

# SAP BDC- THE 49 CRUCIAL QUESTIONS FOR COMPANIES

Which questions you should ask yourself about the SAP Business Data Cloud, which tips will help you answer them - and how you can use them to develop your own strategy, architecture and roadmap for the Business Data Cloud.

## Strategic benefit

**How does SAP Business Data Cloud (BDC) support our business strategy and digital transformation?**

**Which competitive advantages can we gain by using SAP BDC compared to other providers?**

**How does BDC improve decision-making with preconfigured insight apps and AI?**

**How does SAP BDC foster business and data literacy across our organization?**

**What are SAP's long-term strategic goals behind the introduction of the BDC?**

**How does BDC support the development of a data-driven corporate culture?**

**What new business opportunities or business models could arise from BDC?**

**How does BDC help you to react more quickly to market changes?**

**Why should a DACH company think about BDC right now?**

## Data Governance & Security

**How does BDC ensure data quality and consistency across different sources?**

**What functions does BDC offer for data governance (e.g. data catalog, metadata management)?**

**How does BDC support adherence to data protection and compliance requirements (e.g. GDPR)?**

**Where is the data hosted in BDC and how is data sovereignty ensured?**

**How are access rights and roles regulated in BDC, especially for cross-departmental data?**

**How can specialist departments in BDC take responsibility for their data (keyword: data ownership)?**

**How does BDC integrate with existing data governance tools (e.g. Collibra)?**

**How does BDC prevent redundant data copies and data silos?**



BDC creates a uniform database across all SAP and third-party systems. This not only creates a consistent foundation for data analyses - the connection with AI also accelerates strategic decisions and makes them more informed. One platform, many perspectives - that's exactly what digital transformation needs.

BDC combines in-depth business process knowledge with modern data engineering. SAP itself says that companies are "getting more out of their data than ever before". For you, this means: better insights, shorter innovation cycles, more room for maneuver - because data becomes an active resource.

Insight apps in BDC provide immediately usable analyses on business topics such as working capital or Finance 360°. Preconfigured, AI-supported and immediately understandable. This accelerates decisions, ensures consistent KPIs and gets you from analysis to action faster.

BDC is AI-ready from the ground up: with native Databricks access for machine learning and SAP's Joule AI, AI models are created directly on your consolidated company data. The result: generative AI that doesn't operate in a vacuum, but provides concrete assistance in your business processes.

With BDC, SAP wants to keep data where the context is right: in the SAP Business Suite. The goal is a central, modern data platform on which new data products and AI applications can be created - without data exports, without compromises. This not only strengthens SAP, but also your data sovereignty.

BDC lowers the barriers to entry. Self-service, low-code, no-code - it's all there. This allows departments to build their own dashboards and run their own analyses - without the need for complex IT projects. Data expertise is not delegated, but distributed throughout the company.

Data products at the touch of a button - this is more than just a tech feature. It opens the door to new services, e.g. benchmarking, data-driven partner portals or external insights. The combination of internal data with external sources makes innovation scalable.

Real-time networking is the key: BDC combines internal data with external signals - e.g. key financial figures with inflation data. This means that changes are immediately visible and not just in the monthly report. If you want to react quickly, you need precisely this data advantage.

Timing is strategic: BDC will be in controlled availability at the beginning of 2025. For existing SAP customers - especially those with BW - this is an opportunity to get ready for the future at an early stage. Those who get on board now will not only be at the forefront of business AI & data strategy, but also ahead of the game.



BDC provides curated data products. This means: no more wild tables, but uniformly semanticized content - checked, structured and with a clear context. Instead of ten variants of a key sales figure, there is one reliable one. A game changer for specialist departments - because suddenly everyone is working with the same truth.

BDC has a built-in data catalog and a knowledge graph. This allows you to see at a glance what data is available, where it comes from and what it means. Lineage, metadata, responsibilities - everything is included. Governance is therefore not an obligation, but a structured part of everyday life.

SAP operates BDC in certified data centers and relies on European data protection standards. Databricks integration runs via the SAP Cloud, not externally. For GDPR & Co. there is region selection, access controls and deletion functions. Important: data remains controllable - a strong argument, especially in the DACH region.

Data is stored in SAP's cloud, in EU data centers if desired. The partnership with Databricks was deliberately designed so that data does not migrate to external environments. According to IDC, this is a key building block for trustworthy AI - especially for companies that value control, auditability and sovereignty.

BDC adopts familiar concepts from SAC and Datasphere - with clearly defined roles and a finely granular authorization model. Who can see what? Who can change which KPIs? This can be precisely regulated. This is particularly important for cross-functional data products - because without clear roles, it quickly becomes confusing.

