



## SAP Creates Sales Peer Exchange of Knowledge

SAP

Best Use of Social Collaborative Learning

October 2018



### Company Background



<b>Company-at-a-Glance</b>	SAP is the world leader in enterprise applications in terms of software and software-related service revenue. Based on market capitalization, the company is the world’s third-largest independent software manufacturer.
<b>Headquarters</b>	Walldorf, Germany
<b>Year Founded</b>	1972
<b>Revenue</b>	€22.06 billion (total revenue [IFRS] in FY2016 [preliminary])
<b>Employees</b>	88,500-plus in 130-plus countries.
<b>Global Scale (Regions that you operate in or provide services to)</b>	Worldwide operations in all regions (North America, South America, Asia Pacific and Japan, Australia and Europe).
<b>Customers/Output, etc. (Key customers and services offered)</b>	378,000-plus customers in more than 180 countries. From pioneering ERP software to new offerings like the SAP HANA in-memory computing platform, SAP innovation goes beyond software — it’s developing breakthrough technologies that shape IT and business trends.
<b>Industry</b>	Software
<b>Stock Symbol</b>	SAP SE (XETRA – Frankfurt Stock Exchange)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://presales.sap.com">presales.sap.com</a>



### Budget and Timeframe

Overall budget	\$685,000
Number of (HR, Learning, Talent) employees involved with the implementation?	1
Number of Operations or Subject Matter Expert employees involved with the implementation?	2
Timeframe to implement	2 years — 2013 and 2014
Start date of the program	July 15, 2013

### Business Conditions and Business Needs

SAP is a global organization that operates in seven regions across the globe and serves 378,000 customers in 180-plus countries. Guided by its vision of “Help the World Run Better and Improve People’s Lives,” SAP set its overarching strategy to “Be the Most Innovative Cloud Company” to realize its vision.

The presales organization is part of SAP’s global customer organization (GCO), which includes all of SAP’s customer field facing SAP teams. The account executives (field sales) are the relationship management experts within SAP and presales (customer solution advisors) are the solution experts. As such, they are responsible to deliver demonstrations that show the value of SAP’s solutions to their customers and prospects.

Presales’ strategy is to make “Every Customer Touchpoint an Amazing Experience.” This means that when presales engages with a customer or prospect, they need to deliver more than a demonstration of the solution. They are expected to engage in a way that is insightful, innovative and memorable so to make a lasting, favorable impression on their customers. These types of engagements enable SAP to better differentiate itself from its competitors, driving greater pipeline and revenue generation. However, SAP had to overcome several challenges to realize this strategy.

First, as SAP continued to grow and expand the size of its organization and product portfolio, it became more difficult for presales to execute efficiently. About seven years ago, presales began to experience challenges across the regions and market units (MUs). Regions are comprised of market units (MUs), which are smaller geographies and often individual countries. Regional presales management wrestled with these challenges



across the Europe/Middle East/Africa (EMEA) region in particular, which has the most MUs of any region, approximately 15. Their challenges:

- Individual presales colleagues did not know their peers.
- Presales had inconsistent skills across the market units.
- Collaboration was virtually nonexistent.
- High duplication of efforts existed.
- No standard learning program was in place.
- Virtually no peer-to-peer learning occurred.

Colleagues were highly siloed geographically across this region, resulting in little or no peer-to-peer engagement.

Second, as presales engages with customers and prospects, they learn about industry changes, customer needs, competitive tactics, products and market conditions and more. It is important that these latest insights be circulated across presales as quickly as possible so the value and relevancy of this information can be judged and applied as needed. Presales had no means to do this quickly.

Third, field presales spends 80% or more of their time traveling to be with customers. Given that they are highly mobile, they need to be able to contribute and consume information when they have the time to do so.

Fourth, SAP and presales invested heavily over the years to make innovative technologies available to help presales and the larger global customer organization drive greater customer efficiency and impact during their customer engagements. The challenge is not to simply ensure presales have access to these innovative technologies, however, but to be sure they know when and how to apply them effectively in real-world customer scenarios. To be successful, presales must continually hone their customer engagement skills by developing new tool application strategies that combine the use of these latest technologies with tried-and-true customer engagement tactics.

To address these problems, presales needed a way to:

- Share insights and tactics on when and how to effectively apply the latest technologies.
- Exchange account engagement strategies and tactics.
- Enable thought leaders to share their insights and experiences.
- Catalogue and share best practices.

- Develop and document solutions to shared challenges and problems.

Solving these challenges required that presales align all MUs in all regions to drive increased learning and collaboration via best practice sharing, peer-to-peer knowledge transfer and reuse of customer ready content to enable presales to continue to effectively contribute to SAP's growth.

