



SAP

SAP SE (/ˌɛs.ɛɪˈpiː/; German pronunciation: [ɛsʔaːˈpeː] [ⓘ]) is a German multinational software company based in Walldorf, Baden-Württemberg, Germany. The company is the world's largest vendor of enterprise resource planning (ERP) software.^{[3][4][5]}

SAP GbR became in 1981 fully *Systeme, Anwendungen und Produkte in der Datenverarbeitung* (*Systems, Applications and Products in Data Processing*) abbreviated SAP GmbH after a five-year transition period beginning in 1976.^[6] In the late 1980s, it further restructured itself as SAP AG.^[7] Since 7 July 2014, its corporate structure is that of a pan-European *societas Europaea* (SE);^{[8][9][10][11]} as such, its former German corporate identity is now a subsidiary, SAP Deutschland SE & Co. KG.^[10] It has regional offices in 180 countries^{[12][13]} and over 111,961 employees.^[14]

SAP is a component of the DAX and Euro Stoxx 50 stock market indices.^[15] The company is the largest non-American software company by revenue and the world's fifth-largest publicly traded software company by revenue. As of December 2023, SAP is the largest German company by market capitalization.^[16]

History

20th century

When Xerox exited the computer hardware manufacturing industry in 1971,^[17] it asked IBM to migrate its business systems to IBM technology. As part of IBM's compensation for the migration, IBM was given the rights to the Scientific Data Systems (SDS)/SAPE software repository. Five IBM engineers from the AI department^{[18][19]} (Dietmar Hopp, Klaus Tschira, Hans-Werner Hector, Hasso Plattner, and Claus Wellenreuther, all from Mannheim, Baden-

SAP SE



Company type	Public
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Württemberg) were working on an enterprise-wide system based on this software, only to be told that it would no longer be necessary. Rather than abandoning the project, they decided to leave IBM Tech and start another company.^{[3][20]} In June 1972 they founded the SAP *Systemanalyse und Programmentwicklung* ("System Analysis and Program Development" / "SAPD") company, as a private partnership under the German Civil Code.^[21]

Their first client was the German branch of Imperial Chemical Industries in Östringen,^[22] where they developed mainframe programs for payroll and accounting. Instead of storing the data on punch cards mechanically, as IBM did, they stored it locally in the Electronic System while using a common Logical database for all activities of Organization. Therefore, they called their software a real-time system, since there was no need to process the punch cards overnight (for this reason their flagship product carried an R in its name until the late 1990s). This first version was also a standalone software that could be offered to other interested parties.^[23]

In 1973, SAP launched its first commercial product, the RF financial accounting system. This system served as the cornerstone in the ongoing development of other software modules of the system that eventually bore the name SAP R/1.^[21] This offered a common system for multiple tasks. This permitted the use of a centralized data storage, improving the maintenance of data. From a technical point of view, therefore, a database was necessary.^[24]

In 1976 SAP GmbH Systeme, Anwendungen und Produkte in der Datenverarbeitung ("Systems, Applications, and Products in Data Processing") was founded as a sales and support subsidiary. Five years later, the private partnership was dissolved and its rights were passed on to SAP GmbH.^[21] The headquarters moved the following year to Walldorf, Germany.

In 1979, SAP launched SAP R/2, expanding the capabilities of the system to other areas, such as materials management and production planning.

In 1981, SAP brought a re-designed product to market. However, SAP R/2 did not improve until between 1985 and 1990.

In 1992, SAP released SAP R/3. SAP developed and released several versions of R/3 through 1995.

In August 1988, SAP GmbH became SAP AG, and public trading started on 4 November 1988. Shares were listed on the Frankfurt and Stuttgart stock exchanges.^[20] In 1995, SAP was included in the German stock index DAX and, on 22 September 2003, SAP was included in the STOXX Europe 50.^[25]

Key people	<u>Pekka Ala-Pietilä</u> (chairman ^[1]) <u>Christian Klein</u> (CEO)
Products	<u>SAP AppGyver</u> · <u>SAP S/4HANA</u> · <u>SAP HANA</u> · <u>SAP ERP</u> · <u>SAP CRM</u> · <u>SAP PLM</u> · <u>SAP SCM</u> · <u>SAP SRM</u> · <u>SAP SuccessFactors</u> · <u>SAP NetWeaver</u> · <u>SAP Business ByDesign</u> · <u>SAP Business One</u> · <u>BusinessObjects</u> · <u>SAP IQ</u> · <u>SAP Ariba</u> · <u>ABAP</u> · <u>SAP Cloud Platform</u> · <u>SAP Converged Cloud</u> · (Full list)
Services	<u>Applications</u> · <u>Cloud</u>
Revenue	▲ €34.18 billion (2024)
Operating income	▼ €4.665 billion (2024)
Net income	▼ €3.150 billion (2024)
Total assets	▲ €74.12 billion (2024)
Total equity	▲ €45.81 billion (2024)
Number of employees	109,973 (2024)
Website	<u>sap.com</u> (<u>https://www.sap.com/</u>)
Footnotes / references ^[2]	

