

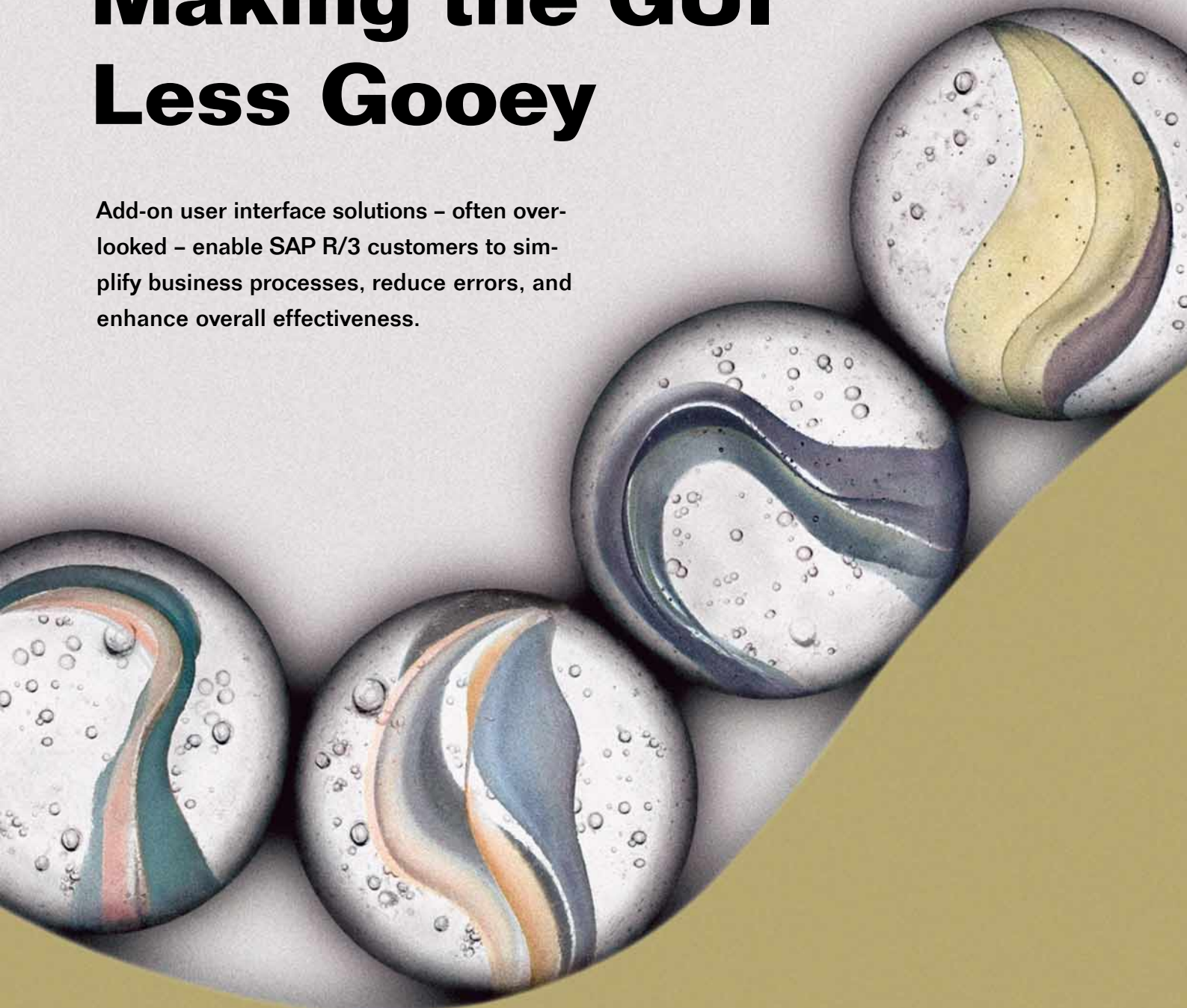
SAP INFO

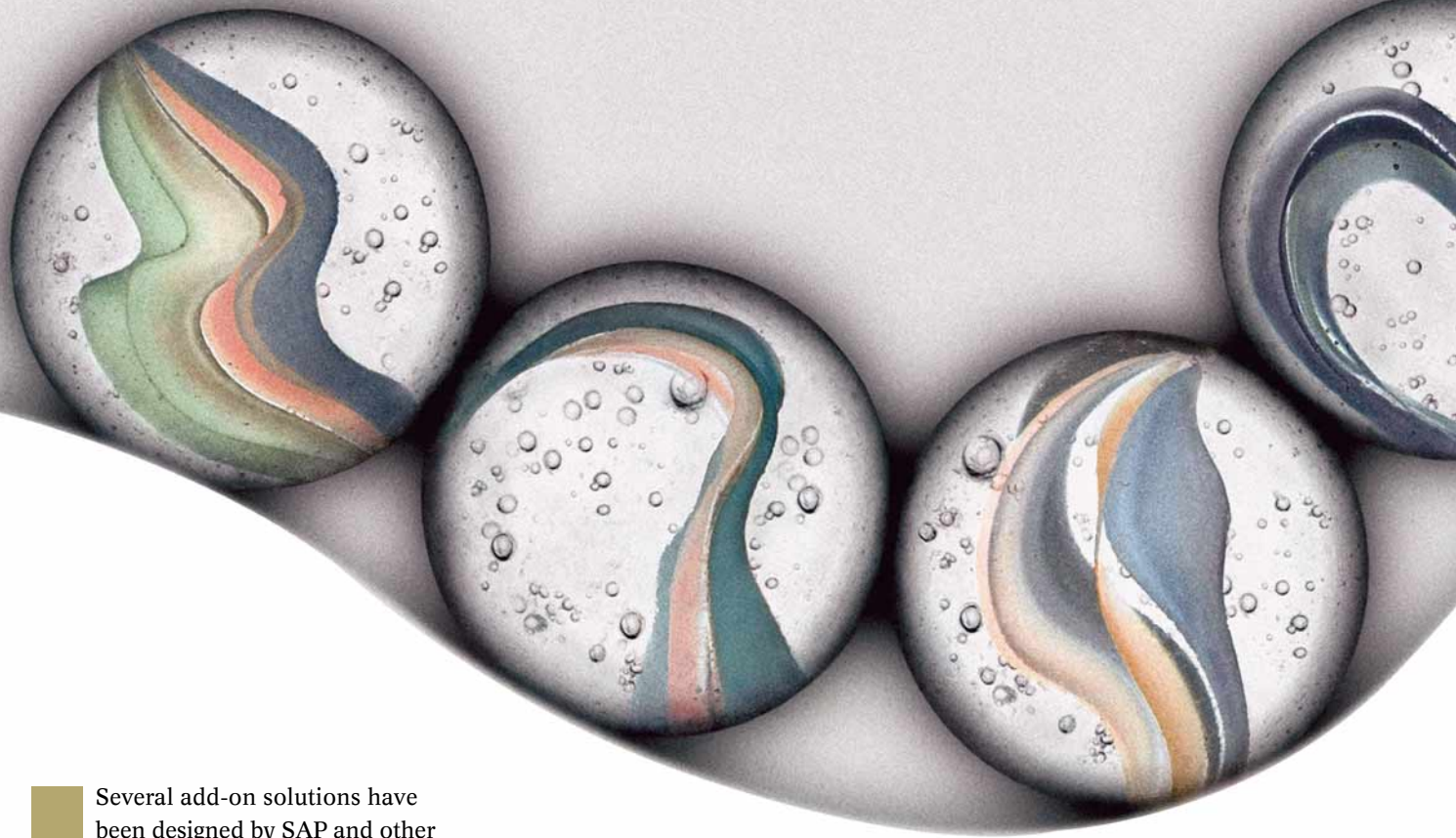
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Customizing the SAP user interface without system modification

Making the GUI Less Gooney

Add-on user interface solutions – often overlooked – enable SAP R/3 customers to simplify business processes, reduce errors, and enhance overall effectiveness.





Several add-on solutions have been designed by SAP and other vendors to help SAP R/3 customers get the most out of the SAP user interface. Nonetheless, few IT professionals take the time to explore the full potential of these applications. By enabling IT staff to enhance the SAP R/3 user interface without modifying the underlying SAP system, these solutions offer numerous business benefits, with minimal time and expense.

Here's a look at how these applications can enhance the effectiveness of SAP R/3 and how one company has used them to simplify business processes, reduce errors, and increase productivity:

GuiXT comes bundled with SAP GUI

Developed by Synactive Software, GuiXT is an add-on that comes bundled with the standard SAP GUI. When used in conjunction with other Synactive components – Designer, InputAssistant, and Viewer – it enables SAP R/3 customers to enhance the interface without making changes to the underlying SAP system. Screen changes made using GuiXT are stored in text files (also known as GuiXT scripts), which can be deployed to different systems. Users can activate/deactivate GuiXT from SAP

GUI's Option menu so they can process a transaction with either GuiXT or the standard SAP user interface.

