



ECC MIGRATION · STRATEGY

The Mid-2026 Ultimatum

Why Your ECC Migration Window Is Closing Faster Than You Think

If your organization is still in “planning mode” for SAP ECC migration in mid-2026, you are not running behind schedule. You are approaching the point where the schedule runs out entirely.

The conversation in most boardrooms has finally shifted from whether to migrate to S/4HANA to when and how. But for a significant portion of large US enterprises — precisely the ones with the most complex SAP landscapes — the arithmetic of that question is becoming alarming.

This is not a vendor scare tactic. It is a time-and-resource equation, and right now it does not favor delay.

The Deadline Landscape: What CIOs Actually Face

Most IT leaders are aware of the high-level deadlines. But the full picture is more layered — and more pressing — than the headline ‘2027 end of mainstream support’ suggests.

Dec
2025

Original Compatibility Pack deadline passed

SAP subsequently extended CP access, but the extension signals mounting transition pressure.

Now
May
2026

Compatibility Packs expire for on-premise customers

SAP The bridge allowing ECC functionality to run within S/4HANA is being removed. This changes your cost and risk profile immediately.

End
2027

SAP mainstream support ends for ECC

No more security patches, bug fixes, or compliance updates under standard maintenance agreements.

End
2030

Extended support ends (at premium cost)

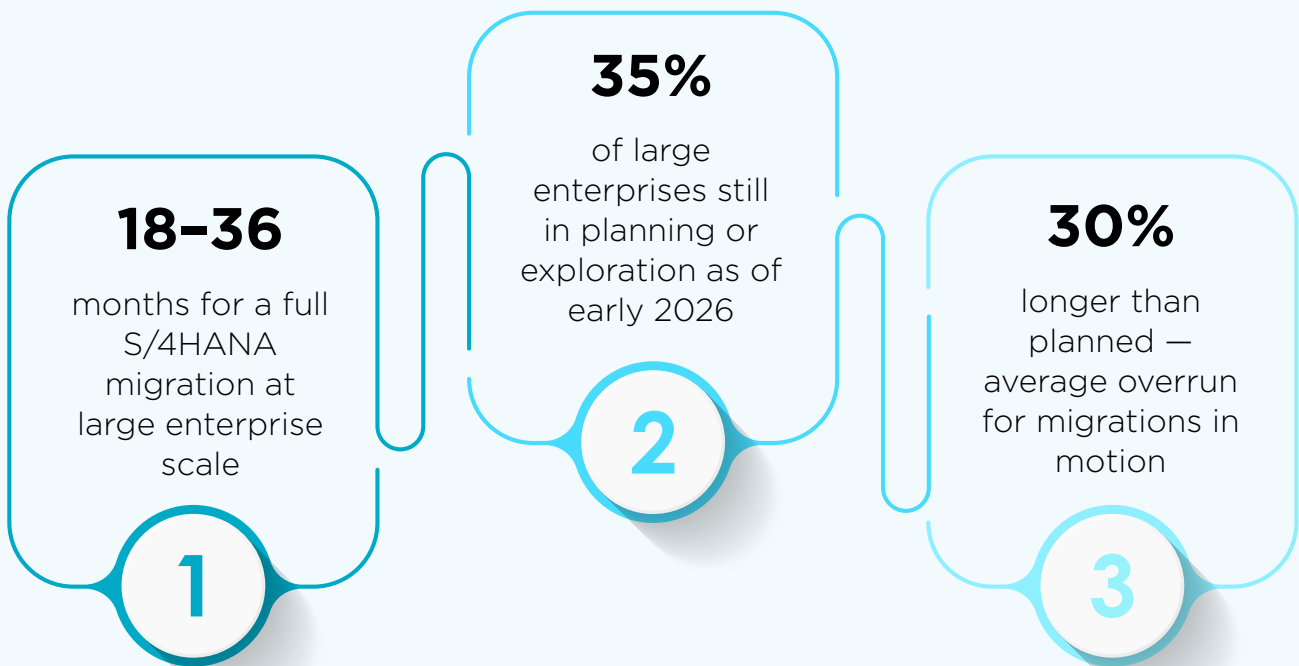
Available with additional fees — designed as a temporary buffer, not a long-term strategy.

