

Are SAP Business One Days Numbered?

Heiko Stichel, SAPIT Corporation

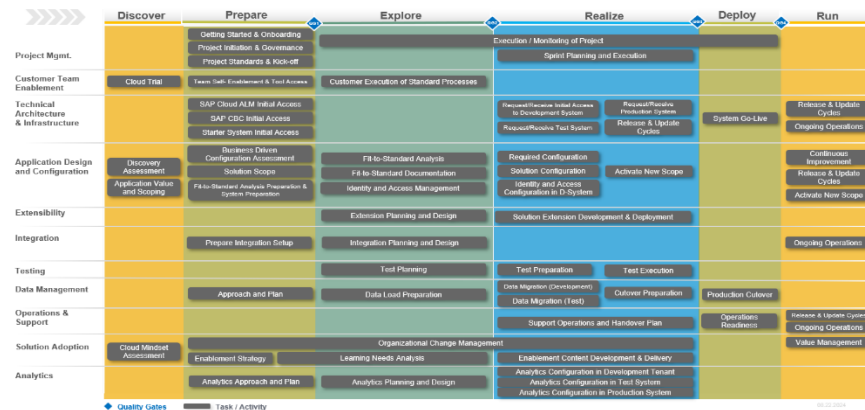
At this year's Sapphire, on 12 May 2026, SAP SE made an unequivocal public announcement: "SAP's only strategic ERP code line is S/4HANA Cloud ERP." It is not Cloud ERP Private, let alone On-Premise, none of those – Cloud ERP, f.k.a. "Public Edition" or "Essentials Edition" is their future ERP. Given this bold statement and the fact that on its website SAP advertises S/4HANA Cloud ERP as for "companies of all sizes" and at the same time pitches Business One (B1) as suitable for "small and medium-sized businesses" – what are the odds of SAP discontinuing B1 in the near future, like they discontinued Business ByDesign this April (2026)?

This whitepaper is an attempt at a strategic analysis on this topic and endeavors to go beyond listing circumstantial evidence. It is also an opinion provided completely independent of the software vendor.

Where SAP stands with B1

Per SAP's B1 roadmap document released March 2026, B1 serves 83,000 worldwide customers with 1.2+ million users (DAU-daily average users), 28 languages and 50 country-specific versions, with local support from over 850 partners; B1 is "SAP's best-selling ERP solution by number of customers." Upon looking closer, the B1 roadmap appears to focus on current features, but does not provide a convincing value proposition for a path forward – as would be expected of a roadmap. The current B1 release is 10.0 and while "11.0" is mentioned as planned for release in 2027, the roadmap contains the usual disclaimer ("...possible future developments are subject to change and may be changed by SAP at any time for any reason without notice..."). That said, they may pull the plug after 10.0 or they may not.

On 09 March 2026, SAP published an Activate roadmap to migrate from B1 to Cloud ERP; we published a whitepaper about it along with factors to assess, if a move from B1 to Cloud ERP is feasible. A few weeks earlier, SAP had published an Activate roadmap to migrate from Business ByDesign (ByD) to Cloud ERP.



Where B1 differs from Business ByDesign (ByD)

This April (2026), SAP discontinued ByD license sales, as they had announced in 2025. This means that ByD will eventually be history. ByD was launched in 2006, four (4) years after B1. Unlike B1, ByD did not have an on-premise option, ByD was only sold by partners and figures like ByD's DAU or installation base were not published by SAP. This suggests that ByD's market share is much smaller than that of B1.

Strategic Context

Business ByDesign's delisting (April 2026) is the precedent here. Duly noted, SAP didn't formally "retire" it—they delisted it from the pricelist for new customers, while maintaining support for existing users with no announced end-of-maintenance date. This pattern matters, because it shows SAP's gradual consolidation strategy rather than abrupt discontinuation.

SAP's current position on B1 is noticeably different. At Sapphire 2026, SAP leaders have publicly reaffirmed that B1 is "forever" and continues to be their best-selling ERP with roughly 10 new customers per day and approximately 1.2 million daily active users across 83,000 companies. This is a deliberate counter-narrative to succession speculation.

