

SUGEN DIGEST

SAP User-Group Executive Network



Foreword

by Gianmaria Perancin, Chairman SUGEN CLT, Chairman *Utilisateurs SAP Francophones, USF*

2025 has been full of news from the SAP world: starting with the kick-off of ECC Transition Option at the very beginning, through the ERP Cloud offering at Sapphire, to the SAP Cloud on-site announcement in the last months of the year. Just three news among all the others, that SAP has delivered in 12 months.

Obviously, SAP S/4HANA adoption is the main topic our ecosystems talk about; but Artificial Intelligence is also one of the major matters we are dwelling with, in these actual times.

For some regions of the world, there are issues about protection of critical data: and this is where sovereign cloud takes a big part in discussions.

All of this must be supported by strong competences, at customers' side as well at partners': this means dwelling with education, and training and how to maintain the level of knowledge at the level we need to sustain all our projects.

Now, where all this comes together, is at SUGEN Face-to-Face meetings: the moment where 22 User Groups in the world can work together, to build together the next future; to prepare actual projects and operations for the members we represent; to analyze the recent past experiences.

All of this can happen only through an honest and transparent dialog with the major SAP Executives.

This is SUGEN: a community of worldwide SAP actors, animated by the strong will of let all SAP users progress, wherever they are in the world. A community of passionate women and men, that work together for supporting the customers and users they represent in their countries. Definitely a rich asset for SAP, the only software editor in the world that can rely on a strong network of people that give real feedback ; the only editor that can and want to really listen to its stakeholders, to continuously improve their products and services, and help pave the way for solutions and services able to respond to customers' and partners' needs and requirements.

We, SUGEN people, can be proud of all of this. We are SUGEN.



SUGEN group picture with SAP Executive Board Member Thomas Saueressig



SAP Executive Exchanges on November 25, 2025

By Philip Adams, SUGEN CLT Member, Director of UKISUG

Executive Exchange with Thomas Saueressig, Executive Board Member for Customer Services & Delivery, SAP

In the Executive Exchange session with Thomas Saueressig, Executive Board Member for Customer Services & Delivery at SAP, outlined SAP's response to increasing geopolitical and macroeconomic uncertainty, as well as the accelerating impact of AI. He highlighted SAP's "AI First, Suite First" strategy, which is built on the integrated SAP Business Suite and underpinned by robust data foundations via the SAP Business Data Cloud. Saueressig emphasized the role of generative AI – not only as an assistant but as an executor of transactions – differentiated by the suite's semantic data model and standardized processes.

Thomas Saueressig cautioned that many AI initiatives fail without a clear focus on business outcomes. In contrast, SAP's integrated suite and semantic layer are designed to ensure that AI delivers measurable value. He challenged the assumption that technology alone drives growth, stressing instead the importance of processes, data, and execution.

He also affirmed the critical role of SAP's partner ecosystem in accelerating innovation and delivering customer impact. To address regulatory and data residency requirements in sovereignty markets, SAP is expanding its sovereign cloud offerings in multiple regions and introducing on-site sovereign cloud solutions. This approach is pragmatic and customer-centric: "RISE with SAP" is positioned as the main vehicle for transformation, SAP S/4HANA Public Cloud targets new "clean start" implementations, and Private Cloud supports transitions for existing customers.

It was stated that the company's intention is to demonstrate results, ongoing innovation far beyond ECC, and a long-term commitment to its customers – including maintenance through 2040 and continued investment despite external pressures.

Executive Exchange with Andre Bechtold, President SAP Industries & Experiences, SAP

Andre Bechtold, President SAP Industries & Experiences, explained in his Executive Exchange session that he's now overseeing Industries in addition to Learning and emphasized that the Business Suite would only fully deliver value with an industries-first approach. It was emphasized that SAP could not focus on just five industries but needed to support all 26, acknowledging deep vertical specifics within industry clusters. He outlined a build strategy that distinguished what should be delivered in Cloud ERP versus by the ecosystem, combining SAP-built and partner-built capabilities, including industry-specific AI use cases and SAP-built industry extensions on the SAP Business Technology Platform. His organization was described as supporting customers across the entire journey, with internal sales enablement in focus, more end-to-end value cases, and value prototyping to mitigate risk early. It was noted that learning had expanded from seven to more than 400 learning journeys, reaching around 4 million learners across learning.sap.com and the community, with a strong emphasis on certifications that partners must renew annually. Moreover, he described SAP's goal of enabling 12 million people with AI-ready skills.