## Overview

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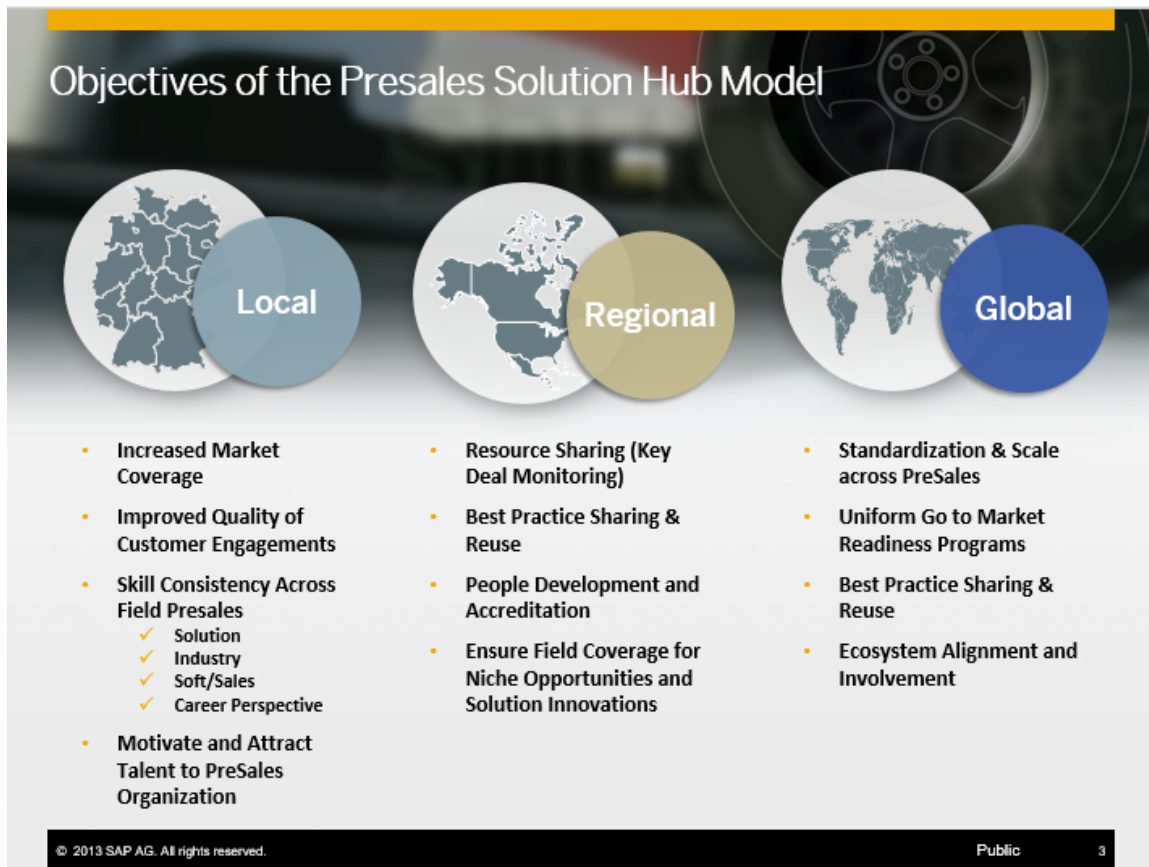
The beginnings of the Social Collaborative Learning Program started with the actions that were taken to remediate the challenges within the market units and regions as outlined above.

In 2012, a decision was made to create communities of practice (CoPs) organized by functional product area or specialization in the Europe, Middle East and Africa region. These communities, including supply chain, Human Resources, finance, supplier relationship management, customer relationship management and enterprise information management brought individual presales colleagues together across all market units within the region based on the product they specialized in supporting.

The CoPs that were created in the Europe, Middle East and Africa region were successful. The more aligned and connected that presales became within the region, the more firmly collaboration, thought leadership and learning were established.

Given the fact that all other regions faced the same challenges as the Europe, Middle East and Africa Region, in 2013 global presales management decided to roll out communities of practice across the remaining five regions. The goals of the communities of practice, now referred to as presales solution hubs, were identified at the local (market unit), regional and global Levels and are outlined in the slide below. While some of these goals are hard and can be quantitatively measured such as skill consistency and aspects of go-to-market readiness (learning), other goals such as best practice sharing, coverage for niche opportunities and motivate and attract talent to the presales organization are soft and can only be evaluated by qualitative means. See the summary of goals below.

Figure 1: Objectives of the Presales Solution Hub Model



Source: SAP

Many of the goals that were originally identified for the solution hubs were either completely or partially achieved.

The establishment of a uniform go-to-market readiness program within the solution hub program resulted in developing role-specific learning that incorporated multiple modes of learning including formal, informal, experiential, and peer/social learning. Members had the ability based on their role, tenure and solution specialization to participate in the type of learning that best met their needs.

Today, the Social Collaborative Learning Program that exists within the solution hubs is comprised of several distinct activities:

- **Collaboration:** Sharing information and solving problems by working together with a common purpose to achieve business benefit.



- **Thought Leadership:** Individuals and the content they share establishes themselves as foremost authorities in an area of expertise to educate and inform.
- **Learning:** Multiple modes of activities offered to increase knowledge, awareness and expertise to increase sales and productivity.

The Social Collaborative Learning Program is comprised of the following core elements:

- Peer-to-peer engagement and interaction.
- Channels and platforms to enable this interaction.
- Leadership to support and evolve social learning.
- Programs and initiatives to elevate thought leadership and collaboration.
- Monitoring and support.
- Metrics to measure engagement.

While this learning program consists of specific elements including peer-to-peer engagement and interaction and programs and initiatives to elevate thought leadership and collaboration, the remainder of these elements are shared with the solution hub program.

Solution hub members participate in the Social Collaborative Learning Program because it delivers the following benefits:

- **Reduces the Time to Learn** — The information exchanged when peers engage their peers can be applied immediately.
- **Solves Problems** — Peer exchange of real-world information and experiences can lead to fast and effective problem solving.
- **Crowdsources Information** — Social, collaborative engagement enables valuable assets and content to be identified and shared for the benefit of all.
- **Permits Learning on the Individuals Schedule** — Collaborative learning enables presales to engage and consume information as their schedules permit, minimizing the impact to their customer commitments on their learning.
- **Elevates the Value of Thought Leaders** — Thought Leaders have a means to share their knowledge and insights making them and their information more accessible by all.

The following examples illustrate the benefits stated above. The first example is from the Human Resources solution hub and shows a requestor reaching out to his/her peers with a question by email via a distribution list. One of those contacted quickly responds with information requested. Note that this document has been shared with the same DL so



now this crowd-sourced information is available to all solution hub members. (Names have been removed for data privacy.)