Looking at SAP's strategic messaging, we can't help but notice some tension:

<i>Dimension</i>	<i>Business One (B1)</i>	<i>S/4HANA Cloud ERP</i>
<i>Market Positioning</i>	For small to mid-market (SMB)	For companies of all sizes (includes SMB)
<i>Strategic Focus</i>	Maintained with incremental innovation	Strategic centerpiece, heavy R&D investment
<i>Cloud Development</i>	Web client parity (even split on-premise vs. cloud users) by 2027, multi-tenant enhancements	AI agents, embedded generative AI, continuous updates
<i>Pricing Strategy</i>	Still actively sold; no pricelist delisting announced	Aggressive positioning as universal platform
<i>Executive Commitment</i>	"Here to stay" messaging required (which suggests some uncertainty)	Enthusiastic, no defensive posturing needed

Realistic Timeline Scenario for B1

In order to estimate what's going to happen to B1, one has to consider factors for and against a discontinuation. These factors will play against one another.

Firstly, Factors Pushing Toward Discontinuation

- *Portfolio compression:* SAP has clearly stated S/4HANA Cloud ERP is their "only strategic ERP code line." B1 is not mentioned in that framing, even though it is technically a code line.
- *Overlapping market reach:* If S/4HANA Cloud ERP can serve small companies "competitively" (which SAP claims), B1 becomes redundant. The fact that B1 still commands the SMB market

share suggests the cloud offering isn't yet a perfect fit for that segment. However, that's a gap SAP will likely close.

- *The Business ByDesign precedent:* ByDesign's April 2026 delisting shows SAP will consolidate legacy products rather than abruptly pull them. B1 could follow the same end-of-life: new sales decline → pricelist delisting → extended support for existing customers → eventual maintenance window closure.
- *Partner ecosystem burden:* Maintaining separate web clients, roadmaps, and support streams for two mid-market platforms (B1, S/4HANA Cloud ERP) fragments SAP's partner focus. That won't be sustainable long-term.

Secondly, Factors Suggesting Continuity (Medium-Term)

- *Active roadmap:* Product version 11 is scheduled for release 2027 and includes significant infrastructure improvements (modular architecture, new web client built on SAP Fiori, cloud control center). Since the development cost is likely significant, this speaks for continuation.
- *Strong user base:* 1.2 million DAU and 10 new customers per day indicate Business One is still profitable and sticky. SAP won't abandon that revenue stream lightly.
- *Customer lock-in is real:* Migration from B1 to S/4HANA Cloud ERP is a "reset, not an upgrade." It's disruptive. Many existing customers will resist moving for years, which buys B1 time.
- *The messaging would be a PR nightmare:* After explicitly committing to "B1 forever," any near-term discontinuation announcement would severely damage partner trust and customer confidence in SAP's platform commitments.

In conclusion, as an attempt to estimate odds along with a time line:

3–5 years out (2029–2031): ~30% chance of a pricelist delisting for new customers, as it was the case for ByD. SAP will likely allow new deployments, but shift marketing weight to S/4HANA Cloud ERP.

5–10 years out (2031–2036): ~70% chance Business One enters "extended support" or "customer-specific maintenance" phases, similar to where legacy SAP products live now.

Beyond (2036-): B1 reaches end-of-mainstream support, though SAP will probably offer extended support for legacy users.

The Writing on the Wall

There likely won't be an announcement, because the messaging would be "tricky." In lieu of that, you will need to look for the following "real" indicators:

1. Partner momentum shifting visibly to S/4HANA Cloud ERP, in particular partners' sales and marketing initiatives turn away from B1
2. Declining feature velocity in B1 (roadmap shrinks year-over-year, fewer new features introduced)
3. Quiet pricing changes that make S/4HANA Cloud ERP more attractive for small companies

4. Difficulty acquiring B1 licenses for new customers (due to lack of sales focus, not technical reasons)

SAP is not going to pull the plug on B1 suddenly. The ByD playbook shows they prefer managed consolidation. But the strategic direction is unambiguous: S/4HANA Cloud ERP is the future, and B1 is increasingly framed as a temporary stage in a customer's journey before they "graduate" to Cloud ERP.

If you're evaluating ERP solutions, the key question isn't if B1 discontinues, but when. If you are running B1, the key question is can you successfully migrate to S/4HANA Cloud ERP before the window closes. The "forever" commitment buys several years, but it does not guarantee indefinite support.

Feel free to get in touch. You can reach us

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