

THE ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCIL: SMOOTH MIGRATION TO THE EPI-USE LABS CLOUD

*Using Data Sync Manager suite, rapid migration of SAP environment
to cost-effective cloud infrastructure, with ongoing hosting and Managed Services*



ABOUT THE ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCIL

The Isle of Wight Council is a unitary authority covering the Isle of Wight near the South coast of England. The Council was formed in 1995, replacing the Isle of Wight County Council and Medina and South Wight Borough Councils. The Council is responsible for public services such as education, transport, planning, social care, libraries, trading standards and waste management.

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"We knew there were some idiosyncrasies of our system that might cause EPI-USE Labs some issues. And actually, it didn't. Everything was just dealt with. Every minor issue was just overcome, which was very reassuring."

Dean Finlayson, Corporate Application Development Lead, Isle of Wight Council

THE ISLE OF WIGHT'S CHALLENGE

"Our SAP system was on-premise and all of the hardware was essentially end-of-life, so we either had to make a significant investment in new hardware, or look for an alternative route. We chose cloud hosting. We were also quite limited in terms of capacity to keep the systems up-to-date. Migrating to the cloud was a chance to get a better version of SAP in terms of up-to-date patches and enhancement packs."

Gavin Muncaster, Strategic Manager of ICT & Digital Services, Isle of Wight Council

SAP is at the heart of the Isle of Wight Council's finance and HR processes. Challenged with ageing hardware, the Council spent some time considering new infrastructure and exploring options for re-platforming and hosting. Their Basis team used Data Sync Manager™ to refresh the non-production landscape, and were interested in a services engagement to migrate their SAP production system from the existing to the new platform. The Council weighed up the benefits of moving to S/4, SuccessFactors or remaining on-premise. They investigated cloud options, and required a rapid migration of their SAP systems to new cost-effective cloud infrastructure, to remove the constraints of the current platform and mitigate the risk of systems outages.

Isle of Wight Council's challenges:

- Ageing hardware
- Retiring workforce
- SAP systems weren't upgraded for some time
- Budget constraints
- An upcoming bottleneck of SAP HR versioning on their kernel version
- Need to migrate off Windows 2003 and SQL Server 2005

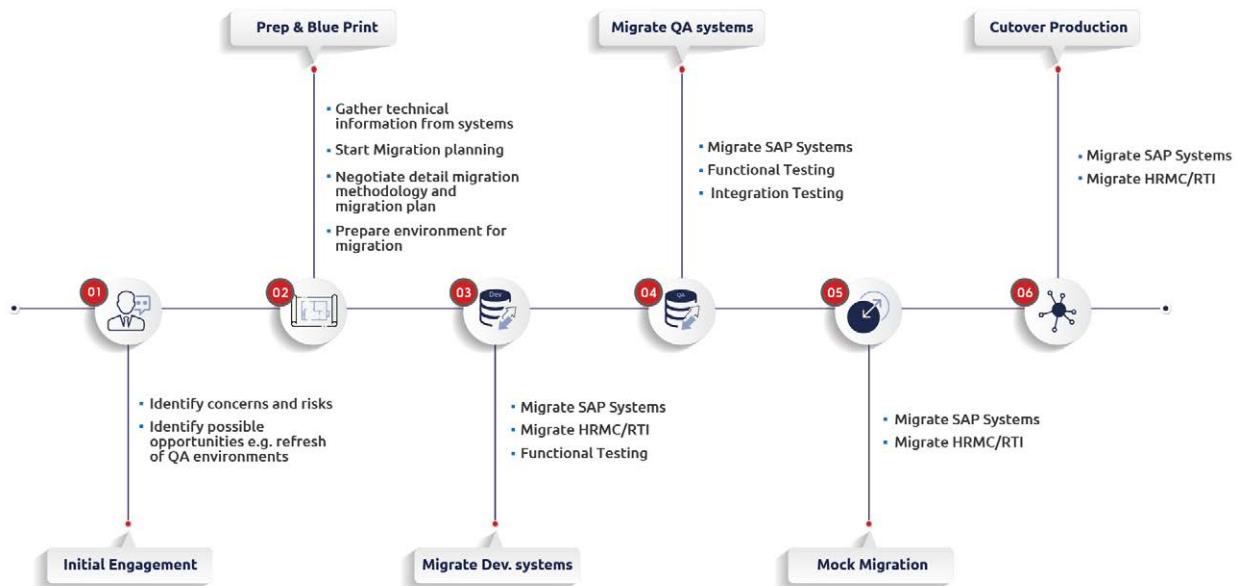
Through an open tender process, EPI-USE Labs bid for the Migration and Hosting engagement, along with other interested parties and was successful in being awarded the contract.

