enterprises
- Gear up for new challenges – particularly in connection with Romania's possible membership in the EU

Solution and Services

SAP All-in-One ERP

Why SAP Solution

- Demonstrates a proven track record of success
- Meets the specific needs of small and midsize enterprises

Implementation Highlights

- Go-live right on schedule
- Implementation extremely rapid – completed in half the time a standard approach would have required
- Time to value faster thanks to expert advice and assistance from implementation partner and SAP Consulting

Key Benefits

- Quick and easy access to up-to-the-minute information
- Better decision making through real-time reporting for managers
- Single integrated solution for core tasks – eliminating the need for data replication
- Clearly defined processes for data entry, ensuring data consistency and accuracy
- Solid basis for future business growth

Implementation Partner

FAIR VALUE

Existing Environment

Various homegrown, stand-alone applications

Third-Party Integration

- Database: Microsoft SQL Server
- Hardware: Hewlett-Packard
- Operating system: Microsoft Windows

“SAP All-in-One packages are ideal for small and midsize enterprises. As the result of the training offered by SAP Education, we are now fully equipped to offer these solutions to customers in Romania.”

Metodiu Mehmet, CEO, FAIR VALUE

RAO PUBLISHING GROUP

Certified SAP Partner Helps Midsize Publisher Rapidly Implement SAP® All-in-One ERP

Thanks to dedicated training offered by SAP® Education and delivered by SAP Consulting, Romania-based SAP partner FAIR VALUE successfully led the introduction of the SAP All-in-One ERP package at RAO Publishing Group of Bucharest, Romania. Expert advice and assistance from SAP Consulting helped accelerate the implementation while ensuring high standards of quality. RAO is now reaping a host of benefits, including easy access to accurate, up-to-the-minute data, plus timely reporting for managers.

Expert Consulting Services for the Midmarket

Founded in 2005, Romania-based FAIR VALUE specializes in marketing and implementing SAP solutions for small and midsize enterprises (SMEs). Although the company is relatively young, its 15-strong team possesses a wealth of experience gained in numerous SAP software implementations. “Before joining us, our consultants mainly worked on projects for large corporations,” explains Marcel Isaila, account manager and cofounder of FAIR VALUE. “However, SAP solutions for SMEs call for very specific skills. So we were very interested when we heard that SAP Education offered training focusing on SAP All-in-One packages.”

Software, Services, and Best Practices: SAP All-in-One Packages

Based on the mySAP™ Business Suite family of business applications and the SAP Best Practices offerings, SAP All-in-One packages combine SAP software, preconfiguration to support best practice processes, and implementation services. They provide an affordable, flexible, and predictable solution, helping midsize enterprises streamline operations while enabling business growth. A predefined scope of implementation and the SAP ASAP Focus methodology ensure the packages are deployed on time and within budget. Basic packages are available for enterprise resource planning (ERP) and business intelligence, as well as for industry-specific requirements.

Training from the SAP Specialists

In September 2005 FAIR VALUE's consultants attended a four-week series of workshops held by SAP Consulting at the SAP office in Bucharest. "The first week covered sales and the remaining three focused on consulting," states Isaila. "Key topics included the target market for SAP All-in-One packages, the presales process, solution benefits, and the SAP ASAP Focus methodology. The SAP experts not only helped us to improve our understanding of the product. They also showed our consultants how to perform customization tasks."

The workshops proved an invaluable asset for FAIR VALUE. "Thanks to the SAP training, our sales professionals have a firm grasp of SAP All-in-One packages and how they support customers' processes," says Isaila. "Instruction on the SAP ASAP Focus methodology was particularly valuable. Our consultants now have the deep knowledge and hands-on skills needed to implement SAP All-in-One packages quickly and cost-effectively."

And FAIR VALUE did not have to wait long to put its newly acquired expertise into practice. Just as the technical team was completing the final stage of training with SAP Consulting – in which they were learning about real-life implementation case studies – FAIR VALUE landed a deal to head up the first Romanian software implementation of SAP All-in-One ERP at RAO Publishing Group.