In the mid-1990s, SAP transitioned from mainframe computing to a client-server architecture. In 1996 it began its alliance with the Spanish technology consulting firm Seidor, initiating the expansion of SAP solutions throughout Latin America.^[26]

21st century

In 2004, R/3 was replaced with SAP ERP Central Component (ECC) 5.0.^[27] Architectural changes were also made to transition customers to a service-oriented architecture.

The company's official name became SAP AG (a public limited company) after the 2005 annual general meeting.

In 2006, SAP ERP 6.0 was released. SAP ERP 6.0 is the latest version has since been updated through SAP enhancement packs, the most recent being enhancement package 8 for SAP ERP 6.0 in 2016.^[28]



The Chief Executive Officer of SAP SE meeting with President Ilham Aliyev of Azerbaijan

Since 2012 SAP has acquired several companies that sell cloud-based products, with several multi-billion-dollar acquisitions seen by analysts as an attempt to challenge competitor Oracle.^[29] In 2014 SAP bought Concur Technologies, a provider of cloud-based travel and expense management software, for \$8.3 billion, SAP's most expensive purchase to that date.^[30] Analysts' reactions to the purchase were mixed, with Thomas Becker of Commerzbank questioning whether Concur was the right choice for SAP, while Credit Suisse called the acquisition an "aggressive" move.^[31]

On 21 May 2014, SAP AG announced during the Annual General Meeting of Shareholders that 99% of the shareholder votes approved the conversion of legal form to a European stock corporation (Societas Europaea, SE) and at the same time, elected the first supervisory board of SAP SE. The conversion of the company's legal form would take place upon entry in the commercial register, expected to be in July 2014.^{[32][33]}

On 7 July 2014, SAP announced it had changed its legal form to a European Company (Societas Europaea, SE). As a result, its German subsidiary was renamed to SAP Deutschland SE & Co. KG.^{[10][34]} The conversion cost the company approximately €4 million.^[35] In 2014 IBM and SAP began a partnership to sell cloud-based services.^[36] Likewise, in 2015, SAP also partnered with HPE to provide secure hybrid cloud-based services running the SAP platform.^[37] Both HPE and IBM provide infrastructure services to SAP, and SAP runs its SAP HANA cloud solution on top. SAP has announced additional partnerships with Microsoft in order to give customers tools for data visualization, as well as improved mobile applications.^[38]

In 2015, SAP exceeded its revenue projections due to the expansion in its cloud business and the success of SAP HANA. The growth can also be partially attributed to the acquisitions of Concur and Fieldglass.^[39] Since 2017, SAP is a founding member of the EU Cloud Code of Conduct.^[40] Since May 2021 SAP has listed selected Cloud Service adherent to the EU Cloud Code of Conduct as one of the first Cloud Service Providers.^[41]

The company announced plans in 2016 to invest heavily into technology relating to the Internet of things (IoT) as part of a strategy to capitalize on the growth in that market. For that purpose, €2 billion is planned for investment in relevant sectors by the end of 2020.^[42] SAP will also launch a new product line called SAP IoT, which "will combine large amounts of data from things connected to the Internet with machine learning and SAP's real-time database S/4 HANA."^[42]

On 29 January 2019, SAP announced plans to cut approximately 4,000 positions at the company in a strategic plan to shift to more modern cloud-based technologies such as blockchain, quantum computing, machine learning, Internet of Things, and artificial intelligence.^[43]

On 13 April 2021, SAP announced the formation of the joint venture *SAP Pioneer*, a dedicated Financial Services Industry (FSI) Unit between SAP and investment company Dediq GmbH.^{[44][45]} Dediq GmbH invested over €500 million in the newly formed unit and received an 80 percent share in return. SAP (<http://neodumps.com/sap/>) brought its products, organizational units and the sales network into the business and holds 20 percent of the shares.^[46]

In June 2025, it was reported that the company had reached €320bn in value and that 4 out of 5 of SAP's client operations were now managed through its cloud business at hyperscale level.^[47]

Acquisitions

Since 1991, SAP has acquired more than 70 companies.

