

WALKME FOR RISE WITH SAP

The Adoption Playbook for RISE with SAP

How to get more from your S/4HANA
investment and make sure the value lands.



THE PROBLEM

The investment is there, make it stick.

Every RISE program starts with a business case that represents a real commitment to the board, to the business, and to the people who will be living with the new system. The goal is always the same, get the return on that investment, and get it moving as fast as possible.

Organizations are investing more in S/4HANA transformation than they have in any prior system change. Implementation partners are delivering, the infrastructure is sound, and timelines are met more or less. The question is how much faster the value can land, because support desks stay busy longer than expected, users take time to find their footing, data quality takes a while to normalize, and the CFO asks the same fair question in every quarterly review: we spent all this money, so when does the return start compounding?

This is what we call **transformation debt: the gap between what the investment was designed to deliver and how quickly it is actually being realized**. Unlike most challenges, it compounds if left unaddressed, and the organizations that close it fastest are the ones that treat people adoption with the same rigor they bring to the technical implementation.

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RISE delivers the technology and the methodology. What compounds the return is making sure people adopt the new capabilities fully and keep pace as the system evolves.



40%

of S/4HANA transformation
spend underperforms because
of user adoption challenges

15–20%

annual cost of maintaining
custom code, as a share of the
original development cost
(Gartner)

The system delivers faster than the people.

When a RISE program gets underway, the focus goes where it should: applications, architecture, data migration, process design. These are real investments and they deliver real outcomes.

What gets less attention is adoption. Not whether training happened, but whether people are actually using what you built, in the way it was designed to be used.

Training happens in classrooms, three to six months before go-live. By the time users sit down at the new system, the content is already outdated, the memory of what they learned has faded, and the process has changed twice. When they get stuck, they call the help desk. Or they find a workaround. Or they just go back to the old way.

This is not a people problem. It is a timing and method problem. The training happened, but it happened in a way that could not keep pace with an ongoing transformation.

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The training model fades, not the training itself. Users are trained, the implementation goes live, and then everyone assumes it is done. But the change keeps coming.



Transformation debt accumulates in predictable places.



1

Customization

When the standard system does not match the experience users need, teams build custom code. Every customization creates dependencies, and every dependency creates maintenance cost. **Gartner estimates ongoing custom code maintenance runs at 15 to 20 percent of the original development cost, every year.**

2

Hypercare

Post go-live support is designed to be a four to eight week window. Without genuine adoption, it becomes permanent infrastructure. Ticket volumes stay elevated. The help desk that was supposed to wind down becomes a recurring line item.

2

AI

SAP has embedded AI across its solutions. The capability is there. But deploying AI and adopting AI are different things. What we hear consistently, twelve to eighteen months after go-live, is: the users just are not using it.

Where WalkMe closes the gap.

WalkMe sits across the full transformation journey, from design through continuous improvement. It is not a training tool. It is not a help desk replacement. It is the layer that connects what you built to how people actually work. There are five specific places where this makes a measurable difference.



App dev deflection for clean core

The biggest reason RISE programs accumulate custom code is that the standard system does not match the experience users need. The ask goes to the implementation team, the backlog grows, and the clean, upgradable system you signed up for starts looking like the old one.

WalkMe addresses this without touching the code. Custom experiences, localization, process variations, role-specific workflows. All of it can be built in the experience layer, by non-technical users, in a fraction of the time. Customers who bring WalkMe in at design are addressing up to 28 percent of their custom use cases this way, saving between \$400,000 and \$1 million in the first year alone.



Skiping the change management bottleneck

Change management is expensive because it is episodic. You train everyone before go-live, then again when the system changes, then again when the policy changes. You are paying for the same content three times and it still does not stick.

WalkMe Learning Arc delivers training inside the flow of work, at the moment someone actually needs it. Simulations built for user acceptance testing can be reused for training. Customers are seeing a 65 percent reduction in manual testing time. The content does not expire because it lives where the work happens.



Making hypercare count

Hypercare is designed to be a bounded window. The organizations that get the most from it are the ones that complement reactive support with proactive guidance. WalkMe prevents errors at the point of execution. Customers have seen a 63 percent reduction in service desk tickets post go-live, and an 84 percent first-time pass rate on complex processes like invoice matching.

FIVE OPPORTUNITIES



Eliminating cross-application friction

S/4HANA does not operate in isolation. Purchase orders start in S/4 and require approval in Ariba. Employee onboarding spans SuccessFactors and S/4. Service requests move between ServiceNow and SAP. The workflows with the most business value are always the ones that cross application boundaries. WalkMe guides users across all of them. 25 percent of multi-application customers are already doing this, across more than 533 unique applications.

