

Cloud-Based Technology Can Revolutionise Operational Planning at Reduced Change Management Cost

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Abstract

Integrated Business Planning (IBP) has evolved from the Sales and Operations Planning (S&OP) process as a methodology for assessing and optimising financial performance of operational plans. However, despite the engagement of finance in the planning processes, many IBP implementations have suffered the same engagement and sponsorships challenges as S&OP. This paper examines implementation from the perspective of using a “change vehicle” – technology – as a tool to both lower the barriers to change and provide participants with the momentum to move through the change steps of: creating a sense of urgency, providing a guiding coalition, enlisting volunteers, enabling action and generating short-term wins around a strategic vision and instituting change. We examine the SAP cloud product IBP through the lens of change management and its potential to overcome the barriers observed in traditional IBP and S&OP implementations. A key finding from the analysis in this work is that the standard spreadsheet user interface provided by the solution in effect removes the need to transition users from the comfort zone of using spreadsheets to a new solution space. The implications of this work are that S&OP and IBP may be implemented using the SAP IBP cloud solution at reduced management time cost to an organisation, facilitating improved operational outcomes using more junior leveraging operational teams than was previously possible under traditional business process re-engineering.

Keywords

Integrated Business Planning (IBP), Sales and Operations Planning (S&OP), process, optimising financial performance, and operational plans.