### Figure 2: Human Resources Solution Hub

**From:** Responder  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 20, 2018 10:35 PM  
**To:** Requestor and DL HCM Presales Q&A <[DL\\_53A2FAA4DF15DB5DB1000006@exchange.sap.corp](mailto:DL_53A2FAA4DF15DB5DB1000006@exchange.sap.corp)>  
**Subject:** RE: examples of themes

Hi all

Here are some of my collections ...

BR,  
Responder

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**From:** Requestor  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 21, 2018 8:35 AM  
**To:** DL HCM Presales Q&A <[DL\\_53A2FAA4DF15DB5DB1000006@exchange.sap.corp](mailto:DL_53A2FAA4DF15DB5DB1000006@exchange.sap.corp)>  
**Subject:** Examples of themes








Hello Team! I am looking for a collection of examples of themes to share with a prospect. I have an old PPT with several theme examples, but they are old and all the home page tiles have the rounded edges. I am looking for something more up-to-date that shows the home page tiles with the sharp edges. Does anyone have something to share? Please?  
Thanks,  
Requestor|

*Requestor*  
Sr. Solutions Consultant | PreSales - West  
**SAP SuccessFactors** 

Source: SAP

A second example is from the business intelligence/predictive analytics solution hub. This solution hub has a thought leadership program entitled “All You Need to Know.” The wiki documents shown below provide information to its members on very specific topics, literally a one-stop shop of carefully selected information. Notice the total number of activities, views and downloads within the last 90 days. (Names have been removed for data privacy.) There are 229 presales dedicated to these solutions.

**Figure 3: Business Intelligence/Predictive Analytics Solution Hub**

Most Engaging Items <span style="float: right;">ⓘ</span>			
<a href="#">Last 4 weeks</a> <a href="#">Last 3 months</a> <a href="#">Last 6 months</a> <a href="#">Last 12 months</a>		<a href="#">All Content ▾</a> <a href="#">Group Admins Included ▾</a>	
Item name	Contributor	Last Modified	Total # of Activities
 <b>SAP Analytics Cloud / SAP Digital Boardroom Demo Environments</b> 1,846 views · 3 likes · 0 comments · 24 versions		04/4/2018	1,873
 <b>Analytics Cloud: all you need to know</b> 527 views · 7 likes · 4 comments · 17 versions		03/27/2018	555
 <b>Golden Deck - Home Page</b> 334 views · 4 likes · 2 comments · 3 versions		03/15/2018	343
 <b>SAP Analytics Cloud / Digital Boardroom best practices, tips and tricks</b> 326 views · 0 likes · 4 comments · 0 versions		11/29/2017	330
 <b>Everything you need to know on BW/4HANA</b> 279 views · 0 likes · 0 comments · 9 versions		04/1/2018	288
 <b>NEW! Digital Boardroom with S4 Finance and SuccessFactors data is now released! (Demo 15059)</b> 197 views · 10 likes · 4 comments · 1 versions		03/5/2018	212
 <b>BI On Premise Platform / Tools</b> 196 views · 1 likes · 0 comments · 1 versions		03/8/2018	198

Source: SAP

The growth of Social Collaborative Learning also favorably impacted the achievement of several other goals:

- Quality of engagements was improved across the board.
- Skill consistency is greatly improved thanks to the global skills analysis program that was created to ensure skill consistency within presales across the globe.
- Best practice sharing and knowledge transfer now regularly occurs in all MUs in all regions.
- Alignment to the presales ecosystem has greatly improved, specifically with solution management and product management. presales is one of the largest consumers of the product-related information delivered by these organizations, which are external to presales.



## Design of the Program

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The presales solution hubs were designed and rolled out globally across all regions in 2013.

The global head of presales is the executive sponsor of the solution hub program and owns overall responsibility for this program, provides the budget to fund it and approved the objectives, scope and rollout schedule for the program.

This global presales solution hub program manager is responsible for the rollout, ongoing maintenance and success of this program. He owns the overall program budget and the solution hub program management office, which was created to support the ongoing growth and maintenance of this program. The global presales solution hub program manager worked to forge the relationships necessary to establish this program across the regions, lines of business and industries and interviewed and selected the global and regional leads for each solution hub. Bi-weekly calls are held with each of the global solution hub leads and regional presales heads to review and monitor the operation of the solution hubs on an ongoing basis.

The program management office assisted with the rollout of the solution hub program, ensuring execution against the project timeframe. This office was responsible to build each solution hub's presence on the social platform and create and distribute program communications. Projects and initiatives to enhance the solution hubs, such as publishing a "Who's Who" of all solution hub leads for the field and designing and providing reports to permit solution hub member activity to be evaluated also are executed.

Presales has 17 active solution hubs that are aligned by SAP's go-to-market taxonomy. They are organized in four groups as outlined below:

- **Line of Business** (six): Supply chain, products, hybris (customer engagement and commerce), finance, Human Resources and procurement.
- **Technology** (three): Database and data management, cloud and platform technology, business intelligence and predictive analytics.
- **Industry** (four): Retail, public services, financial services and discrete industries.
- **Role** (three): Presales customer service manager/director, enterprise architects and presales managers.

The mission of all solution hubs is to "enable (presales) to *provide* an amazing customer experience through *collecting* field requirements, *exchanging* knowledge, best practices,

customer stories and *delivering* customer-ready content.” This is a key enabler of presales’ overall strategy.