Executive Exchange with Uma Rani T M, President and Chief Product Officer Private Cloud ERP, SAP

The executive exchange session with Uma Rani T M, Chief Product Officer Private Cloud ERP at SAP, focused on how SAP supported customers navigating today's uncertainty by providing clarity and headspace to focus on growth and innovation. SUGEN members reaffirmed that customers viewed SAP as a strategic partner, not just a solution provider, drawing on more than 50 years of transformation experience. The shared vision – “creating value, every day” – aims to put measurable outcomes and empathy at the center, while the mission is to empower customers to redefine success and continuously evolve, trusting SAP to manage the complexity behind the scenes.

[SAP Cloud ERP Private](#) was described as a steadfast ally for organizations that needed flexibility and a faster pace of innovation. The benefits of reduction in effort and time required for upgrades in the private cloud was discussed, as well as a clean-core approach to simplify lifecycle management and accelerate the adoption of new capabilities.

Through an integrated SAP Cloud ERP Private powered by data and AI, co-innovation, seamless adoption, and a strong core, SAP enables efficient operations and better outcomes across every touchpoint.

Transformation Charter Update with David Yawalkar, Head of Solution Management RISE with SAP, SAP

David Yawalkar, Head of RISE with SAP – Package Commercialization & Adoption, provided an update on the topics of the SUGEN Transformation Charter. He explained that SAP's current strategy centered on transitioning customers to Cloud ERP (either Public or Private Cloud), with on premise solutions remaining as an option. The main ERP offerings are Public Cloud, Private Cloud, and on premise, with RISE with SAP and Grow with SAP serving as transformation journeys to modernize ERP landscapes. SAP Cloud ERP offers unique innovations such as Joule, SAP's AI assistant, and customers were indicated to be able to transition via three paths: System Conversion, New Implementation, or Selective Data Transition.

A key guiding principle for modernization is the Clean Core approach, which promotes agility, innovation, and efficiency by minimizing heavy customizations. The [Clean Core Framework](#) was presented as being built on five pillars: Processes, Extensions, Integration, Data, and Operations. This approach was characterized as helping organizations maintain resilient, cost-effective systems ready for continuous innovation.

The RISE with SAP Methodology Dashboard supports businesses in adopting a clean core landscape by guiding them through resilient business process design, seamless integration, efficient operations, and high data quality. The use of standard processes and strategic extensions for differentiation is encouraged.



SAP Global User Groups Organization – Update on November 26, 2025

by Yasmin Awad, SVP, SAP Global User Groups Organization, SAP

Yasmin Awad, SVP and Head of SAP Global User Groups Organization (GUGO) at SAP, used her session to provide an overview of how GUGO acts as a bridge between SAP and its User Groups:

SAP and the User Groups – A tight bond

Each user groups has their very own **liaison manager** that:

- Ensures and facilitates a close relationship and dialogue between SAP and the local user groups both on a global a regional level
- Drives all strategic topics and user group priorities as SPOC on SAP side, including briefings, event and speaker support, rollouts, and customer feedback sessions

Besides the liaison managers, SAP GUGO has set up a **dedicated cross team** for the user groups that:

- Provides end users with product- and solution-specific knowledge content
- Sets up and hosts webinars, workshops, panel discussions and expert chats
- Can help you create localized contents and formats for your members
- Bundles its offering on [SAP K4U](#)

She further outlined 3 key thoughts she deems as important right now with regard to user group work:

- 1. People Are the Core Strength:** The real value of User Groups lies in their members. Empathy, collaboration, adaptability, and volunteer spirit drive success.
- 2. AI Will Transform Knowledge Sharing:** AI will reshape how knowledge is created and shared. Opportunities include more shareable content and persona-based sessions tailored to specific roles.
- 3. Human Expertise Remains Critical:** Real-world experience and customer voices will continue to be essential, even in an AI-driven future.

The session concluded with insights into the **User Group Growth Initiative**, focused on user groups must evolve to remain relevant, modernize membership models and meet changing market, technology and membership need.



SAP Executive Exchanges on November 26, 2025

by Alejandro Bonsignore, SUGEN CLT Member,
Chairman ASUG Argentina

Executive Exchange with Stefan Steinle, Executive Vice President and Head of Global Customer Support, SAP

Stefan Steinle, Global Head of Customer Support & Cloud Lifecycle Management at SAP, underscored in his Executive Exchange session the mission-critical role of SAP Support, citing industries like healthcare and peak commerce scenarios such as Black Friday as examples where SAP ensures stability and resilience. He explained that baseline support is available for all customers across on premise and cloud, while advanced capabilities such as preventive support increasingly rely on cloud deployments where rich telemetry enables proactive intervention. To smooth cloud transitions, SAP provides the [Integrated Toolchain](#) as well as the [RISE with SAP Methodology](#) and has streamlined its support offerings into SAP Success Plans (Foundational, Advanced, Max) to replace previously rather fragmented models from 2026 on. Looking ahead, he described the “[future of support](#)” as more invisible, integrated, and personalized. He recommended [Expert Chat](#) to avoid ticket “ping pong,” noting that roughly two-thirds of issues can be resolved in-chat. AI now auto-recommends solutions in about 83% of cases; if unresolved, a support engineer takes over. He emphasized improved triage that factors in the business impact behind each ticket.