Products

As well as its main ERP products, the company also sells database software and technology (particularly its own brand, SAP HANA) and cloud-engineered systems. It sells other ERP software products such as:

- Human capital management (HCM) software
- Customer relationship management (CRM) software
- Enterprise performance management (EPM) software
- Product lifecycle management (PLM) software
- Supplier relationship management (SRM) software
- Supply chain management (SCM) software
- Business technology platform (BTP) software
- The SAP AppGyver programming environment



A bus with SAPE SE wrapping highlighting data connections at the Intel Developer Forum in San Francisco

Finances

For the fiscal year 2017 SAP reported earnings of €4 billion, with an annual revenue of €23.5 billion, an increase of 6.3% over the previous fiscal cycle.^[49] SAP's shares traded at over US\$154 per share, and its market capitalization was valued at US\$180 billion in December 2023,^[50] making it the largest German

company by market capitalization.^[16]

The key trends for SAP are (as at the financial year ending 31 March):^{[51][52][53]}

Year	Revenue (€ bn)	Net income (€ bn)	Total assets (€ bn)	Employees	Sources
2013	16.8	3.3	27.0	66,572	
2014	17.5	3.2	38.5	74,406	
2015	20.7	3.0	41.3	76,986	
2016	22.0	3.6	44.2	84,183	
2017	23.4	4.0	42.4	88,543	
2018	24.7	4.0	51.5	96,498	
2019	27.5	3.3	60.2	100,330	^[54]
2020	27.3	5.1	58.4	103,876	^[55]
2021	27.8	5.2	71.1	107,415	
2022	30.8	2.2	72.1	111,961	
2023	31.2	6.1	68.2	106,043	
2024	34.2	3.1	74.1	107,155	

Sales by region (2023)^[48]

Region	share
<u>United States</u>	32.7%
<u>EMEA</u> (without Germany)	29.1%
Germany	15.8%
<u>Asia Pacific</u> (without Japan)	10.8%
<u>Americas</u> (without US)	8.2%
Japan	4.0%

Corporate structure and ownership

SAP had the following ownership structure in early 2024:^[56]

<u>Shareholder name</u>	Percentage
<u>Hasso Plattner</u>	6.60%
<u>BlackRock, Inc.</u>	5.53%
<u>Dietmar Hopp Stiftung GmbH</u>	5.04%
SAP SE	5.01%
<u>Capital Group Companies Inc.</u>	3.27%
<u>Klaus Tschira Stiftung gGmbH</u>	3.63%
<u>Goldman Sachs</u>	0.39%
<u>Free float</u>	70.53%



SAP Headquarters building seen in 2012

SAP uses a two-tier structure of boards with an executive board and a supervisory board.^{[57][58]} In October 2019 Jennifer Morgan and Christian Klein were appointed as co-CEOs of SAP.^[59] In April 2020 it was announced that Jennifer Morgan will leave SAP and Christian Klein will continue to operate as the sole CEO, citing that the current environment of the COVID-19 recession requires "companies to take swift, determined action which is best supported by a very clear leadership structure".^[60]

The majority of the company's employees are in Germany and United States. About 20,000 employees are based in Germany^[61] and about 19,311 employees are based in the United States.^{[62][63]}

45 employee representatives were elected in 2022 to the *SAP SE Works Council*, including 15 candidates from the Ver.di and IG Metall trade union lists. They represent 17,000 employees of Germany.^[64]

Headquarters is responsible for overall management as well as core engineering activities related to product development. Worldwide customer support is not provided by the field organizations but by a unified organization called Active Global Support (AGS).^[65]

The company also encourages employees to volunteer through social sabbaticals, sending teams of people to different countries to aid non-profits. SAP employees have volunteered in China, India, Brazil, and South Africa.^[66]

Research and development

SAP Labs Network consists of all major global Research & Development Hubs of SAP, across more than 20 countries and representing more than 80% of SAP's global engineering workforce.

