

# Leaving SAP Support: How to take a payment holiday from SAP

**Part 1:** How do you take a payment holiday? **Part 2:** What will you miss out on? **Part 3:** How will SAP react? **Part 4:** Your next steps.



# Part 1: How do you take a payment holiday?

At the end of each year, many SAP customers unthinkingly line up to renew their support and maintenance contracts, and become locked in to another 12-month agreement.





**If you are an SAP customer, it's likely that you're paying up to 22% of your licence fees to support and maintain your databases and software.**

But is this huge expense really necessary?

- What value are you currently getting from your SAP support and maintenance?
- When did the last SAP software upgrade provide you with new value-adding functionality?
- When was the last security patch delivered in a reasonable time frame after a vulnerability was exposed?
- When was your last support ticket ever better than 'meets expectations'?

## You deserve better

This guide will explain how and why you

should take a payment holiday from SAP Support, effectively 'pausing' your current support contract while you receive superior (and up to 90% cheaper) support from a third-party provider.

We will guide you through some of the commonly asked questions of other organisations that have gone through the same process with us, and show you how to take back control of your SAP Support – freeing your budget to invest in your future, not SAP's.

## What is a payment holiday from SAP support?

All it means is that for a year or two, you give SAP notice that you will not require the vendor to support your systems so you will not be paying its annual fee.

You can then look at other sources to support your systems, often at a fraction of the cost.

Some organisations find that they can support their SAP systems via their existing in-house IT department.

But most organisations that consider suspending SAP Support prefer to mitigate their risks by engaging the services of a third-party support provider.

With third-party support, you can expect to see savings of at least 50% on your current SAP Support.



***The independent ERP third-party support market is rapidly maturing. Many application leaders are now more aware of the option to terminate software vendors' maintenance agreements in favour of third-party support models.***

**Gartner Hype Cycle Guide, 2022.**



## Part 2: What will you miss out on?

It's important to first consider what you're actually paying for. SAP Support offers a lot in return for your high fee, right?





In return for your annual payment of around 22% of your original licensing fee, SAP maintenance provides.

**1.**

**Incident resolution**

**2.**

**System performance analysis**

**3.**

**Legal change patches**

**4.**

**Security patches**

**5.**

**Software enhancements and upgrades**

On the face of it, SAP Support sounds like comprehensive support and maintenance for software, even if it is a little dear.

As you'll find from reading this guide, the high price for support is the least of your worries when it comes to SAP Support.

Let's examine each element of the support package in detail, and show you how a third-party support provider can not only match the vendor's offering, but far exceed it.

Check the next pages to see how third-party support far exceeds SAPs offering >>



## 1. Incident resolution

**Swiftly correcting any issues that occur with your SAP system is essential to maintaining effective business operations.**

This is the core of what people talk about when referring to SAP Support, but it's also what many people complain about.

The incident resolution service provided by a third-party support provider is often superior to that provided by SAP Support.

This is because some third-party providers, such as Support Revolution, base their SLAs on resolving their customers' issues.

This may seem obvious but the SLAs that SAP works to can be satisfied by simply offering an "action plan" for resolving the incident.

These action plans are barely a step

above 'Googling it' for your staff, and they still require you to resolve the issue yourself!

What are you paying SAP's 22% fees for in this instance?

And these SLAs from SAP are not widely available either.

SAP will only offer an SLA for very high priority incidents.

Whereas, Support Revolution provides all of its customers with SLAs for resolving their incidents across all priorities.

Finally, Support Revolution supports any and all of the customisations and bespoke developments that customers have in their SAP environments – we understand that you need to make these changes to run your business effectively.

SAP Support only supports the SAP supplied code.

**“SAP's SLAs are action plans – barely a step above 'Googling it' and resolving the issue yourself! What are you paying its 22% fees for in this instance?”**





## 2. System performance analysis that cries wolf

**If your SAP system is not performing at an effective rate then this hinders the operation of your business.**

It can also increase the stress levels of your staff, not to mention be potentially detrimental to the running of your entire system.

But performance monitoring and problem resolution can often be better managed with a third-party support provider than with SAP, as often SAP's own Earlywatch reports cause more problems and stress than they solve.

Third-party support providers like Support Revolution, offer a more personalised service than SAP Support, alerting you to the issues that matter.

On the other hand, Earlywatch reports from SAP Support are full of false alerts

such as the SAP kernel not being the latest version.