2033

Maximum outer boundary for committed migration plan customers

Gartner estimates 10,000+ SAP customers will still run parts of their business on ECC in 2030.

The Real Constraint Isn't the Deadline — It's the Clock



Do the math. A large enterprise that has not started a structured readiness assessment by mid-2026 cannot realistically complete a well-planned migration before mainstream support ends. The options compress: rush a brownfield conversion under time pressure, pay extended maintenance premiums while your team scrambles, or enter the 2027 talent market when consulting rates are projected to spike 30-50% due to scarce S/4HANA expertise.



An organization that hasn't begun assessment by mid-2026 isn't choosing between a good migration and a rushed one. It's choosing between a rushed migration and an extended maintenance premium — while the talent pool it needed becomes unavailable.

Where Most Large Enterprises Are Right Now

As of early 2026, legacy ECC use has fallen below 50% of organizations for the first time — a milestone that signals the majority of the market is in motion. But that aggregate masks a dangerous concentration at the top end of the enterprise spectrum.

The organizations still in “planning or exploration” are disproportionately the largest, most complex ones: multi-division manufacturers, global distributors, financial services firms with decades of custom ABAP code, utilities with deep integrations to operational technology. These are exactly the organizations for whom a migration carries the highest execution risk — and the narrowest remaining window for a controlled approach.

The Three Forces Compressing Your Window

1.



Talent scarcity is accelerating

Demand for experienced S/4HANA specialists — particularly in data migration, FI/CO, testing, and cutover management — is already outpacing supply on most active programs. Demand is projected to reach three times available supply by 2027. The best delivery architects and program managers are getting booked now, not in late 2026.

2.



Consulting rates are already rising

Implementation partner costs are projected to rise 30% in late 2026 due to resource scarcity. This is not a price increase — it is supply and demand. Organizations that delay assessment are entering the market at peak constraint, competing for the same finite pool of experienced resources.

3.



The cost of inaction compounds

Extended maintenance is available — at a premium. Third-party support is available — but SAP will issue no further ECC updates after 2027, meaning organizations accept a permanently static system, accumulating security exposure and compliance risk with each passing quarter. Meanwhile, competitors who migrated early are already leveraging S/4HANA's embedded AI, real-time analytics, and process automation.

