



Customer Stories Booklet

Microsoft Reference Stories

From practice for practice



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About Syntax

Syntax is a long-standing active partner in the Microsoft AI Cloud Partner Program and holds all available Solution Partner Designations in the areas of Azure, Modern Work, Security, and Private Cloud. Syntax also has specializations for Intelligent Automation and SAP on Microsoft Azure.

With over 50 years of experience and more than 900 customers worldwide, we support in particular the industrial SMEs and the retail sector in combining state-of-the-art Microsoft technology with deep ERP know-how for a secure and future-oriented digital transformation.



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FREUDENBERG
INNOVATING TOGETHER

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Neptune Energy is
consolidating its IT and
provider landscape into
the Azure cloud.



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Ascorium Industries

Global Ordering & Approval
via Microsoft Teams App

About the project

As part of a carve-out, Ascorium's SAP Ariba is being replaced within a very short timeframe by an application developed by Syntax, built on Microsoft Power Platform, operable via Microsoft Teams, and connected to SAP.

3
Continents

12
International
locations

3,000
Monthly views

100
Users per day

Challenges

Ascorium, a medium-sized automotive supplier with global operations, encountered technology challenges following its spin-off from its parent company. "We needed a new solution for purchase requisitions and authorization procedures," explains Stefan Baumeister, Group Logistics & ICT Manager.

In search of a provider capable of delivering comprehensive IT services from a single source, Ascorium chose Syntax. "We thoroughly evaluated the market and ultimately decided in favor of Syntax," Baumeister adds. Today, Syntax oversees all aspects of Microsoft, SAP, infrastructure, and client services across Ascorium's worldwide locations.

At a glance

Industry:
Automotive

Location:
Königswinter, Germany

Solution:
APurA developed on Power
Platform, integrated with SAP
and Teams.

Result:
Fully automated purchasing &
approval processes deployed
across 12 global locations with
100 daily users & 3,000 monthly
accesses.



Communication with Syntax is excellent. The team consistently responds to our individual requirements and is extremely customer-oriented.

And the international cooperation with our IT organisations in the various countries is also running smoothly. I really like that.

*- Stefan Baumeister
Group Logistics & ICT Manager
at Ascorium Industries*



Project approach and solution

Ascorium previously used the Ariba solution for purchase requisitions at locations with SAP systems, while relying on an in-house developed Notes application at other sites. “However, Notes was being phased out, and we wanted to avoid requiring employees with no prior SAP experience to undergo extensive training just for this one workflow,” says Stefan Baumeister.

To address this challenge, Ascorium turned to its carve-out and operating partner, Syntax. “The experts at Syntax proposed a simple yet effective solution using Microsoft Teams integrated with SAP – and they convinced us,” recalls Baumeister.

Placing orders via Microsoft Teams, integrated with SAP

In just three months, Syntax developed the Ascorium Purchase Application (APurA) using the Microsoft Power Platform, tailored to Ascorium’s needs. Employees at all locations can now create purchase requests directly within Microsoft Teams.

The approval process follows a streamlined workflow: first the line manager, then a subject matter expert,

and finally a manager with the appropriate approval limit. The entire process is automated, with notifications sent at each stage.

After approval, a PDF summary is generated, and through seamless SAP integration, the purchase order is automatically created and sent to the supplier — with options for the purchasing department to intervene if needed.



Goods Receipt Posting in SAP with one Click

Once an order is delivered, Microsoft Teams notifies the responsible order initiator. In APurA, the goods receipt can be posted to SAP with a single click.

This streamlined process allows the accounting department to quickly match the supplier invoice with the purchase order and goods receipt, ensuring fast processing and accurate inclusion in the payment run according to the defined payment terms.

Results

“Fast, simple, dynamic, and flexible – APurA is a hit,” says Stefan Baumeister. “The workflow is intuitive, running seamlessly through the familiar Teams interface without needing direct interaction with SAP.” This approach saves on training, reduces complexity, and cuts costs. APurA, available in English, is used across all Ascorium locations. Users can easily submit improvement requests via a simple ticketing system. “We’re now expanding more workflows on the Power Platform – with Syntax,” adds Baumeister.

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Ascorium Industries

Low Code, Full Power: Optimized ordering and approval processes via the Microsoft Teams app

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Broetje-Automation

Quality Assurance Management

In a project-driven environment, processes often involve a variety of different solutions and systems. Broetje-Automation partnered with Syntax to develop a solution for quality assurance that brings together all data sources in order to visualize insights as a single pane of glass.

Complex system landscape challenge

Broetje-Automation designs and builds machines and systems for industrial assembly and production, for customers in the aviation and wind energy sectors. At 23 locations in seven countries worldwide, the group supports companies in the automation of high-precision assembly processes. Quality assurance (QA), particularly for very large assemblies and structures, is a central and important part of the work.

