

REALTECH

EMPOWER YOUR ENTERPRISE

DEVOPS FOR SAP

5 LESSONS LEARNED FROM SAP CHANGE AND TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT



INTRODUCTION: DEVOPS FOR SAP

In order to make classic SAP processes completely fit for the future in times of digitalization, one aspect is essential: **the ability to drive new developments agilely and quickly, to react promptly to requirements and to implement changes as quickly as possible.**

To achieve this, companies are increasingly relying on DevOps for SAP. They are hoping for greater added value in their corporate IT and a significantly faster development process. Users should be provided with updates, optimizations and innovations more quickly and without restrictions in ongoing operations.

However, this new level of release speed and agility poses major challenges for many companies. To avoid mishaps, you should therefore keep the following 5 pitfalls in mind:

SERIOUS FAILURES DUE TO OVERTAKERS AND INCOMPLETE SAP TRANSPORTS

1



overtakers are SAP transports that are imported into the production system in the wrong order. This is a common problem, especially in centralized SAP Systems with many development projects running in parallel.

The consequences of a so-called version overtaker or an incomplete transport in production can be devastating - in the worst case, important central functions or processes that shut down entire business areas are affected. Not only do costs arise for the effort required to rectify the error, but also loss of sales, loss of reputation or contractual penalties may be the result.



SERIOUS FAILURES DUE TO OVERTAKERS AND INCOMPLETE SAP TRANSPORTS

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To avoid this, you must carefully check the transport sequence and the object dependency of transports before importing them into the production system. This check process requires a high degree of automation, since a manual procedure is often not possible in a reasonable amount of time due to the high volume of transports in a central system and the complex dependencies involved.



2

LONG DELAYS DUE TO MANUAL PROCESSES

Consider the following example: Using a Word or Excel document, a request is sent by e-mail to the appropriate business unit.

After checking, the business unit decides whether to approve or reject the request. If the request is released, the e-mail is sent to SAP Basis with a corresponding note for conversion.

SAP development and SAP Basis administration process each step of the requests and associated transport requests manually - from the development system to the import into the production system. The status and results (for example, user test or return codes) are then distributed again by e-mail to those involved.



2

LONG DELAYS DUE TO MANUAL PROCESSES



Even this simple example shows a large number of manual steps and media breaks, which not only slow down the change process considerably, but are also very error prone. In order not to jeopardize system operation, the workload increases disproportionately with a large number of requests due to manual checks.

Thus, qualified personnel is not available to the necessary extent for important project activities because they are busy performing recurring process steps.

By automating such activities, you make the process reproducible and transparent for everyone involved. This not only accelerates the process and improves quality, but also releases an easy-to-implement cost-saving potential.

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3

INCOMPLETE DOCUMENTATION DUE TO INADEQUATE PREPARATION

Not only technical aspects and processes must be documented in SAP Change Management. To ensure conformity, the link between a business requirement and a technical transport request must be recorded in addition to the documentation on compliance with approval or release procedures. In practice, such gaps are only discovered when an audit is carried out and are then all the more annoying.

For the administrators and developers involved, it means considerable additional effort to prepare the documentation retrospectively in an audit-proof manner or to ensure its completeness. Most of the time, the necessary information is distributed to different file repositories and e-mail accounts and must be collected with great effort - if it can be found at all. **In the worst case, compliance with the dual control principle for certain change requests can no longer be fully verified. Consequently, revision requirements are not met.**

It is easy to provide the inspectors with the desired information in full at the push of a button. Simple automatic maintenance of the verifications can significantly reduce the effort involved.



4

UNNECESSARY INCONSISTENCIES DUE TO ORPHANED AND FORGOTTEN SAP TRANSPORTS

Don't you know it? A requirement from a business unit is to be implemented at short notice and is prioritized accordingly by the management. The ABAP® developers quickly program a solution, the module managers release the change and an import into the quality assurance system takes place.

Quite often, these changes are not imported into production for various reasons. If this is the case more often, a significant development status delta is created between the development or quality assurance system and the production system.

One solution could be to have the changes deconstructed by the development department: This means that corrections have to be created by the development department and transported into the quality assurance system. However, this often does not take place due to capacity bottlenecks and low prioritization. The result is orphaned and forgotten transports, which lead to growing inconsistency between the quality assurance and production systems.



UNNECESSARY INCONSISTENCIES DUE TO ORPHANED AND FORGOTTEN SAP TRANSPORTS

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Our recommendation on how you can prevent inconsistencies between the systems from occurring: Reverse changes that are not required in a timely manner via development and transport the corrections without fail. If this is not successful and a correspondingly large delta builds up between the systems, the problem can only be solved by a complete refresh of the system line. This means that all required open developments and transports must be imported into the production system. The development and quality assurance systems are then rebuilt by a system copy from production.



This procedure requires a development stop for the time it takes to set up a new system. To implement the rebuild efficiently, it is necessary to determine the delta between the different systems quickly and easily. The right tools can ensure this.

5

LIMITED ABILITY TO REACT DUE TO FLAWED PROCESSES

The correct planning and implementation of changes is an important prerequisite for quality in SAP change management, and a uniform process for all changes is the basis for this. In the event of a disruption situation, for example, it quickly becomes apparent whether there is a clear assignment of responsibilities.

