Symmetry and IBM: enabling real-time insight

A fully managed, cloud-based solution that provides the infrastructure and expertise required to gain the unique benefits of the SAP HANA platform

Highlights:

- Streamlines deployment of the unique SAP HANA in-memory database platform

- Supports faster access and analysis of large data volumes, enabling real-time decision making

- Allows organizations to outsource maintenance, management and provision of IT talent

- Includes dedicated support from experts in SAP, SAP HANA and hosting architecture

- Runs on world-class server and storage infrastructure from IBM

Every organization needs a competitive edge, and for many it is speed. Organizations that can adapt to changes faster, see trends before others, gain insight and take action are well positioned to succeed. Across many industries, the ultimate business goal is to make real-time decisions about real-time events.

SAP® HANA™ is a powerful technology that helps enable accelerated decision making. With the SAP HANA appliance, large amounts of operational data can be kept in memory. This eliminates the delays that can occur with conventional disk-based databases, allowing organizations to access and analyze a wide range of data in real time.

This technology alone, however, can't deliver all the benefits of real-time insight. To bring the concept to life in an efficient, effective and reliable way, organizations need world-class computing resources, the ability to outsource maintenance, and the expert talent required to keep everything running smoothly. This is the solution that Symmetry and IBM offer.

Solution Overview

Data becomes much more valuable when companies can analyze it and apply it with speed and efficiency. What if a critical report that normally takes 10 days to complete were available in 15 minutes? When accurate, insightful decisions can be made sooner, organizations can use virtually all resources more productively and gain new competitive insights.

This is the advantage of SAP HANA, which is why so many organizations are turning to it to improve their agility and achieve a compelling return on investment (ROI). Because SAP HANA is an in-memory columnar application, it radically accelerates big data processing and generates insightful analytics to support on-the-spot decision making.

Implementing SAP HANA — and generating the expected ROI — is not a simple task. Computing resources must deliver exceptional performance, reliability and scalability. Managing the solution in a multi-server, multi-instance environment requires a dedicated IT staff with highly specialized experience. If companies decide to deploy and manage SAP HANA in-house, it requires a long-term commitment to maintain staffing levels, manage related infrastructure, anticipate growth and make investments to sustain performance.

In many cases, it is difficult to find service providers who focus on the complete SAP® portfolio, understand the infrastructure and are skilled in deploying SAP HANA.

Symmetry and IBM provide a more innovative and flexible solution. Together, these two industry leaders deliver a powerful combination of high-performance computing infrastructure, rapid deployment and hosting expertise in both SAP management and SAP HANA. This elite collaboration gives organizations unprecedented access to leading-edge technology and highly specialized managed services for SAP HANA. Essentially, Symmetry and IBM take what can be a highly complex solution and make it both seamless and simple.

Delivered on IBM eX5 enterprise servers with fifth-generation IBM Enterprise X-Architecture® technology, SAP HANA helps address current needs while delivering the scalability and performance needed to accommodate growth. Powerful IBM eX5 enterprise servers with the Intel® Xeon® processor E7 family accelerate in-memory processing, enabling faster access to SAP operational data and information with near real-time visibility into business operations.

In addition, IBM eX5 enterprise servers with Intel Xeon processors offer extreme memory and performance scalability. eX5 features, such as IBM eXFlash solid-state disk technology, can yield significant performance improvements in storage access, helping deliver a superior solution for SAP HANA.

What Symmetry brings to the solution is a flexible, affordable, cloud-based deployment model and the SAP certified experts necessary to handle all stages of execution, including licensing, migration, implementation, hosting, continued maintenance and administrative management.

Symmetry can host SAP HANA at two data centers, both of which feature state-of-the-art physical infrastructure, including redundant power, HVAC and network connectivity. Symmetry provides hardware and switches dedicated to a single client, which helps enhance security and reduces the risk of an outage.

Unlike other providers, Symmetry offers SAP-centric hosting solutions that are specifically developed to meet the unique hosting requirements of SAP customers. In fact, Symmetry's hosting services and infrastructure are backed by an SAP hosting partnership and SSAE 16 certification. Symmetry adheres to strict internal controls and safeguards to maintain this certification, and undergoes regular audits by SAP AG that assess both the quality of the infrastructure and the Symmetry methodology for managed services.