The QA organization at Broetje-Automation requires access to various data sources, as specialized software is used depending on the area of application. For example, there is one solution for project management, in which milestones such as quality inspection points are mapped. There is another where incoming and outgoing goods are recorded, and a third one for quality management to organize the QA process.

In order to maintain an overview in this system landscape, the QA team at Broetje-Automation previously had to merge the different data sources for personnel and resource planning manually. However, this practice had one major drawback: the information from the systems had to be constantly updated. "The lack of interfaces meant that we had to invest a lot of time into manual data transfer, which was also prone to errors," recalls Steffen Ahlers, Project Manager Quality Assurance at Broetje-Automation. "The information was available — but in separately maintained systems."

Since more personnel are required at peak times during various project phases, forward-looking planning was particularly important. This was only possible to a very limited extent with the manual solution — due to the lack of central visualization of the data.

At a glance

Industry:
Mechanical and plant engineering

Location:
23 locations in 7 countries

Solution:
Software solution based on
Microsoft Power Platform

Result:
Clear dashboards and optimal
data visualization for quality
assurance



During our partnership with Syntax, the combination of technological expertise and a deep understanding of our industry-specific requirements was a crucial factor for success.

*- Steffen Ahlers
Project Manager Quality Assurance
at Broetje-Automation*

The logo for Broetje Automation, featuring the company name in a bold, sans-serif font with a red horizontal bar above it.

A single point of truth with Power Platform

As part of a larger company-wide digitalization initiative, all planning data should flow together in a central IT solution. “In dialogue with Syntax, we decided to develop our own application based on the Power Platform,” explains Steffen Ahlers.

“This resulted in a centralized planning tool that is now used as a single point of truth for project management in quality assurance.” With the app, the Broetje-Automation QA team can view and update the status of project milestones at any time via an intuitive user interface.

All important information is available, from outstanding work steps, material deliveries, and installation status, through to planned commissioning and the specific tasks carried out by team members on site at the customer.

“Assets such as an order or drawings of components can be retrieved with just a few clicks using our new tool — regardless of the employees’ devices,” says Steffen Ahlers.

Another significant advantage over the previous approach is that the newly developed solution is connected to various other IT systems, which in turn can be updated via the app.

For example, booking vehicles from the fleet can be done as easily as checking incoming supplier documents. “With the new tool, we can track what has been done and when, right down to the individual component. This makes our work much easier and noticeably increases the quality of service for our customers,” emphasizes Steffen Ahlers.

Clear insights, directly from ERP data

Another item on Broetje-Automation’s wish list was the ability to visualize project-related data stored in the ERP. “Depending on the project and phase, we might receive several hundred deliveries within a week, that need to be checked. We wanted a tool that would help us recognize such peaks early and plan for it”, says Steffen Ahlers. To provide the QA team with all the relevant information, Syntax developed several Power BI dashboards to get ahead of the problem before it occurs.

Further rollouts and solutions planned

“Syntax worked really hard to hit our requirements and we definitely benefited from their technological expertise,” summarizes Steffen Ahlers.

“The partnership was also always constructive and highly trusting. Right from the start, the entire project was characterized by collegial interaction, efficient teamwork and remarkable commitment.” And Steffen Ahlers is confident that this will not be Broetje-Automation and Syntax’s last project. “We are already evaluating other productive projects.”


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Caverion

Full steam ahead into the cloud

„SAP is our central ERP system and our most important business application. It contains our master data, and virtually all of our business processes are mapped there – the heart of the company,” explains Florian Kazak, Manager, Enterprise Systems at Caverion Group. Previously, the system ran on - premises in a data center in Finland, managed by one of the major players in the IT service provider market. However, Caverion follows a public cloud -first strategy, and the company had already moved numerous workloads to the Microsoft Azure cloud. Now it was the turn of the critical SAP system. However, in order to further develop SAP services, not only the migration, but also the future SAP Basis operation should be taken over by a new partner.

„Our goal was to migrate a system landscape with around 45 SAP systems to Azure and, in the process, to consolidate the infrastructure,” said Florian Kazak. Fewer servers mean less monitoring, patching and maintenance effort – and that saves time and money in the cloud as well. Furthermore, the public cloud offers Caverion a number of advantages over its own data center: Greater flexibility in designing the landscape; servers can be started up, shut down or deployed at any time – and systems that are not needed at night, for example, can be shut down by default. Equally important for Caverion, however, was greater flexibility in terms of service providers. Because in the cloud, apart from the hosting provider, it is significantly easier to switch partners or to specifically purchase services from a variety of companies.

Cloud know -how, SAP expertise and nearshore support wanted

Caverion found that a new SAP partner would offer even better value for money – despite the fact that the previous service provider delivered the SAP Basis service offshore from India. The building technology specialist wanted a near -shore model for support anyway, since the majority of the company's IT is located in Europe, especially in Scandinavia. Furthermore, the future service provider should have high

At a glance

Industry:
Technical building equipment

Location:
9 branches in
10 European countries

Solution:
Migration of approximately 45 SAP
systems to the Microsoft Azure
cloud

Result:
SAP in Azure: 40% faster response
times, 10 times faster batch jobs,
more efficient support.