BDC enables true data ownership. Departments can not only consume data products, but also take responsibility for them: check quality, control releases, issue approvals. With predefined templates and a clear assignment of business objects, this becomes tangible - even for colleagues without an IT background.

BDC is designed to be open - which is precisely why SAP has already announced partnerships with tools such as Collibra, Confluent & Co. Anyone already using a governance stack can continue to use it. An important signal for many companies: you don't have to start from scratch - you can integrate what you already have.

Zero copy is the magic word. Instead of physically duplicating data, BDC relies on data products that can be used multiple times - without copying them. This saves memory, reduces errors and ensures that everyone works with the same data. No more copy-paste chaos - just a central data foundation for everyone.

## Change Management & Skills

**What new skills or knowledge do our employees need to work with BDC?**

**How does the role of the existing BW/BI teams change in a BDC environment?**

**What learning resources does SAP provide for BDC (e.g. tutorials, courses)?**

**What support do SAP partners offer in change management for BDC?**

**How is BDC changing collaboration between IT and specialist departments in data management?**

**What changes in processes (e.g. development processes, data provision) does BDC entail?**

**How can you dispel any reservations employees may have about a cloud solution like BDC?**

**How can the added value of the BDC be communicated to managers and stakeholders?**



BDC changes a lot of things - especially for traditional BW teams. SQL instead of ABAP logic, cloud instead of on-prem paradigms, lakehouse instead of pure DWH. Anyone who is familiar with Spark, Python or data catalogs has a clear advantage. At the same time, many things remain accessible thanks to no-code/low-code approaches. However, a basic understanding of modern data architectures is becoming more important - and will pay off in the long term.

BW modelers become curators, architects and bridge builders. BDC automates a lot, but also demands a new way of thinking: away from fixed cubes and towards flexible data products. Those who maintain rigid ETL processes today will be modeling agile data flows together with specialist departments tomorrow. Roles are changing - but there is still plenty to do.

SAP already offers webinars, learning journeys and hands-on workshops. Particularly helpful: the 30-minute primer to get you started, demos of Insight apps and practical guides. The community (blogs, LinkedIn, Learning Hub) is also growing - if you want to get started, you can now find well-curated content

Large and small SAP partners support companies with concrete change concepts. From technical migration to communication with the specialist departments. Many projects are not just about technology, but also about mindset change, role clarification and qualification. And this is where experienced partners are worth their weight in gold.

Fundamental. BDC creates a standardized database and enables self-service - bringing business and IT even closer together. The specialist departments can design data products themselves, while IT provides the governance, tools and platform. This not only changes processes, but also the culture: away from the "supplier model" and towards genuine co-creation.

Less waiting time, more iteration. Data products are built incrementally instead of being defined once and forever. Reporting, planning and analysis merge technically - this accelerates decision-making. And: the integration of analytics and AI into one platform shortens the transition from insight to action.

Transparent communication is the key. Security concerns? Answer them with facts. Loss of control? Show how self-service and ownership actually work. Trust is created through pilot projects, clear contacts - and a sense of achievement. Anyone who experiences the benefits for themselves will no longer question the cloud.

Not with features, but with stories. What are the benefits for day-to-day business and for strategy? Faster month-end closing, new business models, less shadow IT - these are arguments that count. Add to that quotes from other pioneers ("BDC is our lever for data-based innovation") and it becomes a business case with traction



## Costs & Licensing

**How is the SAP Business Data Cloud pricing model structured?**

**Where can licenses for BDC be obtained, and can existing Databricks customers use their existing infrastructure?**

**How does the introduction of BDC affect the existing license models for SAP Analytics Cloud, SAP Datasphere or BW?**

**How does the use of the Object Store in BDC affect the overall costs?**

**Are there potential savings with BDC compared to the previous on-premise data warehouse solution?**

**Are there potentially redundant costs if we introduce BDC and use other data & analytics tools in parallel?**

**Are SAP Analytics Cloud and Datasphere included in the BDC license or licensed separately?**

**How can you evaluate the ROI or cost-benefit ratio of a BDC implementation?**

## Migration & implementation

**How can existing SAP BW systems be migrated to the BDC?**

**For which customer scenarios is the first BDC version intended (greenfield vs. existing systems)?**

**How are existing SAP Datasphere implementations transferred to BDC?**

**Which data should be migrated first to achieve rapid success with BDC?**

**How does a gradual transition (hybrid scenarios) from existing systems to BDC work?**

**What is the roadmap for BDC (introduction phases and planned extensions)?**

**What support does SAP or partners offer when migrating to BDC?**

**What are the risks of migrating to BDC and how can they be minimized?**



SAP promises a smooth transition: BW/4HANA or BW 7.5 can be integrated as long as there is not too much ABAP logic involved. The core idea: use existing data models, make them available via Object Store - and gradually transfer them into curated data products. Sounds feasible, but requires preparation. A readiness check is mandatory.