The resolution time for a malfunction in the production system is considerably delayed if responsibilities only need to be clarified when the problem occurs. In normal day-to-day operations, a suitable decision-maker is usually always available and the gap in the process is therefore not always immediately obvious. However, in many SAP systems, day-to-day operations now extend over 24 hours and often over the weekend. Who can authorize an Emergency Change on Sunday at 2 a.m.? Or is the operator on call on his own? The situation is exacerbated when several external service providers or outsourcers are involved in the process.



Unfortunately, these gaps, such as a lack of necessary authorization or unclear handover points, only become apparent after major incidents. This leaves a great deal of room for interpretation: These prevent objective process optimization and often end up in blame after incidents. You can prevent this with an efficient solution for transport management.

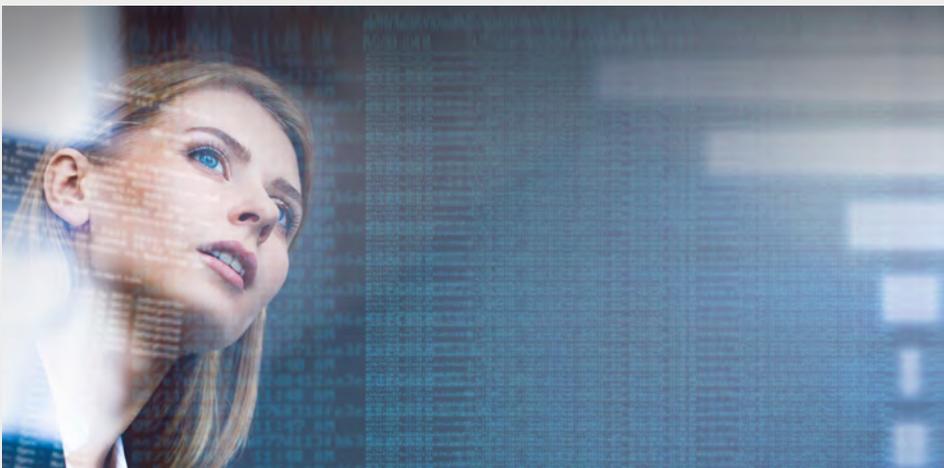


KEY TAKEAWAY: REDUCE MANUAL TASKS

In order to really benefit from the DevOps idea, productive and agile teams working together and modern management and organisational principles are required. The necessary technical framework conditions form suitable tools and solutions with a high degree of automation.

Your goal should be to replace a large number of manual processes with automated ones. In this way you can avoid frequent sources of error and support your employees optimally in their work. This way you gain valuable time that you can invest in new projects and innovations.

We support you in this: with smart transport management tools that enable you to operate SAP in a stable and secure manner.



THOSE REALTECH CUSTOMERS ALLREADY BENEFIT FROM OUR AUTOMATED PROCESSES:

- Together with REALTECH, Microsoft has been able to significantly increase the security and quality of changes to its own SAP systems. At the same time, the risks for productive operation have been reduced.
- Hollister, a provider of medical products, now saves an average of more than three days in the processing time of a transport. This corresponds to 2,200 man-hours - and 112,000 US dollars a year.
- CSS Insurance has automated its transport management processes so that employees now have much more time for new projects and innovations.

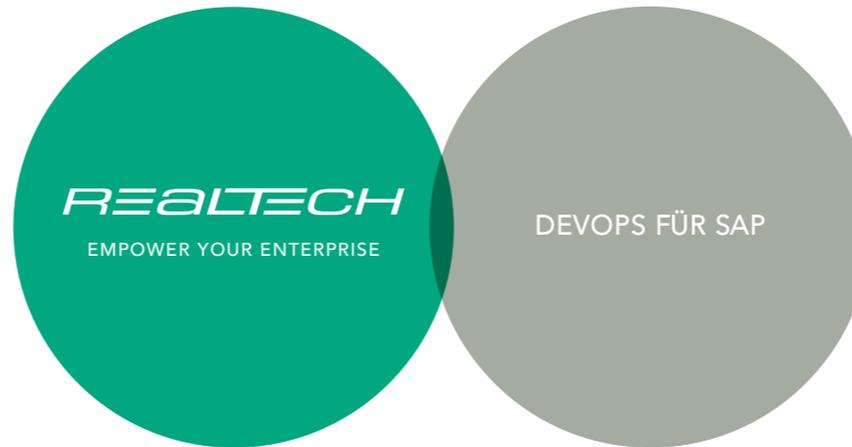


EXPERIENCE OUR SOFTWARE LIVE:

Let us show you how your SAP Change and Transport Management works with REALTECH SmartChange.

GET A FREE DEMO





ABOUT REALTECH

REALTECH is an international technology company with unique know-how in IT and enterprise service management and SAP solutions. Germany's medium-sized enterprises in particular value the high quality of products and services provided by REALTECH. They trust it to meet their needs, from consulting services to implementation and efficient operation. The driving forces of digitization, whether it is mobile and cloud computing, big data and smart data, or predictive data analytics and Industry 4.0, are built into the very fabric of the company's software development and project delivery.



REALTECH AG
PAUL-EHRLICH-STR. 1 · 69181 LEIMEN
INFO@REALTECH.COM · WWW.REALTECH.COM