

NEWSLETTER

PPG INDUSTRY TALK



Wednesday, 5 November 2025

Summary of the talk

The recent talk provided a look inside PPG, a global leader in paints and coatings, and how they run their business using advanced technology. PPG divides its massive operations into three segments (Architectural, Performance, and Industrial Coatings) and highlights core values like being "One PPG to the world". A major part of the discussion focused on Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software, specifically SAP, which acts as the digital brain linking all parts of the company, ensuring a "single source of truth" for everything from

customer orders (Order to Cash) to paying suppliers (Procure to Pay). PPG has been using and upgrading SAP since the early 90s, with plans to move to the newest version, SAP S/4HANA, and cloud computing (AWS) by 2025. This commitment to technology is managed by specialized teams like the Data Analytics CoE at their global IT centers. For future professionals, the talk highlighted that pursuing a career in SAP offers great job security, competitive pay, and the chance to work on cutting-edge features like AI and IoT, making it a key skill for driving modern business transformation.

The technologies in PPG

Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) and SAP



PPG (the global coatings company) runs its entire operation using a major computer system called SAP. This system acts as the company's digital brain, connecting all parts of the business, from ordering materials to shipping products. PPG is focused on technology, upgrading to the newest S/4HANA software and moving its systems to the cloud for speed. They also use advanced tools like Data Analytics and automation. Careers working with SAP are highly recommended, offering stable jobs, competitive salaries, and the opportunity to work with modern technology like AI.

Cloud Computing and Modern Infrastructure



PPG utilizes a cloud-based infrastructure to support the management of its multinational operations that involve over 180 countries. This cloud infrastructure allows global collaboration by enabling real-time data processing. The talk mentioned the technology center and the digital IT teams working under it, including Data Analytics CoE, RPA CoE, Digital Business Solutions, and Cloud CoE.

Issues discussed

One of the issues or topics discussed is about SAP Career Opportunities, which highlights ten key advantages of choosing SAP as a career path. As the SAP certificate is globally recognized, being professional in this field will be a big benefit because it is a highly demanding position and it offers competitive salaries depending on the skills and experience. This leads to career stability and support for life-long learning due to technology development in this rapid evolution era. Furthermore, the talk emphasized four career paths in SAP, which are

technical, functional, project management, and super users. These diverse career paths allow career alignment according to interest and strength, whether it is coding or business analysis. Next, the issue faced by interns is also mentioned. In PPG, interns are provided with comprehensive support from experienced employee for professional growth. Through Digital IT Career & Learning program by PPG, interns get a cross-functional experiences by working in various projects with different business function.



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Reflection from the talk - Afif Shaqir

Mr. Patrick Thong's presentation was beneficial and connected directly to my studies as a Data Engineering student at UTM, especially since I am currently taking ENTERPRISE SYSTEMS DESIGN AND MODELING (WBL) subjects this semester. The main point I took away is how a big company like PPG is built around its core computer system, SAP.

Mr. Thong clearly showed that this ERP system is the company's real brain. I am focused on how data moves, and seeing how processes like buying stuff (PTP) or getting paid for sales (OTC) are run by SAP was very interesting, as it gave me real-world context for the design and modeling principles I'm learning now. It proves that managing data across all departments is the biggest challenge, and that's a skill I want to master. Seeing PPG's commitment to modernization was super exciting.

Their plans to upgrade to SAP S/4HANA and adopt the AWS Cloud show they are moving fast with technology. This focus on the future, plus the existence of their specialized Data Analytics team, confirms this is exactly where modern technology is headed and where data turns into smart business decisions. I strongly hope to get a chance to intern with PPG, perhaps in the SAP or Data Analytics departments. I believe this experience would be a massive help to my skills and allow me to make a real contribution to PPG.

Reflection from the talk - Anis Safiyya

Since PPG is a business-to-business company, I wasn't really exposed to its complex operations. Thus, the talk helped me better comprehend them. I learned a lot about SAP deployment, and it was especially interesting to discover that SAP has been a significant part of PPG's operations for more than thirty years. The evolution of SAP in PPG showed me that enterprise systems continuously evolve alongside business needs rather than remaining static solutions.

I was truly amazed to discover that SAP is an entire dedicated career path with several specializations. It also made me realize how broad the IT sector is. Finding out about the three different paths, which are technical, functional, and project management, has opened my eyes to a variety of opportunities for contribution.

The focus on lifelong learning matches my growth concept. Considering lifelong learning is essential in this rapidly evolving world, I see this as an opportunity rather than a burden. Also, the idea of working abroad truly excites me. Several examples of the dynamic career I aspire to have include working on global projects, engaging with varied teams from various cultures, and potentially pursuing international projects. I'm motivated to learn more about SAP as this industry has both short-term and long-term growth potential.



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