At a macro level, each hub was designed to have three key focus areas or “three legs of the stool”:

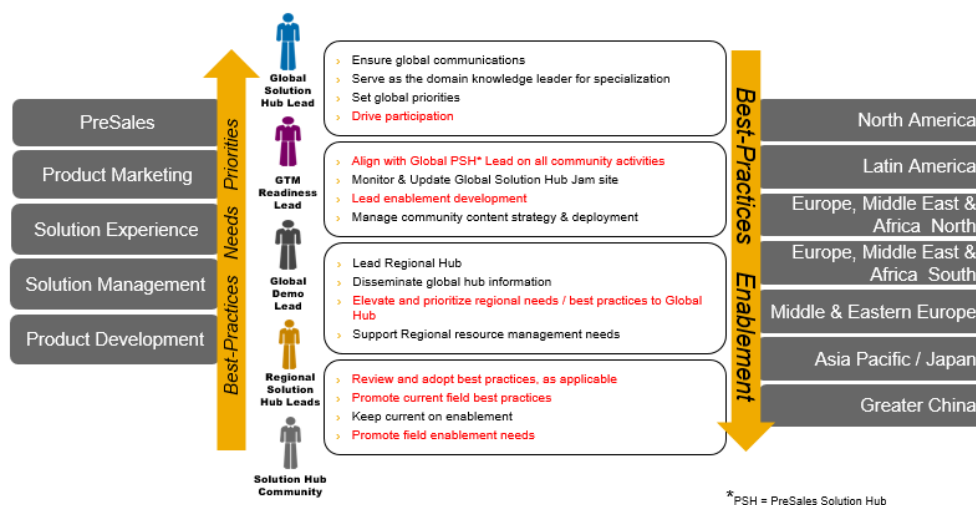
- **Specialization/Product** — Ensure members have access to the latest product information for their specialization or role.
- **Learning** — Ensure members are properly enabled on all facets of the solution including customer engagement tactics and tools via a combination formal, informal, experiential, and peer/social learning.
- **Demo** — Provide access to the latest demos and product presentations.

To ensure this information is provided consistently across this program, each solution hub is led by a leadership team that consists of:

- One global Lead with overall responsibility for the solution hub.
- One global learning lead.
- One global demo lead.
- Six regional leads; one per region.

**Figure 4: Presales Solution Hubs**

### PreSales Solution Hubs: Who Does What?





As shown in the graphic above, the leader roles support the solution hub program in different ways depending upon their area of expertise and responsibility, enablement, demo, regional, etc. However, one of the common responsibilities that underpin all roles is to grow membership and active participation. It is vital that each solution hub has a critical mass of diverse and active members to help ensure that the social collaborative learning program can deliver high value to its members.

Solution hub leaders actively support and promote social collaborative learning within the solution hubs in multiple ways: by onboarding new presales, supporting current presales and helping to organize live events. Examples from the solution hubs include:

- **Onboarding:**
  - In the retail solution Hub, for example, the periodic welcome calls review a “Who’s Who” of key solution hub members, new members are connected with a mentor and learning is suggested based on their product focus.
  
- **Supporting:**
  - In the finance solution hub, for example, the global hub and learning leads collaborated to support current presales by recently kicking off a 12-session enablement series led by thought leaders from SAP global tax to support sales play (product positioning) activities.
  - In the enterprise architects solution hub, the global learning lead supports current presales by routinely reviewing and reposting relevant articles from social media, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc., for consumption by its members.
  - In the supply chain solution hub, the global hub and learning leads engaged with three different solution support teams external to presales and selected presales product experts to design and conduct a thought leadership call series for its members. This program shares market trends, connections to the digital world, presentations of new innovative technologies like Blockchain and competitor news. This hub also conducts a roundtable that focuses on customer stories to enrich storytelling skills across their membership.
  
- **Live Events:**
  - All solution hub leads assist with organizing multiple live learning events throughout the year, including developing hands-on exercises and demonstrations by experts.



At a deeper, foundational level, there are seven competencies or areas of required skill or knowledge that each solution hub is expected to promote. These were identified to support the goals set for the solution hubs. These competencies considered together effectively drive the presales strategy and solution hub mission forward. They are:

