



BABA's

Industry and Location
Manufacturing | Malaysia

Product and Service
SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for SAP Applications

50%
faster order
processing and
delivery times

40%
faster order-to-
cash cycles

99.999%
availability for
critical SAP S/4HANA
application

BABA's Drives Agility and Efficiency
into Food Manufacturing with
SUSE

Success Story

At-a-Glance

Aiming to protect its leadership position, BABA Products embarked on a program of digital transformation to maintain a competitive edge and lay the foundation for future innovation. The project migrated BABA's on-premises ERP system to SAP S/4HANA on AWS Cloud, underpinned by SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for SAP Applications. Working with SUSE, the company has improved supply chain operations with mission-critical applications running at 99.999% availability, which has led to significant improvements in order processing and delivery times, reduced order-to-cash cycles and more.

Introducing BABA's

Established in 1977, BABA Products (BABA's) is Malaysia's leading manufacturer of curry mixes, spices and flour items, with a current market share of over 60%. Its vast product portfolio comprises over 30 products ranging from masala mixes, pure spice powders, pure food mixes, snacks and sweet mixes.

BABA's produce can be found in North America, Canada, Europe, South Africa, Australia, most of Southeast Asia and almost every Malaysian kitchen. Studies show that at least one in three main meals consumed by Malaysians daily contains at least one product from the BABA's range.

BABA's products can be found on almost every retail shelf nationwide, serviced on a weekly cycle by their own extensive distri-



bution team directly from sales branches in every state in Malaysia, Brunei and Singapore. The company's extensive reach and rapid delivery cycles enable them to ensure a "Freshest on the Shelf" policy, which guarantees that any product purchased by BABA's customers in Malaysia is never older than three months from the date of production.

Preparing for the future of food manufacturing

Ilaventhan Vijaya, head of finance for the BABA group of companies, understands that BABA's position as a market leader and staple brand in Malaysian homes is not guaranteed. While tasked with ensuring that current operations are as streamlined and efficient as possible, Vijaya also understands that large scale digital transformation is essential in fending off nimble new competitors and meeting the expectations of increasingly discerning consumers.

BABA's has been operating Microsoft Navision ERP on-premises for many years, but the time had come to explore a migration to SAP S/4 HANA, with many of the underly-

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ing applications and databases to be hosted in either public or private clouds.

As a future-focused head of finance, Vijaya understood that a digital transformation project of this scale could be one of the most consequential undertakings for their business in decades, and he was determined to find the right partners to help BABA's minimize risks while guaranteeing measurable ROI.

Singapore-based cloud computing consultancy, Cloud Comrade, led the selection, planning and execution of the migration from an on-premise infrastructure to AWS as the preferred cloud provider, and SUSE Linux Enterprise Server (SLES) for SAP Applications as the vital foundation for this new digital environment. By selecting AWS's on-demand infrastructure, BABA's was also future-proofing their SAP workloads with the ability to scale up to 48 terabytes of memory for their SAP S/4HANA database.

Based on their experience in migration and managed services, and a thorough understanding of BABA's vision and business

needs for the future, Cloud Comrade was confident that a bespoke cloud-based framework built on SLES was the right choice.

“We were driven by the opportunity to make a significant positive impact on a market-leading organization, and through our partnership with SUSE, we were committed to enabling BABA's to get the best possible return on their IT investments within a short period of implementation,” says Andy Waroma, co-founder and co-managing director of Cloud Comrade.

The Results

SUSE accelerates SAP S/4HANA migration
SLES for SAP Applications was ideal for this project as it delivered timely SAP S/4HANA certification, robust cloud image building and updating of infrastructure, as well as high availability development and support expertise. With a range of automated deployment services and built-in best practices, Cloud Comrade leveraged SUSE to speed up provisioning while simultaneously reducing errors.

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The SAP S/4HANA migration was not the end of the transformation from BABA’s point of view, however, as SLES is also able to offer proactive real-time insights and monitoring for performance optimization. With integrated support from SAP, SUSE offers purpose-built tools and additional expertise to speed up troubleshooting and avoid pitfalls in service delivery.