From the very beginning, Syntax has impressed with the professional competence of the architects, the entire landscape, how it was designed and built. I would gladly undertake such a project again with the experts from Syntax. And the ongoing operations from the near-shore location are also running smoothly and competently.

*- Florian Kazak
Manager Enterprise Systems,
Caverion Group*

Caverion
Building Performance

SAP and public cloud expertise and, above all, a good fit for Caverion with its more than 14,000 employees in terms of company size.

„We no longer wanted a provider with several hundred thousand employees,“ emphasizes Florian Kazak. The providers who met these requirements were invited to present their ideas and services. One company stood out in particular from this group: Syntax. „Professional competence and the highest level of technical expertise, a strong European business with a powerful German branch and near-shore support in Europe, partners on equal terms – that’s exactly what we envisioned“, says Florian Kazak happily. „We were particularly impressed by the transparent approach and the clear ideas about Syntax.“ From the outset, there was openness about how the service would be provided from the EU, and the experts directly demonstrated in detail what aspects such as server sizing, backup, failover strategy, etc., would look like. Syntax has clearly made an advance investment and also taken a risk. Overall, including the price-performance ratio, it was a perfect package exactly as we had envisioned.“

SAP migration using an import/export approach

After the service provider was selected and the contract negotiations were completed, the partners began planning and designing the future landscape and determined how the SAP systems would communicate with other Caverion applications running on other Azure subscriptions. However, the specific migration procedure was determined from the outset: Caverion had decided against Lift & Shift and for an SAP import/export approach to first reinstall server, OS and databases and only then import SAP, not only because of the old infrastructure. In addition, extensive test migrations were planned to keep risks low and minimize downtime.

Smooth go-live

For the go-live, the production systems were divided into two groups and were to be migrated over two consecutive weekends. The largest database contained five terabytes of data – a challenge for such a small timeframe. And yet the partners were fully on schedule. The only scary moment: When thousands of end users accessed the system at the beginning of the week, performance problems suddenly arose. However, the error was quickly identified: The consolidated, high-performing servers were using a configuration inherited

from the old data center so that the servers only used a fraction of the available memory. After correcting the memory parameters, the system ran as desired – and even faster.


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High-performance SAP system in the cloud

The performance figures for SAP on Azure speak for themselves: System response times are up to 40 percent shorter, and batch jobs now run up to ten times faster. The export/import migration approach, the Azure cloud, and the reorganized databases have clearly paid off here. In the next step, Syntax takes over the concrete optimization and rightsizing of the servers and then reserves the corresponding Azure capacities. Because if companies commit to a longer period of time, Microsoft offers discounts, „and that saves us money,“ Florian Kazak knows. For SAP basic operations, the IT service provider also developed a solution using Microsoft Power Automate that automatically creates SAP monitoring alerts as tickets in ServiceNow, Caverio's ITSM tool – with a very sophisticated logic that prevents „flooding“. And thanks to the integration into Syntax's own ticketing system, tickets can now be moved to the support team without any email correspondence or telephone calls. This reduces the effort for everyone involved – and ensures quick troubleshooting.

Good planning leads to success

Florian Kazak recommends that companies facing a similar SAP migration define responsibilities, availability, and processes specifically during the contract drafting phase to avoid misunderstandings. „Our particular lesson learned was – and this is also a tip for others – to address the issue of 'resourcing' early on the service provider side, but also on our own side.“ Internally, ultimately around 20 colleagues were involved; however, they need to be warned in advance and reserved for the right times,“ explains Florian Kazak. Therefore, it is important to also allow sufficient time for the

early planning phase – as well as for the design and architecture. „Those who discuss, approve, and document the important aspects in detail at the beginning can later easily process the migration and implement it smoothly.“ Furthermore, the IT expert would place even greater emphasis on testing next time – as it is a real time sink, but also an absolute necessity to ensure a fully functional system.

Overall, Florian Kazak is very satisfied with the SAP migration: „We wanted to carry out a project that end users basically wouldn't even notice, and then at some point would realize: wow, the systems are running much faster.“ And we managed that.

Syntax was exactly the right partner for this, and we are looking forward to when the SAP basis operation will be fully up and running soon – this will save us a lot of time in IT.“



Syntax has proven to be a reliable and competent partner for Caverio's SAP basis work. We are convinced that with Syntax, we will not only make smooth progress, but also achieve better performance.

– Heikki Linnanen
CIO, Caverio



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EDEKA Nordbayern-Sachsen-Thüringen

Power Platform meets SAP: EDEKA and Syntax develop cloud-based QM solution

The project in brief

Together with Syntax, EDEKA Nordbayern-Sachsen-Thüringen (NST) developed a cloud-based IT solution for quality management. QualiFlow serves as a central communication hub for all stakeholders and, thanks to a wide range of automation options, is the basis or fast and efficient control of all central quality management processes.

