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How **JBS USA** Eliminated 30,000 Hours of Manual Work from its SAP S/4HANA Conversion—and Maintained Business Velocity—with smartShift Intelligent Automation™

Just 8 weeks
To remediate decades of custom code

15-30
Developers freed up for other strategic priorities

"Having a partner in smartShift, with its powerful automation, shared values, and constant support, has put us so much further ahead on our project timeline than we would otherwise have been."

Colin Cole,
IT Director, JBS USA

JBS USA is a leading global food company, with operations in the United States, Australia, Canada, Europe, Mexico, New Zealand and the UK.

Highlights

Challenges

- Looking to unlock business benefits by moving to SAP's latest S/4HANA version
- Modernizing 22 years of custom code felt overwhelming
- Requiring dual maintenance across existing SAP ECC environment and S/4HANA
- Feeling daunted by scale and complexity of S/4 conversion

Solution

- Engaged with business process consultancy, Enowa, to create roadmap for success
- Partnered with smartShift to:
  - Analyze 2.8 million lines of code and identify customizations
  - Automate the task of remediating decades of custom code
  - Automate dual maintenance so customizations integrate with development landscape seamlessly

Results

- 30,000hrs of developer time saved
- Code remediated and ready for S/4 in weeks, not months
- Maintain full business velocity as their systems evolve
- Partnership accelerates project timelines and ensures monster workload is finished on-time

Challenges

Keen to migrate to SAP S/4HANA but daunted by the prospect of modernizing decades of custom code

JBS USA's IT Director, Colin Cole, has a mountain of responsibilities to navigate. As well as overseeing day-to-day IT operations across a patchwork of departments, he has to implement bigger-picture projects that support the company's wider goals.

One such project that sat on Colin's shoulders was a massive global upgrade to convert the company's SAP ECC instance to SAP S/4HANA.

While JBS understood the benefits of S/4 conversion—in particular the ability to run the business more effectively and cost-efficiently—the company was hesitant about making the leap.

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> "Converting to SAP S/4HANA was something that JBS had talked about for probably five or more years," explains Colin. "But the big roadblock that came up every time was the huge amount of custom code we had in our existing environment."

For the conversion to S/4HANA to be successful, JBS would need to adapt every one of those customizations. A job that could only be described as a nightmare!

After all, the version of SAP that JBS was using went back 22 years. Over the ensuing years and decades, hundreds of different programmers had made changes and introduced customizations as the system developed.

With layer upon layer of customization to locate and remediate, the task went vastly beyond the limits of standard technical conversions. In fact, when JBS considered how much time and how many people would need to be thrown at the job, it seemed unfeasible.

> "We looked across our landscape and how we could move these customizations from our old SAP to a new SAP. Even with a conservative estimate, **we felt adapting everything manually would take between 15-30 developers up to 9 months,**" says Colin.

Code remediation wasn't the only hurdle preventing JBS from moving forward. They were also unsure how to overcome the challenge of dual maintenance.

> "As any S/4 system was developed, we would still operate our business in our current SAP environment and would be making changes in that system every week," explains Colin. "This called for maintenance across parallel environments. We'd need to keep our existing customizations, while transforming them and pushing them to work in S/4 as the system developed."

This would be a complex, time-consuming, and lengthy process to manage internally. Plus, JBS would need to ensure there were no deviations or differences between the source and target landscapes when they reached an eventual S/4 cutover.

It was yet another big headache for the business to solve. And another barrier to S/4 progress.

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"The big roadblock that came up every time was the huge amount of custom code we would need to remediate to ensure it worked properly in the new environment."

Solution

Automated code remediation and dual maintenance reduce time, cost, and risk

To propel this massive and complex business transition forward, JBS searched for a business process consultancy to help. After evaluating several companies, JBS selected Enowa Consulting to develop a strategy that would reduce project cost and risk, and unlock the value of moving to S/4HANA faster.

Enowa is an SAP Gold partner with 20+ years of business process and SAP consulting expertise. They execute domestic and global transformative projects across a broad array of industries.

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"Enowa Consulting stood out for us," says Colin. "They spent a lot of time here understanding how JBS and our teams work, and what our SAP footprint looks like. We thought they were a good cultural fit and felt very comfortable moving forward with them."

To reinforce the technical side of the partnership, Enowa brought in smartShift—a recognized leader in automated SAP transformations. It was smartShift's job to execute all code remediation and ensure that JBS' custom code worked perfectly in the upgraded environment.

