



AVANTRA

RISE with SAP and Avantra

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The background to the birth of Rise

SAP has had a long, rich history. From its start in the R/1 days, through to R/3 and into the netweaver stack. It was specifically designed to run on various operating systems and databases, a decision that came back to bite them later on as they watched the Oracle database become the number one database for SAP to run on, yet also one of their competitors.

For this, and other reasons, SAP acquired/created their own database, SAP HANA, which they still look to get 100% customer adoption on. Alongside all of this SAP has been acquiring other enterprise applications such as Business Objects onto solutions like Ariba, Success Factors, and so on. Through all of this SAP became the goliath in the market. A powerhouse of both a solution and company, but slow to evolve and adjust.

For some, this can sound negative, but for massive organizations with huge SAP landscapes, this may mean safety, security, stability - and an overall 'robustness' that doesn't come with little solutions that may be seen as nimble today but completely gone tomorrow.

The seismic shift to the cloud

While SAP was slowly evolving, the 'IT' world around it was going through a massive switch to 'the cloud'. This came in the form of Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS) hyperscalers and the growth of Software as a Service (SaaS) solutions. Many IT leaders realized they could relieve the stress and costs of running enterprise applications on premise by putting them in the cloud, whether that be IaaS or SaaS. It soon became apparent 'the cloud' was here to stay and investors were looking for any cloud solution to dump their money into.

SAP realized this and had a very creative response that could solve two things at once.

- They created the HANA Enterprise Cloud (H.E.C.) which was their own version of a cloud offering
- That also meant customers would need to migrate to HANA as well.

It was a bold, creative, move. Unfortunately, as time rolled on, H.E.C., never really took off as SAP initially hoped and they were once again at the drawing board looking for ways to advance into a 'cloud' company and here **RISE with SAP was born.**

From the outside, RISE with SAP looks like a promising solution. It has the luster of a SaaS solution - no on premise hardware, no 'on hands' maintenance, just a single contract with everything covered underneath it.

Where it gets interesting is once the nut gets cracked open and the visibility of how these RISE with SAP contracts are written.

That's where it becomes apparent what's actually going on. SAP realized it could no longer compete with the IaaS cloud providers such as AWS, Azure, and/or Google Cloud. It was a 'join them not fight them' approach and along with that comes the outsourcing of the project and maintenance work to various SAP service integrators.

So in reality, SAP holds the contract to the customer, but really is only supplying the software while the underlying infrastructure and support is being partitioned to third parties.

A single contract solution

For some organizations RISE is a great solution. Mostly these are smaller organizations that want to keep simplicity at the heart of their IT strategy. A single contract that can hold their entire complex ERP application sounds like a sweet deal to many companies. Where it tends to start to wither is when large to extra large organizations get involved.

For the most part, large organizations have complex SAP landscapes with the possibility of hundreds and hundreds of systems and servers.

These systems are already probably in hybrid environments stretching across their own data centers, various cloud providers and most likely include some sort of legacy systems and hundreds of interfaces.

On top of that, these large enterprises probably have inhouse support teams that are complemented with various service integrators and managed services providers. In these scenarios, it's not typical that a full SAP landscape is on RISE with SAP, but there may be a subset of systems. This extension into RISE with SAP further complicates the environment and better visibility and transparency becomes critical.



I The rise of hybrid

Pretty much any SAP system migrated to RISE with SAP is probably going to be in a hybrid environment. And really, that's the cold, hard fact. For smaller organizations, hybrid may mean that all of SAP is in RISE with SAP, but their environment probably has various other integrations, and third party applications. Large and extra large organizations are not privy to this either. Bank interfaces, connections to vendors and suppliers, any 'direct to consumer' interface, tax software, and the like, are all probably running through interfaces to on premise applications, SaaS solutions, or even completely different ERP environments.

In an effort to simplify our lives with RISE with SAP, we've actually somewhat made them a bit more complex, or at least without the correct tool sets we have. This is where the need for hybrid AIOps becomes so important.

The ability to visualize the entire SAP landscape including third party applications and interfaces all is now necessary and a bit harder to get to. Furthermore, once the visibility is there, what is done with the data? Most organizations are now running with **smart ITOM and ITSM solutions** such as **ServiceNow** where just opening tickets isn't enough. Correlations through event management and CMDB data become vital. Then, with a fully 'intelligent landscape' from your hybrid enterprise applications through to your ITOM/ITSM solution, **the SAP AIOps platform** in the middle of it all can help automate those low hanging, repetitive tasks that are not included with a RISE with SAP contract. The SAP AIOps solution becomes the eyes, ears and automation in these complex environments.

Automation of business health checks

RISE with SAP will have technical monitoring of the operating system, database and some of the SAP application layer embedded. But as every SAP Basis engineer understands, there's more to the health of the environment than just technical monitoring.

There are all sorts of business related health checks that still need to be reviewed and managed. These could be data points such as:

- **Batch jobs**
- **Cross system communication channels**
- **iDocs**
- **Upload times**
- **SAP short dumps**

The list goes on and on. Direct **visibility into these items is critical** to the health of your organization, and being able to have this information at your fingertips through text message, incident/ticket creation, and so on becomes important.

Furthermore, there are a host of audit based checks that should be continuously monitored. This could be things such as:

- Client settings
- ABAP software component levels
- Segregation of duties
- Profile parameters

When it comes to automation, there isn't much needed, or available, at the OS and database layer because those aspects are covered in the RISE with SAP contract. However, there are a handful of business related automations that can be run through BAPIs to ensure the health of the system and business is maintained.



This could be something as easy as creating a new employee's ABAP user ID, all initiated from ServiceNow. Or it could be rerunning a process, triggered by SAP monitoring data. Organizations are really limited to only their imagination when it comes to what they want to automate at the SAP data layer, and the correct AIOps solution becomes the glue that puts it all together.



Avantra, the industry leader in SAP AIOps, is no stranger to these environments. Certified to run in RISE with SAP environments, Avantra has a long history of working in complex SAP landscapes, even those including RISE with SAP.

Avantra and RISE with SAP

As a platform offering observability automation, Avantra can not only collect data in unique hybrid environments, it can make sure the correct parties receive the right information at the correct time. That includes the various **integrations into ServiceNow** such as incident creation, event management, workflows and CMDB data (developed in partnership with ServiceNow).

Integrations into VMWare and various hyperscalers offer full stack automation for all the components outside of RISE with SAP, and of course the ability to call BAPIs within any SAP system, RISE with SAP or not.

Avantra 23, the most advanced release yet, comes with an enhanced automation engine. This provides Basis engineers with updated customizable workflow templates and the ability to automate system refreshes in non-RISE with SAP environments. That frees up so much time - time to focus on greater value projects.

I strongly believe that SAP operations teams have to prioritize automation. It's the only way to give ERP operations teams some headspace to use automation intelligently. And it will return benefits, unquestionably.

Being close to the excellent engineers that constantly evolve Avantra, I've seen first hand how automation pays back by making Basis teams less busy. For example, system refreshes in non-RISE with SAP environments that previously took some customers days of complex manual operations are now automated and completed within a few hours. This new ability comes with Oracle and Sybase database support, in addition to SAP HANA.

So, whether you decide to RISE with SAP, or not, Avantra customers have the ability to better deliver for their business - be that cloud migration projects, or any number of other high impact IT operations strategies which are too often put on the back burner.

For more on RISE with SAP, read our CEO's RISE FAQs to understand what's the right strategy for you and your SAP environments.

[RISE FAQs by John Appleby](#)





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