



Success Story

Swissgrid AG

License-optimized SAP role redesign incl. SOD clean-up with XAMS in SP19 following an SAP S/4HANA migration

Swissgrid is the national grid company and, as the owner, is responsible for the secure and non-discriminatory operation, environmentally friendly and efficient maintenance, renewal and expansion of the Swiss extra-high-voltage grid. Swissgrid employs more than 800 qualified employees from 39 nations at its sites in Aarau, Prilly, Castione, Landquart, Laufenburg, Ostermundigen and Uznach.



Following the migration of their central SAP ERP system from SAP ECC to SAP S/4HANA, the new role concept involved SOD conflicts. In addition, due to the new SAP S/4HANA licensing model, it would have been associated with high costs for relicensing without a clean-up. For this reason, a comprehensive role clean-up project was carried out by Swissgrid AG in collaboration with Xiting AG. The aim was to optimize the new authorization roles in the SAP S/4HANA system with regard to their license costs and to eliminate existing SOD conflicts. With the help of the Xiting Authorizations Management Suite (XAMS) and the support of two Xiting AG employees, a detailed analysis of the existing

roles was carried out in order to identify and optimize potential savings. The integration of the official SAP licensing rules into XAMS enabled a targeted minimization of license-relevant authorizations, which led to a considerable avoidance of license costs. At the same time, the requirements of the IT auditors were also technically implemented in the Xiting CRAF risk rules and the roles were adjusted for SOD conflicts on this basis. Thanks to the productive test simulation (PTS), the optimized roles could be tested and verified risk-free before the final go-live. The subsequent protected go-live (PGL) then enabled an uninterrupted go-live situation with a fallback scenario.

AT A GLANCE

About the company

- Name: Swissgrid AG (founded in 2006)
- Head office: Aarau, Switzerland
- Industry: Energy supply
- Employees: more than 800
- Internet address: [swissgrid.ch](https://www.swissgrid.ch)
- SAP system in the project: SAP S/4HANA

Highlights

- Analysis of existing roles regarding possible license optimization and SOD conflicts.
- Maximum analysis flexibility of licenses and SODs based on the technical integration of specifications using Xiting CRAF rules for SODs and licenses.
- Minimization of license-relevant authorizations within the roles in compliance with the official SAP license regulations (see SAP Note 3113382).
- Efficient test phase with the help of productive test simulation and minimization of license-relevant authorizations in the roles based on the actual usage analysis down to authorization object level.
- Uninterrupted go-live situation thanks to the Xiting Protected Go-Live.

Challenges

As part of the migration to SAP S/4HANA, Swissgrid faced the complex task of adapting the new authorization roles to SAP's new authorization-based licensing model. In contrast to the previous model, in which licenses were issued according to actual usage, the new SAP S/4HANA licensing model is based

on the authorizations issued. This change entailed considerable risks for Swissgrid, as SAP had announced a license measurement for the end of September 2024. The risk of excessive license costs that could result from unoptimized authorizations made a quick and precise solution necessary.

Procedure

To overcome this challenge, Swissgrid decided to use the Xiting Authorizations Management Suite (XAMS). First, a detailed analysis of the existing SAP authorization roles was carried out. The special feature of this approach was the integration of the official SAP licensing rules (see note 3113382) into XAMS. This enabled Swissgrid to carry out a precise and comprehensible determination of license-relevant authorizations.

In the subsequent phase, the roles were optimized in a targeted manner. With the help of the XAMS Role Designer, the authorizations could be adjusted in a way that met the actual requirements of the users without assigning unnecessary access rights. The principle of „roles according to authorization“ was of central importance in order to avoid over-licensing. With the help of the Xiting Role Profiler, usage coverage levels, SOD conflicts, license drivers and over-authorizations were analyzed and clarified.

A decisive step was the implementation of the productive test simulation (PTS), which made it possible to test the optimized roles under real conditions in the background. This ensured that the adjustments had no negative impact on ongoing operations and that license costs were effectively reduced. The PTS made it possible to identify and rectify potential problems at an early stage, which significantly minimized the risk for the final go-live. A possible restriction risk during go-live was eliminated using Xiting Protected Go-Live including a fallback scenario.



„Thanks to this project, Swissgrid is optimally positioned for future requirements in the area of SAP licensing and IT auditing. The successful migration to SAP S/4HANA and the associated license optimization underline the importance of a sound strategy and the right tools for a successful IT transformation.“

Andreas Klein
Senior Application Specialist
Swissgrid AG

Results

The results of the project were impressive. By specifically optimizing the authorization roles, Swissgrid was able to drastically reduce the number of SAP licenses required. Instead of the original approx. 1,000 licenses of the SAP S/4HANA HB Professional license type, only around 70 of these licenses were required after the optimization. The number of licenses required for the SAP S/4HANA HC Functional license type was also reduced. These reductions led to considerable savings. In addition, the full IT audit requirements could be technically transferred directly into the system using XAMS. This enabled a recurring security check based on the current system status for users and roles.

The successful implementation of this project shows how important careful planning and the use of specialized tools such as XAMS are in mastering the challenges of an SAP S/4HANA migration. The ability of XAMS to integrate the official SAP licensing rules and thus enable transparent and traceable license allocation was a key success factor. Thanks to XAMS with its numerous analysis and support tools during highly sensitive project phases, it was only possible to carry out a role adjustment parallel to day-to-day business without affecting production.