Challenges

Quality management (QM) is both an important and complex task for EDEKA Nordbayern-Sachsen-Thüringen (NST). With about 900 retail stores supplied, product defect reports can occur, which must be followed up quickly and effectively in coordination with various stakeholders. However, the previous monolithic IT landscape was increasingly slowing down the process. "There was no relational database, but many individual documents," explained Stefan Hirsch, Project Manager Quality Management at EDEKA NST.

"In addition, numerous media disruptions caused by different systems and formats resulted in high storage costs and ultimately outdated performance." Together with his colleague Michael Büchs, Project Manager Corporate Development at EDEKA NST, Hirsch explored various options for modernization and had a clear idea of what the new solution should offer: central control of all relevant QM processes via an IT platform integrated with the ERP and thirdparty systems.

At a glance

Industry:
Wholesale and retail

Location:
Rottendorf, Germany

Solution:
QualiFlow

Result:
Faster and more effective control of all quality management processes via a central IT platform integrated with SAP and scalable in the cloud.



A key success factor in the development of QualiFlow was the close and trusting collaboration with the Syntax team. Using an agile approach, we were able to develop an extremely powerful and futureproof solution for our demanding quality management within just a few months.

- Stefan Hirsch,
Project Manager Quality Management
at EDEKA NST



Project approach and solution

Together with Syntax, EDEKA NST developed the QualiFlow QM solution. It is based on the Microsoft Power Platform with a standardized database in Microsoft Dataverse and seamless connection to the SAP backend and other systems. QualiFlow combines data from the Azure Cloud with documents from SharePoint and presents everything via a standardized, browser-based user interface that clearly displays the current status of all individual measures in various quality processes. Using the example of a product defect report shows how seamlessly this works:

1. The affected store enters the relevant information in an online form
2. QualiFlow then automatically creates a ticket and informs all relevant stakeholders by email
3. Direct communication with suppliers also takes place via the system; they can enter the required information directly using a corresponding form
4. The information is also compared directly with the current stock levels to prevent affected batches from continuing to be delivered to the individual stores

Stefan attributes the rapid commissioning of the solution after just a few months to the agile development approach with short cycles and regular feedback loops. Finished functional modules were tested and optimized directly. "We also closely involved the future users right from the start, which made extensive training after the project was completed superfluous," he explained.

Result

QualiFlow eliminates all media disruptions and maps the entire process chain digitally and seamlessly. The high degree of automation increases efficiency, and the seamless documentation ensures comprehensive transparency. This facilitates the preparation and follow-up of product recalls and is essential for processes that must be reported to the authorities. Pre-prepared, personalized mailings with integrated forms speed up time-critical communication with suppliers, and the system automatically reminds users of any outstanding feedback. QualiFlow also impresses in terms of performance—partly because it only retrieves the data relevant to the respective process from SAP.

According to Hirsch, the fact that the project was successfully completed under great time pressure is due in large part to the excellent cooperation with Syntax. "We immediately noticed that they were a dynamic team with a deep technical understanding and extensive experience in the field of quality management. QualiFlow has become a powerful communication and collaboration hub that meets EDEKA's high standards and has been extremely well received by the workforce."


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Endress+Hauser

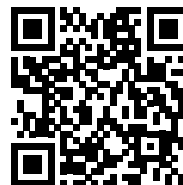
People for Process Automation

Endress + Hauser

Power Automate for everyone – Platform as a game changer

500+ users, double the flow rate – made possible by open access, clear rules and a strong community.

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Freudenberg Home and Cleaning Solutions (FHCS)

Simple SAP approvals via Microsoft Teams thanks to approval app

The project in brief

Freudenberg Home and Cleaning Solutions (FHCS) optimized its approval processes in SAP with an innovative solution based on the Microsoft Power Platform. The approval solution developed by Syntax enables direct integration of Microsoft Teams with the ERP backend and ensures an efficient, more transparent, and user-friendly approval process.

Challenges

FHCS receives countless “non-production” orders every day, which are approved via SAP. To make the approval process more efficient for management, the company had developed an internal IT tool that automatically notified the decisionmaker by email. However, various updates and adjustments to the ERP system made this process increasingly inefficient and ultimately outdated. “We constantly had to find complicated workarounds, and our tool did not allow mobile use, for example, which is now a must-have for all approval processes. At some point it had simply outlived its usefulness,” explained Christian Keller, Global IT Director Processes and Systems

at FHCS. The decision was therefore made to replace the homegrown system with more modern software. Christian and his team had a clear idea of the desired performance profile of this successor. “We wanted a secure solution that integrates seamlessly into existing systems and can be operated intuitively in order to minimize the approval effort for managers and offer maximum transparency.”

