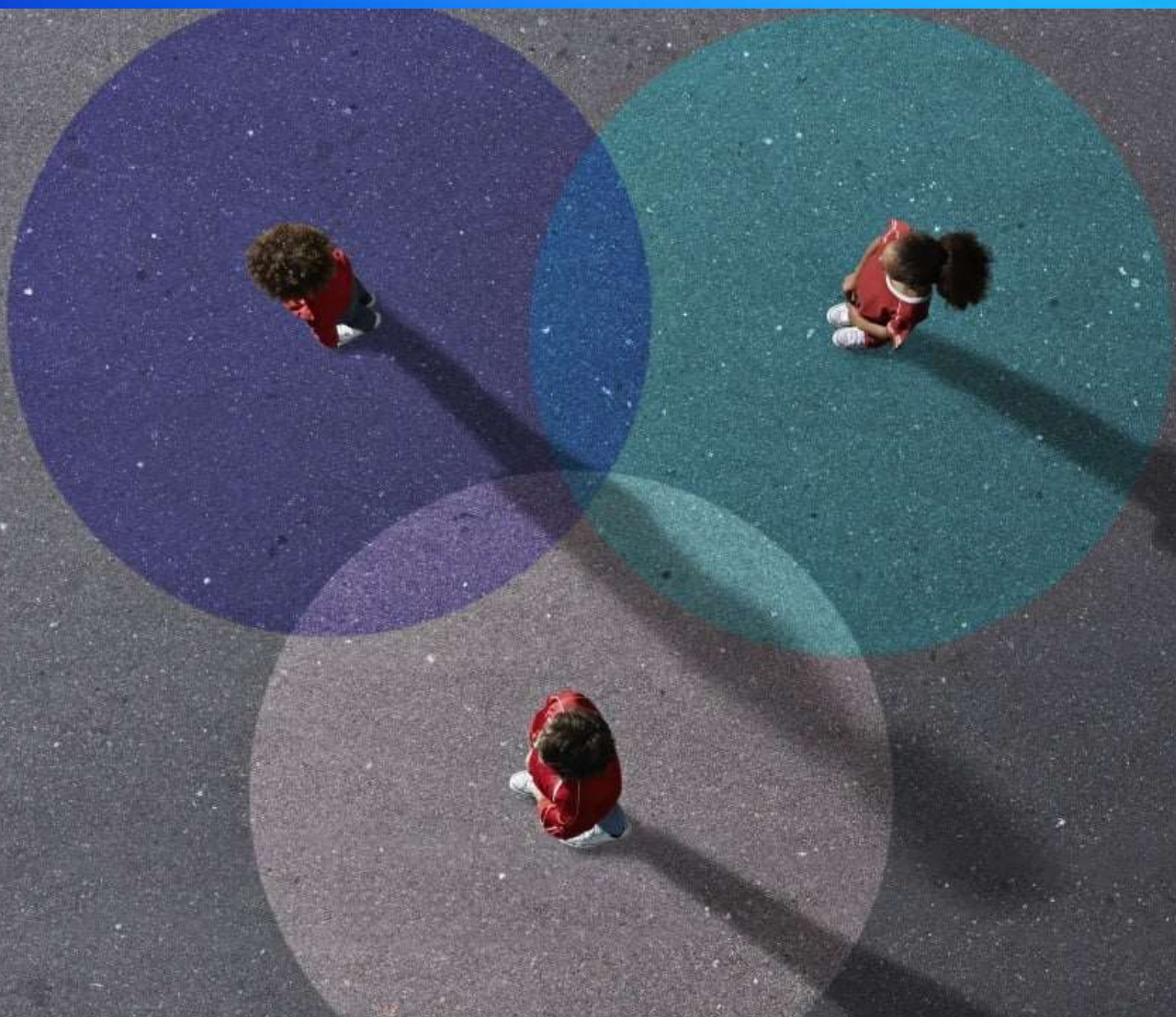


# Greenfield, brownfield, and BLUEFIELD™: The different approaches to SAP S/4HANA migration



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The best approach for your ECC to S/4HANA migration is the one that works best for your business. While that seems obvious, what's not so obvious is how to go about selecting the right one.

We're going to talk about the three main ways you can execute your S/4HANA migration by using the greenfield, brownfield, or BLUEFIELD approach. To help you evaluate the method that will suit your company best, let's break down each method by examining their benefits and challenges.

## Understanding the different approaches to S/4HANA migration

If you want to execute an S/4HANA migration, you've probably evaluated the use of a brownfield vs. a greenfield approach. More recently, many businesses have opted to roll out their migration using the BLUEFIELD approach. But what are the differences, benefits and challenges of each?

### What is the greenfield approach?

The greenfield approach treats the migration as a completely new implementation. When using greenfield, you would set up and configure a totally new ERP landscape that's independent of any of your existing systems. Alternatively, you could also migrate data from your existing systems.