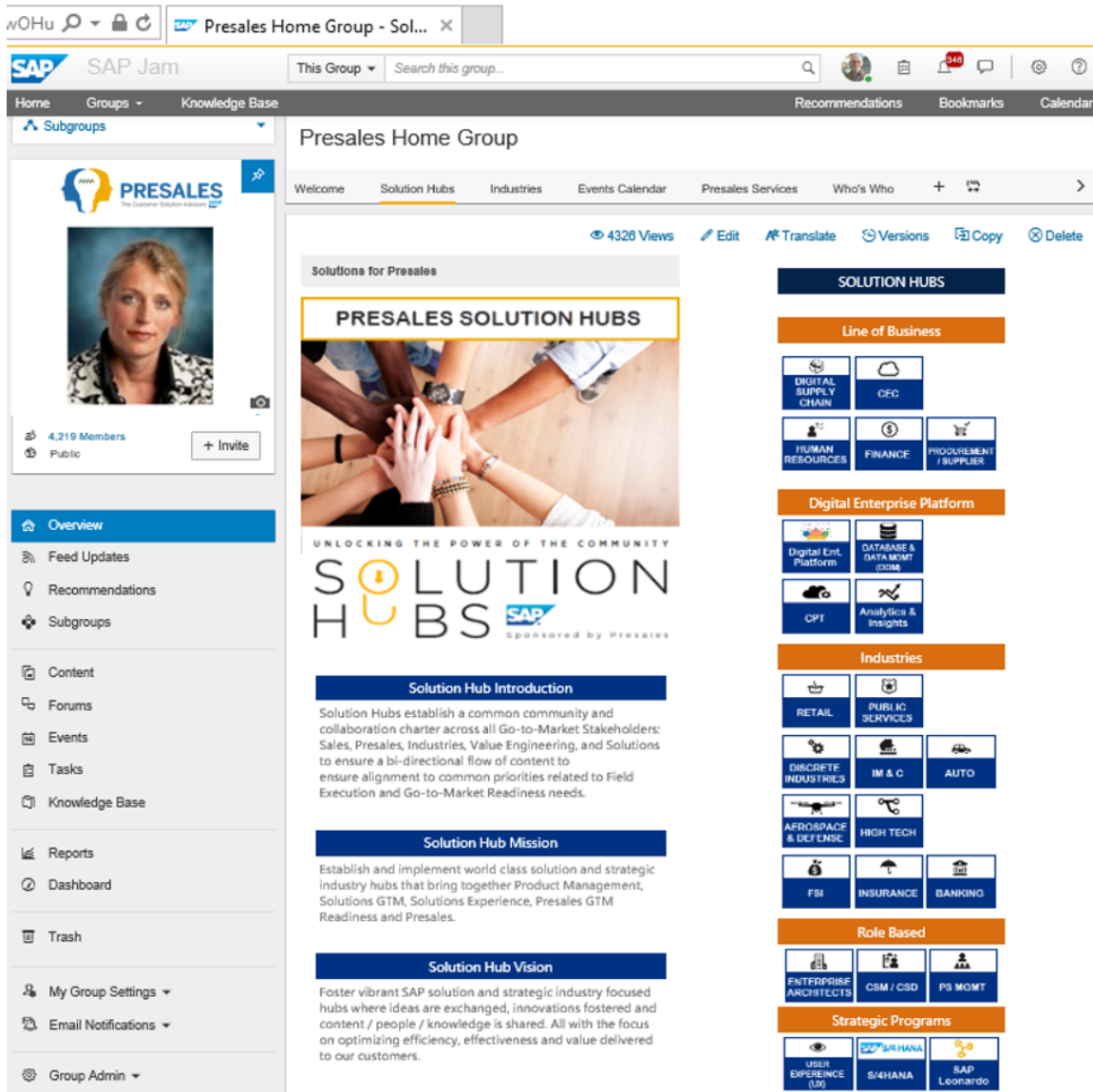
- Collaboration.
- Reuse.
- Thought leadership.
- Learning.
- Demo.
- Ecosystem.
- Colleague satisfaction.

To help promote member interaction and engagement across each of these competencies, each solution hub has a dedicated site on an internal, social collaboration platform called Jam. Several of the screenshots in the previous section were from this platform. This social platform enables presales colleagues to come together to contribute and consume information regardless of organizational, time or geographical boundaries.

The Jam platform also offers a mobile app, which enables solution hub members to access their solution hub Jam group via their mobile device at their convenience.

On the presales home Jam group, solution hub Jam sites are easily accessed via direct links (see right side of the screenshot below).

Figure 5: Solution Hub



Source: SAP

An essential element included in the design of the solution hub program are solution hub enablement summits. Held by each solution hub, these two- to three-day in-person annual meetings are attended by all global and regional solution hub leads and the key virtual account team principals who support each solution hub's product specialization. These leaders come together to align and collaborate around specific opportunities and challenges. Collaboration, thought leadership and learning are primary activities at these events where strategies and tactics are explored and solutions to problems and

challenges are developed. The outcomes of these meetings are distributed to the solution hub members for their consideration and use — key inputs to fuel the Social Collaborative Learning process. These meetings are held during the first half of the year at various locations across the globe.

## **Delivery of the Program**

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The Social Collaborative Learning Program was integral to the original scope for SAP's solution hub program with the key goal of bringing presales together at all levels — local (market unit), regional and global — to increase peer-to peer collaboration across the entire presales organization. The first four solution hubs were rolled out in July 2013. These four hubs (supply chain, sustainability, database and mobility) were closely monitored for adoption, participation and content consumption by the solution hub leads. Additional hub rollouts closely followed resulting in 12 live hubs by February 2014.

The rollout process of the solution hubs consisted of the sequential completion of multiple activities:

- Alignment with the line of business, technical and industry leaders to make them aware of presales need to create the solution hubs in scope and to obtain their support and agreement as needed for members of their team to be appointed as solution hub leads.
- Alignment with the presales regional heads to make them aware of the need to create the hubs in scope and to obtain their support and agreement for members of their teams to be appointed as regional hub leads.
- Alignment with the learning and demo organizations for their awareness and support and to obtain their support and agreement for members of their teams to be appointed as global learning and demo solution hub leads.
- Approval from the presales executive solution hub program sponsor to proceed with the rollout.
- Selection and appointment of individuals to fulfill the roles of hub leads: three global and six regional leaders per solution hub.
- Creation of an online Jam group to provide a location for all members of the hub (not the only place) where they can come together to engage one another.

The role of the solution hub leads, both global and regional, played a huge role in the successful rollout and subsequent growth of the hubs. The global solution hub leads, who are chosen from the field, are typically long-tenured employees often with 15 to 20 years of experience in their area of expertise. All have deep and intimate knowledge of their

specialization and possess a large personal network of established contacts across all levels: market unit, regional and global. In support of the rollout process, they generated communications and worked closely with their regional leads and local managers to expand membership. They also marketed their hubs by conducting in-region meetings and calls with the local presales field organization. All Hub leads also ensure that the content shared in the hubs was “relevant” and “accurate.”

The global solution hub program lead also assisted with rollout and adoption by engaging individual global hub leads and regional presales heads on a regular basis to discuss challenges faced within each solution hub in each region: growth goals, competitive environment, people and/or skill gaps, communication issues, etc. Feedback was shared among all stakeholders, as well as with the learning and demo organizations.

To assist the solution hub leads, a “Hub Manager’s Handbook” was created by the solution hub program office. This handbook provides guidance for the many facets of rolling out and managing a solution hub and is used to manage the hub governance model.