Reducing ongoing IT management complexity was also a priority for BABA’s technology team. SLES for SAP Applications enables automation of SAP software stack deployment for new services, along with best practices to speed up server and cloud instance provisioning—greatly reducing the risk of future errors.

Above all, the solution enables BABA’s to reduce their system administrators’ workloads with automation features and guided configuration wizards for setting up and maintaining systems—allowing Center of Excellence (COE) staff to focus on delivering innovative solutions rather than routine maintenance.

Faster order processing, reduced cash cycle

In the first phase of the migration, the team implemented SAP’s future ready enterprise resource planning system, SAP S/4HANA. This was followed by the SAP Direct Store Delivery mobile app along with its enhanced SAP CRM with photo-taking, which has proven particularly effective and cost-efficient for enabling BABA’s unique supply chain needs.

The SAP Direct Store Delivery mobile solution enables BABA’s field personnel in sales, presales, and delivery van sales to work more productively and effectively by simplifying complex direct-to-store delivery processes and enabling real-time decision-making. Combining flexible, mobile order-to-cash processes with reduced costs from bypassing the retailer’s warehouse, BABA’s was able to shorten order processing and delivery times by 50% and reduce order-to-cash cycles by over 40%.

This increased visibility into direct-to-store delivery processes has provided a timely

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boost to improving customer relationships and allowed BABA's to continue building brand loyalty in a competitive food manufacturing landscape.

A secure foundation for reducing risk and guaranteeing business continuity

Cloud Comrade's well architected framework also lays a strong foundation for limiting ongoing systems risks for the company. SAP S/4HANA on SUSE provides real-time decision support to end users at BABA's; saving processing time, and enabling the business to focus less on risk mitigation, and more on strategic growth efforts.

As these were mission-critical applications for BABA's, SLES for SAP Applications offers a reliable, manageable and highly available platform—fully optimized for all SAP mission-critical applications with increased availability to 99.999%. With automated system error detection and failover for recovery, downtime of BABA's critical SAP systems is reduced to a minimum. Enhanced security features also protect SAP S/4HANA systems and remote storage devices from

unauthorized access, while system data monitoring enables proactive problem avoidance.

Unlocking flexibility and efficiency in workforce management

Another component of the transformation project with Cloud Comrade and SUSE has enabled BABA's to reap the benefits of improved and more efficient recruitment, talent management and employee engagement. To automate the organization's HR operations, BABA's also opted for the feature-rich, end-to-end human capital management and payroll solutions offered by SAP SuccessFactors and SAP Payroll. This offered the speed, scalability, accuracy, efficiency and compliance with local/regional HR regulations that BABA's needs to be an employer of choice in the region.

The automation and 'anytime, anywhere' accessibility of SAP SuccessFactors has allowed BABA's to reduce HR staff costs and time, while increasing speed and operational efficiency and ensuring the highest levels of security and compliance. Real-

time reporting and analytics capabilities allows for faster decision-making and a significant amount of workforce cost savings over three years.

Digital transformation partnerships essential for long-term success

With a new digital foundation at the core of BABA's ongoing operations, the leadership team now has agile and scalable capabilities for seizing new opportunities within their marketplace. BABA's has peace of mind that new intelligent enterprise functionality offered by SAP S/4HANA—such as AI, machine learning and automation—are now at their fingertips to be securely and seamlessly deployed on SLES for SAP Applications.

"We deemed moving to the cloud as a strategic imperative to support our growth plans and customer-centricity. Not only did we recognize the enormous savings in IT infrastructure and manpower costs, but also the great impact of speed, scale and security on almost every aspect of our business that the cloud offered," says Vijaya.

Although this implementation project has achieved all of its stated outcomes so far, BABA's is excited about the continued collaboration and partnership with SUSE and Cloud Comrade in the future. In a dynamic global economy, they understand that these strategic technology partnerships will be crucial for maintaining their status as an innovative and customer-focused enterprise.

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Benefits

- Shortened order processing and delivery times by 50%
- Reduced order-to-cash cycles by more than 40%
- Increased availability for critical SAP S/4HANA application to 99.999%
- A significant amount of workforce costs saved over three years

Find out how SUSE can help you become an innovation hero!

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