While Colin says the project felt quite overwhelming at first, once Enowa and smartShift stepped onboard the roadmap became clearer—and any anxiety disappeared.

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> "We quickly got into deeper project planning and broke off the chunks on how we were going to manage each of the work streams—and one of those was our customization piece with smartShift," says Colin.

smartShift's patented Intelligent Automation™ analyzed all of JBS' almost 2.8 million lines of sprawling custom code, and then remediated it for guaranteed S4/HANA compatibility. This turned what would have required months of manual effort by a large team of developers into a predictable, fast, high-quality workflow that took just eight weeks for analysis, full transformation, and acceptance.

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> "smartShift's code remediation was hyper-accurate," says Colin. "They would feed us back what's called a Transport, which we would load into our new SAP environment that would include all of our custom code. We could see straight away when our customizations came over that they worked, and they were complete."

This was game-changing for Colin and his team.

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"Suddenly, everybody started to see the light and really believe in the process," he says. "It would have literally taken us months and months to go through all of these and it wouldn't have been as accurate or as complete as what they were able to do for us. You could see the excitement with our technical teams when they started to see these results and they started seeing the code loading successfully."

Because smartShift's automation is fully traceable, in the few instances where code didn't work as expected, they quickly identified the issue and rectified it.

Additionally, smartShift solved JBS' requirement for dual maintenance with further time-saving automation.

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"As we continue to operate our business in our current SAP environment and make changes every week, smartShift uses automation to mimic that change in S/4 and ensure new developments are integrated into the development landscape automatically," explains Colin. "So when we eventually go live, we'll know that we're current with every customization that we've done in our production system."

This automated approach to dual maintenance allows JBS to maintain full business velocity, even as their systems modernize.

As the company's SAP S/4 roadmap continues to evolve, the strong bond built between Enowa, smartShift, and JBS ensures that they align on project goals, timeline, and milestones.

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"There's been a huge sense of relief in the business seeing that we have such a strong partnership," says Colin. "It was like a light went off when we realized this is gonna work, it's really going to save us months of time, and we're going to be able to attack this humongous workstream and get it complete in time."

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"You could see the excitement with our technical teams when they started to see these results and they started seeing the code loading successfully."

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Results

30,000 hours of manual effort saved thanks to smartShift's Intelligent Automation™

By partnering with smartShift, **JBS remediated 2.8 million lines of code in weeks** rather than the months or years it would otherwise have taken.

Without smartShift, 15 to 30 highly paid developers would have been pulled from other critical tasks for months at a time to manually modernize code. With smartShift's intelligent automation, they don't need to touch a thing.

While Colin hugely appreciates the speed of delivery, **he equally appreciates the quality and reliability of all the remediated code**.

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> "With smartShift's automation, we have eliminated so many 'gotchas' and problems that we would otherwise have faced later, when we go into testing and prepare to go live," says Colin. "We're fully confident that we've touched all those lines of code and there's nothing we've forgotten. There's nothing that's not working the way that it should."

Colin estimates that **well over 30,000 hours of manual effort have been saved by leveraging smartShift's automation**. This has freed up technical teams to do more strategic work for the business, which ultimately benefits the bottom line.

As a busy IT Director driving major business change, Colin appreciates smartShift's five-star support, ongoing mentoring, and collaborative approach.

"smartShift has walked us through so many important learnings," says Colin. "So it never felt like we were alone trying to figure this out. We always had a sounding board to make sure everything worked correctly.

"They mentored us on a lot of things that we should be doing in S/4, which was useful as we don't necessarily have that skill set internally yet."

Colin holds smartShift in high esteem.

"Having a partner in smartShift, with its powerful automation, shared values, and constant support, has put us so much further ahead on our project timeline than we would otherwise have been. **If we hadn't had Enowa introduce that relationship, we would have had months of delays, which would have been a significant cost to our business.**"

Colin and JBS are thrilled with the partnership they have cultivated with smartShift and Enowa. Together, they made complex business change achievable.

"I think it's everything that we hoped it would be when we awarded the business to them," he says. "We were looking for that true partner, for somebody that could collaborate with us on the same level, with very transparent communication, and both smartShift and Enowa have met those expectations."

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"smartShift is a wise investment for how much time they've saved us on this project."

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