



# Implementation and Migration Tips & Best Practices for Fashion (and Other Industries)

Paul M. Arking, CIO, AmeriCo  
Ina Viljoen, Sr. Delivery Director, SAP  
Session ID #82489

# About the Speakers

## Paul M. Arking

- CIO, AmeriCo Group
- 19 years of service with AmeriCo, virtually all of them on SAP (initially R/3 Retail, then FMS).
- I'm all about having fun

## Ina Viljoen

- Sr. Delivery Director, SAP
- 19 Years of service with SAP, all of that in Retail & Fashion in roles ranging from Consulting through Delivery
- I can be fun

# Key Outcomes/Objectives

1. The importance of clarity and reality
2. The importance of “people” and logistics
3. Planning, product, processes and solution

# Agenda

- Scope
- Schedule
- Solution
- Location
- People
- Post Go-Live

# Scope

- The importance of thorough and clear scoping
  - knowing what is possible and what is not
    - with regard to budget
    - with regard to time
    - with regard to resources (e.g., size of organization, size of IT/support)
  - knowing which components are in scope and which are not
  - knowing *how* everything will be implemented so that the expectations of all parties (customer IT, customer end users, consultants, etc.) are aligned
  - ensuring that this is all documented clearly *from the start*, which will help greatly with any future scope or conflict resolution during the project

# Scope *...continued*

- The importance of thorough and clear scoping
  - Beware of the sales team setting expectations that the implementation team cannot fulfill.  
If possible, insist that the implementation team is included in conversations well in advance (i.e., when putting together the timeline/proposal).
  - When possible, minimize the number of “moving parts”.  
For example, save third-party integrations (that aren’t time-critical) for a later phase.

# Schedule

- The importance of a reasonable, understandable timeline
  - The timeline should accurately reflect the full scope of what needs to be done, with reasonable durations, and clear phases
  - The timeline should be appropriate for the various parties involved, i.e., reflective of the size and capabilities of the personnel in each party
- The importance of pace and momentum
  - A steady pace and momentum will motivate team members (as well as boost morale) throughout the duration of the project
  - Set both major and minor milestones in the timeline in a way that can help highlight and promote momentum
  - It is important to set expectations from the start
  - Avoid too many team-wide meetings, or too many “bureaucratic” meetings, which can ultimately be more disruptive than helpful if too frequent

# Solution

- Understanding/knowledge of new solutions
  - For a new implementation, this means understanding all the features and options available with the new system.
  - For a migration, this means understanding the changes in existing processes, as well as the features and options that didn't exist in the old system, but are now available in the new system.
- Balancing customization with out-of-the-box functionality
  - The more customization, the more closely the system can mirror the business processes, especially those processes that may be unique to the individual company.
  - On the flip side, the more customization, the more potential challenges with each patch and upgrade.
  - Therefore, a compromise must be achieved (although one which favors out-of-the-box functionality as much as is practical).



# Location

- The ideal location(s)
  - It's important to choose the most ideal location for the project. Factors include:
    - proximity to superusers
    - geographic centrality to the most consultants possible
    - proximity to airports, train stations, etc.
    - adequate facilities and resources (war rooms, breakout rooms, A/V capabilities, whiteboards, etc.)
  - Multiple locations may be advantageous. For example, one location for one phase (e.g., implementation), then moving to another location for another phase (e.g., user testing).

# People

- The ideal staffing and oversight of the implementation team
  - Different team compositions will require different team members. Consultants who excel in large groups might not necessarily work well on a lean team, and vice versa.
  - Similarly, different team compositions will require different management styles and, consequently, different candidates for project manager.
  - While swapping out consultants can be necessary in certain cases, there will be points in the project where this is either detrimental or outright impossible, and this should be kept in mind when wavering about replacing someone.
  - Continuity is an important consideration when it comes to swapping out consultants (as well as dealing with vacation time).
  - Utilize the strengths of each available resource.
  - Foster team-building and morale—without overdoing it.

# People ...continued

- Weekly travel schedules
  - Many consultants may be flying in weekly. It's important to establish schedules that accommodate that, but do not impinge on the pace of the project.
- Vacations / time off
  - Over the course of a project, consultants will want to utilize their vacation days so as not to lose them. Do not wait until the consultant approaches you with it; it should be discussed and coordinated with the timeline and with other users *as far in advance as possible* so as to cause as little disruption as possible. This is especially critical for a lean team.
  - Try to insist that the PMO plans out the rolling-on and -off of all resources (including time off) during the prep phase, so there are no surprises, and to lock all time off after that prep phase (except extenuating circumstances).

