



Top 5 Reasons to Integrate Your SAP System

with an Enterprise Labeling Solution



 **Loftware™**

White Paper



Introduction

Quite a few companies have selected SAP as their enterprise resource planning system. Their choice helps them to digitally transform many of their company's internal processes, and with this, comes productivity and efficiency gains. But they still struggle with labeling. If your company uses SAP, you might be familiar with one - or all - of the following approaches to labeling:

- You use SAPscript to create your labels. Your label templates are hard coded in SAP, and label changes require programming support from the IT organization. Label change requests can take weeks to months, requiring considerable time to comply with customer requests. These delays can have a negative impact on customer satisfaction and time-to-market.
- You use Smart Forms for your labeling needs. However, your IT team struggles because they are using legacy technology originally intended for building complex reports. This makes for a cumbersome label design process, one that puts a huge burden on IT. And changing labels also means an IT change request, which can take weeks to process. Again, this prevents you from being responsive to changing customer needs and market demands. It's not exactly the recipe for an agile labeling process.
- You use Adobe Forms for your labeling needs. Because the system is intended for designing interactive PDFs and far more complex documents, you find that it's difficult to use. While you have all the bells and whistles to design interactive forms and complex reports, you lack the basic features for designing barcode labels. Again, your label production process is overly dependent on IT, and the complexity of the system precludes you from being able to make label changes fast.

To create a truly agile labeling process, you need a labeling system that's built for that purpose, i.e. for designing, printing and maintaining labels, as well as one that integrates seamlessly with your SAP environment. You need an Enterprise Labeling Solution.

1. Make label changes faster while reducing the burden on IT

By selecting an Enterprise Labeling Solution – like Loftware Spectrum, which is built specifically for barcode labeling, you can greatly simplify your label creation and maintenance process, while significantly reducing your IT burden. Spectrum includes a built-in label designer that enables users to create labels in minutes, without coding. With universal label templates and data-driven dynamic content, you can quickly design complex labels that can be used across any printer brand or model. This helps drastically reduce the number of templates you need to create and maintain. A process that took weeks or even months can now be done in minutes. And the easy-to-use interface allows you to delegate label creation and update responsibilities to other parts of the organization, freeing up valuable IT resources to work on other value-adding projects.

2. Address variability in labeling with business logic

As you can see, when you transition to an Enterprise Labeling Solution, you get so much more than an upgraded label design experience. You gain the opportunity to transform and improve every phase of your label production process. We've explored quality control and print speed, now let's take a look at the logic governing your label production process.

Every labeling environment typically has an element of business rules applied to the labeling process. This can range from the simple, such as selecting which label needs to be printed for a particular customer or material, to the complex, such as determining which languages need to be on a label shipped to a particular region or customer. Implementing an Enterprise Labeling Solution gives you the option to build this logic into your labeling process, so these decisions are made automatically by the system. For example, Loftware Spectrum includes workflows and a configurable business rules engine that allow you to drive label template selection, content,



REDUCED TIME TO UPDATE LABELS

3 MONTHS TO ONE HOUR

"By moving to Loftware, we enabled business users to manage the design of the labels autonomously. With Spectrum's intuitive design interface, anybody can create labels."

Marcello Cambellotti, Freudenberg FST

formatting – even the printers used – based on the data set supplied by SAP. These rules make printing labels an automated process. Using this capability to automate decision-making workflows reduces the likelihood of human error and speeds the label production process. This also enables companies to customize their label workflow to satisfy specific customer or industry requirements.

3. Go from catching errors to preventing them

One of the major goals of implementing an Enterprise Labeling Solution is to be able to increase the speed with which you can design and print labels. However, using a system built for barcode labeling offers other benefits as well. For example, integrating Spectrum with SAP leverages master data without requiring time-consuming data duplication or error-prone manual entry. Actions you take in SAP can trigger printing of your labels, which include the latest information from your SAP data. This streamlines label printing processes while yielding highly accurate labels. By leveraging your data with certified integration, you can virtually eliminate label errors and the need to reprint labels.

4. Integrate labeling with all your enterprise applications

The benefits of integration aren't limited to SAP and ERP systems. With the integration capabilities built into Loftware Spectrum, you can also integrate other business systems, such as manufacturing execution systems (MES), warehouse management systems (WMS) or in-house applications. This enables you to print from a single repository of templates and print labels based on transactions from different systems, with the knowledge that all print transactions are stored in one central location. And printing from multiple integrated systems happens automatically, requiring no intervention on your part. This gives you the flexibility to drive your labeling with the systems you use to run your business.



\$128K < 2 sec

LOST
PRODUCTIVITY
PER YEAR

LABEL PRINT
TIME

"Before Loftware we wasted approximately \$128,000 per year waiting for labels to print. Moving to Loftware Spectrum, our goal was to print each label in under two seconds. We more than beat that."

5. Reduce label print time

An Enterprise Labeling Solution can solve another common pain – label printing speed. There are typically two approaches to printing labels in an SAP environment. One is sending master data via the spooler to legacy label software for printing. However, this method offers no print preview, which means there's no way to perform a quality check of the label with the master data integrated prior to printing. This can lead to errors and time-consuming reprints. As an alternative to this approach, some companies decide to program SAP system integrations in-house. However, the level of programming needed to seamlessly integrate an external labeling system with SAP to produce a label preview may take several months and can be a costly affair. And, if something changes in their SAP system, they have to change their custom integration program.

Is there another way? Put simply, yes. By choosing an Enterprise Labeling Solution like Loftware Spectrum, with built-in SAP-certified integration, you get label template previews with master data and true on-demand instant printing of labels, all directly within the SAP system user interface – without spending months writing code. How is this possible? Loftware's bi-directional communication with an integrated SAP system allows you to see what prints in your Spectrum – directly from your SAP interface. Your labels print faster and the process is more efficient. Plus, you get real-time print status feedback and confirmed print delivery, resulting in a streamlined SAP label printing process and less risk.

Choose the deployment that fits your business objectives

At Loftware, we understand that you require flexibility when deploying your labeling systems. Deployment of your labeling solution is often determined by your SAP installation. That's why we offer several options. Moving to the S4/HANA in the cloud? Select SaaS-based Spectrum Cloud and let us manage your labeling application for you. That way, you can leverage Loftware's global cloud platform,



SAVING UP TO

\$99K

OVER

12 MONTHS

"By integrating with SAP, we were able to reduce manual data entry and verification steps."

Dan Torrey, DiaSorin

advanced security, high available and 24x7 support to manage, maintain and monitor your labeling system. If you prefer to run your SAP system on premises, we offer several options to deploy your Spectrum – all of which integrate with your on-premise SAP systems. And, if you are running your SAP systems and labeling on-premise today, with a plan to move to the cloud in the future, we accommodate that as well. This ensures your investment in Loftware Spectrum will meet your business needs well into future.

A strategic platform for a standardized global labeling

Just think; this started with a desire to design and print labels faster. Yet, by seizing the opportunity to transform labeling by implementing a modern Enterprise Labeling Solution, you gain so much more. You digitize quality assurance, increase print speed and accuracy and get a faster time-to-market. And the benefits don't have to end there. Now that everything is streamlined and standardized, you can extend your label production process across multiple production lines, plants, locations and even to business partners. You can scale it up or down depending on market demand and extend it throughout the supply chain. Using the cloud technology built into Loftware Spectrum, you can connect all your printers across borders and regions, quickly establishing consistent labeling processes across your entire organization. This leads to efficiency gains that go beyond increased productivity.

It's no wonder that many of our customers have chosen a Loftware Spectrum as their global labeling platform, incorporating it into their IT business strategy and deploying it alongside SAP in their factories, production facilities and distribution centers.

Find out more about how our SAP customers have benefited by transforming their labeling.



IMPROVE HANDLING OF LABEL CONTENT

106

KEY DECISION
MAKERS

91%

OF RESPONDENTS

In a recent survey of 106 key decision makers, 91% cited their Loftware solution's ability to improve handling of labeling content, barcodes, images/branding, formatting and language as a major benefit to their organization.



**The world's largest cloud-based Enterprise Labeling
and Artwork Management provider**



White Paper

Loftware is the world's largest cloud-based Enterprise Labeling and Artwork Management provider, offering an end-to-end labeling solution platform for companies of all sizes. Maintaining a global presence with offices in the US, UK, Germany, Slovenia, China, and Singapore, Loftware boasts over 35 years of expertise in solving labeling challenges. We help companies improve accuracy, traceability and compliance while improving the quality, speed, and efficiency of their labeling. As the leading global provider of Enterprise Labeling and Artwork Management, along with Clinical Trials Labeling and Content Management, Loftware enables supply chain agility, supports evolving regulations, and optimizes business operations for a wide range of industries. These include automotive, chemicals, consumer products, electronics, food & beverage, manufacturing, medical device, pharmaceuticals, retail, and apparel.