

## Preface

Since the publication of the first version of this highly successful book in 2000 it has become obvious that Supply Chain Management (SCM) is not just a buzzword or a fashion, as are so many other subjects in management and IT. Some “mega-trends” in the world of business and economy, such as globalization and growing technical specialization of product and process development, result in a complex division of labor at national and international levels and in reduced net value added within single firms.

To coordinate all these elements of development, procurement, production, sales, distribution, and recycling functions, SCM has become a mandatory approach. Successful SCM must be based on powerful IT systems that combine traditional ERP systems with specific SCM functionality, including sophisticated Operations Research heuristics and algorithms.

With respect to their leading position in the market, SAP systems are highly relevant in the management of supply chains. Because of the extensive progress of SAP SCM™ systems in recent years, the English book published in 2002 has had to be totally rewritten. The text was finished in spring 2008 and refers to SAP SCM™ 5.0.

Gerhard Knolmayer, Peter Mertens, and Alexander Zeier, who authored earlier versions of the book, are deeply grateful to Jörg Thomas Dickersbach, who has joined the authoring team and brought with him his profound knowledge of and detailed experience with SAP SCM™ systems.

The book has also gained from our cooperation with several top SCM specialists working in globally operating companies such as Colgate-Palmolive, Danfoss, Henkel, Hilti, and Nestlé, who describe the implementation, usage, and experiences with SAP SCM™ systems and share their views on the future of SCM in Chapter 5.

This book is also among the first to discuss the impact of SAP’s new Business ByDesign System on SCM™. We are much indebted to Wilhelm Zwerger and Dr. Bülent Akinto of SAP for contributing this information in Chapter 6 of the book. We also appreciate different types of support from members of our teams, in particular Dr. Dina Barbian, Lukas Helfenstein, Gabriela Loosli, Jürgen Müller, Manuela Stolz, Daniel Stucki, and Thomas Wermelinger.

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Supply Chain Management Based on SAP Systems  
Architecture and Planning Processes

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2009, XI, 207 p., Hardcover

ISBN: 978-3-540-68737-5