A Leading Romanian Publisher

One of Romania's most important and successful publishing houses, the RAO Publishing Group was founded in 1993. Its portfolio comprises more than 1,000 titles, including classic and contemporary fiction, children's books, dictionaries, and encyclopedias. The group, which consists of eight individual companies, employs around 50 permanent staff and posted revenues of over US\$10 million in 2005.

Until recently, RAO handled financial accounting, management, and sales and distribution tasks using multiple homegrown, stand-alone applications. "Replicating data from one application

"The SAP software gives us a clearly defined process for entering facts and figures into the system. So we can see exactly who entered what and when. As a result, data is more reliable and complete."

**Oliviu Vlad, Chief Accountant and Project Manager,
RAO Publishing Group**

to another was a major headache – and very time-consuming," says Oliviu Vlad, chief accountant and project manager for the SAP software implementation at RAO Publishing Group. "We synchronized our data once a month, but we lacked real-time information access. As a result there were often delays in getting reports to our managers."

Designed for SMEs: SAP All-in-One ERP

With Romania likely to join the European Union in 2007, RAO saw that the time had come to retire its legacy applications. "We began implementing a non-SAP solution," explains Vlad. "But we soon realized this would entail a lot of costly custom development. That's why we decided to introduce the SAP All-in-One ERP package. SAP software obviously has an impressive track record, but we initially thought it would be too big for a company like ours. We were pleasantly surprised to discover that SAP offers solutions tailored specifically to the midmarket."

To ensure the implementation went smoothly, RAO teamed up with FAIR VALUE. “We needed a partner who could help us get our new SAP software in place quickly, cost-effectively, and in line with our specific requirements. And FAIR VALUE came highly recommended by SAP,” says Vlad. SAP Consulting was also involved, providing additional project management and quality assurance services.

Close Collaboration and Proven Practices

Following the kick-off meeting in October 2005, RAO began by introducing a range of capabilities (including accounting, materials management, and sales and distribution) at its encyclopedia publishing company. Core activities were tackled by the publisher’s in-house team, the implementation partner, and SAP Consulting.

FAIR VALUE and SAP Consulting worked hand in hand with the customer to determine RAO’s specific requirements and also collaborated closely to find the best way of migrating the publisher’s data to SAP All-in-One ERP. “There was a lot of give and take throughout the project,” says Isaila. “We held joint reviews with SAP and the customer, and SAP Consulting provided local specialists to assist us with the ERP software.”

In addition to overall project management, FAIR VALUE handled all tasks within the scope of the SAP ASAP Focus methodology – including consulting, customization, go-live, and support. “We also presented the migration concept to the customer, installed the hardware and software, and performed on-site testing,” states Isaila. “The training we received from SAP was excellent, and considerably reduced the risk of our first SAP All-in-One project.”

Implementation in Double-Quick Time

Thanks to the winning combination of FAIR VALUE’s newly acquired expertise, close support and coaching from SAP Consulting, and tried-and-tested implementation practices, the RAO project was completed on schedule in January 2006. The entire effort took only 140 working days – under half the time that a standard approach would have required. This not only slashed associated costs but also minimized disruption to the publisher’s day-to-day business.

Better Decision Making – Higher Quality Data

“The new SAP software provides excellent decision support,” says Vlad. “Our management now has quick and easy access to all the information they need and can generate reports in real time.” SAP All-in-One ERP has also enhanced the quality of RAO’s data. “The SAP software gives us a clearly defined process

“With the SAP All-in-One ERP package, we now have a solid foundation for developing our future business.”

**Oliviu Vlad, Chief Accountant and Project Manager,
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for entering facts and figures into the system. So we can see exactly who entered what and when. As a result, data is more reliable and complete. And because we have a fully integrated standard solution, time-consuming replication is a thing of the past.”

The Way Ahead

Building on the success of the first implementation, RAO went on to roll out SAP All-in-One ERP to its international publishing arm and to its distribution company – with FAIR VALUE delivering expert support for both projects. “The first implementation was fast,” says Vlad. “But FAIR VALUE has gathered speed with each subsequent implementation.”

Going forward, the group intends to further integrate internal processes by introducing SAP functionality for project planning and human resources capabilities. “With the SAP All-in-One ERP package, we now have a solid foundation for developing our future business,” states Vlad.

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