

Upping the Game of SAP Managed Service in the UK

E-book

What do you imagine when you hear the phrase “SAP Managed Service”?

To most, a Managed Service is designed to ensure that your business critical systems remain operating successfully, often in a very reactive fashion. ‘When something breaks, we fix it’ mentality.

As time progresses in this digital age though, there has certainly been a step change in customer expectations when considering what level of service they are looking for from a Managed Service provider.

When engaging with prospect customers, we often hear:

- ‘Our current provider is purely ‘keeping the lights on’
- ‘We have to repeatedly address and fix the same errors’
- ‘All issues are dealt with at the same priority level – we don’t have visibility of the errors that will ultimately have real business impact’

Gone are the days when your SAP Managed Service provider is responsible for just “keeping the lights on”. It is now more important than ever to partner with a provider who can add value to your organisation. An example of some of the ways we help make a real impact to business efficiency and revenue growth is by:

- Prioritizing incidents & reducing incident resolution time with proactive monitoring
- Monitoring critical business process, both in and outside of SAP
- Automating the way we do things through self-service and self-healing
- Reducing cost while still adding value
- No offshoring; A UK-based team with decades of experience and vast knowledge

In this e-book you will learn, in more detail, which customer pain points and expectations triggered us to, once again, challenge the status quo of SAP Managed Service in the UK and bring a new wave of Innovation to the state of SAP support

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1. SAP Managed Service: Then vs. Now

Absoft has run an SAP Support Centre since 1994. During those days, conventional remote dial-up and the fledgling internet allowed remote access to SAP systems. Absoft were among the first to offer SAP services paid for by the hour rather than the day with banks of hours.

The years that have passed since, have seen the introduction of Service Level Agreements (SLAs), implementations of multiple generations of support software, alignment with ITIL and our ISO20000 certification in IT service management.

Since 2012 we began to replace the old banks of hours with fixed price managed services and really moved the incentive for efficient service into our court.

"When I joined Absoft in 2010, I was surprised to see the 'daily checks' of SAP systems taking place by hand each day. Our Technical Director wanted to automate it, so my first project in Absoft was building automated monitoring for SAP.

In the decade that has followed, we have based our services around real-time insight into what is happening in our customers SAP landscapes.

Now I'm thrilled to be working at the centre of our next generation SAP Managed Service launch, building on everything we've learned and upping the game in the value an SAP support service can offer for a customer."

Robert MacDonald, Innovation and Technology Manager at Absoft

2. Automation & Monitoring

2.1. The error of looking for errors

Automation is the buzzword of today and most organisations have some degree of automated monitoring. But as a mature provider with a decade of background in automated monitoring of SAP, what are the problems that we still face?

Things go wrong in a complex SAP environment; there are always errors in log files, cancelled jobs and aborted programs. Lots of it is noise that doesn't impact a business at all, but all of it is dutifully picked up with the same priority. Does the support analyst know the implications of each error, and are the errors that affect the business brought to their attention first?

A lot more is missed completely. Does anybody know that a file was supposed to appear on that SFTP site this afternoon for a critical interface?



Does the support analyst know the implications of each error, and are the errors that affect the business brought to their attention first?

Imagine a support service where everybody knew exactly the implications of every error, they were all logged with the correct priority automatically, and every important activity was monitored across systems. A printer fails and the SAP support team immediately knows which process will be affected.

Possibly no error has occurred in the entire scope of what is covered, but if an interface that forms part of a critical business process has not worked correctly, that has more importance than most errors that are picked up.

Business Process Monitoring is set up by standard in Absoft's new SAP Managed Service, and from the point of service transition we understand what is most important to the business and focus our automated service around it.

Nothing stops at transition: every closed incident is reviewed for monitoring opportunities, so we will never miss anything twice. The service itself becomes more and more aware of what is important.



Does anybody know that a file was supposed to appear on that SFTP site this afternoon for a critical interface?

