



E-BOOK · EXECUTIVE GUIDE

SAP Archiving

The invisible cost of data nobody uses — and the path, in waves, to a database 40–60% smaller.

The database that never stops growing

Every mature SAP landscape tells the same story: the database grows every single month, and nobody remembers the last time it got smaller. Tax documents, material movements, IDocs, interface logs, workflow items — everything comes in, almost nothing goes out. Within a few years, a database that started at 300 GB is past a terabyte; and on S/4HANA that means **memory**, not disk.



Figure 1 — What shows above the waterline is today's operation; the submerged mass is history that does nothing but occupy memory.

Here is the key point: **the growth does not come from the data the business uses**. It comes from data that has already done its job — the closed fiscal year, the completed document, the IDoc processed five years ago — and that still sits in the most expensive table of the landscape.

The right question — it is not 'how much does archiving cost?', but 'how much is it costing us *not* to archive?'. The next pages put numbers and method behind that answer.

What a terabyte really costs

One extra terabyte in the production database is never just one terabyte. It multiplies across the entire landscape:



Figure 2 — The same data, replicated and amplified: every copy repeats the weight — and the cost.

- **HANA memory:** live data sits in RAM — the most expensive resource in the sizing, with licensing and appliance tiers that jump in steps.
- **Copies:** backup, DR and every QA refresh repeat the weight of the whole database — and stretch the maintenance windows.
- **Contract:** under RISE with SAP and in the cloud, sizing follows database size. A smaller database is literally a smaller monthly bill.
- **Projects:** S/4HANA conversion, datacenter migration, upgrades — effort and downtime scale with volume. Every TB you remove shortens the project.

Rule of thumb — landscapes that have never archived typically shrink the database by **40% to 60%** with a well-run program. Before buying more memory or renegotiating sizing, it is worth asking: how much of this is data nobody ever queries?

What archiving is — and what it is not

Archiving is not deleting, it is not 'dumping it into a spreadsheet', and it is not hiding data from the tax authorities. SAP archiving is a native, auditable process: completed data is written to verified, integrity-checked files, removed from the database, and **remains readable** for queries, audits and legal obligations.

