

CHEP leverages Rev-Trac for SAP project success

Company snapshot

Operating in 47 Countries

HQ Sydney, Australia

Industries Equipment pooling

Brands include Automotive containers, chemical catalyst containers, intermediate bulk containers, pallets, returnable plastic containers

Owners Brambles



High-risk SAP project management

The high volume of complex technical changes required involved considerable risk to the business. Historically, CHEP relied heavily on manual SAP change management processes, including spreadsheet, paper-based approval forms and an in-house migration utility. With several hundred transports to be created each week over the lifetime of the projects, relying on manual processes could lead to costly delays.

To add to the complexity, CHEP needed to manage five SAP landscapes for the duration of the projects:

- Three production support landscapes for R/3, BW and SRM
- An integration landscape to develop and test a new version of R/3 to align with the requirements of the global business
- A BW upgrade landscape to transition systems to run the latest BI software and support local customization

Meanwhile, CHEP couldn't stop operations because it was managing two massive projects simultaneously. The change team still had to implement business requirements for existing R/3, BW and SRM applications which needed to be reapplied or considered for reapplication in the associated project landscape. To avoid a system shutdown, any cross-landscape contention had to be managed carefully.

New strategy drives cost efficiencies

In 2006, CHEP's global operations managed the movement of 280 million pallets around the world using a combination of sophisticated interfacing systems and customized SAP applications. Tracking the pallets and containers generated huge volumes of data with more than 100,000 billing documents created each month.

The stability of the tracking and billing systems were crucial to the operation. Any unscheduled downtime could result in a loss of reputation, and ultimately customers.

To achieve greater cost efficiencies, the company decided to integrate its SAP application with legacy systems in use in Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. At the same time, it would update its existing SAP BW infrastructure to take advantage of features the regional operations required.

CHEP had to complete the projects without interrupting its core business, which was a significant challenge.

Automated and consistent processes improve stability

Minimize risk with automated SAP change management

CHEP made the decision to deploy Rev-Trac – a sophisticated SAP change management automation platform – for project success without interrupting daily business operations.

Rev-Trac provides useful insight into the functional significance of a user's actions, which improves decision making and helps to maintain the stability of target systems. Every new transport is attached to a Rev-Trac request representing a functional requirement. As a result: changes can be managed as a unit of work to meet business needs rather than at a purely technical level.

Before migrations to target systems are approved, users can study specification or test results attached to requests, verifying the nature or current status of the change. Rev-Trac can even enforce rules about what information must be associated with each type of change at different points in its lifecycle.

Business Results

- Streamlined operations and administered tighter controls
- More efficient change management processes to meet business demands
- Reduced audit effort with a full documented history of changes
- Rev-Trac was fully operational in four weeks, significantly reducing time to realize benefits
- Eliminated error-prone manual tasks minimizing risk and maximizing efficiencies

“Our people like the Rev-Trac workflow... we no longer have to maintain our complex spreadsheets. Rev-Trac tracks all those details for us automatically.”

Susan Cannington, CHEP,
Basis team member and project lead

Automation features enhance change management

Upon approval, Rev-Trac automatically migrates all transports associated with a functional change as a group, ensuring all required transports are migrated to the target system.

Importantly, Rev-Trac can alert developers of cross landscape parallel development. Developers are prompted to coordinate changes to avoid overtakes/overwrites when the project and production support changes are merged, eliminating unnecessary rework.

Another valuable feature is Rev-Trac's request-cloning capabilities. This innovation allows CHEP to keep both project landscapes synchronized with their equivalent project landscapes. Meaning project development consistently accounts for current production support functionality and project testing always occurs in the most appropriate environment.

“Rev-Trac has made a significant contribution to our ability to carry out two major SAP projects in a highly volatile environment,” said Susan Cannington, CHEP, Basis team member. “Rev-Trac has helped us mitigate the risks and has helped us get a much better understanding of the changes that we're managing. We really know what we're managing now.”