THE CHOICE: EPI-USE LABS CLOUD AND MANAGED SERVICES

Following the public tender, the Isle of Wight Council selected EPI-USE Labs to host their SAP environment and also run it through Managed Services, leveraging the EPI-USE Labs iHost Private Cloud in London and Amsterdam. EPI-USE Labs ran kickoff and blueprinting sessions at the Council's premises to introduce themselves and their approach to affected stakeholders.

An iterative migration process

The EPI-USE Labs methodology engages the customer on Day 1 to gather as much information as possible to blueprint the steps and establish the timeframe for the upcoming project. This process is based around a staged migration of the landscape: Development, QA, and finally production. At each stage the migrated systems are tested and observations fed back into the project; improving transition to the next stage and increasing the customer's confidence in the solution. The team reacts to changing customer requirements throughout the engagement, remaining agile, further demonstrating EPI-USE Labs commitment to ensuring a smooth and successful delivery.



A smooth switch-over

"The testing throughout the process meant that by the time we got to production and went live, we were comfortable that most of the issues had been resolved. The switch-over took place over a weekend and ran surprisingly smoothly. Having dealt with a number of projects over the last few years, this is probably one of the smoothest we have ever had, with very few teething issues which was very pleasing."

Dean Finlayson, Corporate Application Development Lead, Isle of Wight Council

OUTCOME AND BENEFITS

- Successful migration to EPI-USE Labs iHOST Private Cloud
- On-boarding of EPI-USE Labs' Cloud and Basis Managed services for SAP landscapes
- Re-platforming of customer systems to newer operating system and database version.
- Future-proofing of SAP solution for future HRSPs
- Refreshed landscape
- Improved resilience - better backup tools, ability to recover from snapshots etc.

"I would genuinely say there is a large percentage of the users that didn't know it happened. So it was the ideal project, with an improvement of performance and little to no interruption to access because the migration was that smooth."

Gavin Muncaster, Strategic Manager of ICT & Digital Services, Isle of Wight Council



A secure, cost-neutral solution

The Council's security concerns were addressed by ensuring the correct standards and accreditations were put in place as part of the process; they also wanted their data hosted in the UK and Europe. One other concern was how the Council would fare switching from a CAPEX to an OPEX model for financing, and how best to manage that. For the Isle of Wight Council it worked out well; because they could decommission some functionality as a result of the migration, it was cost-neutral.

"We were faced with a £600 000 - £700 000 hardware investment that would have fixed our hardware challenge, but wouldn't have solved any of our challenges around versioning and upgrade patches, limited resilience, knowledge base or capacity to develop. Moving to the cloud in this way opened up a lot of options. We now have all of the enhancement packs, better disaster recovery options and resilience of the systems - which is a huge bonus."

Gavin Muncaster, Strategic Manager of ICT & Digital Services, Isle of Wight Council

Cost-effective support

"Compared to a lot of bigger organisations, we have a small in-house support team. We really weren't equipped to get the most out of the product as it was. There are huge benefits to having essentially a whole support team in EPI-USE Labs, which just didn't make sense to have in-house."

Dean Finlayson, Corporate Application Development Lead, Isle of Wight Council

A close partnership

"A lot of companies offer a partnership arrangement and promise to listen to your concerns. Unfortunately, often that is just 'sales talk'. But with EPI-USE Labs, their communication has been very good and we have actually built a close rapport; we have been in regular contact both before and since go-live. That good relationship has continued."

Dean Finlayson, Corporate Application Development Lead, Isle of Wight Council

The way forward

EPI-USE Labs has also subsequently made upgrade recommendations for migration to NetWeaver Business Client and EHP8, leading to Portal decommissioning and further cost savings. EPI-USE Labs are continuing to work closely with the Isle of Wight council to further advise on improvements and cost savings to their SAP landscape.

As a global software solutions and managed services company, EPI-USE Labs helps you to maximise the performance, management and security of your SAP® and SAP SuccessFactors systems. Our clients tell us every day how we have transformed their business operations. Contact us to find out how we can help you solve your SAP challenges.

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