# People ...continued

- Choosing superusers and getting “buy-in” from the end users from solutioning through go-live
  - It is important to choose superusers who have as many of the following characteristics as possible:
    - very knowledgeable of their business area (and bonus if beyond)
    - influential within their business area (and bonus if beyond)
    - very capable and experienced in their current ERP system
    - open-minded (willing to think outside the box) and adaptable to change
  - It is important to involve those superusers from the very start, at scoping, and through every phase of the project (solutioning, implementation, testing, go-live/post-go-live)
  - Post-go-live user adoption rate will be *significantly* higher when the users themselves helped come up with the solutions

# People *...continued*

- Choosing superusers and getting “buy-in” from the end users from solutioning through go-live
  - Even some open-minded superusers will inevitably still try to hold on to previous processes, and their partnership throughout is key to successfully getting past those hang-ups.
  - In light of these considerations, it’s advisable to limit the number of superusers to a manageable, reasonable amount.
  - The superusers should be encouraged often to disseminate information to the rest of their respective departments and even to bounce ideas off of them. This helps delegate the solicitation of additional feedback (without additional time and efforts of the implementation team), and also preps the end users for a smoother post-go-live adoption.

# People ...continued

- Getting “buy-in from the top” (principals, C-level executives, etc.) to flow down the org hierarchy
  - They will value the project with a greater priority and lend better (and more educated) support when necessary.
  - They will help fill in those “gaps” where user acceptance falls short, and those particular users need a firm mandate from above to enforce adoption.
  - But, don’t let them feel *too* important!

# People *...continued*

- Using third-party consulting to reach a mutually-workable project budget:
  - Pros
    - Cost-saving, and can help get “more bang for the buck”
    - Can speed up the project by affording more manpower
    - Can leverage existing relationships with and strengths of third-party companies
    - Access to a wider range of options
  - Cons
    - Can blur the lines of responsibility, especially when there are delays or inaccuracies in the work
    - Can slow down the project by involving too many channels to coordinate various activities
    - Adds additional “dotted lines” between the various parties, sometimes circumventing proper channels, making methodology and scope enforcement a challenge (as well as overall project coordination and management)
    - If offshore:
      - » Communication gaps
      - » Time zone gaps
      - » Management gaps

# People *...continued*

- Escalation and resolution

- The need for conflict resolution will be inevitable due to disagreements over scope, timelines, testing scenarios, personnel, and so on.
- It's important to have not only an escalation path, but that the escalation path is based on real, cultivated relationships.
- Therefore, these relationships should be established as early as possible (and, if done right, will last long after the project's successful completion!).
- Don't ignore any red flags or warning signs. Bring them out into the open and resolve them early, to ensure that misunderstandings don't get compounded or lead to more time wasted than necessary.



# Post Go-Live

- Post-go-live preparations and issue management
  - While it's impossible to predict everything that can possibly go wrong post go-live, be prepared to react quickly. That means:
    - Managing expectations of users and executives—well in advance!
      - cost (and cost overruns, if applicable)
      - time (and delays, if applicable)
      - features—and the pace of rolling out unfamiliar ones
      - system performance, i.e., tuning, bugs, temporary down-time, etc.
      - user performance, i.e., user acceptance, adoption, and acclimation
    - Having a user-friendly, user-familiar support-ticket system (e.g., Jira) set up, in place, and already widely in use, well in advance of go-live.
    - Monitoring all vital areas very closely post-go-live.
    - Ensuring capable team(s) at the ready for any areas that experience issues. This includes both from the customer side and the consulting side.
    - Being prepared to bring in higher-level teams from SAP Support. This also means setting tolerance thresholds and deadlines for issue resolution and sticking to them.

Thank you!

# Take the Session Survey.

We want to hear from you! Be sure to complete the session evaluation on the SAPPHIRE NOW and ASUG Annual Conference mobile app.



# Presentation Materials

Access the slides from 2019 ASUG Annual Conference here:

<http://info.asug.com/2019-ac-slides>

*TIP: Download this slideshow to keep for use as a “pre-engagement” checklist for any future implementations!*

# Q&A

For questions after this session, contact us at

[paul.arking@americogroup.com](mailto:paul.arking@americogroup.com)

*and*

[ina.viljoen@sap.com](mailto:ina.viljoen@sap.com)

# Let's Be Social.

Stay connected. Share your SAP experiences anytime, anywhere.  
Join the ASUG conversation on social media: @ASUG365 #ASUG