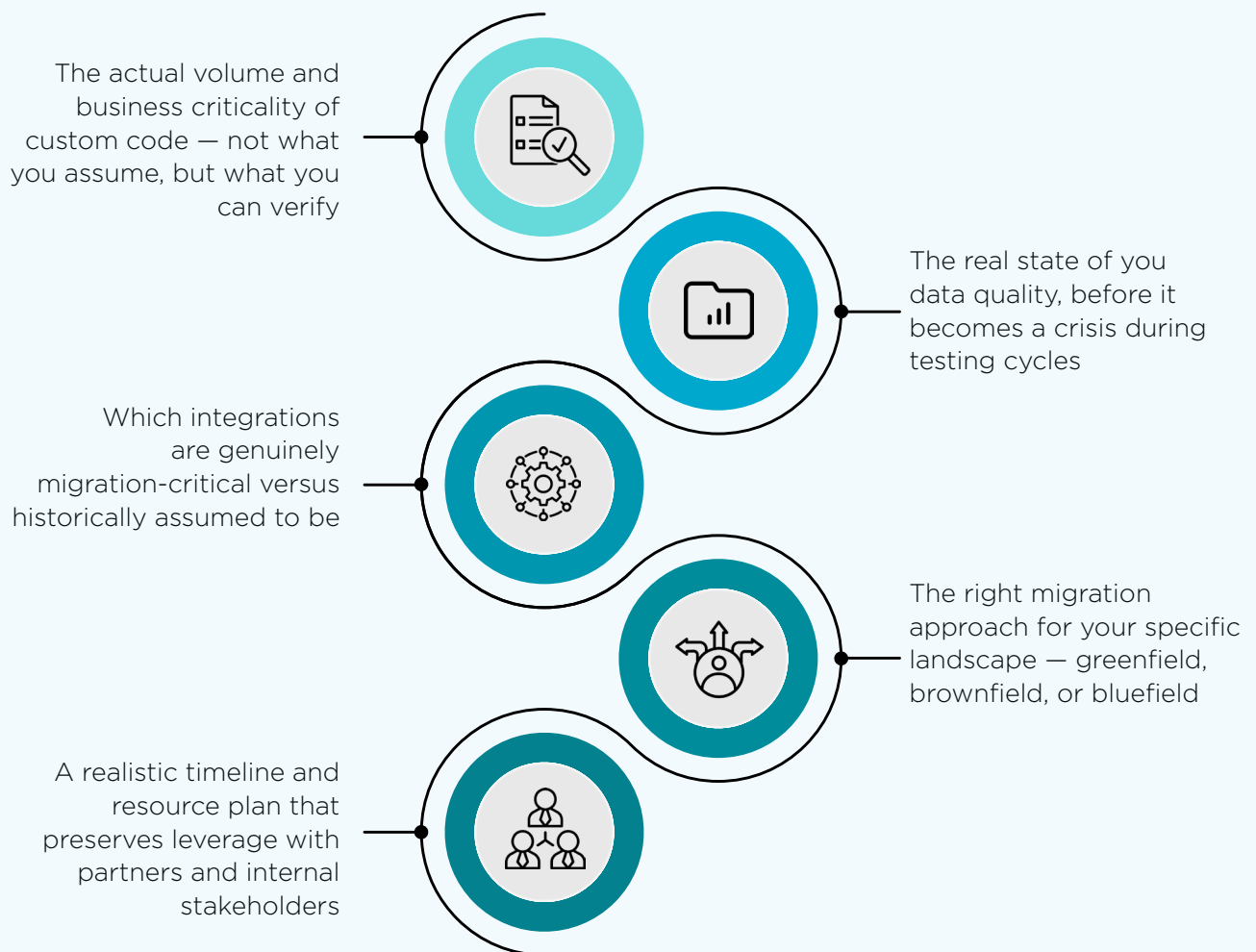
THE CAPABILITY GAP IS WIDENING DAILY

SAP's entire innovation investment — AI automation via Joule, predictive analytics, machine learning, cloud-native extensibility — is directed exclusively at S/4HANA. Every quarter you remain on ECC is a quarter your competitors on S/4HANA pull further ahead on operational intelligence.

What “Starting Now” Actually Means

The most common misconception among IT leadership is that “starting” means committing to a multi-year, nine-figure transformation program. It does not. The single highest-value action available to most enterprise SAP leaders in mid-2026 is a structured readiness assessment — not a migration commitment.

A proper assessment surfaces:



The Question for Every CIO Reading This

Not: “Should we migrate to S/4HANA?” That question was answered by SAP’s roadmap years ago.

Not: “Can we wait another year?” The timeline math answers that clearly.

The question is: **Do you know — with precision, not assumption — what your actual migration complexity looks like?** Do you know how much custom code you’re carrying? What your data quality issues are? Which third-party integrations will break? What a realistic timeline looks like for your specific landscape?

If the honest answer is “not precisely,” that is where the work starts. And mid-2026 is the last point at which starting that work gives you real options.



Start With Clarity, Not Commitment

Accrete’s S/4HANA Readiness Assessment gives your leadership team a precise picture of your migration complexity — before you commit to a path or a partner.



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