

How to Reduce ERP Migration Risk with TraceLink OPUS and MINT

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Most companies are faced with complex ERP replacements, upgrades, or migrations at one time or another. A prominent example of this in the life sciences industry is SAP's S/4HANA upgrade, which will require IT and business leaders to migrate from earlier versions of SAP ECC before 2027 or face the loss of support.

These large migration projects can often temporarily stifle other innovation efforts, as other IT projects are put on hold for lengthy periods of time so teams can focus on the ERP project and ensure the success of the migration. Too often, this includes delaying innovative projects such as supply chain digitalization and AI-powered orchestration, which can put companies at a competitive disadvantage in the future as other organizations move rapidly forward. While this focus is understandable given the complexity of large ERP projects, it also puts the business at risk.

One example of an innovation project that is often subject to delay is updating antiquated integrations with key customers and suppliers, including the digital exchange of purchase orders, shipping notices, invoices, and payments that drive a business's commerce engine. This critical partner data flows into the ERP through many legacy methods, including EDI, spreadsheet uploads, manual data entry,

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portals, and point-to-point connections. ERP migrations require risky updates to all these ERP integrations and data intake mechanisms, and this risk is often exacerbated by putting off this effort until the end of the project.

De-risk ERP migration with TraceLink MINT

Although leaving ERP integrations to the end of the project is risky, it is often necessary because some or all of the new system needs to be in place to develop and test the integrations. Fortunately, there is now a more efficient and cost-effective way to modernize all integrations at the beginning of the project while de-risking ERP migrations simultaneously.

With **TraceLink Multienterprise Information Network Tower (MINT)** on the OPUS Platform, all existing ERP integrations can be updated using the powerful TraceLink Integrate Once, Interoperate with Everyone™ model, which uses a single link per transaction type to integrate your ERP to the TraceLink network. All partners receiving or sending that transaction are integrated efficiently using TraceLink's flexible modes of integration, which enable our Network Success team to use EDI, IDocs, APIs, FTP, XML, or even a user interface (UI) to execute the integration. This effectively minimizes the disruption of your migration to your partners.

Move forward with innovative projects

Using MINT for partner integrations not only modernizes the integrations now, it also insulates the customer and its network of partners from future changes required during ERP migration projects. And the TraceLink Network Success team provides any ongoing maintenance that is required if your partners update their systems.

Most importantly, you can continue with your supply chain digitalization projects because the Integrate Once™ model enables the single integration through the TraceLink network to be expanded to all partners exchanging a specific transaction

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with a few clicks. For example, an IDoc exchange with a single supplier could be expanded to all suppliers without any impact on your IT team or the ERP migration project—all that's required is a simple configuration step to turn on the new partner.

MINT also enables organizations to meet requests for new partner integrations by leveraging—temporarily or permanently—the UI experience and then switching to an API once the new ERP is live, all without disrupting the ERP project. Partners can also use the UI-based integration approach should they not be ready for an API approach.

Turn integration maintenance over to TraceLink

With MINT, future integration updates are performed by TraceLink at no additional cost. This includes the updates required to link the current MINT integrations to the new ERP. As the new ERP approaches its go-live date, TraceLink will update all MINT integrations in order to be tested and ready for go-live.

Unlike conventional EDI or point-to-point integrations that require each integration be tested with each partner against the new system, the Integrate Once™ model streamlines the process, ensuring that updates and testing are limited to a single process for each transaction type for all partners. And best of all, the update process does not require resources from your IT or your partners' IT teams—the update is handled completely by TraceLink.

Take complexity out of the S/4HANA migration project

For those companies faced with the daunting SAP S/4HANA migration, MINT can help take complexity out of the project in a couple of ways:

- **Update external partner integrations now**: With MINT, you can start updating integrations against your current SAP ECC system now. Whether integrations are based on IDocs, EDI, or customer integrations, TraceLink Services will use the Integrate Once™ model to replace these integrations

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with your preferred choice of formats. The same IDocs or EDI extracts can be used to link to the TraceLink Network quickly and cost-effectively. The TraceLink Network Success Team will build the integrations to your partners in their own preferred formats with no resources needed from your IT or ERP project team. As the project approaches its go-live date, TraceLink will update links to S/4HANA; there will be no requirement to update partner links as their integrations through the network are not impacted.

- **Simplify new partner integration requirements**: SAP upgrade projects can take two to three years, which is an impossibly long time to delay integrations that may be required to meet the needs of new customer or supplier relationships. MINT customers can quickly link to new partners on the network for existing MINT transaction types through an easy-to-use UI. If the partner is not on the network, the Network Success Team will onboard the partner and integrate them to the network. The combination of prebuilt MINT transactions and no-cost Link Actions (prebuilt integrations to popular enterprise systems) enable TraceLink to perform this new partner integration with little or no resources from your IT team, so they can stay focused on your ERP migration project.

Modernize integrations to get ready for AI-driven supply chain orchestration

The key objectives of any ERP migration project are to stay current with the latest functionality, enhance business capabilities, and take advantage of the technology advances of the new ERP. This should apply to external integrations that supply continuous real-time supply chain information from an end-to-end network of suppliers and customers as well. Simply rolling forward outdated EDI integrations is a missed opportunity to upgrade to newer network-based integrations that support current and future digitalization projects.

Most supply chain leaders see AI-fueled orchestration playing a big role in future supply chain management. AI requires access to continuously flowing, proprietary

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supply chain data to be effective—your transactions are not in the public domain for a “ChatGPT-like” large language model (LLM) to analyze. The future success of AI-fueled supply chain orchestration will rely on clean, accurate, and real-time partner data. Modernizing your integrations with MINT is the fastest and most effective way to not only update all partner integrations but future-proof them as well.

If you want to see how MINT can help you de-risk your ERP migration project and capitalize on real-time supply chain data for your AI initiatives, and for as little as $600 per partner, per year on a fixed fee subscription, just fill out the form. TraceLink will reach out to schedule a meeting to discuss your project requirements and potential opportunities.

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