



## Case Study

SAP Solutions

# Guerbet

As it expanded rapidly around the world through organic growth and acquisition, Guerbet recognised an opportunity to enhance its operational efficiency, reduce its costs and gain deeper insight into its global supply chain. To achieve its goals, Guerbet has consolidated 21 separate ERP systems to create a future-ready platform based on SAP Business Suite powered by SAP HANA, running on SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for SAP Applications.

### Overview

With more than 2,800 employees in the five continents, Guerbet is a global leader in medical imaging. The company's solutions are used in both diagnostic and interventional imaging, to improve the prognosis and quality of life for patients. In recent years, Guerbet doubled in size by taking over its principal competitor in the US, and the company continues to grow both organically and through corporate

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FRÉDÉRIC DUCHET

Group Chief Information Officer  
Guerbet

acquisitions. Guerbet is headquartered in France and generated annual revenues of EUR790 million in 2018.

### Challenge

Guerbet's employees are committed to delivering solutions that empower medical professionals around the world to diagnose and treat their patients quickly. With operations in over 80 countries—and long and complex supply chains—the company knew that rationalising its business processes would be vital to operate efficiently and cost-effectively as its growth gathered pace.

Frédéric Duchet, Group Chief Information Officer at Guerbet, said: “Because we work in a highly regulated pharmaceutical-products industry, the availability and efficiency of our manufacturing and distribution systems are extremely important. In the past, 21 of our 44 sites and subsidiaries worldwide relied on different processes and business systems to drive their operations. As well as increasing the cost and complexity of managing and maintaining the applications and their underlying IT infrastructure, this approach made it difficult



### Guerbet at a Glance:

*Guerbet is a global leader in medical imaging, providing interconnected solutions for diagnostic and interventional imaging.*

#### ■ Industry and Location

Healthcare  
France

#### ■ Product and Services

SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for SAP Applications  
SUSE Manager

#### ■ Results

- + Consolidates 21 ERP platforms to just two, reducing operational costs
- + Facilitates compliance and strengthens security with full visibility of unpatched SAP systems
- + Delivers 100% availability, ensuring mission-critical systems are always online
- + Boosts performance for analytics workloads by up to 30 percent, cutting time to insight

for us to bring together our business data for analytics and reporting tasks.

“We were confident that rationalising our business processes and consolidating our systems would enable us to achieve a substantial reduction in our operational costs—and to make it easier to integrate future acquisitions into the business. Additionally, embracing a centralised and standardised way of working across all our operating units would empower the business to build new synergies between our corporate entities, and greatly enhance our supply-chain visibility.”

Guerbet set out on a major business transformation initiative, named G-ONE. Through a multi-stage programme, the company aimed to migrate the business systems that supported its business units in Europe, the Middle East and Africa, Asia Pacific, North America and Latin America to a central platform located at the company's primary data centre in France. To make its target operating model a reality, the company decided to standardise on SAP Business Suite powered by SAP HANA, including SAP BusinessObjects and applications for Process Integration, Financial Consolidation, Track and Trace for Pharmaceuticals, B2B Integration, and Workforce Performance Builder. To reduce the training required to migrate its business users to the new platform, the company also selected SAP Fiori to deliver streamlined user experiences for the SAP applications.

“The main goal of G-ONE is to create a foundation for the future of Guerbet,” said Frédéric Duchet. “By replacing our decentralised ways of working with a single platform that includes near-real-time analytics capabilities, we can ensure that our continued growth doesn't reduce our ability

to drive lean, compliant and cost-effective operations around the world. We needed to achieve the first phase of our migration to the new SAP platform within a 24-month window, after which the technical service agreement with one of our key managed services vendors was set to expire. To set G-ONE in motion, we looked for a secure, scalable and high-performance server platform for SAP Business Suite powered by SAP HANA.”

### **Solution**

To achieve the high levels of performance, scalability and availability it had targeted for the new SAP business systems, Guerbet selected SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for SAP Applications. The leading Linux platform for SAP HANA solutions, SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for SAP Applications combines optimised performance and reduced downtime with accelerated SAP landscape deployments.

“At the time, we were only the second company in France to embark on a SAP HANA project, so we ran a number of deep-dive technical workshops with the SAP and SUSE teams to ensure that the platform was going to meet our long-term requirements,” said Frédéric Duchet. “This thorough evaluation gave us confidence that the combination of SAP Business Suite powered by SAP HANA and SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for SAP Applications would enable us to achieve the goals of G-ONE.”

Partnering with PwC for project management resources and with Capgemini for solution integration services, Guerbet deployed SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for SAP Applications to support the SAP Business Suite powered by SAP HANA platform.

Laurent Londais, Chief Technical Officer at Guerbet, said: “SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for SAP Applications has a thriving community of users all around the world, which gave us the confidence that we could easily access the skills we needed to maintain the platform. In our opinion, SUSE also has an excellent reputation for the quality of its support—and for all of these reasons, we felt that SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for SAP Applications was the natural choice for our new server platform.”