The advantages of managed services for SAP HANA are considerable. Organizations can tap into a high-quality talent pool of SAP HANA certified associates, all of whom understand the nuances of hosting architecture and SAP application management. This eliminates the need for companies to find, hire and retain IT specialists. With the fully supported SAP HANA environment that Symmetry creates, organizations are not locked into a specific hardware footprint. Symmetry can size the solution to meet specific performance and budget needs, as well as scale up the solution to meet changes in demand. Outsourcing the management of SAP HANA also frees up internal resources that can be redirected to core activities.

Symmetry offers dedicated service teams for all SAP HANA engagements. Each team handles end-to-end service for the IBM computing resources and the SAP HANA database. This includes all hosting and cloud services, SAP technical administration, implementation, upgrades and migrations, as well as project-based services and security services to maintain data integrity.

To make the decision even easier for organizations considering SAP HANA, Symmetry and IBM offer a proof of concept (POC) program that provides the opportunity to "test drive" a hosted SAP HANA deployment running on IBM server and storage infrastructure. Participating in this program allows organizations to experience the SAP HANA environment, establish performance metrics, determine technical requirements, assess the potential ROI of real-time decision making, and begin sizing the environment and preparing for migration.

Solution Benefits

- **Faster insight** — Because SAP HANA runs in-memory (instead of on disk, like other databases), query performance and data loading are significantly faster. SAP HANA can process millions, billions and even trillions of records in seconds, making it possible to analyze complex business scenarios in real time. Reports that take days now can be produced in hours or even minutes. Generating insight earlier helps organizations make faster, better decisions that can improve profitability and competitive advantage.
- **Higher productivity** — For transactional applications, the gains made through SAP HANA save a great deal of time. This is especially relevant for transactions that happen hundreds of times daily. If transactions that normally take up to one minute can be completed in less than one second, this sets the stage for critical improvements in throughput and efficiency.
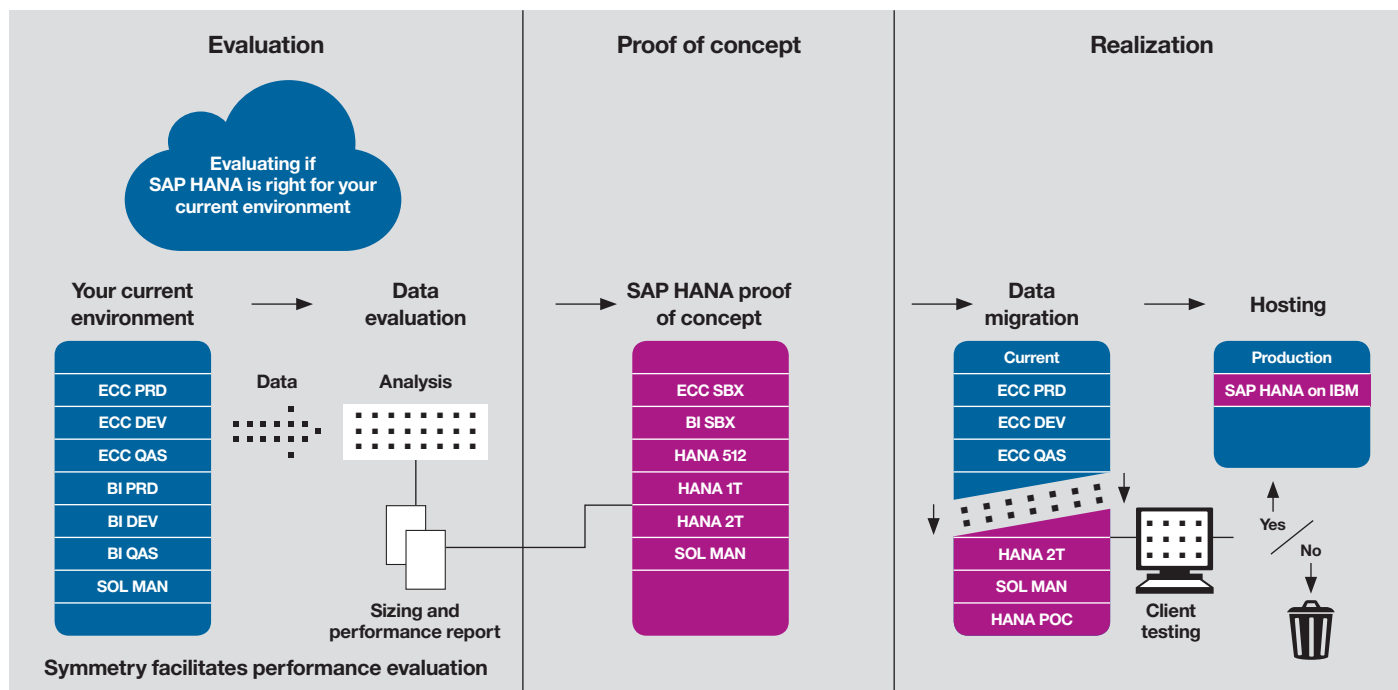
- **Easier operation** — A hosted, fully managed solution running on dependable IBM infrastructure helps organizations derive all the benefits of real-time decision making without making capital investments in equipment, maintenance, management or specialized IT resources. Because Symmetry and IBM are long-time SAP collaborators, organizations can expect a smooth implementation that fully aligns with specific business needs.