Executive Exchange with Jonathan von Rüden, Chief AI Officer at SAP – SAP Business AI Strategy

Jonathan von Rüden, Head of AI Innovation at SAP, outlined the company’s AI approach: AI is embedded within applications, powered by trusted, unified data from integrated end-to-end processes and SAP Business Data Cloud, with flexibility for

customers to choose suitable AI models. He positioned SAP's application suite, harmonized data, and embedded AI as a virtuous cycle for continuous optimization, orchestrated by Joule. He previewed more than 40 [Joule Agents](#) planned for 2025 across supply chain, spend management, HR, and finance, showcasing the Accounting Accruals Agent that accelerates period-end close by analyzing historical patterns and preparing pre-populated entries. For multi-step, cross-functional work, role- and context-aware AI Assistants in Joule act as "AI teammates." He demonstrated [Joule Deep Research \(Beta\)](#) for synthesizing history, identifying drivers, comparing playbooks, and drafting actionable plans. On extensibility, he announced by year-end the ability to integrate any agent into Joule with human-in-the-loop orchestration, and early next year an agent gateway to expose and govern standard and custom agents. He highlighted interoperability via an open A2A protocol, MCP-based access to data and tools, and [Joule Studio](#) to configure standard agents. Finally, a prototype of a potential app-free experience was presented.

Executive Exchange with Daniel Becker, Head of Global Adoption & Experience Center of Excellence at SAP

In the Executive Exchange session with Daniel Becker, Head of Global Adoption & Experience Center of Excellence at SAP, it was emphasized that product experience now outweighs mere capabilities, and his organization aims to help customers get maximum value from SAP through free of charge tools & services along license consumption, functional usage and product experience (e.g. customer influence services, adoption & audit services, and more). He described a strategic shift from audit-centric practices to proactive, free-of-charge advisory with self-service insights and complementary services with regional/local flavors. For license utilization transparency, he highlighted [SAP for Me](#), the [SAP Business Technology Platform \(BTP\) Cockpit](#), and the [SAM4U](#) tool (introduced in December 2024) to track license consumption and functional usage across complex landscapes - free to use and deploy, with data staying in the customer's environment. He explained two SAP Business Suite subscription models - the flexible Full Usage Equivalent model (most common in RISE with SAP) and the Per-User model (most common in GROW with SAP) - plus bundled data and AI entitlements. He addressed three common license management challenges: audits (addressed via SAP for Me and BTP Cockpit), complexity of optimal user assignments, and internal cost management (supported by SAM4U's raw data access). Concerning AI, he also pointed to [AI Units](#) and the [Business AI Catalog](#) and [Estimator](#) for planning and simulating AI consumption. Lastly, he concluded the collaborative approach of his unit with customers along audit & adoption services and pointed to the regional / local team set-up allowing for even more tailored discussions.



Best Practice Day, November 24, 2025

By Amanda Gibbs, Managing Director AFSUG,
Ronald Schippers, Managing Director VNSG, and
Craig Dale, Chief Executive UKISUG

Best Practice Day Summary

The Best Practice Day opened with an interactive ice breaker highlighting the importance of kindness across cultures—setting the tone for a day focused on collaboration and shared learning.

Practical approach to manage membership lifecycle and how Business and IT can work closer together

INDUS, SAPIence, and UKISUG, shared presentations on lifecycle management, each showcasing practical approaches to managing the full membership lifecycle.

User Groups shared a range of innovative initiatives designed to strengthen engagement from onboarding through retention. Notably, **SAPIence** introduced its new auto-renewal functionality, aimed at simplifying the renewal experience and supporting long-term membership continuity.

A standout session was delivered by **UKISUG**, who facilitated a workshop on one of the most significant challenges facing SAP customers today: bridging the collaboration gap between IT and business stakeholders. Their framework highlighted that organisational work falls into two essential categories:

- **Transformation Projects** – driving innovation and strategic advancement
- **Business As Usual (BAU)** – ensuring operational stability and continuity

The workshop underscored a powerful takeaway: *transformation moves the business forward, but BAU keeps it alive*. Neglecting BAU leads to operational instability, increased risk, team burnout, and ultimately undermines transformation outcomes.