The controlled availability is initially aimed at greenfield approaches. This means that anyone starting out or trying out a specific use case is in the right place. For existing customers with complex system landscapes, things will get exciting from general availability (expected from mid-2025) - this is when the migration paths for BW and Datasphere come into play.

Don't worry - everything remains the same. BDC is technically an upgrade based on Datasphere. In concrete terms, this means that your existing models, authorizations and data flows continue to run. You don't have to rebuild anything, but can migrate directly to the new environment. SAP promises a seamless migration without any loss of functionality.

The focus is on quick wins - i.e. areas for which SAP already provides predefined content: Finance, spend analysis, supply chain. If you start there, you will get results faster and can implement your first business cases with little effort. A good database, immediately visible benefits - the ideal way to get started.

Hybrid scenarios are absolutely planned: BDC for new topics, existing solutions for ongoing operations. Parallel operation is possible - and even makes strategic sense. Coordination is important: which systems deliver which insights, how do the data streams synchronize? If planned correctly, this is not a problem, but a real advantage.

2025 is the year of scaling. The controlled rollout is currently underway and will become broader from the second half of the year. SAP is planning additional data products, more partner solutions and new AI functions. If you start now, you can position yourself early - and even participate in the co-design of new functions if required.

There is plenty of help available: webinars, hands-on sessions, launch partners such as Deloitte or PwC, who have already set up specific use cases. The major consulting firms offer introductory programs and tools for assessing migration readiness. The important thing is Don't wait, but seek discussions - there are often even funding programs or early adopter benefits.

The biggest pitfall: individual ABAP logic or unstructured BW systems. If you have been working with shadow processes for too long, you need to clean them up. Data quality and interfaces should also be checked in advance. The solution: proceed step by step, document cleanly, carry out test runs - and use the migration as an opportunity for modernization, not as a compulsory exercise.



## Architecture & Integration

**What are the core components of the SAP Business Data Cloud architecture?**

**How does BDC integrate with existing SAP systems such as S/4HANA, BW/4HANA or SAP Datasphere?**

**Can BDC also integrate data from non-SAP systems, and if so, how?**

**What role does the partnership with Databricks play in the BDC architecture?**

**How is data stored in BDC (keyword: data warehouse concept, object store)?**

**How does BDC ensure that existing SAP data contexts (semantics) are retained?**

**Are there any restrictions on the integration of BDC with third-party analytics solutions (e.g. Power BI)?**

**How does BDC fit into the overall strategy of the SAP Business Technology Platform (BTP)?**

BDC combines the tried and tested with the new: SAP Datasphere as a semantic layer, SAP HANA Data Lake Files as an object store, Databricks as an engine for AI & data engineering, BW/4HANA optionally in the background - and the SAP Analytics Cloud for planning & reporting on top. Everything modular, everything orchestrated - this is what a modern data setup looks like.

BDC is not a greenfield development, but an evolutionary leap. Existing SAP Datasphere solutions are seamlessly integrated, BW/4HANA can be connected or even used directly - and S/4HANA provides the business contexts. No isolated solutions, but a consistent architecture concept.

Absolutely. Thanks to Databricks technology at its core, BDC supports open data standards such as delta sharing. Whether data lakes, external APIs or third-party tools - data integration is designed to be open and can be implemented realistically. BDC is SAP-native, but not SAP-exclusive.

Databricks delivers the AI power under the hood. Spark, Lakehouse, machine learning - all of this is embedded natively. The idea behind it: SAP provides the business context, Databricks the scalable computing power and AI expertise. Together, they create a genuine data product ecosystem.

Two storage layers - one idea: frequently used data remains in-memory in HANA, while everything else ends up efficiently in the Object Store. The advantage: you can store large amounts of data cost-effectively and analyze it efficiently when required. The whole thing follows the Lakehouse principle - flexible, scalable, economical.

This is one of the biggest advantages: With the "One Domain Model", the semantics from S/4HANA are retained - no matter where and how you use the data. This means that a cost center is still a cost center even in the cloud. Context, business logic and structure remain intact. This not only saves time, but also misunderstandings.

BDC is basically open - but not (yet) completely free. Some external tools such as Power BI are currently reaching their technical limits with live connections. SAP is working on open standards such as Delta Sharing, but the current status: integration yes, sometimes with compromises. Important to know for hybrid landscapes.

BDC is not a stand-alone product, but the centerpiece of the BTP data strategy. As a cloud-native solution, it complements existing services such as SAP AI Core, SAP Build and SAP Integration Suite. For customers, this means standardized security, governance and scalability - and a platform that brings everything together, from the data source to insight.

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