### Advantages of a greenfield approach

Setting up a new ERP environment enables you to reevaluate, standardize, and redesign all your processes. If you're new to SAP and its implementation, or if your systems are outdated or inefficient, greenfield is a great place to start. Not being tied to legacy data in this case is a big advantage if you're looking for a lightweight and more efficient migration.

Now, you and your team can look at your current business needs and plan for the future. That way, you can immediately take steps to adapt the new system to account for those plans.

### Disadvantages of a greenfield approach

Starting from scratch will have its challenges such as more effort, higher costs, and longer project timelines. Another factor to consider is when you set up a new system, you may overlook important features or even lose historical context still relevant to your business.

Also, your users may require training during the adoption and onboarding stages, which could cause even further delays

BLUEFIELD can ensure maximum flexibility thanks to the selective migration approach. The plan is to migrate only relevant data, modules, and systems. Once that's done, the focus can move onto data optimization in the target system to really take advantage of the full potential of SAP S/4HANA. But what about the legacy data? There are various strategies for handling legacy data, including [archiving](#) or [system decommissioning](#). In short, the legacy data can be moved to a cost-effective storage solution and still remain accessible for legal purposes.

Now that you have a better understanding of the three approaches that are available to you, it's down to you and your teams to figure out which one will work best.

### **What is the brownfield approach?**

The brownfield approach is essentially where you would transform your current ERP system into S/4HANA by performing a system conversion. This method takes advantage of your existing system instead of creating a brand new one.

### **Advantages of a brownfield approach**

Compared to the greenfield method, you'll experience less risk with minimal disruption to your current systems because you'll be retaining your existing processes and functionalities. By retaining your systems, you'll also find that the migration process is faster.

### **Disadvantages of a brownfield approach**

Yes, system retention is a huge advantage, but it can also mean that you're limiting your ability to innovate and optimize. If you have processes that aren't as streamlined as they could be, these are the blockers you'll be bringing into the new system too. This means you'll need to extensively test all your systems and applications during and after the migration.

### **SNP BLUEFIELD: A Hybrid Solution**

Take the advantages of both the greenfield and brownfield approaches and you have BLUEFIELD – an effective hybrid strategy that combines their strengths. With 12,500 projects successfully completed using the BLUEFIELD approach, what is making this hybrid grow in popularity?

With BLUEFIELD, you'll have the opportunity to select and migrate only the data and processes relevant to your business. This allows you to retain customizations without redesigning your entire system. It's a fully documented, easy-to-understand transformation that can be executed according to your specifications, and the migrated data is consistent.

When Airbus Commercial Aircraft were looking to upgrade their five local ERP systems to S/4HANA, they needed an approach that allowed them to centralize their local finance processes on a single aligned platform.

[Airbus wanted to combine](#) what they had into a single project plan as seamlessly as possible. Using the BLUEFIELD approach, SNP could customize each transformation step, which allowed for a fast and flexible migration. But it isn't just companies like Airbus that can take advantage of BLUEFIELD.

Global leader in the home appliance industry [BSH Hausgeräte GmbH are planning to completely overhaul](#) their SAP ERP systems worldwide. Their focus is on maintaining flexibility and consistency so they can continually optimize and innovate their business well into the future.

## Five questions to help you choose the right approach

Finding the appropriate method is about risk assessment and having a complete understanding of your business needs. Here are some questions you can ask yourself to weigh your options:

1. What are your current system limitations?
2. What are your process optimization needs across your business?
3. What are your budget and time constraints?
4. What is your priority regarding the retention of existing customizations and processes?
5. How willing are you to invest in third-party tools to facilitate your migration?

Taking all of this into consideration, you can now determine the most suitable migration approach for your organization. We recommend having the right tools in place to help overcome many of the challenges that we outlined. Using [CrystalBridge](#) to power BLUEFIELD is an example of that.

One of the core elements of BLUEFIELD is selective data transformation. This allows businesses like yours to retain the best elements and improve where necessary before migrating to a new S/4HANA landscape. The CrystalBridge platform can execute seamless and efficient migration processes by providing in-depth analysis, process improvement identification, and other transformation options during the migration process.

This powers BLUEFIELD's approach by automating data and system transformations without compromising on flexibility. That means your existing SAP environment and processes can be retained, optimized, or modernized.

## The right approach and tools for your business

You know better than anyone how important it will be to get the ECC to S/4HANA migration done as effectively and as accurately as possible. But don't just see this as a technical upgrade – it's a pivotal part of your organization's digital transformation journey. Having comprehensive information to help you make an informed decision on the tools you need to achieve your goals is crucial to that success.

To ensure a smooth and successful digital transformation journey, explore our insightful [S/4HANA white paper](#) to learn about innovative strategies and technologies tailored to your organization's unique needs.