Symmetry and IBM: a closer look

Components of the solution may include:

- **Symmetry Complimentary Business Assessment** — Organizations receive a detailed report of processes that can be accelerated by SAP HANA, including the estimated time and cost savings.
- **Symmetry Readiness Service** — Symmetry evaluates the business's individual system requirements to help the client become SAP HANA ready and determine valuable recommendations for its specific environment. Project upgrades can be performed in Symmetry's hosted environment or in the organization's on-premise environment.

- **Symmetry Proof of Concept Lab** — Organizations can "test drive" SAP HANA in Symmetry's secure rapid deployment POC environment. Clients will be set up in a Symmetry-hosted SAP HANA testing environment to establish complete end-to-end solution performance metrics.
- **Symmetry Migration Services** — Symmetry's certified experts size the environment and migrate current systems to SAP HANA.
- **IBM System x® servers** — These enterprise servers represent the best of IBM X-Architecture technology. In this solution, System x servers are equipped with processors from the Intel Xeon processor E7 family. These processors combine exceptional raw compute power with increased memory bandwidth and support for significantly greater memory capacity to deliver superior performance compared to the previous generation of processors.
- **IBM Power Systems™ servers** — Power Systems servers enable application choice, enterprise integration, IT efficiency, and data availability and security, so organizations can achieve outstanding performance. They enable intelligent, dynamic resource allocation and rapid response to changes in application and workload requirements, and are specifically designed for big data and compute-intensive applications.

Symmetry and IBM Solution Architecture

The solution from Symmetry and IBM brings together high-performance technology and expert managed services, enabling organizations to realize the superior difference of a hosted and fully managed deployment of SAP HANA.

- **IBM General Parallel File System (GPFS™)** — This high-performance enterprise file management platform is designed to optimize data management. GPFS provides high-performance file management, seamless capacity expansion, and high reliability and availability to help eliminate production outages and provide disruption-free maintenance and capacity upgrades. An advantage of using GPFS for an SAP HANA implementation is that it requires no additional external storage.
- **IBM Storwize® V7000 system** — This robust, mid-range disk system is designed to be easily managed. As a virtualized storage system, it offers efficiency through built-in solid state drives, thin provisioning, clustering and data compression. To support a greater potential ROI, the Storwize V7000 system enables nondisruptive migration of data from existing storage and can virtualize and reuse existing disk systems.

Symmetry and IBM: intelligence accelerated

Symmetry

Symmetry Corporation, an SAP value-added reseller, provides technical managed services, security administration and project support for SAP customers in the U.S. and around the world. Founded in 1996, Symmetry has been a pioneer in defining best practices for SAP technical administration. Symmetry is an SAP partner, certified in hosting and cloud services and an IBM Advanced Business partner and member of the IBM Cloud Computing Specialty.

IBM

With a unique combination of expertise, experience and proven methodologies, IBM can help strengthen and optimize information infrastructure to support SAP applications. IBM and SAP have worked together for more than 40 years. IBM and SAP offer solutions that move business forward and anticipate organizational change by strengthening business analytics information infrastructure for greater operational efficiency and faster decision making.

For more information

To learn more about IBM and SAP, contact your IBM sales representative or visit: **ibm.com**/SAP