The discussion concluded with three critical success factors for sustainable delivery: **clear communication, meaningful stakeholder engagement, and deep business understanding**. Together, these elements enable organisations to balance innovation with operational excellence—ensuring both immediate value and long-term success.

Panel Discussion Unpacking Innovative membership strategies

A dynamic panel discussion unpacked innovative membership recruitment strategies across global user groups. Through a series of structured questions, panellists explored regional challenges, successful tactics, lessons learned from failed approaches, and how events can effectively convert attendees into engaged members. The conversation also highlighted the importance of clearly articulating user group value, activating volunteer communities, collaborating strategically with SAP, leveraging digital tools, and implementing budget-conscious initiatives.

Representatives from **AFSUG, SAUG, AUSAPE, and ASUG Argentina** contributed rich insights, closing with forward-looking plans and opportunities for 2026.



Panel Discussion on Unpacking Innovative Membership Strategies

Afternoon Best Practice Rotations: Insights from Three Strategic Topics

The afternoon sessions at SUGEN brought rich conversation and forward-thinking ideas through rotating tables focused on three key themes shaping the future of User Groups.

1. The Future of Events: Designing Experiences That Matter

Discussions centered on reimagining events as high-impact, multi-sensory experiences that energize attendees and spark meaningful connection. Key takeaways included:

- **Experience Design:** Events should offer memorable "wow" moments—thoughtful use of music, playful elements, and elevated food and beverage experiences that feel worth sharing.
- **Community Building:** Genuine connection remains the heart of meaningful engagement. Structured networking, small-group moments, and post-event follow-up help sustain relationships long after the event ends.
- **Access to Expertise:** Attendees want direct interaction with speakers and experts through Q&As, office hours, meetups, demos, workshops, and hands-on sessions. Co-creation formats—unconferences, open space, collaborative challenges—shift events from passive learning to active participation.
- **Tangible Outcomes:** Sessions anchored in shared values and purpose enable attendees to leave with usable insights and practical skills. Basic principles still matter: accessible venues, spaces designed for mingling, well-paced agendas, easy participation, and hybrid/health considerations.
- **Impact Measurement:** Success goes beyond attendance numbers. Strong events convert connections into real partnerships, projects, and long-term value. Continuous feedback loops and impact tracking are essential.

2. AI Performance Enhancement for User Groups

This session explored how User Groups can move from basic analytics to **agentic, closed-loop AI systems** that recommend, simulate, and execute actions within safe guardrails.

Near-term, high-value use cases include:

- S&OP updates
- End-to-end exception management
- Demand signal analysis
- Inventory optimization
- Supplier risk assessment
- Logistics routing
- Constraint-aware scheduling

Expected benefits span faster, more accurate decision cycles, lower inventory costs, fewer expedites, and more consistent service levels.

Success depends on clean data, strong integration across systems, shared policy or constraint models, and transparent AI outputs backed by governance, explainability, and compliance.

Two pilot use cases were recommended—an **S&OP Update Agent** and an **Exception Agent**—with clear KPIs and phased scaling to validate value and build trust.

3. Closing the Gap Between Business and IT Users

This workshop emphasized that bridging the business–IT divide starts with **value clarity**: linking initiatives to real ROI, cost-benefit outcomes, and end-to-end process improvements tied to functional KPIs.

Key insights included:

- Understand business processes by asking the right questions, identifying pain points, and involving stakeholders early.
- Translate technology into business language that explains risk, value, and financial impact.
- Use surveys and AI tools to reveal underlying challenges.
- Provide proof—prototypes, demos, and hackathons (including SAP BTP-driven sessions)—to help stakeholders visualize impact.
- Scale success through storytelling, recognition, and awards.
- Build trust through design thinking engagements and active executive sponsorship that support continuous co-creation.



Group Work on AI Performance Enhancement for User Groups

A Unified Message Across the Day

Across all sessions—membership lifecycle management, IT–business collaboration, recruitment strategies, AI innovation, and event design—the common theme was clear: **our challenges and opportunities as User Groups are interconnected.**

The true strength of this gathering was not only the insights shared but the collective spirit behind them. Whether exploring the future of events, enhancing performance with AI, or strengthening business–IT alignment, participants reaffirmed that sustainable success requires:

- **Deliberate balance between innovation and operational excellence,** and
- **Collaborative influence across the global user group community.**

SUGEN’s shared voice continues to grow stronger - shaping impact not only for individual User Groups, but for the SAP ecosystem worldwide.