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Will You **Be Ready** When **Opportunity** Comes Knocking?

How SAP Custom Development Enables Adaptability

by Klaus Weber, SAP

Klaus Weber (klaus.weber@sap.com) is Executive Vice President of SAP Custom Development, delivering customer-specific solutions for unique, often mission-critical or competitively differentiating business processes. For 20 years, Klaus has contributed to the development of many areas across the SAP solution portfolio, giving him significant insight into how to successfully translate customers' business needs into solutions that deliver real business value.

Whether we're in business or IT, I'm sure that we'd all like to be able to predict the future. Companies are now dealing with market, economic, and political forces that are forever evolving, so a glimpse into the future could be a powerful boon.

Of course, while technology like predictive analytics has made it easier to try to forecast upcoming issues and be proactive in solving them, sometimes the best thing companies can do is react as nimbly as possible when changes do occur. In a world of fast and furious change, you have to be able to continuously evaluate your business direction and the software that supports your organization to make sure you can keep up.

SAP has always delivered powerful, robust software that companies can configure during implementation to fit the business. But what happens when business or market dynamics change? As you race to stay ahead in the game, your business processes will certainly have to evolve when new and unique business opportunities arise. Companies need to be able to adapt their software solutions as well so they can address those opportunities fast.

For SAP customers, there is help at hand. The SAP Custom Development team works with customers not only to address their business needs and provide custom-built software solutions, but also to help them extend their existing solutions to accommodate new business processes (see **Figure 1** on the next page).[1]

[1] See www.youtube.com/watch?v=45T_XZxVsTg for an overview of SAP Custom Development.

3 Business Imperatives That Compel Companies to Engage SAP Custom Development

Why are companies turning to custom development for help in driving their businesses forward? Let's look at three of the top business drivers that compel a custom development engagement.

Driver #1: Enabling Business Process Adaptability to Stay in Front of the Competition

No one can afford to stand still in today's dynamic marketplace. Competitive pressures, tax and regulatory changes, and rapidly evolving economic conditions all require businesses to be able to continuously adapt their business approaches. This is one reason customers come to SAP Custom Development. They want to build custom solutions that touch the complex, mission-critical aspects of their business — and they want to be sure those solutions tightly integrate with their existing SAP footprint. Whether a company is looking to enhance or extend a current SAP

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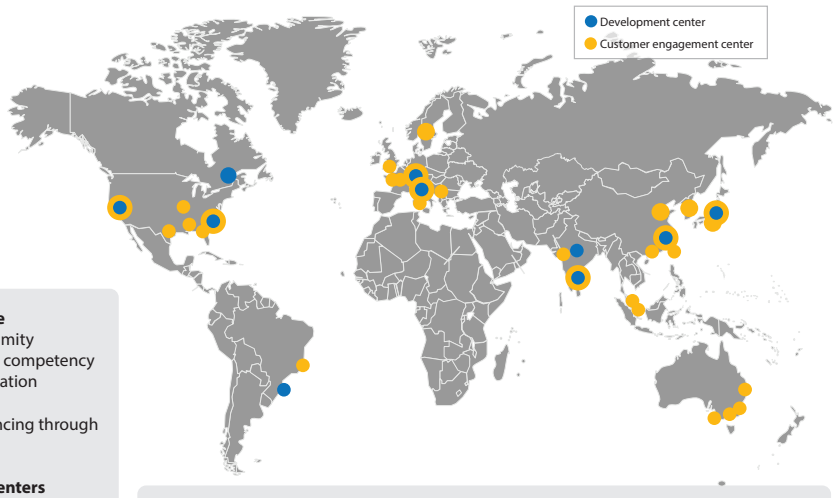
FIGURE 1 ▶ The SAP Custom Development organization operates globally, giving customers around the world access to their experts



Global coverage
- Customer proximity
- Local language competency
- Global collaboration
- Time zones
- Workload balancing through 10 locations

Development centers
- Bangalore, India
- Gurgaon, India
- Montreal, Canada
- Newtown Square, US
- Palo Alto, US
- Sao Leopoldo, Brazil
- Shanghai, China
- St. Ingbert, Germany
- Tokyo, Japan
- Walldorf, Germany

General expertise
- Broad coverage with high flexibility
- SAP Business Suite, SAP NetWeaver, technology platforms, and industries
- Access to subject matter experts in SAP Development, SAP Active Global Support, SAP Consulting, and the partner community

Focused expertise
- Focus industries: automotive, banking, consumer products, high tech, oil and gas, public sector, and utilities
- Focus technologies: mobility, SAP HANA, and many more
- Focus expertise: financials, resource and project management, solution configuration, supply chain management, and transportation management

solution or to develop something entirely new, SAP Custom Development provides the expertise and guidance needed to get the job done.