Key requirements

- Intuitive solution
- Seamless integration into existing system landscape
- Secure and guideline-compliant processes with a high level of transparency

At a glance

Industry:
Cleaning and household products

Location:
Weinheim, Germany

Solution:
Approval app based on the Microsoft Power Platform

Result:
Fast, efficient, and secure processing of SAP order approvals via Microsoft Teams



The close and trusting cooperation with Syntax was a key factor in our ability to implement this pioneering project in a timely manner and complete it within the planned resources. Thanks to their in-depth knowledge of SAP and Microsoft, we have jointly created a solution that serves as a blueprint for further innovative digitization projects at the ERP workplace interface.

*- Christian Keller,
Global IT Director Processes and Systems at FHCS*

Project approach and solution

The idea quickly emerged of using the Microsoft Power Platform to develop an application that is directly connected to the SAP system as a user-friendly front end and enables users to issue approvals intuitively and without an extra login as part of their digital workplace. The basis was to be “Approvals,” an app fully integrated into Teams that FHCS was already using for other business areas. Longstanding partner Syntax developed a corresponding interface that displays new approval requests from SAP directly in Teams. If approval is granted, it is automatically fed back to the ERP system. What sounds simple in theory was associated with a number of challenges during the technical implementation. The project team needed a great deal of creativity, especially for synchronizing the data, to adapt the existing SAP workflows and ensure a stable retransmission of the approval decisions. Despite the technological complexity, this was achieved quickly—especially thanks to the continuous and close exchange with Syntax, which enabled an agile project organization with fast feedback loops and adjustments. “Throughout the entire project, there was a high level of trust in our communication,” said Tatjana Wilkening, Global IT Analyst SCM at FHCS. “We could rely on the SAP and Microsoft experts from Syntax to understand our requirements precisely and find suitable solutions.”

Result

The new approval system is successfully in use and considerably simplifies the approval processes in SAP for management at all levels. Approvals can be granted on PCs and mobile devices directly via Teams or Outlook; a prior login with password entry in the ERP backend is not necessary. When an order is completed in SAP, the responsible manager automatically receives a message with all relevant information via the Approval App in Teams and can grant or deny approval directly with one click. The introduction of the new solution was a complete success. It was accepted by employees from day one, as the training required was minimal thanks to its intuitive handling. However,



the familiar and intuitive user interface is just one of many reasons for the high level of user acceptance. “The streamlined and transparent processes lead to a noticeable improvement in process efficiency for everyone involved,” Tatjana explained. In addition to the desired results, the project also serves as a model for other digital transformation initiatives in which intuitive front-end solutions are combined with ERP back-end processes. “Even though we used existing applications and tools, there has never been a comparable solution before. Together with Syntax, we have done real pioneering work here to make business-critical processes very user-friendly.”

Key benefits of the solution

- Simple approval via Teams without SAP login
- Flexible use, even on mobile devices
- Work in a familiar Microsoft user interface
- More transparent and efficient processes

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Freudenberg Home and Cleaning Solutions (FHCS)

Seamlessly Bridging Innovation – The Power of Templates

With the Syntain app, FHCS connects SAP and Microsoft, harmonizes processes in 14 plants and increases efficiency – thanks to templates, clear governance structures and seamless system integration.

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HIMA Paul Hildebrandt GmbH

Securely positioned digitally and for the future

Innovation and progress have defined the development of HIMA Paul Hildebrandt GmbH since its founding in 1908.

The HIMA Group is the worldwide independent provider of safety-oriented automation solutions for the process and railway industries to protect people, the environment, and economic assets. For more than 50 years, HIMA has been considered a reliable partner of the world's largest companies in the process industry (including chemicals, petrochemicals, and energy as well as oil and gas).

The family-owned company, headquartered in Germany, now has more than 800 employees worldwide and ensures that industrial plants run safely and flawlessly in the digital age with „Smart Safety“. As a globally operating company, HIMA uses digital transformation to become more customer-oriented and has made its internal IT systems fit for the future. To modernize and convert the entire global IT infrastructure of the HIMA Group, the security expert brought Syntax on board as a partner for the transformation of its IT.

Centralized and digital – via OneERP and OneIT to OneGroup

Under the name OneGroup, HIMA decided on a comprehensive modernization strategy with the aim of offering customers worldwide a consistently high quality of products and services through standardized processes and technologies. Against this background, a global ERP system was to be introduced under the project name OneERP, and a new communication and collaboration infrastructure was to be centrally provided under the name OneIT.

At a glance

Industry:
Engineering

Location:
Brühl, Germany,
global presence

Solution:
Modernization of IT infrastructure
with Syntax Enterprise Cloud,
Microsoft Azure, and
standardization.

Result:
Global networking, increased
efficiency, flexible services,
scalable performance, and
maximum security.



We were looking for professional experts with a broad service portfolio, global proximity to our locations and a deep understanding of the requirements of medium-sized companies. That's why Syntax was chosen.