**Figure 6: Hub Manager’s Handbook**

SESSION	PARTICIPANTS	OBJECTIVE / TOPICS	FREQUENCY
Global PSH Leadership Team - Mandatory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Global PSH Leader (Gerry) with all</li> <li>Global Leads of all Hubs: Hub, Readiness and Demo</li> <li>Enablement Lead (Melissa)</li> <li>Global PMO Leader (Joe)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Global strategy &amp; communication</li> <li>Best Practice Sharing</li> <li>On going Operations</li> <li>Tools Update/Review</li> <li>Communication / Presales Banding/Execution</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bi-weekly</li> </ul>
Global PSH Team Calls – All Hands - Mandatory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PSH Global Leaders of each Hub:</li> <li>Global Hub, Enablement, Demo Leads</li> <li>All Regional Leads</li> <li>All PSH Members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cascading Communication</li> <li>GTM Strategy &amp; Messaging</li> <li>Best Practice Sharing</li> <li>Guest Speakers</li> <li>Demo &amp; Enablement Updates</li> <li>Content Reuse and Ecosystem Alignment</li> <li>Customer Success Stories</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quarterly and scheduled during “Learn to Win” Day”</li> </ul>
Global 1:1 PSH Leadership Calls - Mandatory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Global PSH Leader (Gerry) with</li> <li>Global PSH Leaders of each PSH – Hub, Readiness and Demo</li> <li>Global Readiness Lead</li> <li>Global PMO Lead</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Global Hub Health Check</li> <li>Regional Alignment</li> <li>Hub Participation (Leaders, &amp; Ind. Cont)</li> <li>Operations &amp; HR topics</li> <li>Presales Enablement and Reuse</li> <li>Resource Management</li> <li>Ecosystem Alignment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monthly</li> </ul>
Global PSH Leadership Calls (by PSH) - Mandatory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Global PSH Leaders – Hub, Readiness and Demo Leads per PSH with all</li> <li>Regional PSH Leaders per that PSH</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cascading communication</li> <li>GTM Strategy &amp; Messaging</li> <li>Presales Enablement and Reuse</li> <li>Select / Prep topics prior</li> <li>Rotate by Region / Time Zone</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bi-weekly</li> </ul>
Global (3)1:1 PSH Leadership Calls (by PSH) - Optional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Global PSH Leaders per PSG: Global Hub, Readiness and Demo Leads</li> <li>Regional PSH Leader per PSH</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presales Activity</li> <li>Skills Assessment</li> <li>Participation Review</li> <li>Best Practice Sharing</li> <li>Content Reuse and Ecosystem Alignment</li> <li>Customer Success Stories</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bi-weekly / Monthly</li> </ul>
Global Enablement Council Call	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Global PSH Leader (Gerry) and</li> <li>Global Enablement Lead (Melissa) and</li> <li>Global PMO Leader (Joe) with</li> <li>Regional PMOs/Ops Leads</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regional PSH Health Check</li> <li>Communicate Regional Reqs to Global</li> <li>Review PSH Participation KPIs</li> <li>Best Practice/Knowledge Sharing</li> <li>Tools Update/Review</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bi-Weekly</li> </ul>

Source: SAP



Finally, to support the ongoing growth of the hubs, new-hire onboarding calls are held by the global solution hub program team (project management office lead and learning and demo leads) for colleagues who have recently joined the presales organization. The purpose of these calls is to make new presales members aware of the solution hubs, what they are and why they are important. Three primary areas of information are shared in the calls:

- Overview of a hub and the hub program.
- Learning program — What it is and why it is integral to the hubs.
- Demo organization — What it offers and why it is integral to the hubs.

At the conclusion of these calls, the names of all new members are provided to each solution hub global lead as applicable. An additional “welcome” call is then held by each solution hub with their new members where their specific solution hub is reviewed in greater detail. This second “welcome” call is the type of call that was described above using the retail solution hub as an example.

## **Change Management Efforts**

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The main challenge that was encountered regarding growing Social Collaborative Learning across the solution hubs was to scale membership to increase the number of active members within the hubs. The solution hubs always were intended to be true communities of practice where colleagues from across SAP who were interested in a product area, like finance for example, could join the finance solution hub and collaborate with colleagues with the same interest.

One of the main goals of the solution hub program has always been to increase membership. To accomplish this, regular status calls were held at the global and regional levels, tighter relationships were forged with the solution and product management organizations and other relevant internal lines of business and the solution hub program was highlighted and socialized by presales executive leadership.

Shortly after the rollout of the solution hubs in 2014, initial membership in each was small, consisting only of the presales colleagues who were assigned to support that product. An audit was done on Oct. 29, 2014, and the 16 solution hubs that existed at that time had a total combined membership of 2,026, which equaled an average membership of 101 each.





The effect of the activities outlined above to increase membership had a positive effect on growing membership. By September 2015, the combined membership of 15 solution hubs had grown to 7,901. The average membership of each was now 473, which was more than 4 times the previous average. (The total number of solution hubs was reduced due to consolidation.)

The continuous efforts to increase solution hub membership has continued to pay off. Today, the solution hubs have a total membership of more than 36,000 members with 6,000-plus active members who share, collaborate and learn.

Collaboration inclusive of non-presales members enriches the Social Collaborative Learning process because of the broader expertise and different points of view that are shared. Looking more deeply at the membership of two solution hubs, the positive effect of non-Presales roles on overall membership becomes apparent.

- The hybris (customer engagement and commerce/CEC) solution hub has 379 presales dedicated to support hybris across the globe and there are 2,647 members of this solution hub Jam group (screenshot above). This results in a seven-to-one ratio of non-presales to presales.
- The Human Resources solution hub has 2,420 members and there are 295 presales dedicated to support HR across the globe. This results in an eight-to-one ratio of non-presales to presales in this hub.

