



**YASKAWA**



# ERP Relocation Across Seven Time Zones

YASKAWA migrates and modernizes SAP system in record time together with Syntax

“A key component of our IT strategy is the SAP ECC 6.0 ERP system used throughout the company,” explains André Wieprecht, Director IT Europe at YASKAWA. In the past, the leading provider of mechatronics and robotics solutions for industrial automation hosted this SAP system at its headquarters in Japan—and therefore also at its EMEA subsidiary YASKAWA Europe GmbH, which employs over 2,000 professionals across twenty-three branches, and nine production sites.

“However, this made it difficult for the European region to map local requirements quickly and efficiently,” says André Wieprecht. In Poland, for example, a copy of all customer invoices must be sent to the relevant tax authority simultaneously. It often took quite a long time for the IT colleagues in Japan to make such adjustments to the SAP system, if only because of the different time zones. To simplify support, the SAP system, which was already running in a separate client at the Japanese data center for the EMEA region, was to be operated directly from Europe in the future.

## An ambitious IT Project Requires a Competent Partner

The concrete planning began once the company’s top management had given the green light. To minimize downtime, data transfer and restarting the SAP systems in a European data center had to happen over a single weekend—a challenging schedule. It was clear to André Wieprecht and his team that they wanted a powerful IT service provider for this technically demanding project, who could offer a complete package consisting of consulting, implementation, and post-go-live operation in a private cloud environment.

One applicant stood out above the others. Syntax had seasoned experts for every relevant issue—regardless of whether it concerned the platform, SAP, or interfaces. “We immediately realized that there was a deep understanding of our individual challenges and that a productive exchange at eye level was possible,” André Wieprecht says. Syntax was able to demonstrate its expertise in the central question of suitable migration models and was ultimately awarded the contract for the project.

### CUSTOMER STORY YASKAWA

#### At a glance

- Industry: Industrial Automation
- Locations: 23 locations, 9 production sites
- Solution: SAP Migration to the Private Cloud



*You have to approach such projects with an open mind, stay on top of important things, and discuss difficult issues at an early stage. However, all this only works with a competent partner at your side who advises you on an equal footing and provides motivated support. That’s why we will continue to rely on Syntax in the future and are already looking forward to upcoming projects.*

- André Wieprecht  
Director IT Europe, YASKAWA Europe GmbH

## Secure Data Migration Across 9,000 Kilometers

Considering the tight schedule, teams on both sides weighed the pros and cons of various approaches. They ultimately decided to create a copy of the whole 4.5 TB SAP system and migrate it to Syntax's German data center. Here, they would perform a technical carve-out of the 500 GB EMEA system and delete the remaining data. To do this, however, a clone of the system had to be transported quickly and securely across seven time zones. "You don't just transfer that amount of data via an FTP server," says André Wieprecht. "And transporting a copy of the system on hard drive by plane was not an option traveling 9,000 kilometers, more than 14 hours of flight time and a very tight schedule."

The solution: a transfer via Microsoft's Azure backbone. YASKAWA was already using Office 365 and other Microsoft applications throughout the group. As a Microsoft partner, Syntax is familiar with Microsoft's strengths and the options it offers. Syntax implemented multiple encryption and limited access points to ensure the security of the highly sensitive ERP data—after extraction, before conversion into a binary large object (BLOB) and during transport. Strict compliance regulations also required a password together with a decryption token.

### "A Relationship of Trust that is Quite Unique in this Form"

To be able to get the system back online as quickly as possible upon arrival, Syntax tested the entire migration process twice. This immediately showed the value of Syntax's expertise in cloud-operated SAP systems. The service provider hosted the full private cloud environment in its own data center, meaning Syntax only had to import the transferred data—an extremely challenging task due to the numerous subsystem interface.

The good planning and consistent preparation paid off. The Japanese system was shut down and cloned on Friday evening, local time. Syntax then transferred 4.5 terabytes of securely encrypted data via the Microsoft backbone. André Wieprecht attributes the successful migration (within a record-breaking six hours) largely to the professional support provided by Syntax. "It was not possible to fully automate the move; steps had to be initiated manually again and again, which required prompt coordination," he says. The project team was able to launch the system right on time at 7 p.m., Sunday evening. "The syntax experts were always available, and the response times were optimal, even though the project took place over a single weekend and at various times of the day and night," André Wieprecht said. "I have rarely experienced such professionalism combined with extraordinary commitment and understanding for an admittedly very demanding schedule. This creates a relationship of trust that is quite unique in this form."

## Better Performance, Faster Response Time, and Comprehensive Support

During ongoing operations, IT then customized the system and deleted all SAP data that was not required for the EMEA region. YASKAWA also used the move to the private cloud for further modernization measures. They updated their European SAP system to the latest database and Linux operating system versions. In combination with the geographical proximity, these changes resulted in a massive performance boost, improving system response times by a total of 40 percent—much to the delight of the specialist departments.

Even more important, however, was the simpler implementation of EMEA-specific configurations. "Add-ons, updates, or similar changes to the system now only need to be agreed on among the regional departments via the short

official channels. This reduces the coordination effort and implementation time enormously," says André Wieprecht. "And because Syntax takes care of ongoing operation and support as part of its managed services, we can always be sure that everything will work, even after major changes."

## Version Upgrading, Made Easy

Thanks to the stable running systems in the private cloud, YASKAWA Europe could promptly move on to the next project and upgrade from SAP EHP6 to EHP8. "Through the migration, the team gained a lot of knowledge about the interfaces and the individually configured connection settings of the subsystems. These issues are usually the biggest time wasters during such an upgrade, so we wanted to utilize the tailwind straight away," explains André Wieprecht.

The schedule was correspondingly ambitious: two and a half months, based on an Agile approach and with calculated risk. The motto: test as little as possible and as much as necessary. "We always knew that the Syntax team would be highly motivated, keep at it, and think along with us. Even when problems arose after the official closing time, we could rely on a contact person to get in touch straight away so that everything didn't grind to a halt until the next morning."

The upgrade project was completed on time thanks to the trusting cooperation.

## Future-Proof—with a Competent Partner at Your Side

YASKAWA Europe was then back in the starting gate with Syntax. The IT service provider needed to set up a test system for a possible switch to S/4HANA. “We expected a set-up time of at least four weeks. But Syntax managed this after just one week. To be honest, I still don’t know how,” laughs André Wieprecht. In view of the two successful projects, however, he is certain of one thing: YASKAWA Europe will continue to rely on Syntax for all innovative topics relating to SAP and the cloud.

### About Yaskawa

YASKAWA is a company of people pursuing their passion—motivated by the vision of a smarter future with advanced technologies that save valuable time and energy. And for us, every day offers new opportunities for progress.

We want to contribute to the development of society with our technologies by improving processes, advancing the performance and productivity of our industry, and thus creating a better quality of life. Of course, we also promote renewable energies for a healthy environment and a sustainably managed planet for us all.

Yaskawa Europe, headquartered in Hattersheim, Germany, provides mechatronics and robotics solutions for companies throughout Europe, the Middle East, and Africa. With subsidiaries in these regions and European production facilities, we operate close to the needs of the markets.



## About Syntax

Syntax offers a wide range of technology solutions, reliable professional services, comprehensive consulting services and application management services to keep mission-critical cloud applications reliable and future-proof.

With 50+ years of experience and more than 800 customers worldwide, Syntax has deep expertise in implementing and managing multi-ERP installations. Syntax works closely with SAP, AWS and Microsoft to ensure the secure and seamless operation of customer applications.

For further information visit [syntax.com/en-eu](https://syntax.com/en-eu)