- Rudolf Lein,
Director Global IT,
HIMA Paul Hildebrandt GmbH





The goal: Optimizing collaboration within the HIMA Group through greater transparency and central availability of data, orders, and processes. The isolated solutions that emerged during international growth in previous years should be consolidated on a future-proof process and IT platform. The challenge: the IT infrastructure, which has grown over many years, is heterogeneous and decentrally organized, and there is a complex interface landscape.

Thus, the OneIT project played a key role as an enabler for the larger business transformation. The project aimed not only to create the infrastructural prerequisites for OneERP and a unified platform for

globally networked work, but also to modernize and standardize the IT equipment at all locations in Europe, Asia, and the USA. A big task!

“It was clear to us that we wanted to undertake this complete renewal within the framework of OneIT not with a simple service provider, but only with a competent partner at our side,” explains Rudolf Lein, Director Global IT at HIMA.

Phase one: Global connection to the private cloud

Following the launch of OneIT, the first step was to create the appropriate infrastructure for a global IT application landscape. „Here, Syntax’s extensive know-how in architectural matters proved particularly beneficial to us during the consulting and planning process,” says Lein.

HIMA initially established a central data center hub in Europe with Syntax, which hosts the Active Directory, the global mail system, and various applications used across the whole enterprise, and makes them accessible to all employees in a secure environment. This „control center” is operated in the Syntax Enterprise Cloud.

The next step involved gradually phasing out the old legacy infrastructures and connecting all locations to the new hub in the Syntax data center. This was achieved by establishing global WAN links, which are currently being optimized using an SD-WAN concept.

Since the subsidiaries cannot operate entirely without their own IT infrastructure, a harmonization concept was also needed here. Therefore, a highly available, secure and standardized network and server infrastructure was created for all locations under the heading „Standard Office Infrastructure” – based on a modular system. „The locations were divided according to the number of employees, following the model of common clothing sizes XS, S, M, L, XL, and assigned to corresponding standard hardware configurations,” Lein recalls. „This has helped us a lot to deploy the new hardware efficiently and in accordance with requirements, without repeated discussions about the number of access points or switches needed.”

Phase two: From „No Cloud“ to „Cloud first“

While the connection to the private cloud was still in progress, HIMA decided to take another big step towards a digital future. “At the beginning of 2019, we broke with old patterns and decided to, in the spirit of ‘Cloud first’, increasingly rely on the public cloud in the future, more precisely on Microsoft Azure,” says Lein.

The decision to use Microsoft Azure was based on strategic reasons, as HIMA planned to source its entire communication and collaboration infrastructure from the public cloud using Microsoft 365 in the future.

Further arguments included improved cost efficiency and the ability to offer certain services more flexibly on a platform basis – not only internally, but also to end customers. “However, such a move is easier said than done and requires comprehensive planning, architectural know-how, and a realistic assessment,” explains Lein. “Do we have sufficient bandwidth available to use the application efficiently from the public cloud?” How do we adequately secure access to the applications? How do we prevent a leak of critical data? And how do we securely integrate these applications into our on-premises IT landscape? Therefore, we were pleased to have Syntax, already experienced public cloud and Azure professionals, on our side.”

Following initial pilot projects, a central workload was migrated to the public cloud using the Computer-AidedEngineering (CAE) system at the beginning of 2021. The computationally intensive CAD software is the basis of all major plant projects. By operating in the cloud, HIMA benefits from demand-oriented scalable computing power and high global availability.

Phase three: Safely and flexibly into the future

As part of its cloud-first strategy, HIMA is currently planning its next Azure projects together with Syntax – and is utilizing the expertise of the IT service provider. “Syntax plans the appropriate hybrid cloud architecture with us, continuously develops it according to our requirements, and, within the framework of managed cloud services, ensures that the backend runs simply and without disruption.”

Furthermore, HIMA focused on another aspect where Syntax could provide support as an equal partner: IT Security Services. As an expert in functional safety and security, the company itself offers its customers numerous services in the field of cyber security for industrial IT. Therefore, the highest possible security requirements apply to the company’s own IT infrastructure.

In addition to the existing perimeter protection, further security services will be added in parallel with the gradual migration to the public cloud. The great advantage: Syntax can provide all services, including security monitoring in the sense of a Security Operations Center operating 24/7; HIMA, as a medium-sized company, couldn’t afford to do this economically on their own.

HIMA will continue to shoulder all these upcoming projects hand in hand with Syntax, because, as Rudolf Lein says: “Syntax has proven itself not only as a reliable service provider for the smooth operation of our IT landscape. Thanks to sound expertise and dedicated employees, we have received exactly what we need: a strong partner on equal footing for the realization of the OneIT strategy as the backbone of our digital transformation.”


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Julius Berger International

Modern client management in the cloud

450 Clients migrated to the cloud

72 Intune-ready applications migrated

"As a global company, we need flexible, secure and reliable IT structures, which is why the cloud is a central component of our strategy," emphasizes Carsten Thielking, Head of IT at Julius Berger International (JBI). With over 350 employees and headquarters in Wiesbaden, JBI is one of the largest engineering firms in the world.

