# Streamline and automate financial close processes and increase efficiency

**SAP**

The digital economy offers a wealth of opportunities for finance and accounting groups to boost performance. Standardizing and automating finance and accounting processes enhance efficiency, increase accuracy, and support better decision-making – while **powering your intelligent enterprise**.

# Transform finance and accounting to drive business value

Accounting departments need standardized and controlled processes to drive efficiency, deliver accurate data, and support informed decision-making. But traditional record-to-report processes often rely on manual tasks such as communicating financial close status updates through e-mails and saving critical information in spreadsheets.

Organizations also often work with decentralized data from multiple sources and application instances. These complexities and inefficiencies can slow processes, introduce errors, and limit business partnerships.

By connecting people, data, and processes with SAP S/4HANA and the SAP Account Substantiation and Automation application by BlackLine, you can transform finance, enabling continuous accounting and keeping you better informed. You can standardize and automate end-to-end accounting processes, enhancing productivity and data quality. You can also better manage market volatility, support new business models, foster compliance in a complex regulatory environment, and enable finance and accounting to make strategic contributions to the organization.

# Maximize your financial close efficiency

SAP Account Substantiation and Automation helps you maximize financial close efficiency and reduce risk through intelligent processes. From transactional accounting to entity- and group-level analysis and corporate close, the application complements and extends your other finance solutions from SAP (see the figure on the next page) by addressing manual processes traditionally performed outside ERP software. The application works smoothly with your process controls, master data, and other sources of financial data.

The cloud-based application can standardize and automate labor-intensive finance and accounting processes, reducing or eliminating routine manual tasks and increasing visibility and control – without heavy reliance on IT infrastructure and resources. With the application, you can reduce the time spent on and risks associated with traditionally manual month-end processes, including balance-sheet substanti-ation, manual journal-entry processing, and transaction matching. And the product's proactive analysis capabilities mean there's no need to wait until the end of the period to execute certain close activities. You can spread depart-mental workloads across periods and enable the adoption of continuous accounting practices.

## SAP Account Substantiation and Automation by BlackLine

**Account reconciliation and task management**

Standardize, control, and automate substantiation processes

Drive visibility and accountability across accounting checklists

**Journal entry**

Centralize, manage, and streamline journal entries

Automate journal entries with configurable rules and dynamic workflows

**Transaction matching**

Match and reconcile millions of transactions in minutes

Shift resources to focus on exceptions

**Financial review**

Proactively analyze financial statements

Continuously monitor for risk with automated fluctuation analysis

Proactively identify risk and execute control workflows

Figure: Close faster with accurate results with closing solutions from SAP

# Standardize and automate processes and support compliance

SAP Account Substantiation and Automation includes functionality for account reconciliation and task management. You can also take advantage of journal entry and transaction matching options. And a financial review option features functionality for entity- and group-level variance analysis and compliance.

**Account reconciliation and task management**
The account reconciliation and task management functionality in the application streamlines account reconciliation processes with standardized and configurable templates, rules-based prioritization, automatic reconciliation, and automatic certification. Predefined workflows support checks and balances and help ensure reconciliations get the right approvals. The application strengthens your compliance efforts through the integration and control of multiple processes that are often tracked in spreadsheets or e-mails.

Business users can manage financial close tasks and can provide sign-off and certification electronically. The functionality automates recurring period-end closing tasks such as month-end close checklists, provided-by-client lists, auditor lists, and tax filings. It also automates tracking of tasks that have previously been monitored manually. Configurable controls enable time tracking and role-based approvals, and business users get visibility into processes through real-time dashboards, automated e-mail alerts, and a comprehensive, detailed audit trail.

**Journal entry**

The journal entry option for SAP Substantiation and Automation centralizes and streamlines the manual journal-entry process. Business users can prepare journal entries, perform validations and dependent validations, and attach supporting documents. Workflows streamline posting processes, and the functionality can create extracts for use by your SAP ERP application.

**Transaction matching**

The transaction matching option supports reconciliations of high volumes of data across multiple data sources. By providing suggested matches and flagging exceptions based on preconfigured rules, it increases efficiency and reduces risk.

SAP Account Substantiation and Automation is precon-figured to integrate with SAP software, including SAP ERP and SAP S/4HANA. It supports a range of SAP software data, from general ledger balances and subledgers to transactional data and currency rates, and it can provide journal data to be posted back to your SAP software environment.

> Intelligent workflows help finance and accounting focus on high-risk areas and support ongoing business strategies and policies.

**Financial review**

The financial review option for SAP Account Substantiation and Automation enables rules-driven workflows to automate the discovery of accounting discrepancies at both the entity and group level. This automates the tracking of balance fluctuation between balance-sheet and income-statement accounts over different periods, such as month to month or year over year. You can define flexible variance rules, conduct balance comparisons, maintain analyses in a central location, and share reports with stakeholders. Alerts provide timely notification when further action is required, and you can flag and monitor accounts that vary outside expected thresholds.

Centralized controls and workflows let you monitor and support compliance, and you can track and enable conformity with regulations, including Section 404 of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act.

> Rules-driven workflows automate the discovery of accounting discrepancies at the entity and group level, as well as the tracking of fluctuation between balance-sheet and income-statement accounts.

# Optimize the financial close to boost efficiency and reduce risk

Customers report that SAP Account Substantiation and Automation reduces the time and risks associated with their manual efforts in the financial close. By helping you close the books faster and move toward a continuous accounting model, the application drives efficiency, increases accuracy, and supports sustainable, profitable growth by revealing insights sooner. You can reduce the cost and effort of closing while freeing time for analysis and strategy, improving closing accuracy, and reducing risk. And you can handle data from different sources and multiple instances of ERP applications and other software providing cross-landscape visibility of important finance and accounting data.

The application assists customers with their regulatory compliance efforts by enabling audit trails and providing greater transparency of accounting activities across multiple instances of ERP applications and other software. With it, you can reduce days of work previously needed for administrative tasks, balance workloads across time periods, and reduce the challenges of peak closing windows. And real-time access to trusted data fosters better decision-making.

Because SAP Account Substantiation and Automation is cloud based, its deployment, user adoption, and time to value can all be accelerated. It's flexible to meet your requirements and scalable to support growth and enable onboarding for people and entities across your global network.

# Quick facts

## Summary

SAP Account Substantiation and Automation by BlackLine standardizes and streamlines closing processes, complementing and extending your finance solutions from SAP. The cloud-based application enhances key steps along the way and supports continuous accounting practices, reducing risk and increasing efficiency, productivity, and data integrity.

## Objectives

- Reduce or eliminate dependence on manual, labor-intensive activities and spreadsheets
- Simplify and speed financial close processes
- Support better-informed decision-making

## Learn more
Contact your SAP representative or visit us online.

## Solution

- Automated and standardized closing processes and alerts
- Centralized reconciliation and task management
- Journal entry, with option
- Transaction matching, with option
- Variance analysis, with option
- Risk control through balance fluctuation
- Integration with the SAP ERP application and SAP S/4HANA

## Benefits

- Simplify and coordinate critical manual accounting processes
- Improve efficiency, productivity, and data quality
- Assist compliance efforts and foster a trustworthy foundation for decision-making
- Control IT costs with a flexible, scalable, cloud-based solution