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SPAR ICS

With a project this complex, we needed SNP's software and consulting expertise to complement our own in-house capabilities. That was the only risk-free way to perform such an extensive upgrade during regular operations.

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Modernizing an SAP System Environment Amit Regular Operations

About SPAR ICS

SPAR has its own IT company, known as SPAR Business Services ICS (Information & Communication Services). ICS operates state-of-the-art systems for more than 70 000 employees at 2,500 locations in nine countries. It relies on strategic applications and infrastructure systems, most of which are developed in-house. ICS is headquartered in Salzburg, where it performs international group-wide projects. SPAR ICS's 380 IT employees – including 250 in Austria – make up a highly capable team that can swiftly meet demanding requirements.

Further information: www.spar-ics.com

The Challenge

In addition to upgrading SAP 4.6C to the latest SAP release, the project required a separate functionality transfer and re-engineering to accommodate the large number of custom modules and system modifications.

ICS also needed to modernize its outmoded database and operating system versions. The system had grown to a database size of around 14 terabytes and contained a production client. In order to upgrade the SAP system to the new release, the project team would have to install the latest enhancement package (EHP) and port the system to Unicode.

Other challenges included the go-live at the start of the year after 18 months of lead time, a short execution window (downtime) of 48 hours, the considerable system size and numerous parallel projects.

The Solution

Thanks to SNP Transformation Backbone, it was possible to migrate the data to the upgraded system during ongoing operations using the near zero downtime method. The last delta transfer was performed during the downtime window, and then the data was automatically checked for integrity. This check ensured a smooth transition to the new system and a clean bill of health from the auditor.

SNP Transformation Backbone was also used to transfer functions and perform re-engineering during the downtime window. To speed up the parallel customizing and project execution, SNP and SPAR ICS developed a solution based on SNP Data Provisioning & Masking.

The Advantages

- Short downtime with the near zero downtime method
- Combined implementation of an upgrade with re-engineering to reduce custom code
- Test and validation mechanisms ensured data integrity and a positive auditor's opinion