This 'cry wolf' approach to performance analysis can raise team stress levels and then cause your team to grow immune to the notifications of alerts, including more important ones.

### Remedyforce Service Desk system

When you switch your support from SAP to Support Revolution, we load all open incidents onto our Remedyforce system, providing your team with access and training to explain how to use it effectively.

This is a much clearer, efficient system that can show you how your support partner is performing, what actually needs fixing and how we're meeting our SLAs.

### 3. Legal change patches

**Ensuring that your SAP system is fully compliant with current legislation in the countries your business operates in is essential.**

You need to ensure your systems are completely compliant with any legislative changes made in your country.

But it's unnecessary to patch your systems for every change in legality in every country across the world.

SAP provides global patches that can contain nothing relevant at all to the locations and industries you operate in.

You will often only require specific changes to your SAP system to comply with your local requirements.

With SAP Support though, this isn't an option.

Legal change packs are global and issued monthly.

This makes it very difficult to stay up to date with the changes you need, without major retesting monthly to ensure that a new patch hasn't broken an existing process.

And then there's the possibility of a new patch actually breaking your systems, which adds further complications to this entire legislative patching process.

Third-party support providers work with you to only develop and implement the changes that your business needs to remain compliant in those areas your business operates in.

Our approach reduces stress and potential compatibility issues, all while keeping you legally compliant.







## 4. Security patches that still leave you at risk

**Effectively protecting the integrity of your SAP systems and data is essential in a world of ever increasing cyber attacks.**

But SAP relies on an outdated patching model that is slow and hard to implement.

It is dependent on the vendor identifying loopholes within its own code.

Often, SAP identifies risks when some of its customers have suffered an attack!

Not only that, but the vendor only provides patches for the latest supported versions of its software.

These patches cost time and money to implement within organisations, as they have to go through intensive testing and implementation cycles.

This means that patches are often put on hold until resources are available or there is a requirement for the organisation to patch their systems as soon as possible.

Security patches are commonly thought of as an SAP monopoly.

The reasoning behind this is that only SAP can fix faults with the SAP kernel (the executable that operates SAP systems).

But, the majority of vulnerabilities in a typical SAP system are not in the kernel, but in the configuration or ABAP coding.

These are fixable without resorting to SAP Support.

So there is a better way.

Any issues, plus those vulnerabilities that SAP provides kernel updates for, are easily removed via a virtual patching solution, such as the Gartner recommended Trend Micro Deep Security that **Support**

**Revolution** uses to protect customers.

## More on Trend Micro and Deep Security...

Trend Micro Deep Security provides automated pro-active security designed to address the relentless onslaught of vulnerabilities on a daily basis.

Deep Security is comprised of a security management component and a very small footprint agent which sits on each server (or in your Cloud solution).

The manager holds a database of vulnerability signatures which it communicates to each agent.

The agents monitor traffic on the network level and scans for known vulnerability signatures.

They then report any incidents or block the traffic.

As Deep Security is a rule-based system, new rules are published regularly, downloaded to a console with a "threat level" and the customer then chooses which updates to apply and when.

This whole process can be automated.

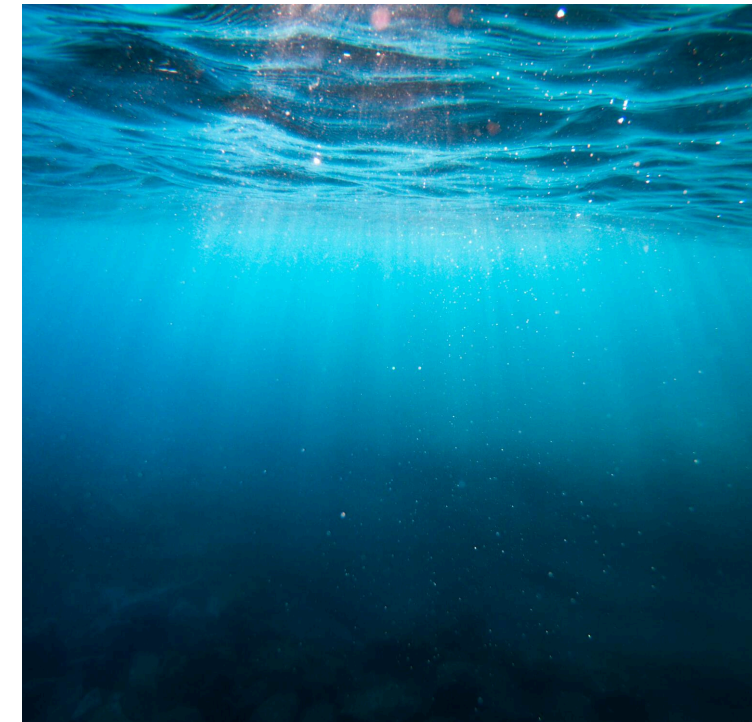
The deployment of new rules has minimum impact on the production systems, so the time between identifying a vulnerability to being protected is reduced from months to hours.

