



An S/4HANA conversion project like no other

After ERBACHER the food family introduced SAP, the next phase of the food producer's digital transformation came in 2019, when the company decided to migrate to SAP S/4HANA as an innovation platform. The demand-driven conversion took place during operation and also entirely remotely, due to the pandemic, without influencing ongoing processes and without changing the users' experience.

The customer

ERBACHER the food family is a thought leader and pioneer of future-oriented food production. The family-run enterprise, now in its third generation, manufactures super premium feed for pets and livestock as well as high-quality food for people. Its strong brands Josera Agrar, Josera petfood, Green Petfood and Erbacher Food Intelligence are successful in Germany and abroad. As a medium-sized family-run enterprise, ERBACHER the food family represents 80 years of experience and innovation. More than 750 employees work for the company in Germany and other countries.

The challenge

Converting core processes to SAP S/4HANA as the innovation platform for future digitization projects

The solution

- Demand-driven coaching and project planning using the XpressWay methodology
- Efficient SAP S/4HANA conversion during operation



30%

fewer duplicates, along with a streamlined and better organized master database—one of the positive "side effects" of database cleanup

"Our unparalleled collaboration with Fujitsu helped us secure food family's future viability at an early point by converting to S/4HANA!"

Volker Gaese, Business Analyst for Corporate Solutions and project manager of SAP S/4HANA
Josera Erbacher Service GmbH & Co. KG, a food family company

Ready for the world of ERP 2.0

Josera, a food family brand, has hundreds of different products for the pet food segment in its portfolio. This variety requires the same level of performance at the back end. To ensure the necessary performance today and in the future, food family has taken steps to turn itself into a smart enterprise. The company embarked on this journey in 2017 by switching to SAP, which forms the basis for 90 percent of the business processes. Two years later, food family was ready to take the next step in its digital transformation: to convert to SAP S/4HANA.

During the course of a preliminary study in September 2019, Fujitsu won the customer over as a solution partner, thanks to its customer-specific project plan and its expertise in test automation. Fujitsu's XpressWay methodology, a results-oriented consulting approach, once again proved to be successful in modeling the project. Its benefits include precise cost estimates and detailed project planning. This resulted in a reliable project timetable, through close collaboration with food family. In the coaching phase, food family's departments as well as its IT team received the knowledge they needed to independently clean up the old systems and maintain the future one in line with their areas of expertise.

On-the-fly changeover during operation

The circumstances made this project unique. First of all, the existing user interface needed to be retained in order to preserve the accustomed user experience and minimize the amount of initial training required. The migration also took place during operation but was not allowed to influence it. On top of that, the conversion had to be carried out completely remotely, since the most intense phase of the project coincided with the first wave of COVID-19 infections. The project partners also coordinated their efforts remotely via Microsoft Teams, and even the steering committee met in virtual space. However, the remote communication did not make the discussions any less productive—to the contrary. "I was deeply impressed by the Fujitsu product manager's dedication," remembers food family CIO Lothar Leitl. "We were able to rely on his support at all times, and he even provided us with assistance after we wrapped up the project."

Well equipped for the future

The project partners met all these challenges brilliantly within the agreed time frame, as demonstrated by the final result. The ongoing operations were never interrupted at any time, and the conversion to SAP S/4HANA was apparent to the users only in the form of a modified start screen. "We replaced the engine but not the instrument panel," Leitl concludes. A significant change did take place at the back end: Eliminating duplicates reduced the size of the master database by approximately one-third.

With SAP S/4HANA as the digitization platform, the food family is now well equipped to effectively implement numerous additional future projects, including integrating EWM and Fiori as well as handling the cloud integration of its business technology platform (BTP). Furthermore, the food family has gained one important piece of knowledge: how to transparently coordinate a project on an equal footing, even under the difficult conditions of a pandemic—together with the right project partner.

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