SAP SolMan's New Friends

SolMan is getting its time in the spotlight: SAP has positioned
it as the central integration engine of the Business Transformation Suite (BTS).
But what exactly is BTS all about?

By Kenneth Staub, Blueworks

Kenneth Staub,
SAP ALM Consultant,
Blueworks

Many consultant colleagues still wince when they hear the name Solution Manager. They equate it to the ankle bracelet with heavy iron ball that it has historically represented. A necessary evil next to the otherwise so important SAP core systems - but now that we see its end of support (2027) slowly looming on the horizon, voices arguing for deeper use from a new direction are getting louder.

One important aspect is SAP's new positioning of Application Lifecycle Management (ALM) in the context of RISE with SAP. It is a wake-up call to the strengths of ALM done right - the path from business process design to implementation, testing, documentation, and operation. Basically, these are all areas that the Solution Manager has already mastered, but now with a focus on integrating additional products and technologies. The aim is meeting the requirements of complex product portfolios and creating a transformation suite which companies with a larger non-SAP part of their IT landscape can also use without having to worry about affecting their operation.

Powerhouse SolMan

With the introduction of the Business Transformation Suite, the question rightly arises as to where this strategic change and repositioning are coming from. Is it SAP's quiet admission that the Solution Manager may not be able to deliver on its promises after all?

A resounding No is the answer. The change should rather be seen as SAP realizing that there are excellent products on the market that go beyond classic SAP solutions and thus better integrate third-party products into a central ALM methodology. It makes no sense to introduce in-house competing solutions in this market space. This realization is certainly also a driving force behind the strategic partnership with Tricentis or the billion-dollar acquisition of Signavio. The interplay of the SolMan's new friends and the stroke of genius

of positioning them as a holistic solution makes sense to SAP customers and creates a clear benefit: If you break the ALM cycle down into its seven core steps, you find that each tool brings clear, indisputable benefits in exactly its niche. They create unprecedented transparency in operations by breaking down the silos between business and IT in a targeted way. ALM forces everyone to sit down at the same table and encourages discussion and finding solutions that benefit everyone, because the transparency companies gain means all departments can finally see eye to eye.

ALM as foundation

If you look a little deeper, the benefits in the area of implementation and operation crystallize even more precisely: Anyone operating an IT landscape today can no longer afford to view projects separately from operations. The interrelationships and dependencies of processes, departments and systems are becoming increasingly complex, and this in times of ever shorter change intervals and innovation cycles. The vaunted single source of truth is more important than ever for implementing changes efficiently. The issue of audit-proof, centralized documentation is becoming increasingly important, whether this concerns end-to-end process documentation, technical specifications, or test cases. Each of these is an integral part of any system as well as the prerequisite for stable operations and follow-up projects. To be successful, the tools must be harmoniously integrated with each other without weakening the benefits or sacrificing good user experience.

And it is precisely here at this sweet spot that BTS builds a bridge between the products in use, the requirements of business and IT, and user acceptance - driven by the powerhouse Solution Manager.

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The **SAP Solution Manager** – or SolMan, as it has been lovingly dubbed by the SAP community – is the central point for service and maintenance. In a hybrid IT architecture – on premises and on demand – maintenance becomes even more important.