To reduce the complexity of managing the server platform, Guerbet uses SUSE Manager. The SUSE Manager solution automates Linux server provisioning, patching and configuration, enabling faster, more consistent and repeatable server deployment. SUSE Manager also delivers automated monitoring, tracking, auditing and reporting for systems and virtual machines, helping Guerbet optimise operations and contain costs.

“In the pharmaceuticals space, compliance with stringent regulatory requirements is a must,” said Frédéric Duchet. “With SUSE Manager, we can automatically generate detailed, timely and granular reports that help us quickly demonstrate to our regulators that we are compliant with industry best practices. In France, where our consolidated business systems are based, audits are a frequent occurrence—and having a solution like SUSE Manager enables us to monitor, patch and report on a rich SAP application landscape with a wide range of modules and virtual machines.”

Laurent Londais said: “Without a doubt, SUSE Manager is a compliance tool par excellence. Maintaining a strong security posture and ensuring regulatory compliance

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requires full visibility of our server environment, and that's exactly what SUSE Manager is delivering for the business today.

"SUSE Manager enables us to automate repetitive—but essential—tasks such as deploying updates and patches to our server environment. Because we know that experts at SUSE are constantly improving, optimising and increasing the security of their software, we place a great deal of trust in the best practices embedded in SUSE Manager. As well as reducing the time and manual effort required to complete these tasks, automated patching significantly reduces the possibility for human error, which helps us to harden our systems and avoid the risk of vulnerabilities."

Working with oXya, an SAP-certified provider of hosting and cloud services, and expert SAP consultants from TeamWork, Guerbet architected and deployed the SAP business systems. The new applications cover business processes including order-to-cash, demand-to-supply, maintain-to-settle, and procure-to-pay, and run on SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for SAP Applications virtual machines on VMware, with replication at the VMware level to provide high availability.

To date, Guerbet has successfully migrated 21 ERP systems that support 34 of its entities to the new SAP platform. Today, the company has cut down its number of ERP platforms to just two: the SAP Business Suite powered by SAP HANA platform that supports its users in Europe, the Middle East and Africa, and Asia Pacific, and an Oracle platform for business users in North America and Latin America.

## Results

As it moves into the second phase of the G-ONE programme, Guerbet is already realising many of the benefits of a unified approach to managing its global business. By embracing global standards across the business—powered by an in-memory analytics database—it is now far easier and faster for senior managers to compare performance between different geographies. For the company's finance teams, closing the books at the end of each month, quarter and financial year requires substantially less manual work. And with deeper insight into complex data flows inside the business, Guerbet can identify opportunities to enhance the efficiency of its global supply chain.

"Shortly after we began the G-ONE initiative, Guerbet completed a major acquisition in the USA that added USD300 million to our annual revenue," said Frédéric Duchet. "By using SAP business systems running on SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for SAP Applications, we can support this kind of fast-paced growth without sending our operational costs soaring."

After completing the first phase of its migration project, the company unlocked more than EUR3.5 million in cost-savings by ending its technical service agreement six months before its expiry date—an achievement for which Guerbet received a silver award from SAP France for the best business transformation of the year during an annual SAP user convention.

"Achieving the first phase of our migration within the 24-month deadline that we'd set for ourselves was a tough challenge—but

by adopting a philosophy of 'keep calm and row hard', we kept up our motivation and momentum throughout," said Frédéric Duchet.

Over the next four years, Guerbet aims to complete its migration by decommissioning the Oracle ERP systems and data centres that support its business in North America and Latin America. When completed, this project has the potential to deliver operational cost-savings of up to USD1.5 million.

"The efficiencies we're now delivering for the business are about more than technology," said Frédéric Duchet. "By rationalising our processes, we can achieve powerful economies of scale in areas such as supplier management. For example, because we will be able to quickly identify if we are using the same supplier to support multiple different geographies, we will have the opportunity to negotiate volume discounts to reduce our operational costs. This kind of business integration is also extremely valuable from an inventory management perspective. By gaining a 360-degree view of the position of stock around the world, we can optimise our logistics to fulfil orders faster and more efficiently."

With the SAP HANA database at the heart of its new analytics platform, Guerbet has boosted the performance of some of its key reports by a factor of 30. And with the stability and availability of SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for SAP Applications supporting its business, the company has the confidence its mission-critical systems will be online 24/7.

**“Without a doubt, SUSE Manager is a compliance tool par excellence. Maintaining a strong security posture and ensuring regulatory compliance requires full visibility of our server environment, and that’s exactly what SUSE Manager is delivering for the business today.”**

**LAURENT LONDAIS**  
*Chief Technical Officer*  
Guerbet

Contact us at:  
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“Since we went live with SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for SAP Applications, we’ve never experienced unplanned downtime—the platform is extremely stable,” said Laurent Londais. “Our relationship with SUSE continues to be close and productive, and we have

been very satisfied with the quality and clarity of their support, documentation and training. When the opportunity presents itself, we will advocate strongly for migrating our other line-of-business applications running on Linux to the SUSE Enterprise platform.”