GuiXT can be used to implement a range of screen customization options that deliver numerous benefits:

- Combine and consolidate screens to reduce the number that users need to wade through. In most cases, a transaction can be consolidated to a single screen.
- Change the layout of any SAP screen (refine terminology, move or delete fields, change field length, add text or images, and offer radio buttons instead of coded input). This improves productivity and reduces errors in data entry.
- Add relevant documentation by integrating Web-based help within the SAP GUI itself. This convenience often reduces training costs.
- Simplify the business processes by hiding unnecessary fields.

GuiXT is bundled free with the SAP GUI; three other Synactive components – Designer, InputAssistant, and Viewer – do require license keys.

Designer generates portable GuiXT scripts

An add-on to the SAP R/3 system, Designer works in tandem with GuiXT to create user-friendly and intuitive SAP user screens. It generates portable GuiXT scripts in a matter of minutes with extensive support for drag-and-drop automations. With Designer, users can:

- Modify view, change position, and delete fields or groups of fields, using simple mouse clicks

- Add pushbuttons, radio buttons, input fields, group boxes, and images
- Modify on-screen text and add tips
- Employ two modes: script view to display the script and WYSIWYG to see the modified layout

InputAssistant helps input data into SAP R/3

InputAssistant helps users input data into SAP R/3 effortlessly and efficiently. It works with GuiXT to combine multiple tabs, screens, or transactions into one – without changing any ABAP or SAP R/3 business logic. Specifically, it enables users to:

- Combine multiple data-input screens and tabs into one
- Load data into SAP by interfacing with external programs, making internal RFC calls, and interacting with external Internet sites

- Fill values into SAP by clicking on a specialized pop-up, on the alternate mouse button
- Transfer common sets of information into various SAP R/3 fields with a click of a button
- Re-enter the most recently entered values with one click
- Create a subset of values that appears when you use the alternate mouse button.

Component Viewer enables seamless integration of the Web

Component Viewer, used with GuiXT, enables seamless integration of the Web with the SAP GUI. Users can:

- Embed HTML and RTF controls in the SAP GUI window. The HTML control is a full-fledged browser and can run Java applets, Java scripts, and ActiveX programs. The Viewer requires Internet Explorer 4.0 or above.
- Create templates to be used with HTML and RTF controls so a user can interact with the SAP GUI from a Web site

- Retrieve data from external Web applications and use it as input for SAP screens
- Embed training documentation within the SAP GUI screen, in the form of on-demand help (clicking on any field or help image to activate help) and/or enhanced help that can be used to fill data into the SAP screens.

Case study

In the SAP implementation for a large consumer goods manufacturing client in North America, the Deloitte/SAP technical team used GuiXT to customize the user interfaces for several business processes. For example, we used it to simplify and combine the budget and planning transactions, which included internal order creation (transaction KO01), internal order budget (KO22), and internal order plan/forecast (transaction KPF6, called twice with different layouts). Here's how we applied the tool to streamline these operations:

- Transaction KO01 – Eliminated fields not used. Combined *General Data* tab with *Assignments* tab and repositioned data entry blocks to fit onto one screen. Users no longer need to scroll up and down to enter data.
- Transaction KO02 – An internal order is created as soon as transaction KO01 is saved and displayed via



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- ▶ transaction KO02. It is similar to standard SAP, except that the input fields for KO22 and KPF6 have been added to the right side of the *Assignments* tab.
 - Transaction KO22 – Once transaction KO02 is saved, KO22 runs in the background using the internal order and budget information passed from KO02. We eliminated the user interface for this transaction.
 - Transaction KPF6 with layout 401 (Planning by Cost Element) – After KO22 is completed; the KPF6 data-entry screen comes up, with layout and overall budget displayed in the upper left corner. The initial KPF6 screen is eliminated, and the selection data comes from the fields on the lower right side of the *Assignments* tab in transaction KO02.
 - Transaction KPF6 with layout 402 (Planning by Sender's Cost Center) – Once transaction KPF6 with layout 401 is saved, KPF6 with layout 402 is displayed in a similar manner.

After KPF6 with layout 402 is saved, it returns to the original data-entry screen: the initial screen of KO01. The flow of the above five screens appears as one seamless process, though it involves five distinct SAP transactions.

Worthy of a second glance

This case study illustrates how the GuiXT tool and other add-on solutions can be used to create a win-win: Companies benefit from reduced errors and improved operations, while users waste less time and experience less frustration in their daily tasks. These reasons alone provide a compelling case for giving these often-overlooked solutions a second glance.

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