This method of correction doesn't require any system downtime as it enables real-time blocking of the attack vectors of the vulnerability.

So instead of risking living with the vulnerability until your next scheduled downtime, or interrupting your normal business operation with an emergency downtime, you can simply import the latest rules for your virtual patching engine and be assured that your business is safe

**“The majority of vulnerabilities in a typical SAP system are not in the kernel, but in the configuration or ABAP coding and are fixable without resorting to SAP Support.**

from data loss and other such vulnerabilities.



## 5. Software enhancements & upgrades that don't exist

**Software enhancements and upgrades are often the primary reasons SAP customers have for remaining with SAP Support.**

Access to the latest version of the software and lots of new and exciting features are obvious reasons for customers to stay with SAP Support.

Unfortunately, it may not be as glamorous as SAP has made it out to be.

In fact the SAP Support contract specifically mentions SAP's "current practice" regarding the delivery of new functionality.

The contract states that "SAP's current practice is to provide one enhancement package or other update per calendar year."

As the SAP Business Suite 7 core applications were released in 2006, you would be reasonable in expecting that there would be over 14 enhancement packs that have been released for each of the applications.

However just eight enhancement packs have been released for ERP as of 2020. Only four enhancement packs have been released for CRM, SCM and SRM respectively.

So, for 22% per year of your original licence fee, you've only received half of the enhancements to your systems that SAP said it would deliver, and only a quarter for each of your Business Suite applications.

With SAP now firmly focused on the Cloud, it's highly doubtful that there will be any more "enhancements" provided for your on-premise ERP system in the foreseeable future (despite paying 22% of your licences fees for these upgrades).





## Part 3: How will SAP react?

SAP offers incentives for customers to remain once it receives notice of your intention to take a payment holiday. Unfortunately, these incentives tend to be rather limited.



- Enrolment on a “Value Improvement Program,” which is basically a couple of days of free consultancy.
- Moving from Enterprise to Standard Support which is more affordable, but means moving from a P1 response time of one hour to a lengthy 24 hours.
- Partial termination of unused modules, but only as credit to be applied to either new on-premise software or Cloud services

**One thing we have never heard of is SAP just charging you less!**

SAP’s support contract states that if you stop paying for SAP Support for a period of time and then wish to return, then it “will invoice Licensee the accrued SAP Support Fees associated with such time period plus a reinstatement fee.”

