

# Upgrade Project + Virtualization = Reduced Costs and Increased Efficiency

Virtual Off-Premise Services from TExperts Enhance the Upgrade Equation



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Current economic times are forcing companies to search for new ways to cut costs — all while maintaining efficient and flexible IT infrastructures. This challenge is compounded as many SAP customers are presently upgrading their SAP solution-based landscapes, converting to Unicode, or migrating their existing 32-bit hardware and software landscapes to a 64-bit platform (see sidebar on the next page).

Accordingly, IT managers have to evaluate technologies and services that can assist with their upgrade or conversion projects. Virtualization technologies have matured over the last several years to provide a stable, robust, high-availability platform for non-productive

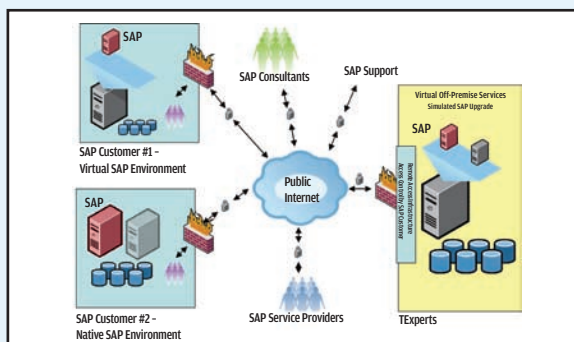
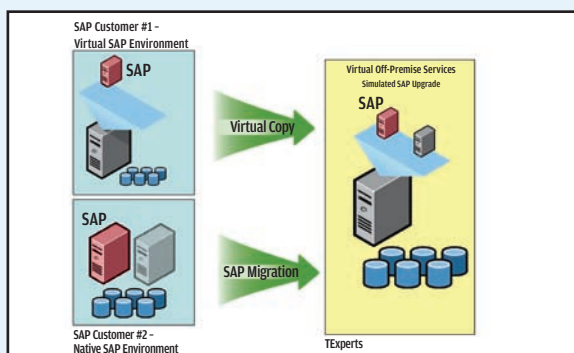
and productive SAP NetWeaver technology platform-based applications. VMware is a major provider of these virtualization technologies, and Virtual Off-Premise services from TExperts give SAP customers an acceleration tool in the form of virtual upgrade services — which leave no footprint in customers' data centers and help save money and increase flexibility in upgrade projects.

TExperts' Virtual Off-Premise services, which are offered on a month-to-month subscription basis, involve a temporary copy of a customer's SAP solution-based system being migrated to TExperts' dynamic data center, to which the customer and all involved parties have remote access (see figure). A service provider offering support for SAP solutions and a Certified VMware VAC Partner, TExperts offers SAP customers these Virtual Off-Premise services based on VMware ESX technology, one of the virtualization technologies officially supported for SAP solutions based on SAP NetWeaver technology.

## Employ Virtualization for Smarter Upgrades

TExperts' Virtual Off-Premise services provide flexibility for functional and technical SAP solution-based landscape upgrades and help IT departments perform these upgrades immediately, more efficiently, and in less time. While a copy of a system is temporarily migrated to our dynamic data center, the customer can prepare the upcoming upgrade independently, without temporarily freezing enhancements or other requests for business-critical services.

Furthermore, IT can plan, manage, and perform certain upgrade phases — such as PREPARE — faster and separately from the actual upgrade. Virtualization features, such as VMware snapshots, enable this independence and accelerate the process with fast rollbacks using snapshot technology. For example, IT can do an off-site proof of concept of the involved database upgrade as part of the PREPARE phase. Most SAP upgrades —



TExperts' Virtual Off-Premise services migrate a virtual copy of a company's SAP solution-based system to TExperts' dynamic data center; this allows involved parties to access it remotely

## Upgrades on the Horizon

Organizations are facing upgrade decisions this year as support for SAP R/3 Enterprise and SAP R/3 4.6C 32-bit applications phases out. Many companies are also considering the upgrade window an opportunity to move from an older 32-bit platform to a faster 64-bit platform to support new releases of SAP NetWeaver-based applications. Organizations are also looking into converting non-Unicode systems to Unicode as part of their upgrade because so much new Web Dynpro functionality – for employee and manager self-services, for example – require Unicode.

particularly those related to upgrading to SAP NetWeaver 7.0 from SAP R/3 — require this proof of concept.

Customers can also minimize and accelerate database upgrade efforts by creating one copy of the SAP solution-based system and using the snapshot feature to roll back or roll forward the virtual platform in case of corruption, rather than re-deploying the whole SAP system. This snapshot technology can be used not only to upgrade the database, but also to aid in the different phases of an SAP upgrade project — to respond to unexpected events that may occur during first-time upgrades, for example.

### 5 Key Virtualization Advantages

Here are several benefits of using virtualization technologies in an SAP upgrade project:

- IT can reuse the virtually upgraded SAP system to further rehearse upgrade scenarios (dry runs) to fine tune the process, especially by using a re-homed copy of the quality assurance or production system to learn about the timing of the different upgrade phases.
- System copies can be created easily to provide a duplicate system to the integration testing or training team, enabling IT to train employees before and during the actual upgrade. The snapshot capability allows the training system to be reset quickly after a training session so it can be reused for the next session. A native training system, on the other hand, requires additional effort for reuse because it has to be cleaned up manually or a client copy must be performed.
- IT can perform, evaluate, and test modification adjustments completely independently while the actual production landscape is live. These adjustments can be realized and prepackaged in the form of a turnkey transport to be reused with the actual upgrade.
- The implementation team can review new functionality well ahead of the actual upgrade, enabling the team to start the blueprint phase

independent of the internal hardware deployment and procurement processes.

- SAP solutions, such as SAP Solution Manager, or third-party software, such as BSI TaxFactory or Vertex Sales and Use Tax, can be easily simulated, evaluated, and integration-tested in a similar manner without any intrusion to the customer's data center.

All involved parties can perform their tasks collaboratively while remaining independent of their location as they obtain the appropriate access, approved by the customer, through the remote access infrastructure that TExperts provides.

### Reduce Costs During Your Upgrade

TExperts' Virtual Off-Premise services offer many opportunities to reduce upgrade costs with:

- Zero footprint in the SAP customer's data center
- Inexpensive snapshots that replace backup and recovery processes
- Instantaneous system copies for training and testing
- No additional cost for the access infrastructure
- Access to Basis experts
- No travel costs due to virtual collaboration among the various team members

SAP customers who have started to implement virtualization technologies internally typically plan to extend them to their SAP solution-based landscape because of the defined benefits of virtualization. These customers will gain additional benefits by using TExperts' Virtual Off-Premise services because of the de-coupling effect of virtual platforms. The Virtual Off-Premise services concept can be utilized to start virtualizing SAP systems off-site while the internal implementation of the virtual platform is underway. TExperts' certified consultants provide expertise in migrating SAP solution-based systems running on native hardware onto a virtual platform allowing customers to benefit from our Virtual Off-Premise services that seamlessly integrate with their existing landscape. To learn more, please visit [www.texpertsinc.com/saponvmware.html](http://www.texpertsinc.com/saponvmware.html). ■