Archiving of tomorrow

+ 4 ERP trends for 2024 & beyond

SAP

Storage

kgs
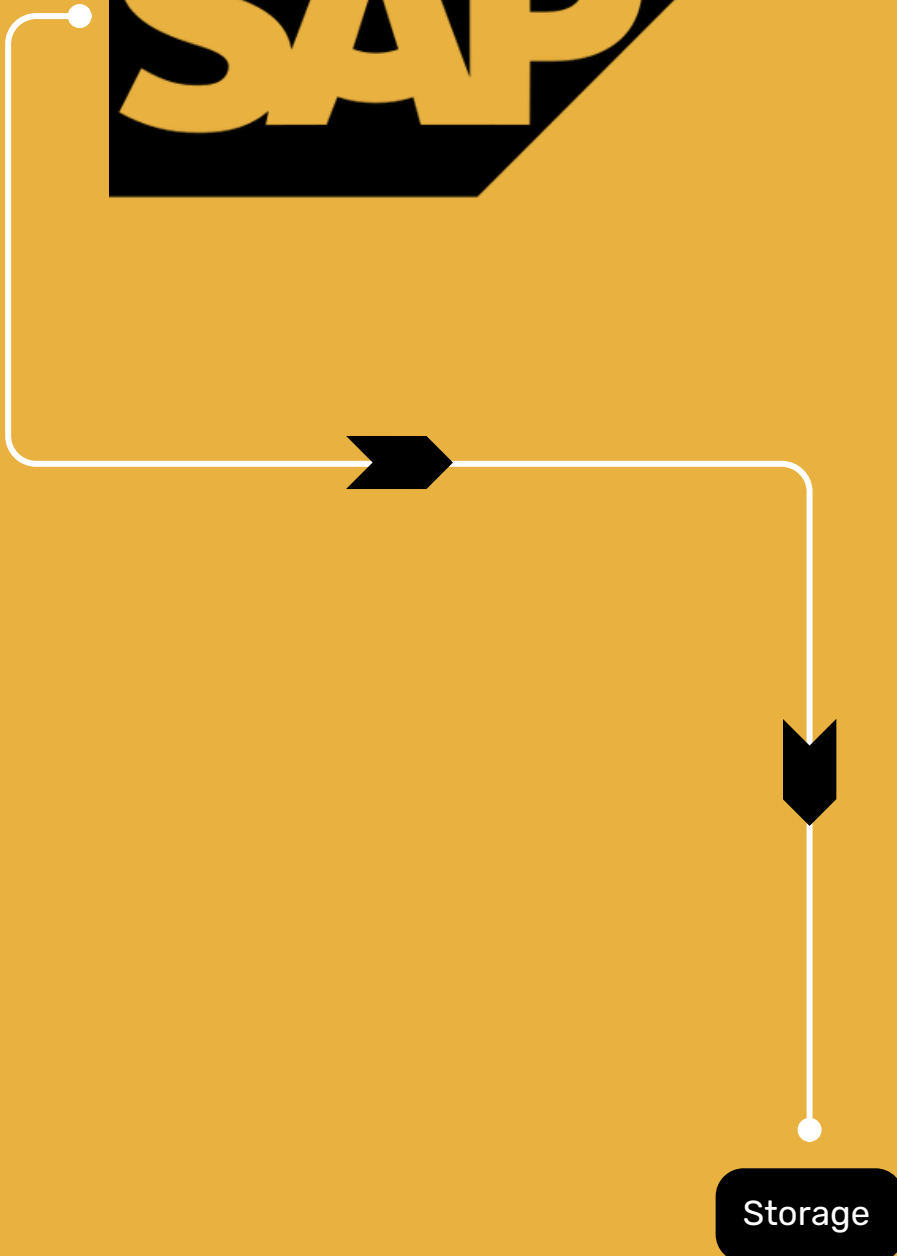
No more data miners!

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Archiving solutions need to be able to do much more than just store data and documents that are no longer required in productive operation on suitable storage systems or store them in an audit-proof manner in accordance with legal requirements.

The motto is: put an end to data graves that bring nothing to the company except high costs and headaches in the IT department. Archive solutions need to be given the necessary attention, modernized, adapted to current and future requirements and made useful for important processes. This includes streamlining, adapting to modern technologies - including the cloud - and investing in an architecture that guarantees a high and, above all, measurable ROI after a short period of time.

Benny Schröder
Head of Development & Delivery

Benny Schröder brings almost 15 years of experience in the management and implementation of IT projects. His in-depth knowledge of software archiving, document management and his ability to successfully implement complex projects make him a valued expert in the industry.

The archive in the blind spot

Archiving is often one of the less popular tasks for IT administrators. It is "in the blind spot" of the company - true to the motto "Don't touch a running system as long as it runs." Perhaps this strategy would not be completely wrong if the circumstances in the rest of the corporate environment did not change significantly. However, applications, data centers and legal requirements have evolved significantly and this needs to be taken into account. Archiving is now a strategic IT discipline, both from an economic and a business-critical perspective.

The aim is to reduce the administration of the archive systems scattered throughout the company to a reasonable level, to be "interface fit" for the future, to ensure audit security and, finally, to keep the budget within acceptable limits.

Intelligent archive systems can do this and are also capable of much more.
They turn a former data graveyard into an intelligent information pool that enables a complete audit or the necessary retrieval of individual documents and data records quickly and reliably. Advanced archiving solutions are also the best resource for building the business of the future on a reliable foundation - a long-term memory of the company and a central point of connection to which highly specialized applications for all company matters can dock.

Our favorite child: data

In business, technology has made many things possible that were considered science fiction just a few years ago: we automate, we create complex systems, we work decentrally and we produce documents and data in a quality and quantity that has never been seen before. We love to produce data, both structured and unstructured.

Many companies and their employees could even be described as data messis, because they don't want to (or can't) delete any of the digital information they have generated. However, when experts repeatedly refer to a company's data as its most important asset, they are certainly not referring to littering by not deleting it.

An incredible amount of digitally generated data, much of it not even visible at first glance. The flood of documents, on the other hand, can be observed very clearly in companies. The pursuit of the digital office generates enormous volumes of documents to be archived on a daily basis through central business processes alone, such as order creation, incoming and outgoing invoices. Conventional technologies are reaching their limits or exploding in terms of costs.


This means that vast amounts of documents and corresponding data are stored or sent to an archive - either because they are simply there or because legal requirements, such as GDPR, HIPPA or GDBO, demand it. According to Statista, data growth is developing rapidly: while there were 33 zettabytes of data worldwide in 2018, this figure is expected to rise to 175 zettabytes by 2025.
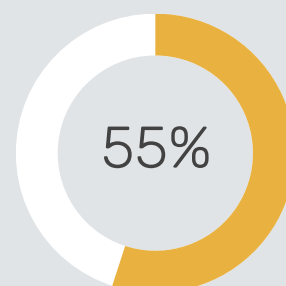
Splunk study on data growth*

Germany's companies expect the amount of data to increase 4.5-fold in 2025 compared to today.

57%
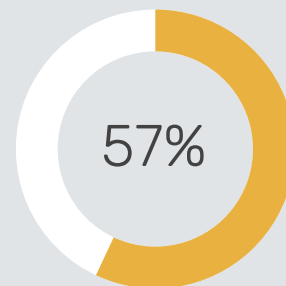
More than half of those surveyed stated that the volume of data is increasing so quickly that their company can no longer keep pace with developments.

81%
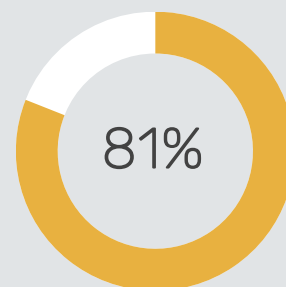
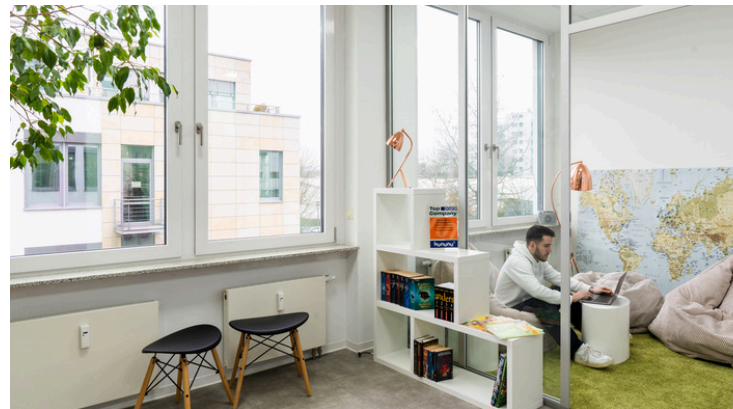81% are convinced that data is extremely important for their company.

55%

5% of German respondents estimate that at least 50% of their company data is dark data (data that is not used).

Master of Disaster: The supposed organized mess

Documents are archived using solutions that have been specially developed for this purpose. Traditionally, this also includes document management systems (DMS) or today often referred to as enterprise content management systems (ECM). These manage or archive documents - for example from SAP or SharePoint, to name just two of the major representatives. DMS and ECM solutions serve as a layer between data production and physical storage. However, as they require a higher-level instance that represents a logic above the applications, they are not so much an intermediate layer, but rather strive to be the leading front end. They organize the documents, provide them with additional information and metadata, which is often stored in additional proprietary databases, and then store them on different production storage and archive storage systems.

The result: companies usually have several independent archive solutions and DM or ECM systems as isolated solutions. These are expensive, complex to administer and hardly allow a cross-company orchestrated view of the archived documents and data.

The crux of the matter is that DMS and ECM solutions are complex, for example when it comes to connecting to different ERP solutions. They are not very flexible and therefore difficult to adapt to new requirements. What's more, some archive solutions are storage-agnostic - in other words, they are not storage vendor-independent. This has put companies in a very unfavorable situation over the years, as the proprietary software architecture makes it difficult to migrate to newer, modern systems and being tied to a specific storage hardware creates an unnecessary additional dependency that is exploited to the full by the respective providers.

Strategic data and document archiving

Today, data and document archiving is an IT discipline that is of strategic importance for companies. The first step is, of course, proper filing in accordance with regulations: The German Federal Office for Information Security (BSI) defines archiving as "the permanent and unalterable storage of electronic documents and other data."

The retention period of the respective data must be defined at the time of archiving. The data may also need to be available indefinitely. It is therefore clear that archiving is a central component of the IT architecture for companies. Certain data must be stored long-term in a special form, much of it audit-proof, unchangeable and specially protected.

But it is also about having data and documents quickly available when needed. An archive is much more than just an unloved filing cabinet in the far corner of the data center. Successful companies base their business development and the direction of their products and services on knowledge from the past. And it is precisely this knowledge that can be found in the archives. It is therefore important that archive systems are also actively used as an information pool for the corporate strategy.

1 The future of the cloud is getting even hotter

$67,7 B — 2022
$130 B — 2027

-> The use of cloud ERP is growing rapidly and the global marketis expected to reach 130 billion dollars by 2027.

->The changing world of work, including talent shortages and a decentralized workforce, is driving the adoption of cloud ERP.

->Companies are under pressure to change in order to remain competitive, which leads to a high.

2 Mobile ERP share across devices

-> Mobile ERP has evolved from simple apps to intelligent, cross-device experiences.

-> Users can track their tasks across different devices.

3 Integration of AI and IOT

->In the past, many AI tools were achieved through add-ons and integration; in future, many ERP providers will offer these functions as part of the ERP-Technology Stack.

The Internet of Things (IoT) refers to the network of physical devices connected to the internet, enabling them to collect, exchange, and act on data. This technology turns everyday objects into smart devices that can communicate and automate tasks.

->IoT data can be used for tracking goods, early detection of problems in the automotive industry.

4 More powerful ERP analyses

-> AI-supported analyses, data visualization tools and what-if analyses first traditional dashboards.

->Conversation and message-based analytics allow users to ask questions and give commands.

guide users through tasks <- ERP analyses -> offer contextual insights

recognize anomalies

Summary

Archiving is a discipline that companies should use strategically. Used correctly and with a modern solution, it leads directly to greater transparency of the archive data stock and to a lean long-term memory of all processes in the company

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ready for SAP® S/4HANA?

Check for SAP managers

Considerations for cost-sensitive and flexible data and document management are particularly important before a transformation. So what questions should SAP managers ask themselves beforehand? kgs clarifies.

1 Has the "basement" been cleaned up yet?

The thought suggests itself: If I already want to tidy up, make my system smaller and leaner, clean up the "basement" so to speak, why should my untidy archive move with it?

Winfried Althaus
CEO at KGS Software GmbH

Anyone who thinks about how their archive will look in the future before the transformation to SAP® S/4 HANA about what their archive should look like in the future will not only save time and nerves, but above all costs.

2 What about current retention periods?

This is an opportunity to review whether all retention periods are still current and being met, or the management for them should be reconsidered altogether.

4 Can it perhaps be slimmer?

Shouldn't my system landscape be homogenized and, above all, simplified? Would it be worthwhile to use this opportunity to implement new use cases?

3 Integrate archiving into transformation?

Whether green, brown or rightfield approach: Why not integrate archiving into the transformation? This way, after transferring selected data to the new system, archiving can be used to keep the data footprint small.

5 Ready for the future with CMIS?

When switching to SAP® S/4HANA, wouldn't it be wise to make my systems future-ready right away by migrating from ArchiveLink® to CMIS future-ready?

6 Do I want to be cloud-ready?

Isn't it better to introduce solutions under SAP® S/4HANA that are cloud-oriented?

7 What is the situation with DSGVO and Co.

Wouldn't it be best to implement the GDPR guidelines cleanly and think about ILM right away?

8 Where can I save costs?

The volume of data in productive SAP® systems is growing continuously. Rising costs for the SAP® infrastructure and operation are the direct consequences. Doesn't a cost-effective archive therefore make sense?

9 Alternative to the in-memory database?

Isn't - especially with the expensive in-memory database of SAP® S/4HANA - transferring the data to an archive system the best way to save costs?

10 Increase user satisfaction, but how?

Without data archiving, response times in dialog mode increase, while overall system performance steadily decreases. So isn't it smarter to increase user satisfaction with an extremely fast archive?

More than one question answered with YES? Then it's time to rethink your data and document management before a transformation. kgs is happy to support you.

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