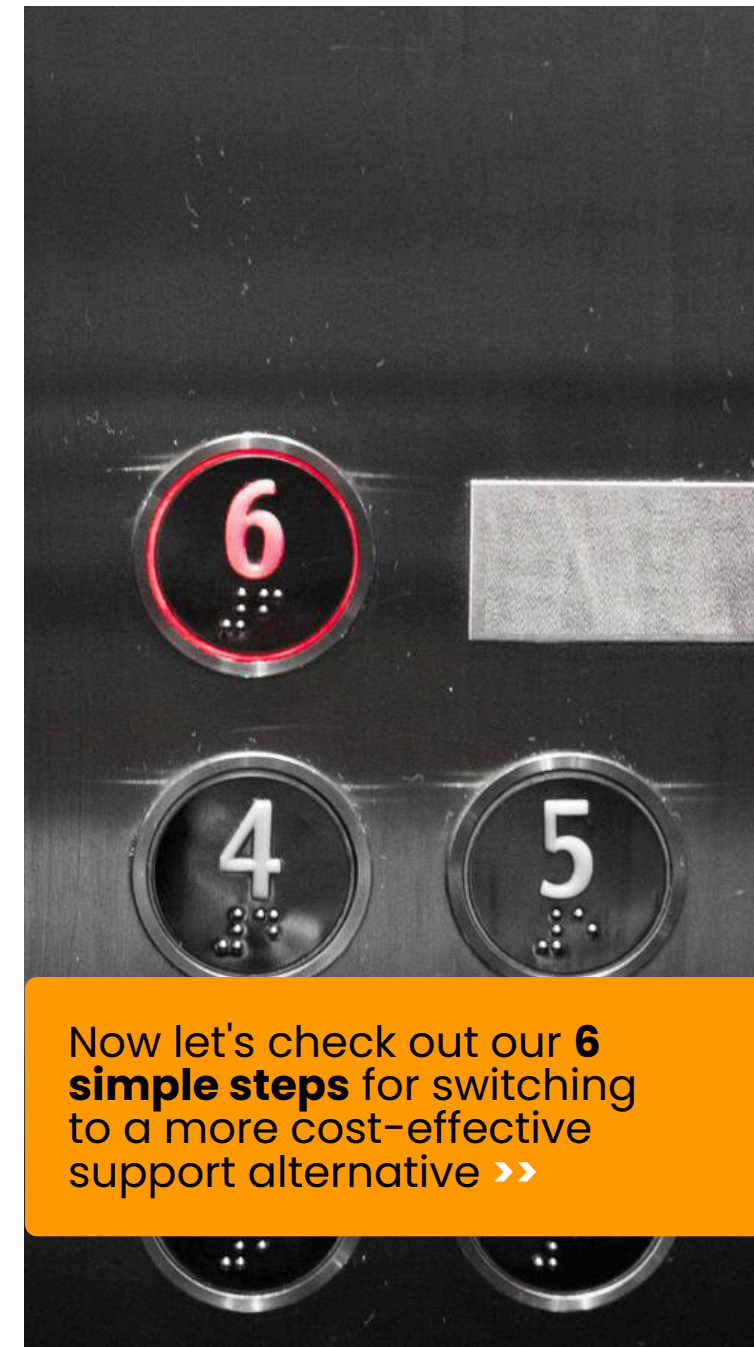
But actual practice is very different.

We are not aware of any returning SAP customers who have been made to pay either back fees or a reinstatement fee.

SAP will want you back as a customer and you will be in a strong negotiating position.

For example, Surrey County Council took a two year break.

When returning to SAP, the council noted: *“The terms offered by SAP are considerably more attractive than have previously been offered by SAP.”*



Now let's check out our **6 simple steps** for switching to a more cost-effective support alternative >>

## Part 4: Your next steps...

We believe that we can offer you superior and more cost-effective support than you currently receive from SAP.





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**upport Revolution believes that organisations are being taken advantage of by Oracle and SAP, paying too much for software support & maintenance and being forced into unwanted upgrades.**

Our mission is to cut our customers' Oracle and SAP maintenance costs in half, while providing a better quality of service, and freeing them from the mandatory upgrade cycle.

Our customers are able to redeploy funds from maintenance to innovation – investing in their own future.

Before us, customers were locked into expensive vendor maintenance contracts providing basic software support.

Customers were regularly forced to change their IT strategy because of forced upgrades and urgent security updates.

Now, customers have a choice.

## How do we take a SAP holiday?

To take a payment holiday from SAP, you simply need to give SAP written notice.

This is usually three months prior to the start of the following renewal period.

In the vast majority of cases, that means giving SAP notice by 30 September at the latest in order for your SAP Support agreement to finish on 31 December.

That's it!

But you don't need to wait until then to start the transition process (and we recommend that you don't).

We have a tried and tested transition process that we take each customer through.

Check out our simple 6-step transition process >>



# The Third-party Difference

*Switch and save in 6 easy steps.*

1

We create a transition plan with clear roles & responsibilities and a defined timeline.

2

We will identify patches and the latest versions of software you're running and assist you to create an archive.

3

We review all open incidents that you have with your vendor, and agree a plan of which will be dealt with us.

4

We establish access to your test systems, although we can work without this if access will not be possible.

5

We load incidents onto our RemedyForce Service Desk system, and give your team training on how to use it.

6

Finally, we agree a formal go-live date and begin to roll out our full support service.

**Start your revolt against high support costs today.**

**<<Get in touch>>** and have a chat with one of our team.

Have a question for us?

# Our FAQs

Get your questions answered around third-party support and what Support Revolution can offer you.