2. Automation & Monitoring

2.2. Free from toil

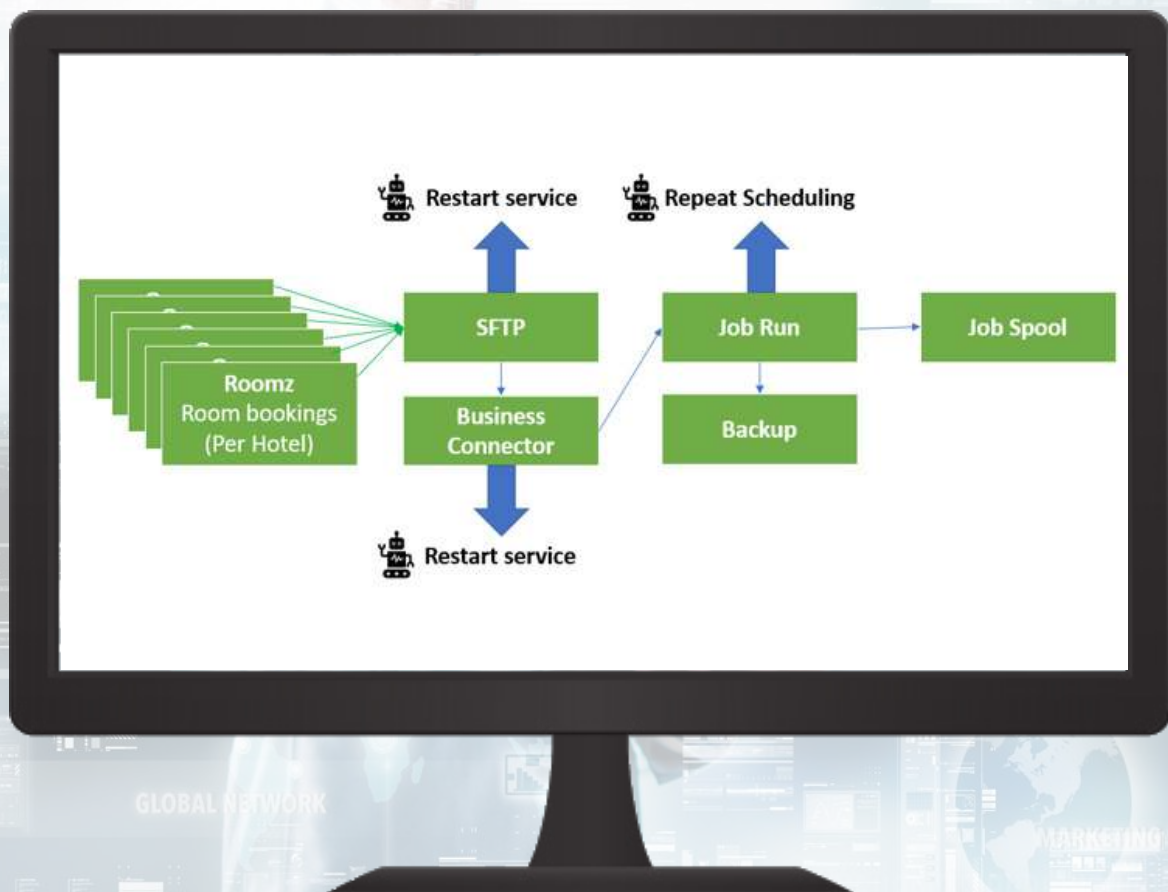
Our support team at Absoft really pride themselves on permanent solutions. The number one single complaint we hear from prospective customers describing their current support provider is that same faults crop up again and again, each time investigated and resolved by hand with a delay.

Sometimes a permanent fix is not possible in a legacy system, and more often things are not broken but just need some activity performed periodically like operating system patching. For those, we have automation by standard.

Combining automation with monitoring brings self-healing. Intelligent operations detect a problem, respond and resolve it without human involvement. This does save time, of course, but it also resolves the problem immediately - consequently resulting in reduced business impact.

With full SAP and operating system automation toolsets including dedicated SAP automation, infrastructure as code and Robotic Process Automation capabilities, more can be automated than ever before.

We never fix anything twice, and we review every closed incident for possibilities in automation.



3. Self-Service

The customer experience

The customer experience for most support services is not good. We all feel the sinking feeling of realising we must deal with a service desk or follow some awful process that sends a request into oblivion.