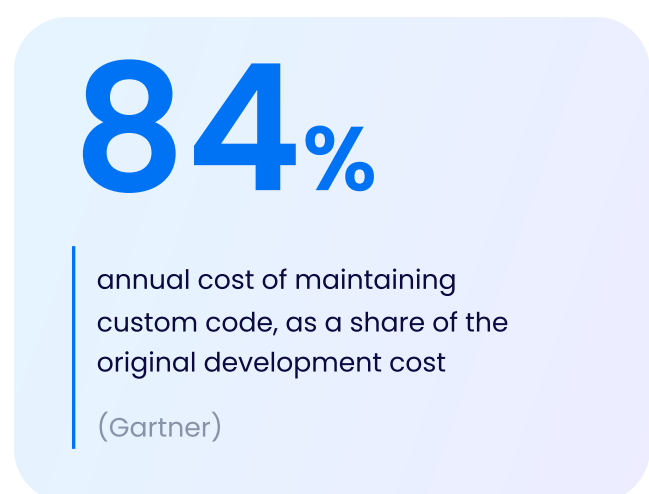
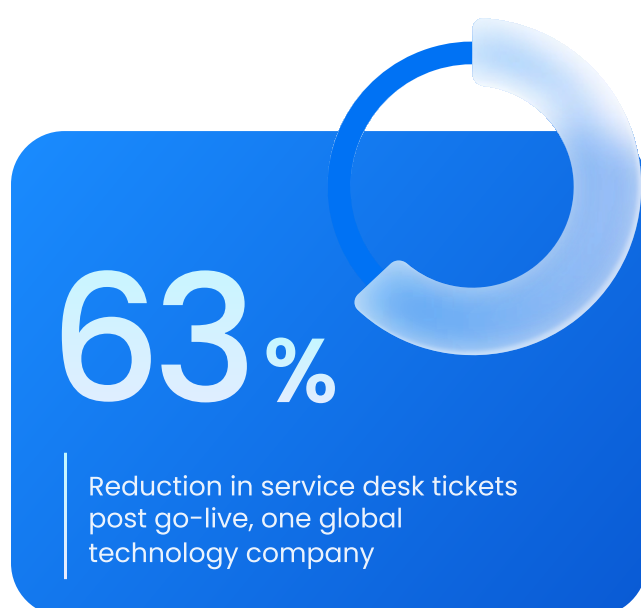


Turning AI investment into AI impact

SAP has made significant investments in AI across its solution portfolio. The capabilities are live and funded. The challenge is that deploying AI is an IT event. Adoption is a different problem. WalkMe surfaces AI contextually, in the application the user is already in, at the step where it is relevant. Users do not need to write prompts. The capability comes to them.

IN PRACTICE

What customers are actually seeing.



28%

Of custom code use cases addressed through the WalkMe experience layer instead of development

65%

Reduction in manual testing time using WalkMe simulations alongside UAT

1.5M

Productivity hours recovered in under 12 months, one global CPG company

\$30M

Estimated financial benefit from that same program, inside 12 months of go-live

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Clean core is a commitment worth keeping. WalkMe is how you honor it. You get the experience users need without the technical debt that used to come with it.

None of these are outcomes from a training rollout. They are outcomes from treating adoption as a continuous discipline, not a one-time project phase. The organizations getting these results have someone accountable for adoption outcomes, with the data to back it up.

This is not a sprint. It is a marathon.

RISE is not an IT upgrade. It is a business transformation. The organizations that do this well are not the ones that implement the fastest. They are the ones that build the right capabilities from the start and keep running them after go-live.

WalkMe is part of the SAP integrated toolchain alongside Signavio for process management, LeanIX for architecture, and SAP Cloud ALM for project management. Together, they form a continuous loop: user behavior from WalkMe feeds back into process change, a new application introduction triggers an impact assessment, and the transformation keeps improving over time.

WalkMe

Adoption

Signavio

Process management

LeanIX

Architecture

Cloud ALM

Project management

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The road is the same for every RISE program. What separates the ones that pull ahead is how they run it. WalkMe is how the best programs keep moving forward.



The best RISE customers succeed not just at go-live but throughout the transformation journey.

- ✓ They bring WalkMe in at design, not after go-live.
- ✓ They use it to reduce customization before it starts.
- ✓ They treat training as a continuous experience, not a classroom event.
- ✓ They manage hypercare with data, not headcount.
- ✓ And when SAP ships new AI capabilities, their users are already positioned to use them.

Transformation debt is real. Addressing it early is entirely possible. The organizations doing it well started asking the adoption question at design, not at go-live.

About WalkMe

WalkMe, an SAP company, pioneered the world's leading Digital Adoption Platform, helping organizations navigate the change brought on by technology across any application or system. Leveraging over a decade of experience, WalkMe's platform integrates generative AI to deliver proactive, accessible, and actionable insights. Our context-aware solutions guide users through any workflow, identifying and resolving digital friction to ensure seamless execution of critical processes across all departments. Trusted by global leaders like IBM, Nestlé, ThermoFisher Scientific, and the U.S. Department of Defense, WalkMe empowers organizations to maximize software ROI and drive people-centric digital transformation.

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WalkMe is successfully deployed at:

