For a smooth migration journey, make sure you choose the right partner for your flight to the cloud
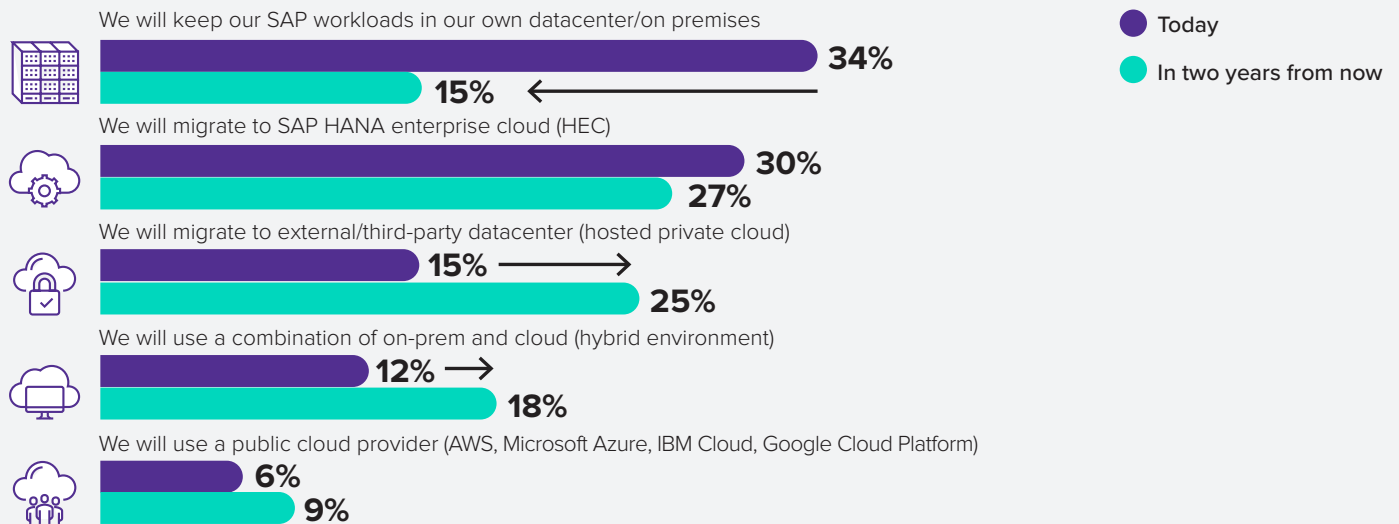
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SAP modernization is a critical step on the path toward digital transformation. Typically, there are two aspects to an SAP modernization project: a business-level modernization of processes; and a technical modernization of the IT platform. In terms of the latter, IDC research[1] shows that over the next two years, many organizations expect to reduce the SAP workloads currently hosted in their own datacenters or on-premises in favor of cloud and third-party service providers.

We will keep our SAP workloads in our own datacenter/on premises
- Today: 34%
- In two years from now: 15%

We will migrate to SAP HANA enterprise cloud (HEC)
- Today: 30%
- In two years from now: 27%

We will migrate to external/third-party datacenter (hosted private cloud)
- Today: 15%
- In two years from now: 25%

We will use a combination of on-prem and cloud (hybrid environment)
- Today: 12%
- In two years from now: 18%

We will use a public cloud provider (AWS, Microsoft Azure, IBM Cloud, Google Cloud Platform)
- Today: 6%
- In two years from now: 9%

Legend:
- Today
- In two years from now

Moving legacy IT applications and infrastructure into cloud is by no means a simple "lift and shift" task. It is fraught with a wide variety of challenges that must be addressed from the outset of a project. Security, performance, and a lack skills are some of the main hurdles organizations will need to overcome before they develop a digital strategy. If that wasn't enough, they will also need to look out for opportunities to deploy open standards-based technologies; integrate with other cloud services, on-premises applications, and the edge; and promulgate a corporate culture in which cloud services and tools gain user acceptance.

Connectivity and networking play a critical role when it comes to providing the best user experience and enable real-time insights. It is therefore essential for organizations to optimize connectivity and networking right from the outset of an SAP cloud migration and modernization project by focusing on the following:

Security: Digital trust and security capabilities are among the highest priorities for enterprises seeking to deploy their business applications in the cloud. Any security or compliance breaches can not only result in hefty penalties for offending organizations, but also lead to reputational damage and business losses.

Latency: Deterministic latency is imperative for mission critical applications like SAP running in the cloud. High latency results in poor user experience and adoption.

Throughput: Insufficient network throughput or bandwidth has a serious impact on the overall performance of SAP HANA systems. The network will need to support the size of the data and log that an organization generates during its daily workload, as well as peak load duration such as end of the month loads.

Reliability: By working with network connectivity providers that own their network - as opposed to those that rely on third-party providers – organizations can ensure that their applications are subject to less interconnects. They also benefit from assured SLAs.

Cloud-readiness: Select a connectivity provider that can support any cloud strategy you choose and has optimized networking solutions for each cloud architecture.

Given all these complexities, enterprise organizations are increasingly turning to service providers, not only to ensure success at each stage of their cloud journey, but also to gain access to best practices and benefit from their experiences of migrating SAP workloads.
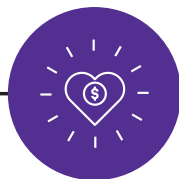
WORKING WITH PARTNERS

When asked[2] at which stage of the cloud journey they engaged a services partner, most organizations in Europe that use SAP said they did so during the migration and integration phase:

Cloud migration and integration
54%

Cloud assessment and planning
36%

Cloud management and optimization
35%
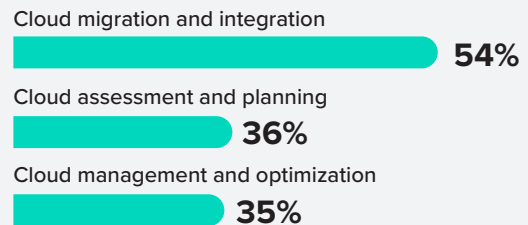
37%
Comprehensive offering able to deliver services for various types of cloud (private, public, etc.) and various layers
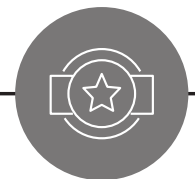
31%
Favorable pricing

28%
Partnerships with global cloud providers (AWS, IBM, Microsoft, Google)

25%
Multicloud capabilities

24%
Industry-specific expertise

Wide-ranging industry experience shows that working with the right services partner is essential for a successful SAP modernization and cloud migration. Given all the complexities and challenges involved here, organizations should seek out accredited, experienced, and expert partners that can help and support them throughout the lifetime of their digital transformation journeys.