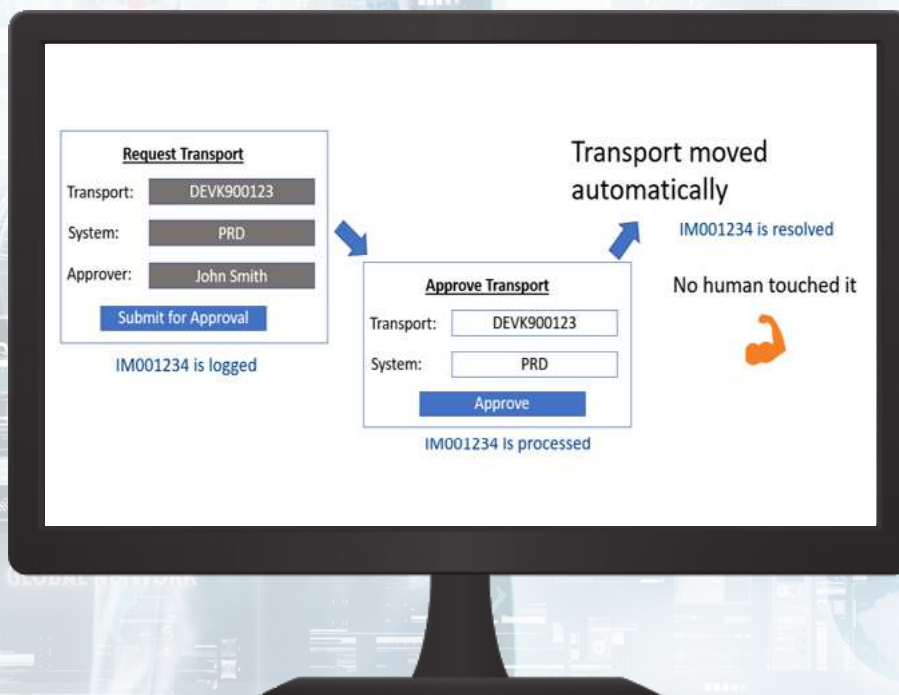
It is far better if the person you get through to knows what is happening from monitoring and has the time for a quick response thanks to automation handling everything repetitive, isn't it?

Self-Service requests are the next stage. If something can be handled automatically, from moving an SAP transport request to performing an automated QA data refresh to even deploying entire SAP landscapes in the cloud, then logging the request can trigger immediate action.

Over a third of British consumers now prefer self-service over human contact for any interaction with a business, and seven in ten expect to see self-service applications available.

Human contact will always be available over collaboration tools, phone and email, but when a production problem needs to be solved at 7pm and you just need the transport moved now without having to talk anybody the instant self-service request is very appealing.

It is far better if the person you get through to knows what is happening from monitoring and has the time for a quick response thanks to automation handling everything repetitive, isn't it?



4. Cloud Services

4.1. Born in the cloud

We have learned a lot from offering SAP in the cloud for over a decade, SAP monitoring as-a-service and dozens of successful SAP migrations into Microsoft Azure.