The construction specialist supports its clients with its General Planner Plus approach. This precisely-coordinated portfolio of planning, consulting, project management, and in-depth construction management services expertise follows national and international standards, including both individual partial services and comprehensive overall planning along the entire construction value chain.

Unpatched end devices as a security risk

At JBI, various systems such as SAP ERP are already running in a private cloud environment. During further IT modernization, Carsten Thielking and his team set their sights on client management. Previously, administration was carried out on-premises via the System Centre Configuration Manager (SCCM) from Microsoft. However, this approach had a significant disadvantage.

"Some functions and security patches for the operating system could only be installed if the users were connected to the company network, either physically or via VPN," explains Christoph Mahler, IT project manager at JBI. However, as many employees in the field do not need a VPN for their daily work, their end devices were sometimes not updated for months and posed a potential security risk.

At a glance

Industry:
Construction and engineering

Location:
Wiesbaden, Germany

Solution:
Client management in Azure Cloud

Result:
Increased IT security and efficiency



What is remarkable about working with Syntax is the combination of technical expertise and extremely high commitment. At every stage of the project, we could be sure that the team understood our precise requirements, and quickly developed suitable solutions.

- Carsten Thielking
Head of IT, Julius Berger International



Ongoing migration for business continuity

In the future, the computers are to be managed via Microsoft Intune instead of locally via SCCM. "As our application landscape was already running entirely in Azure, we also wanted to use the platform for future client management," explained Carsten Thielking. Syntax was responsible for the planning and implementation. The IT service provider, cloud specialist, and Microsoft partner has been the single point of contact for JBI on all IT issues for many years. Besides SAP hosting and

infrastructure, Syntax also provides support for end devices and users. The Syntax experts provisioned the new system in Azure, took over the packaging of the on-prem software required for the move, and made a total of 72 applications Intune-ready. After a successful pilot phase with individual specialist departments, the roll-out proceeded with the successive migration of all 450 clients. To ensure an uninterrupted working day, users could choose when their client should start its journey to the cloud within certain time windows. The entire move was completed after four weeks.

More dynamism and flexibility

With the new Modern Managed Clients, JBI benefits from dynamic and efficient management of all end devices via MS Intune. This starts with the configuration of new devices. These can be put into operation quickly and easily with just a few clicks thanks to Syntax's pre-provisioning stored in the tenant. "A quick login with the company address is enough, and the standard system is set up automatically, including all drivers and authorizations," reports Christoph Mahler. All apps are installed cloud-based via Intune, which simplifies patch and update management immensely. Packaging and manual installation to the on-prem servers are a thing of the past. The gradual migration to Windows 11 is also much less complicated thanks to cloud-based client management. "Switching to Modern Managed Clients in the cloud makes it much easier to manage the end devices. In addition, we now benefit from better IT security for the devices thanks to software that is always up-to-date. Syntax implemented this quickly, smoothly, and without interruption for our colleagues," says Carsten Thielking.

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Neptune Energy

Complex carve-out in record time

Neptune Energy, headquartered in Hanover, is a leading German oil and gas production company. Around 420 employees help to produce these raw materials from a total of 31 fields across Germany. Neptune Energy in Germany faced particular IT challenges as it exited the existing group structures at the end of 2023.

Until now, the complex and multifaceted IT environment with numerous special solutions was hosted by the group on an Azure tenant and made centrally available to all subsidiaries. German society was also fully integrated into this infrastructure, from the architecture to individual applications and the end devices used. Only the SAP ERP and HCM solutions ran in a private cloud environment in a data center in France. In contrast to this centralized hosting, there was the heterogeneous landscape of various, globally distributed IT service providers, all of whom had to be involved in the project due to their know-how regarding the individual configurations. And above all, there was enormous pressure to succeed. „As operators of safety-critical facilities, such as those for natural gas production, we could not afford any unplanned IT downtime. We had to ensure a seamless transition without any production downtime,” says Frederic Sager, CFO of Neptune Energy Germany.

Looking for a competent partner with a broad service portfolio

Neptune Energy was therefore looking for a suitable IT service provider and had very precise ideas in this regard: „High-level SAP and Azure expertise for the technically complex execution of a carve-out and the subsequent operation of the systems was just one aspect,”

explains Cindy Schindler, Head of IT at Neptune Energy Germany.

„As part of the project, we also wanted to consolidate our heterogeneous provider landscape.” The partner sought was to serve as the single point of contact for all

At a glance

Industry:
Energy

Location:
Hanover, Germany

Solution:
Complex carve-out and client management in the Microsoft Azure Cloud

Result:
Successful migration and improved IT security.



What impressed us was the commitment of the entire team, right up to management. Syntax always had an open ear and genuine interest in us, our long-term requirements, our markets, and our challenges.

