

COMMUNITIES OF INFLUENCE AT WORK: UNIVERSITIES AND SAP

Heather Czech Matthews

SAP University Alliances

1. Introduction

ERP applications are integrated software suites that are becoming mature technologies in many organizations today. There is some evidence that nearly 80% of all world business transactions are conducted either directly or indirectly (through the supply chain) on an ERP system. Accordingly, students in today's universities need to understand this important technology and students with an understanding of the integrated nature of ERP systems in general have been valued in the job market. The Business Suite from SAP AG is used in over 900 universities globally to enhance the education of students.

The challenges in today's economy have hit universities as well as the business community, yet the job market for SAP-literate graduates remains strong. Within the first month of opening the University Alliances job board over 150 jobs were posted there and there are estimates that the global need for SAP literate graduates is about 30,000. In all organizations, including universities, people are being asked to do more with less, be transparent and accountable, and partner with each other to achieve common goals. SAP calls this the Clear Enterprise and the University Alliances (UA) Team works to help universities become part of this program. In addition to the free use of the software, the UA provides extensive curriculum, free training to faculty and numerous networking opportunities for member schools.

This session highlights the mission and benefits of the SAP University Alliances program in North America. We present examples of schools who have successfully incorporated SAP products into classes across the Business and Computer Science curricula. We demonstrate the value proposition to 1) Deans through networking opportunities with key SAP customers and partners, 2) faculty to enhance their own skill sets while they build the marketability of students, and of course, 3) students who receive the ultimate benefit of a good job upon graduation. We have evidence that SAP literate graduates not only receive more job offers but are among the highest paid graduates of their programs. Whether the student has a functional knowledge of the use of ERP to complete integrated business processes or has more depth in the technical aspects of ERP systems administration or development, data show that these students receiving job offers even in this challenging economy. Please check us out and join our public community today for free at <http://uac.sap.com> or contact us at uap.na@sap.com.

Key Features of our Presentation

- 1) SAP University Alliances Program -- what is it, how do schools participate, what do students learn about SAP?
- 2) Benefits to UA members
- 3) Call to action -- next steps: how to join and how to incorporate SAP products into business and IT courses