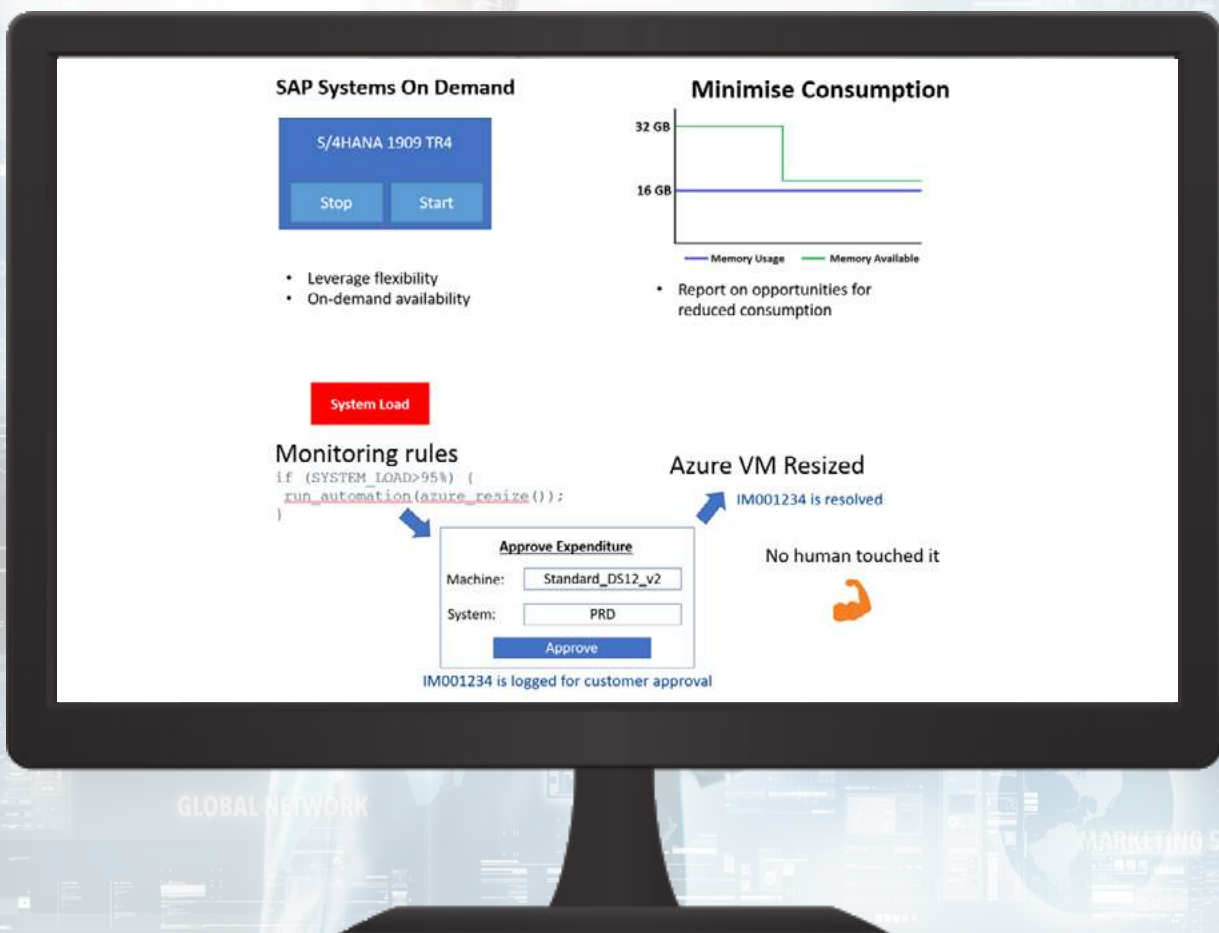
To make public cloud IaaS services work, software must be designed, sized, and deployed for the cloud. Lift-and-shift of the on-premises setup is costly, cumbersome and does not deliver the benefits.

An SAP support team needs to be equipped to size cloud resources correctly, and to respond immediately and automatically when they need to change.

There is a huge opportunity to identify when and how services can be sized down too, to really reduce cloud spend.

Our managed service lives in the hybrid cloud; a third of our customers are fully in the cloud, a third fully on premises and the rest somewhere between. The right toolset and practices to work with an internal infrastructure team in one minute, and the infrastructure-as-code world of Microsoft Azure the next, is the only way it works.

There is a huge opportunity to identify when and how services can be sized down to really reduce cloud spend.