While ratios vary, the other solution hubs Jam groups enjoy membership levels well beyond the number of their dedicated presales members.

The additional members beyond dedicated presales in the solution hubs are from the virtual account teams (VAT) and field teams who have an interest in that product topic. This also illustrates the reciprocal nature of presales organizational relationships. Presales consumes the roadmaps, solution and competitor information provided by the virtual account teams. The VAT teams consume the market, customer and competitor information that presales provides to them learned from their customer engagements.

To help increase active participation two primary measures have been put in place: solution hub reports and the most valuable player (MVP) program.

Solution hub reports have been created to measure multiple aspects of member activity across all solution hub Jam groups based on the frequency and type of member activities. During the report creation process in 2015, a weighting based on a 1-5 scale was assigned



to each of the 90-plus operations that can be performed in Jam. The assignment of this weighting enables member activity to be evaluated from both a volume and quality perspective. Data from member reports provide the solution hub program owners and global and regional solution hub leads with insights they can use to manage their solution hubs.

Three solution hub reports have been created:

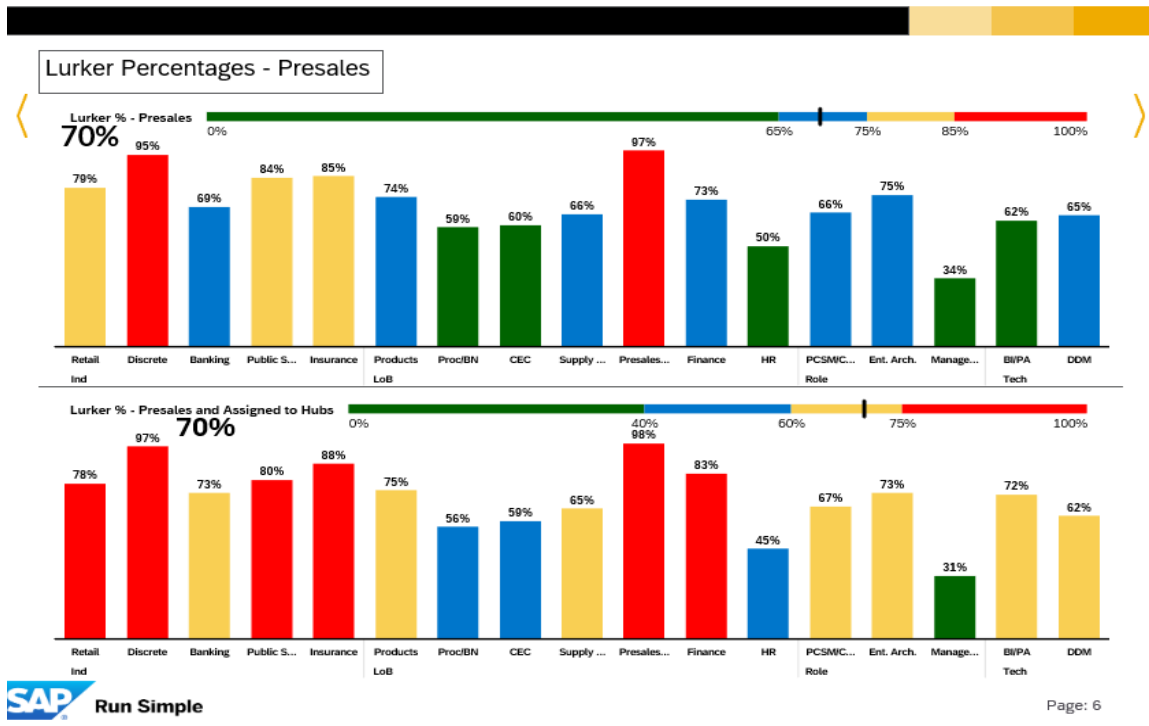
- Activities and participants.
- Collaboration index.
- Members.

These reports provide insights for many key performance indicators across all hubs such as activity by score and count with filtering options by region, identifying top 10 and 250 active members, providing hub member counts and more.

To promote active membership, the global and regional hub leads execute programs and strategies including calls for relevant customer-ready content, contributions of customer engagement stories and knowledge transfer topics.

The screenshot from the hub members report below shows lurker percentages among presales solution hub members. Lurkers are members who are primarily consumers of information in the hubs, which is a good thing. The color of the bars indicates presales lurkers expressed as a percentage of all presales members of each hub based on the thresholds that have been set for: basic (red), emerging (yellow), mature (blue) and world class (green). This report is updated weekly.

Figure 7: Lurker Percentages — Presales.



Source: SAP

The MVP program was created to help with lurker conversion to active member engagement and collaboration. It recognizes colleagues who are key participants and contributors in the solution hubs. Surveys show that when recognition and appreciation is directed toward members within a community of practice, it encourages the membership to become more active. The solution hub global and regional leaders determine the frequency of extending MVP awards either on a quarterly or bi-annual basis. All solution hubs are required to recognize a “Most Valuable Player of the Year” per region.

This selection process begins with each global hub lead requesting each of their regional leads to nominate a colleague(s) from their region who they (the regional leads) believe are active and add value to their solution hub. This selection is made subjectively by considering:

- Direct engagement and support provided.
- Communications initiated.
- Information posted and shared.



When the final selections are made, the hub lead distributes a communication to all members of their hub recognizing those selected (see the example below). (Names have been removed for data privacy.)

