SAP S/4HANA

WHITE PAPER

**NAVIGATING THE FUTURE WITH SAP S/4HANA
- A CONVERSATION WITH LINDA GEORGIOU**

AXIUM
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Purpose

To inform business and IT leaders about the strategic importance of transitioning to SAP S/4HANA, highlighting its transformative potential, key benefits, and practical considerations. The paper aims to shift the mindset from viewing S/4HANA as a technical upgrade to recognising it as a business enabler and future-ready ERP platform.

Scope

This white paper provides strategic insight for organisations evaluating or preparing for a transition to SAP S/4HANA, framing it as a business transformation rather than a simple system upgrade. It addresses the growing urgency driven by the 2027 end-of-support deadline for ECC, but emphasizes that the real opportunity lies in modernising operations, improving agility, and enabling real-time decision-making.

The paper explores the limitations of legacy ERP systems and outlines how S/4HANA's architecture, featuring in-memory analytics, AI and machine learning integration, and a modern Fiori interface, delivers speed, scalability, and innovation. It details the business value of S/4HANA, including cost reduction, enhanced compliance, and improved customer and employee experiences. It also examines the three primary migration paths, Brownfield, Greenfield, and Hybrid while highlighting common challenges such as over customisation, poor data quality, and lack of executive sponsorship. A strong emphasis is placed on data governance as a critical success factor, both during and after implementation.

Finally, the paper presents a forward-looking view of ERP as modular and composable, capable of evolving with business needs. It concludes by outlining how AXIUM supports clients throughout the transformation lifecycle—from initial planning and partner selection to post-go-live optimisation and long-term capability uplift.

Best Practice

Define a Clear Migration Strategy

Choose the right path (Brownfield, Greenfield, or Hybrid) based on your business goals and system complexity. Clarity from the outset prevents costly delays

Prioritise Data Governance Early

Clean, structured data is essential. Invest in cleansing, archiving, and governance to reduce risk and accelerate ROI post-go-live.

Secure Strong Executive Sponsorship

Leadership buy-in drives alignment, funding, and momentum. Projects often stall without visible and committed executive support.

Engage Experienced Partners

Collaborate with experts like AXIUM to navigate technical, organisational, and strategic challenges with confidence and efficiency.

Introduction: Why This Moment Matters

Interviewer: Linda, there's been a lot of noise around SAP S/4HANA. Is it really that big of a deal?

Linda Georgiou: It absolutely is. This isn't just an upgrade. It's a strategic reset. S/4HANA is fundamentally changing how businesses operate - enabling real-time decision-making, cloud agility, and visibility across the enterprise. With ECC support ending in 2027, many organisations are being forced to act, but the opportunity is much bigger than a deadline.

1. What's Driving the Shift

Interviewer: What's prompting organisations to make the move now?

Linda: Legacy systems like ECC are no longer cutting it. Leaders are dealing with fragmented workflows, slow reporting cycles, and rising costs just to keep the lights on. Many are already feeling the pain, especially during restructures or M&A activity. Research shows nearly half of businesses are moving because their systems no longer meet performance or flexibility requirements.

2. What Makes S/4HANA Different

Interviewer: So what's actually different about S/4HANA?

Linda: S/4HANA brings speed, scalability, and smarts. It's built for in-memory analytics, has a modern user interface through Fiori, and integrates AI, IoT and machine learning right out of the box. It reduces the need for costly customisations and turns your ERP from a cost centre into an enabler of innovation.

3. Real Business Benefits

Interviewer: Can you give us a sense of the outcomes organisations can expect?

Linda: Absolutely. Done right, S/4HANA improves visibility, speeds up decisions, supports compliance, and enhances customer and employee satisfaction. I've seen clients spending upwards of $180k a month just maintaining legacy systems. That kind of inefficiency builds up fast.

4. Migration Paths and Pitfalls

Interviewer: How are organisations approaching the transition?

Linda: There are three broad strategies: Brownfield (technical upgrade), Greenfield (starting fresh), and Hybrid approaches like Bluefield. What matters most is clarity. A lot of projects get stuck due to over-customization, weak executive sponsorship, or underestimating how complex the data migration is. You need strong governance and change leadership from day one.

5. Data: the Unsung Hero

Interviewer: Let's talk about data. What's often overlooked?

Linda: Post-go-live, data becomes your biggest asset or biggest risk. AXIUM helps clients cleanse, archive, and decommission legacy systems while building strong data governance. A good strategy can reduce storage by up to 50% and deliver ROI in as little as 6-18months.

6. Future-Ready, Composable ERP

Interviewer: What does the future look like?

Linda: The future is composable. S/4HANA enables a modular approach - think microservices and distributed ecosystems. This gives businesses the ability to scale, adapt, and evolve. Whether it's integrating new AI tools or pivoting to market shifts, you're no longer locked into monolithic systems.

7. How AXIUM Helps: From Selection to Sustainability

Interviewer: Where does AXIUM come in?

Linda: Wherever you are on your ERP journey, AXIUM brings structure, clarity and momentum. We support clients through:

- ERP needs analysis and partner selection
- Roadmap and readiness planning
- Business process optimisation
- Organisational change and training
- Data migration and system integration
- Post-go-live support and capability uplift

Our team has supported some of Australia's largest transformations - from the $17B Defence ERP reform to sector-wide upgrades across Justice, Health, and Infrastructure.

8. Ready to Begin?

Interviewer: What should leaders be thinking about now?

Linda: It's time to move from curiosity to clarity. Whether you're still evaluating your options or already scoping your move, the earlier you engage with experienced partners, the smoother your transition will be. Start with a conversion. We're here to help.

Interviewee

Linda Georgiou
Managing Partner

Contact AXIUM:

🌐 axium.au

✉ info@axium.au