In addition, SAP Custom Development provides continuous maintenance and support to protect upgradeability, mitigate business risk, and safeguard your custom investments. This means you can focus on your business, adapt to new changes, serve your customers better, and innovate for the future while claiming and staying in first place.[2]

Driver #2: Opening New Routes to Market for Your Business

Trends such as social media, web marketing, and video messaging, coupled with the widespread use of mobile technology through smartphones, tablets, and other devices, are affecting the way companies interact with both their business partners and their consumers. Regardless of your company's size, the industry you work in, or the geographical reach of your business, it is important to be able to use these technologies to your best advantage. This means, for instance, that your sales organization needs to be able to continuously adapt to new ways of selling and find new routes to market. Your customer service division will need to be able to cope with consumer demand for new interaction channels and anywhere, anytime support.

Our SAP Mobility Design Center can help.[3] This team can work with you to develop fast, simple, empowering mobile solutions for your individual business needs that integrate into back-end SAP solutions.[4] Take our engagement with Sysco for example. Sysco is the global leader in selling, marketing, and distributing food

[2] To learn more about SAP Custom Development offerings and services, and to read customer testimonials, visit www.sap.com/customdev.

[3] See www.sap.com/services-and-support/custom-application-development/custom-development.epx for more information about the SAP Mobility Design Center.

[4] To learn more about the business value and advantages of our customer-centric mobile development approach, see "Business Value Unwired — The Key to Mobile Success" by Oliver Betz in the January-March 2012 issue of *SAPinsider* (sapinsider.wispubs.com), or the brochure available at http://bit.ly/x88D5s.

Whether a company wants to enhance or extend a current SAP solution or develop something new, SAP Custom Development provides the expertise and guidance needed to get the job done.

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products to restaurants, healthcare and educational facilities, lodging establishments, and other customers who prepare meals away from home. Its family of products also includes equipment and supplies for the food-service and hospitality industries.

With the SAP Mobility Design Center, Sysco designed and built an application using Sybase Unwired Platform to enable its customers to manage their inventory from Sysco and place orders, either manually or by setting replenishment metrics, to re-order automatically. The app will also allow a Sysco customer to track its own inventory not purchased from Sysco. Not only is this an added service for the Sysco customer, it gives Sysco an expanded view into the items its customers need, and thus items Sysco may want to offer in the future. (See sidebar to find additional resources about other SAP Custom Development customer engagements.)

Proven Results: SAP Custom Development Customer Case Studies

- To learn how SAP Custom Development helped npower, an RWE company, power its intercompany data exchange, see **http://download.sap.com/download.epd?context=C06DB993620C99EF446706BC9980CD2663F235C05E0BE3A39E38EA73C344488D6062CA404BCF84FDB75457925BB1915EB2E76A7BE208D3CC**.
- To learn how eBay Inc. enhanced its vendor payment processes and extended the use of PayPal to all its vendors, resulting in simpler processes and data, cost efficiencies, and time savings, see the webcast at **www.sap.com/community/int/ShowDoc.epx?docid=35493&Type=Webcast**.
- To learn how BMW worked with the SAP Custom Development group to build efficient material requirements planning with a service-oriented architecture, download the resource at **http://download.sap.com/download.epd?context=2C203A7176E4EB0AE9B4CFFB8BBCDE1D914B1D49238DDA79BF27388D6631C2160CA96C3C6EF8BC083FBD2F2312591911ECCB067C71B0407D**.

Driver #3: Quickly Reacting to Changing Market Conditions

The volume of data available within your business, not to mention in the wider marketplace, is growing. So the question then becomes: How can you use this glut of data to help you predict trends and optimize your business?

SAP HANA, SAP's in-memory platform, brings with it extraordinary processing speed and power. The SAP Custom Development team can help you reap the benefits of SAP HANA by developing individualized solutions for the high-speed execution of your unique business processes and for running predictive analytics to instantly spot business trends. This in turn helps organizations transform their business operations by enabling them to combine internal and external data in ways that were never before possible.

For example, SAP Custom Development is building a solution, based on the SAP HANA platform, for an airline.[5] This solution will reduce the time needed to calculate alternative passenger itineraries in case of a delay or cancellation from 20 minutes each to just 10 seconds. This translates into millions of dollars in savings by getting their customers on the most optimal flight, and greatly increases customer satisfaction.

Drive Your Business Toward the Future

Whether you're driving your business with classic solutions like SAP ERP, SAP Customer Relationship Management (SAP CRM), and SAP ERP Human Capital Management (SAP ERP HCM), or newer products like SAP HANA or Sybase Unwired Platform, SAP Custom Development can help put your business in the right gear.

Our team has been involved in both large and small projects across all industries and geographies. We have more than 1,000 developers based in 10 countries, and can work with clients like you around the globe to help you maximize your SAP investments.

If you are interested in learning more about SAP Custom Development:

- Join our SAP Custom Development group on LinkedIn at **www.linkedin.com/groups?gid=4248800&trk=myg_ugrp_ovr**.
- Follow us on Twitter **@sapcustdev**.
- Visit our website at **www.sap.com/services-and-support/custom-application-development**.
- Call us directly at +1 800-872-1727.

[5] For an overview of how we can help accelerate your business processes, take a look at our SAP Custom Development brochure for SAP HANA at http://bit.ly/R813eN. Also see the article by Sebastian Speck on page 26 in this October-December 2012 issue of *SAPinsider* (sapinsider.wispubs.com).

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