- Frederic Sager
CFO, Neptune Energy Germany



NEPTUNE
ENERGY

internal and external IT inquiries and had to offer a correspondingly broad portfolio of services – from application and provider management, from workplace and security services to the operation of a company-wide service desk. Even during the tendering process, one applicant caught Neptune Energy's eye. From the very beginning, the Syntax team impressed with honest communication and proved that they had thoroughly examined the specific requirements. „There were no standard presentations, but rather a customized offer that was tailored entirely to our situation,” recalls Frederic Sager. „Furthermore, we quickly realized that we were clearly on an equal footing in the negotiations.” Potential risks were specifically identified, and possible solutions were developed collaboratively. Furthermore, Syntax ensured cost transparency. This combination of competence and openness convinced Neptune Energy, and Syntax was awarded the contract.

Per „Lift and Shift” into the Azure Cloud

The official kick-off followed the conclusion of the contract negotiations. Together, the partners opted for a relocation model based on the lift-and-shift principle. All SAP and non-SAP systems, workplace services, and all company-wide used applications, data and

workloads should be moved without changes from the existing global instance to a new Azure tenant used exclusively by Neptune Energy Germany,” emphasizes Cindy Schindler. Following a comprehensive assessment of the specific implementation, a migration in three major steps proved to be the most effective approach. Syntax, in collaboration with the numerous IT service providers also involved, took care of preparing the target landscape in the Azure Cloud, thus setting the course for the three-stage go-live.

Go-live for Workplace Services and global applications

The first step towards the future independence of Neptune Energy Germany was taken only four months after the launch. As part of the „User Go-live”, all Workplace Services, emails and underlying data hosted on the old tenant were moved to the new Azure instance set up by Syntax. Applications used exclusively by the German subsidiary were also running in the new environment. And all employees received devices and new email addresses pre-configured by Syntax. „These noticeable changes in the working environment made our IT-related independence truly tangible for the first time,” says Cindy Schindler. „And the first carve-

out, which went so smoothly, motivated us for the projects that were still pending.” The next step followed just one month later: The applications previously operated group-wide and „shared” with Germany, such as those for document management, were extracted from the global cloud environment and set up within the new Azure tenant.

SAP Carve-out: A good preparation is half the battle in a migration.

The biggest challenge was the third step: carving out the SAP systems from a private cloud environment and subsequently migrating them to the much more standardized Azure cloud. The partners had already agreed on the procedure: They first created a complete copy of the global systems, including all specific adaptations, from which the data relevant to Germany was then extracted and transferred to the new environment. To make this move as smooth as possible, the Syntax experts set up a test system in Azure, in which various scenarios had already been tested and evaluated over several months and test cycles.

„In this context, the feedback from the individual departments which work with SAP on a daily basis and had to thoroughly test the functionality of the system in the new environment was particularly important,“ explains Frederic Sager. „For example, the accounting department could be sure that the upcoming month-end closing would also work in the migrated system.“

After all departments had greenlighted, the go-live could start as planned. On Friday evening, the SAP systems with all the up-to-date data for Germany were cloned, then shut down, and the copy was imported into the new environment within one and a half days. With this successful move, Neptune Energy Germany was now completely decoupled from the old environment in terms of IT. Cindy Schindler primarily attributes the fact that everything worked so well to the active collaboration with Syntax: „In such a complex project, good communication is essential. Problems must be addressed from both sides and discussed openly and in a solution-oriented manner. This was always the case.“

All services from a single source

As a Service Integration and Management (SIAM) partner, Syntax now handles application management, operates the company-wide service desk based on the ServiceNow ticketing platform, and manages workplace services, including the management of the necessary infrastructure and the end devices. Furthermore, the IT service provider is also responsible for access permissions and Azure Active Directory, and offers comprehensive cybersecurity services from its Security Operations Center and acts as a single



point of contact, serving as the first point of contact for all IT-related inquiries on both the customer and supplier side.

Furthermore, the successful three-stage carve-out also marked the starting point for a long-term collaboration on future IT projects. And according to Frederic Sager, this is not solely due to Syntax's proven expertise: „We have worked with many suppliers and service providers, and such commitment and proactive approach as with Syntax is truly very rare.“



The fact that we were able to successfully complete this complex three-stage carve-out in just 6 months and 9 days is thanks to the extremely good and collegial cooperation with Syntax. Even when things didn't go as planned during preparation, the team always came up with a well-thought-out, suitable solution.

*- Cindy Schindler
Head of IT, Neptune Energy Germany*

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Your contact persons

Antje Rosendahl

Microsoft Partner Manager,
Microsoft Professional Services
antje.rosendahl@syntax.com

Constantin Klein

Global Product Manager Microsoft,
Global Solution Enablement
constantin.klein@syntax.com

Sinan Ioannidis

Global Head of Microsoft Professional Services,
Microsoft Professional Services
sinan.ioannidis@syntax.com

Learn more at syntax.com
or email us at hello@syntax.com





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