SAP Technical Business Transformation Study | Media | Discovery Communications | PUBLIC

Discovery Communications: Streamlining System Management with SAP® Landscape Management

Global success meant rapid growth for Discovery Communications Inc. To support this business expansion, the media company relies on an increasingly extensive SAP® software landscape. To help run its SAP software efficiently, it deployed SAP Landscape Management software, dramatically **cutting time spent for maintenance tasks and system refreshes while reducing costs**.

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Optimizing the Way You Run Your SAP® Software Environment with SAP Landscape Management

Discovery Communications Inc.
Silver Spring, Maryland
https://corporate.discovery.com

Industry
Media

Products and Services
Nonfiction, lifestyle, sports, and children's television programming

Employees
7,000

Revenue
US$6.5 billion

SAP® Solutions
SAP® Landscape Management software

Before: Challenges and Opportunities
- Streamline management of increasingly diverse and complex SAP software landscape
- Eliminate off-hours staffing for maintenance
- Reduce time required for system refreshes
- Avoid errors made during manual processing
- Decrease efforts to train offshore team

Why SAP
- Simplified and automated functionalities for managing systems
- Regular updates to keep pace with innovations in SAP technology
- Intuitive, centralized user interface
- Superior knowledge of SAP products

After: Value-Driven Results
- Less time taken to complete system refreshes, enabling IT to meet business needs faster
- Elimination of overtime costs
- Significantly improved quality in system refreshes
- Simplified IT management

"SAP Landscape Management helps us free up resources for strategic IT projects that support the business and assists in our digital transformation of the enterprise."

George Adjei, SAP Basis Manager, Discovery Communications Inc.

Executive overview
Company objectives
Resolution
Business transformation
Future plans

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Supporting a Growing Enterprise

Audiences in over 230 countries enjoy entertainment from well-known television channels – including Discovery Channel, TLC, and Eurosport – thanks to Discovery Communications Inc., one of the world's leading global media and entertainment companies. Headquartered in Silver Spring, Maryland, the company has achieved success in its nonfiction, lifestyle, sports, and children's programs, resulting in rapid growth for the enterprise.

To support operations across the business, Discovery Communications has an extensive SAP® software environment, including the SAP ERP, SAP Supplier Relationship Management, and SAP Business Warehouse applications. It also runs SAP governance, risk, and compliance solutions. Operating this rapidly expanding environment efficiently presented a challenge.

For software updates, the team had to shut down 80 servers manually, a time-consuming job that took them away from other important tasks. IT staff often had to perform this work outside normal office hours to minimize business disruption, resulting in added costs.

3 billion

Viewers worldwide

"Every system refresh took three to four days with over 250 manual steps, making it hard to respond quickly to the needs of the business," says George Adjei, SAP Basis Manager at Discovery Communications. "And these manual processes were error prone, driving up costs and causing further delays."

To optimize IT efforts and help the company run its SAP solutions more efficiently, Discovery Communications decided to implement SAP Landscape Management software.

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Achieving a Smooth Transition

Discovery Communications considered solutions from a number of different vendors before selecting SAP Landscape Management. "We chose a solution from SAP because we knew that it would keep pace with any developments in SAP technology," says Adjei.

With the help of SAP partner CoreALM LLC, the deployment took just two weeks and went very smoothly. "The whole process was much simpler than I'd expected," says Adjei. "Everything went as planned with no surprises, and there was no disruption at all to our business users."

With the software in place, the company can now manage and refresh all of its SAP solutions from a single, centralized user interface. "At the click of a button, we can shut down and restart all of our application and database servers. This means we can get the latest operating system patches without involving our whole team in the update process," says Adjei. "In addition, this maintenance work can be scheduled to take place outside office hours without our team members needing to be present, which has a massive impact on our work-life balance."

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SAP solutions managed

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Increasing IT Agility and Reducing Resourcing Costs

The time required for a system refresh has been reduced dramatically, down from four days to just six hours. And because the process is automated, manual errors have been eliminated.

"SAP Landscape Management has given us the IT agility we always wanted," says Adjei. "Before, business users had to give us at least two weeks' notice when they wanted a system copy because we needed to schedule our resources in advance. Now, we can deliver copies with very little notice, meaning that users can make decisions faster and accelerate business processes."

SAP Landscape Management has also helped Discovery Communications significantly reduce its offshore outsourcing costs, while freeing up in-house employees to focus on other important projects. For example, Discovery Communications recently implemented the SAP HANA® business data platform to help make its IT infrastructure future proof and to benefit from improved performance, lower cost of ownership, and simpler administration. "Thanks to SAP Landscape Management, our existing team could handle this implementation without needing to hire additional staff," says Adjei.

8x
Faster to complete system refreshes

75
Working hours saved each month

US$70,000
Offshore resourcing costs saved each year

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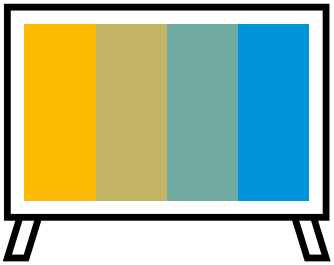
Optimizing Landscape Management for SAP HANA

For Discovery Communications, the deployment is just the beginning of the journey to streamline its system landscape operations. "We're very happy with what we've done so far, but we know that we've only scratched the surface of what we can achieve with SAP Landscape Management," says Adjei.

The company plans to leverage advanced operations and provisioning scenarios offered by SAP Landscape Management for SAP solutions that run on SAP HANA. Functionality such as near-zero downtime maintenance, automated takeover and failback, and support for managing multiple tenant databases will further improve system management.

Adjei believes that SAP Landscape Management will play a key role as the company continues to grow. "We're merging with another company soon, which will mean that our company will double in size," says Adjei. "SAP Landscape Management will be critical in helping us to manage an ever-more-complex IT environment effectively to meet the needs of our growing business."



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