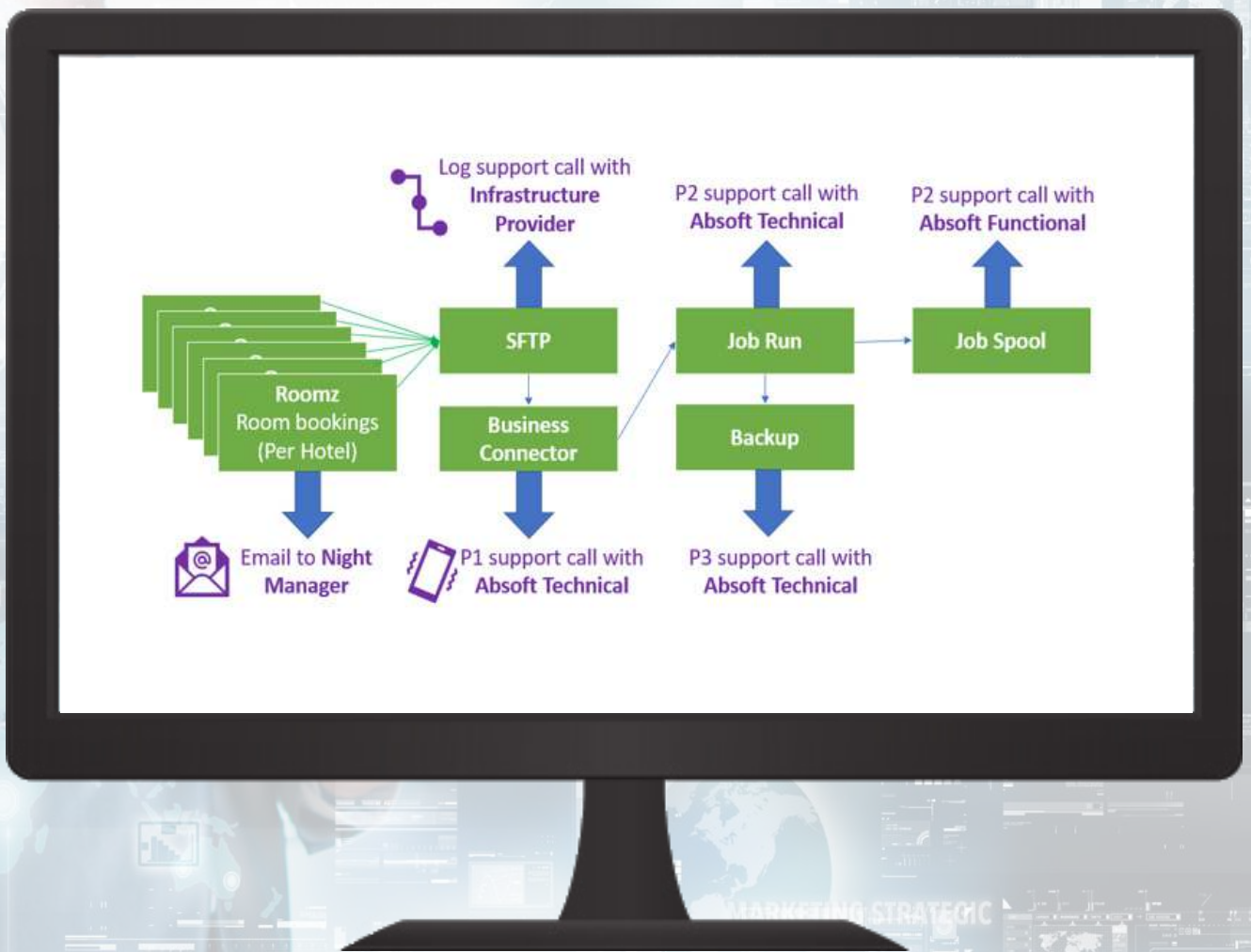
4. Cloud Services

4.2. Never in isolation

For decades, support services have been collaborative with complex interactions between third-party teams, internal teams, and vendors. Managing the interactions between suppliers can be several full-time jobs in some organisations.

As Azure becomes more and more common, we are seeing growth in companies running Azure infrastructure themselves or with a third-party running Azure across IT, whilst Absoft provide support for the SAP software.

We notify the right person immediately for any fault we detect, including third parties and internal teams with customer agreement.



5. The Power of Productivity

Our commitment to constant innovation

Things are changing fast and we are making an unprecedented level of investment in our SAP Managed Service. More automation by standard, more self-healing and more possibilities unlocked with every passing month.

Our aim is to make SAP simpler, faster, more reliable and more cost effective than ever before and to keep getting better and better.

Why Absoft?

- Absoft have delivered SAP support since 1994. With over 600 years of combined experience, we offer access to the most knowledgeable minds in the industry.
- We make it our mission to fully understand your business and to become an extension to your internal team. Our dedicated SAP Consultants will know you, your business and your systems inside and out. And you always know who is looking after your system.
- Absoft has met the rigorous requirements and highest standards in achieving SAP Partner Centre of Expertise and holds ISO 27001 & ISO 20000 certificates.

Contact us for more information:

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The benefits of our next generation SAP Managed Service



Real-time visibility & self-healing of end-to-end business processes



Support for on-premises, hybrid and cloud hosted landscapes



Fixed, yet flexible cost model



Entirely UK based support and service



Predictability and cost monitoring of cloud infrastructure



Reduced manual errors through Robotic Process Automation



Fast responses from automated self-service requests



ITIL-aligned support processes for incidents & problems



ISO certified SAP Partner Center of Expertise