ASUG News + Views

ASUG Pulse of the SAP Customer 2021 Results

Geoff Scott   January 20, 2021   4 minute read

What are SAP customers thinking as we emerge from 2020 and forge ahead in 2021? We've got the answers, once again, with the release of our ASUG Pulse of the SAP Customer 2021 study.

We sought critical pieces of information from our members in North America to create a picture of the state of the SAP customer base: their attitudes and preferences, their successes and challenges, and their thoughts and plans on vital SAP technology decisions. (We are able to compare historic data trends, which revealed a number of insightful trends.)

For the last four years, we were able to capture the pulse of SAP's North American customer base and answer these questions:

– Why does SAP talent and training continue to challenge SAP customers?

After looking at the data from this year's results, I picked three topics that I believe are relevant to all SAP customers.

1. The Pulse on IT Buying Committees

This is a trend that we've been watching for the past few years, and it's clear that technology buying committees are all the rage. Nearly half (45%) of respondents, which was the top answer, are tapping C-levels, IT staff, and line-of-business staff when deciding to purchase new technology.

What's interesting to note is since 2019, use of buying committees has more than doubled.

Of course, a buying committee brings with it a mix of peers and opinions who are now weighing in on critical decisions. It's important to understand the various opinions on, say, best-of-breed versus best-in-suite, or whose goals deviate from the group's objectives, or who may have a bias about a certain software, which can complicate an already complex decision-making process.

2. The Pulse on SAP S/4HANA Implementations and Staffing

This year's data shows a continuation of ASUG members moving to or planning their move to SAP S/4HANA. A full 22% of respondents told us they are already live.

What's noteworthy is the topic of SAP S/4HANA skills and staffing. We asked respondents to tell us how they did or how they will find skilled talent to work on their SAP S/4HANA projects. The top answer? Permanent staff who learned SAP S/4HANA on the job (57%).

We know that our members will need help with SAP S/4HANA pre- and post-go-live, so please be sure to check out and register for [ASUG Best Practices: SAP S/4HANA Virtual Experience](#), kicking off on March 2 and running through the month.

3. The Pulse on End-User Adoption

"Change management" is a pretty fundamental and well-known concept, right? But so often we get caught up in the technology aspect of digital transformation, and we neglect to consider the end users and why they should adopt new technology.

Respondents this year told us that they most need help with training (25%), lack of adoption/user acceptance (25%), and getting a better handle on change management practices (10%).
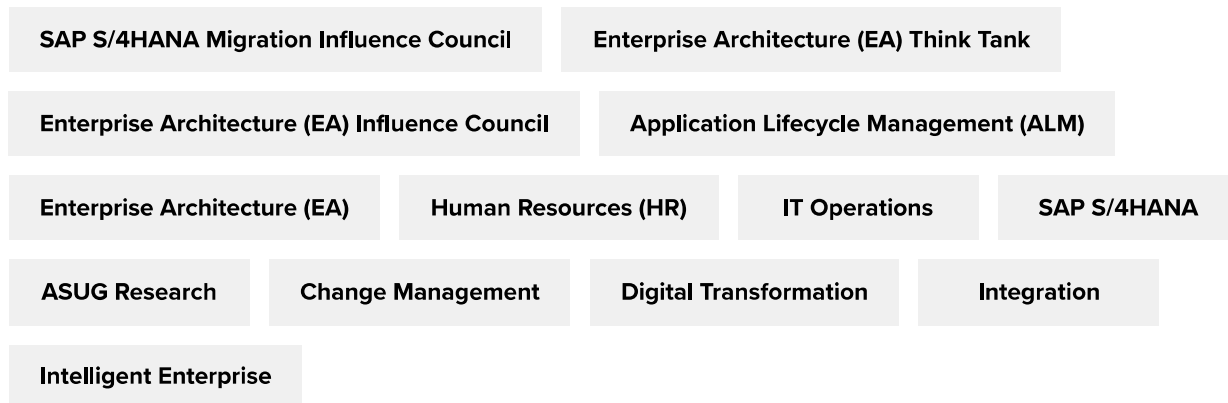
With users, you really have to make sure they understand how the changes being made to their "day jobs" will help the company overall—typically, an answer to "the why" question. What is the real benefit to them using the new software and changing their business processes? Without that explanation and connection in their minds, you're bound to get resistance—no matter how cool the new software is.

As always, I'm eager to hear your thoughts on the results, so please [email me your questions and comments](#), and also see the list of ASUG resources below.

ASUG Resources for SAP Customers

Study Infographic: Be sure to download the [ASUG Pulse of the SAP Customer 2021 infographic](#) with an overview of the study results.

SAP S/4HANA Event: Join us online throughout the month of March for [ASUG Best Practices: SAP S/4HANA Virtual Experience](#), an event that will give you the tools you need for a frictionless end-to-end SAP S/4HANA implementation.

SAP S/4HANA Migration Influence Council	Enterprise Architecture (EA) Think Tank
Enterprise Architecture (EA) Influence Council	Application Lifecycle Management (ALM)

Enterprise Architecture (EA)	Human Resources (HR)	IT Operations	SAP S/4HANA

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