Major Hubs of SAP are Germany, India,^[67] USA and China, and growing Hubs in East Asia, Eastern Europe, Canada and Latin America.^[68]

Criticism and controversy

Since May 2015, the company has dealt with a series of high-profile bribery investigations,^{[69][70][71]} including one that led to them paying \$3.9 million to settle U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission civil charges over a former executive's scheme to bribe Panama government officials in order to win lucrative technology contracts.^{[69][72]}

In July 2017 allegations were made that SAP had been involved in business transactions with the controversial and politically influential Gupta family in South Africa. SAP was accused of paying CAD House, a Gupta-controlled company, R100 million in order to secure a Transnet deal. SAP denied the allegations, claiming that the money was paid as "an extension of the sales force", despite CAD House having no prior SAP experience.^{[70][73]} The dealings of the Gupta family with SAP were revealed in a widely publicized e-mail leak.^{[74][75]} As a consequence of the allegations SAP launched an investigation that led to four of its South African managers being placed on administrative leave along with the seizure of their mobile phones and computers.^[76] Claas Kuehnemann was named as acting managing director for Africa while the investigation continued.^[77] On 26 October 2017 SAP announced that it had voluntarily reported itself to the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) for a possible violation of US law, including the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA), related to the South African bribery allegations. SAP's own investigation, conducted by law firm Baker McKenzie, revealed that SAP had paid \$7.7 million in commissions to third-parties linked to the Gupta family while securing contracts worth \$48 million with Transnet and Eskom.^{[78][79][80]}

In 2018 and in an ongoing court battle, Teradata accused SAP of IP theft and fraudulent behaviour.^{[81][82]} In 2021, in the German weekly news magazine Der Spiegel, additional claims were made of questionable behaviour with regards to SAP's funding of researchers at the University of Mannheim - who were in effect paid by SAP to investigate competitors technology.^{[81][83]} In a later article, Der Spiegel magazine maintained that SAP had been neglectful in maintaining strict governance for years.^[84] In June 2022 the German business magazine Manager Magazin published an article stating the management style of the leadership might be responsible for an increased compliance risk.^[85]

In February 2019 SAP was accused of 'improper conduct' linked to state contracts in Kenya and Tanzania. An anonymous whistle-blower claims, through a firm of attorneys, that SAP used Twenty Third Century Systems (TTCS) to bribe officials at the Tanzania Ports Authority (TPA) to win a US\$6.6 million enterprise resource planning software tender that involved the provision of software licenses and services.^[71]

In 2021 SAP admitted in a United States court that it exported software to firms in Iran, contrary to US sanctions against Iran, which led to a fine of \$8 million.^{[86][87][88]}

In May 2022, multiple claims were made of bullying and sexual harassment within the company, with many cases of unwanted advances by senior male managers on female colleagues. When complaints were made or information made available, HR were found to be unhelpful or hostile. For example, in one case a female employee was groped by a male manager in Sydney while at a company event, but he was never brought to account. In another case, a female employee was sexually targeted by a manager and asked to keep her web camera on during the day. She then complained and was placed under "performance management" - a precursor to being asked to leave the company.^[89] Several female executives, including the Co-CEO left the company, adding to concerns that women were negatively treated, despite SAP then hiring several other senior women from Microsoft.^[90]

In 2024 after investigations by the U.S. Justice Department and the Securities and Exchange Commission, SAP was ordered to pay \$220 million to resolve violations of the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act in South Africa, Indonesia, Tanzania, Malawi, Ghana, Kenya, Zimbabwe and Azerbaijan. It paid bribes to officials in state-owned enterprises to gain government contracts. It entered into a three-year deferred prosecution agreement, paying a criminal penalty of \$118.8 million and an administrative forfeiture of \$103,396,765.^{[91][92]} In South Africa SAP used third-party intermediaries to acquire tenders from various state-owned entities, including Transnet, the South African Revenue Service, the City of Johannesburg, Eskom and the Department of Water and Sanitation.^{[93][92]:4} In March 2024, SAP agreed to pay R500 million as part of an agreement with South Africa's Special Investigating Unit. The agreement indemnifies them against further financial claims related to the bribery, but does not absolve any parties from criminal prosecution.^[94]

On September 3, 2024 it was announced that CTO and Executive Board Member Juergen Mueller reached a mutual agreement to leave the company by the end of the month due to incident of inappropriate behavior at a company event.^{[95][96]} Following the news of this incident it was reported on September 13, 2024 that German prosecutors have opened a formal investigation of sexual harassment between him and the female employee.^[97]

See also

- [List of ERP software packages](#)
- [List of SAP products](#)

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External links

- Official website (<https://www.sap.com/>) 
- Business data for SAP SE: Google (<https://www.google.com/finance/quote/SAP>) · SEC filings (<https://www.sec.gov/cgi-bin/browse-edgar?action=getcompany&CIK=1000184>) · Yahoo! (<https://finance.yahoo.com/quote/SAP>)

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