The Computerworld Honors Program

Honoring those who use Information Technology to benefit society

Final Copy of Case Study

Status:
Laureate

Year:
2013

Organization Name:
SAP AG

Organization URL:
www.sap.com

Project Name:
Sustainable Asset Lifecycle Management (SALM@SAP)

Please select the category in which you are submitting your entry:
Sustainability

Please provide an overview of the nominated project. Describe the problem it was intended to solve, the technology or approach used, how it was innovative and any technical or other challenges that had to be overcome for successful implementation and adoption. (In 300 words or less.)

In 2009, SAP set itself the 2020 target of decreasing its carbon emissions to the same levels as the company had in January 2000. To support SAP's sustainability strategy and this goal, SAP Global IT set up a long-term project to optimize the entire lifecycle process of SAP IT assets while, at the same time, increasing IT's sustainability. The purpose of the SALM@SAP project was to establish a process that was as lean and sustainable as possible from asset purchase to disposal. Various approaches and technologies were used, including a highly scalable, automated, and paperless ordering process for employees via SAP's online store (SAP SRM), as well as route optimization in logistics, as suppliers install the SAP image centrally. PCs and notebooks can then be

delivered directly to SAP's different locations. Power management software installed on every client optimizes their power consumption by using a centralized solution that has comprehensive reporting features. An internal asset management tool helps reduce the total amount of assets per user by identifying unused and duplicate devices. An approval process for additional devices by manager is included. Devices and peripherals are reused in the company. SAP assets are sold or recycled by one global certified supplier in an environmentally friendly manner. Distributed asset data is uploaded automatically into our sustainability performance management system. The data is reviewed quarterly. Implementing power management across different user groups was a technical challenge of this project. To meet the requirements, we made power management configurable and implemented Wake-on-Web. When implementing the asset management tool we had to gain user acceptance for alternatives to having a second PC (e.g., desktop virtualization). Other challenges: choosing suitable partners, employee acceptance, project coordination, and global implementation (accounting, tax, and legal differences in the countries in which SAP has locations).

When was this project implemented or last updated? (Please specify month and year.) Has it incorporated new technologies and/or other innovations since its initial deployment? (In 300 words or less.)

The SALM@SAP project comprises a number of separate projects (listed under question 5: approaches and technologies) that were started in 2009 and have evolved continually since then. New projects have also emerged. For example, in the fall of 2012 one team started to look at how SAP's PCs and notebooks could be made to last longer. One idea is to offer employees validated hardware packages (RAM, solid state disk) to upgrade their devices to extend their useful life, rather than issuing them with new devices. This extends the lifecycle of the product and makes it more sustainable. It is the production and disposal of an asset (e.g., notebook) that uses the most energy, so it is obvious that updating an existing asset will greatly benefit the environment.

Is implementation of the project complete? If no, please describe the project's phases and which phase the project is now in. (In 300 words or less.)

The implementation of the SALM@SAP project is about 80% complete, as many of the connected projects (listed under question 5: approaches and technologies) have already been finished. The current phase considers the asset lifecycle as a whole. Process components are aligned to optimize them further. We also intend to raise awareness about our project at SAP, and are already planning an information session for the IT department. Implementing the SALM@SAP project

worldwide also involved dealing with the differences between countries. Our aim is to further standardize the implementation across the countries and regions.

Please provide at least one example of how the technology project has benefited a specific individual or organization. Feel free to include personal quotes from individuals who have directly benefited from the work. (In 300 words or less.)

Just some of the achievements of this project are (please note: the Q4/2012 figures are not available yet): Within 12 months (October 2011-September 2012) we saved 2.2 gigawatt hours' client energy by reducing the number of assets and implementing power management software (see appendix 2). We were able to reduce the number of clients (PCs/laptops) per head from 1,25 (Q1/2011) to 1,08 (Q3/2012) (see appendix 3). Having one standard global process enabled us to recycle 23 tons of e-waste in a sustainable way in 2012 (with a recovery rate of about 98% according to our recycling partner Sims).

Would this project be considered an innovation, a best practice or other notable advancement that could be adopted by or tailored for other organizations and uses? If yes, please describe that here. (In 300 words or less.)

The outcome of this project is a notable advancement and a best practice that can certainly be implemented at many other companies in a consulting project. The range of SAP products that are used (e.g., Assets Accounting and Plant Maintenance from SAP Business Suite, SAP Supplier Relationship Management, SAP Sustainability Performance Management, SAP Business Warehouse) made it easier to optimize the process, so the approach is certainly of interest to SAP customers.