**Figure 8: MVP Announcement**

**SOLUTION HUBS** **Supply Chain Solution Hub Announcement**

*Congratulations!* **MVP**

It is with great pleasure that we would like to announce the **Most Valuable Players of the Supply Chain Solution Hub in each region for Q4 2017!**

Being active on our Solution Hub benefits the entire community. It also helps our Solution Hub be recognized as a thought leader within SAP. **Thank you to the winners below for contributing significantly above and beyond to our Supply Chain Hub in Quarter 4.**

APJ	EMEA	GC	LAC	MEE	NA

Source: SAP

It is common for managers and peers to publicly congratulate the colleagues recognized for their contributions to the solution hub. This program was initiated in 2017.

## Measurable Benefits

To gauge the effectiveness and business impact of the Social Collaborative Learning Program as it occurs within the solution hubs, a business impact analysis was conducted by a third-party data analytics firm. The study was conducted in 2017 using fiscal year



2016 employee information and data. It measured the ways in which a group of presales colleagues who are highly engaged in social collaboration and learning in their solution hubs — the top 10% from across all hubs — impacted the business compared to those presales colleagues who are somewhat or not at all engaged in social learning.

The study showed that those who were actively engaged in Social Collaborative Learning contributed greater business benefits to presales and SAP than those who were engaged little or not at all. Benefits were realized in three areas:

- **Increased Productivity**
  - + 95% average productivity per hour.\*
  - +19% productivity per hour.\*\*

\*Average productivity per rep per hour = revenue generated per presales rep per hour.

\*\*Productivity per hour = revenue generated per hour by the entire group.

- **Increased Revenue Generation**
  - + 17% more bookings.
  - +28% average deal size won.
- **Larger Pipeline Creation**
  - + 19% more pipeline.
  - +17% average deal size pipeline.

The study confirmed that presales employees who are actively engaged in peer/social learning and collaboration in the solution hubs were significantly more productive per hour and had a greater impact on revenue generation and pipeline creation, winning more opportunities and accounts than those who had little or no engagement.

Social Collaborative Learning can help presales realize their strategy of making “Every Customer Touchpoint an Amazing Experience.” The peer *exchange* of knowledge, best practices and customer stories and the *delivery* of customer-ready content help presales engage with customers and prospects in an insightful, innovative and memorable way, which leads to incrementally improved productivity, revenue generation and pipeline creation. This is validated by the performance of the control group of engaged presales.

In their words ...

- “The solution Hub has helped me a lot with my role at SAP and also to support others when in need. The solution Hub has helped me with collaboration on best practices and keeping myself on the loop of things.” — Human Resources, field specialist, Latin America
- “The collaboration in the DDM (Database and Data Management) HUB is truly amazing and very responsive.” — Database and data management solution hub manager, Europe Middle East and Africa Region
- “It is easy to find these people (thought leaders) and they are sharing quite good.” — Cloud and platform technology field specialist, Greater China Region

## Overall

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1. Social Collaborative Learning, or peer-to-peer learning, is very powerful and is an important learning function that delivers tangible business benefit to SAP.
2. Continue to emphasize and expand the Social Collaborative Learning process in the solution hubs by placing continued high priority on increasing the amount of true collaboration: sharing of customer stories, best practices, peer-to-peer knowledge transfer and problem solving.
3. Continue the solution hub enablement summits to ensure that the collaboration and problem solving that happens among presales and its virtual account team members continues.
4. Monitor the call cadence mandated for the solution hubs, both global and regional, as these calls encourage and expand collaboration — especially within the regions.
5. The maturity model assessment is an important measurement tool and must continue to be conducted annually to drive the evolution the of the competencies and the solution hubs.
6. The value of this learning methodology must continue to be socialized so experts, thought leaders and other contributors understand that the value of sharing their expertise, knowledge and experiences drive business improvements across presales.

### Next Steps/Future

1. Offer a microlearning program to supplement the overall collaborative learning process. These short, quick learnings created by field presales can be leveraged by same as the basis for developing knowledge and solve problems.
2. Add podcast capabilities in 2018. This will allow solution hub members to easily contribute their expertise via short audio recordings that can be distributed by the solution hubs. The infrastructure needed to do this currently exists within presales. Podcasts can be downloaded via a mobile app that will enable presales to consume this content virtually anywhere.
3. As technology continues to expand, new collaboration channels have become available and are being adopted by hub members to varying degrees. This creates a challenge in that it splinters communication across multiple channels. Standardizing on a limited number of primary communication channels needs to be investigated.
4. Research is needed to determine if and how the competencies central to collaborative learning — collaboration and thought leadership — can be measured more accurately. Work has been undertaken to investigate alternative reporting tools and programs that will enable activity from across the multiple channels (email, Slack, Jam, What's App, MS teams, SharePoint, etc.) to be measured. Include this incremental data in the maturity model assessment.

## About Brandon Hall Group

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Brandon Hall Group is a HCM research and advisory services firm that provides insights around key performance areas, including Learning and Development, Talent Management, Leadership Development, Talent Acquisition, and HR/Workforce Management. With more than 10,000 clients globally and more than 20 years of delivering world-class research and advisory services, Brandon Hall Group is focused on developing research that drives performance in emerging and large organizations, and provides strategic insights for executives and practitioners responsible for growth and business results.

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Our mission: Empower excellence in organizations around the world through our research and tools every day. At the core of our offerings is a Membership Program that combines research, benchmarking and unlimited access to data and analysts. The Membership Program offers insights and best practices to enable executives and practitioners to make the right decisions about people, processes, and systems, coalesced with analyst advisory services which aim to put the research into action in a way that is practical and efficient.

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- Maturity Model
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### STRATEGY

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- Planning
- Organization & Governance

### TECHNOLOGY SELECTION

- Vendor Selection
- Architecture Design
- Systems Evaluation

### DEVELOPMENT & INTEGRATION

- Program Design
- Assessment
- Survey
- Process Integration

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