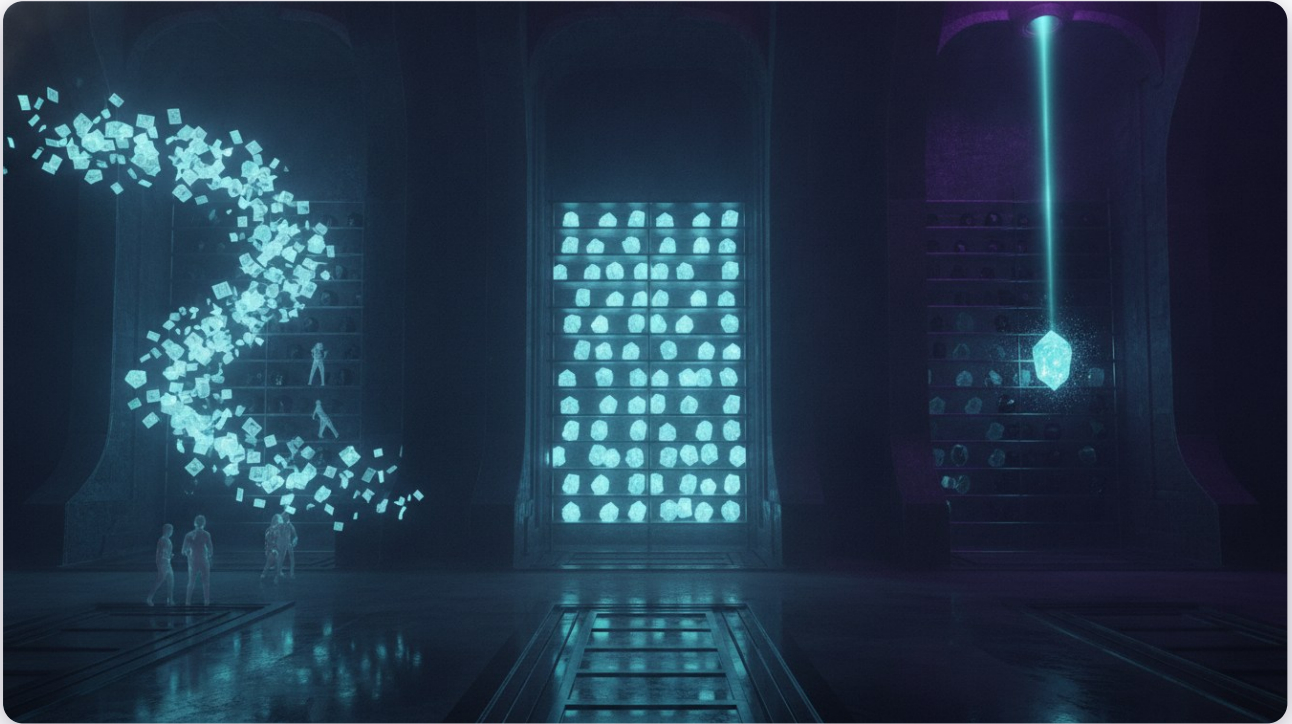


Figure 3 — Reside, archive, respond: the document in motion, crystallized into the archive file and retrieved on demand.

The three concepts behind the process

- **Residence:** how long data stays in the database after it is completed. It is a policy per object — agreed with business, tax and audit, never set by IT alone.
- **Retention:** how long the archive file must exist (Brazilian legal and tax deadlines included). With **SAP ILM**, expiration at the end of the period becomes a rule too — which matters for LGPD, the Brazilian data-protection law.
- **Access:** archived data still answers — in display transactions, in the document archive and in audit checks.

What changes for the user? Practically nothing: current-period documents stay exactly where they have always been. What leaves the database is what was no longer part of daily work — by agreed policy, not by guesswork.

Where to start: the assessment

An archiving program does not start by configuring a job — it starts by measuring. Three questions drive the assessment:

1. **Which tables carry the database?** The top 20 tables usually explain 70–80% of the volume.
2. **Which archiving object covers each one?** Every large table maps to an SAP object with its own rules.
3. **What is the gain and the risk of each?** Technical objects are a quick win at low risk; business objects require tax and audit at the table.

Where the gain usually is

Area	Typical objects	Nature
Interfaces	IDOC, application logs (BC_SBAL)	Technical — quick win, low risk
Workflow	WORKITEM	Technical — huge volumes wherever approvals run
Change documents	CHANGEDOCU	Technical — grows quietly for decades
Finance	FI_DOCUMNT and period-end data	Business — residence agreed with accounting
Logistics	MM_MATBEL, deliveries and billing	Business — old material and sales movements

The criterion that avoids frustration — start with the highest-volume **technical** object. The pilot proves the process end to end (write, verify, delete, query) without touching anything the business will feel — and frees up space in the very first wave.

The path in waves — from assessment to routine



Figure 4 — On the left, the hot, crowded corridor; on the right, the database already reduced. The stair of light is the descent in waves.

Wave 0 — Assessment: top tables, monthly growth, candidate objects, estimated gain. **Wave 1 — Policy and pilot:** residence agreed per object plus a pilot on a technical object. **Wave 2 — Business objects:** finance and logistics, with tax and audit validating queries and deadlines. **Wave 3 — Routine:** monthly jobs, monitoring, and a database that finally stays flat.

Executive checklist

- ✓ Do we know which 20 tables carry our database — and how fast they grow each month?
- ✓ Is there a residence policy agreed with business, tax and audit?
- ✓ Does the cost of growth show up in any account (memory, backup, RISE sizing)?
- ✓ Does our S/4HANA plan (or migration plan) include archiving before converting?
- ✓ Is archiving a monthly routine — or a heroic event every five years?

Archive before you migrate — every GB archived before an S/4HANA conversion or a datacenter migration is a GB you do not have to convert, copy, test or pay for. The best moment for archiving is always *before* the next big project.

Where AI changes the game

The expensive part of an archiving program was never running the job — it was the **analysis**: weeks of surveying tables, mapping objects and simulating scenarios. That is exactly the work AI compresses from weeks into days:

- **Reading the landscape:** a cross-analysis of the largest tables, their growth and their archiving objects — produced by agents, with the specialist validating instead of typing.
- **Strategy proposal:** for each object, the suggested residence, the dependencies and the recommended order of waves — a draft policy that the tax and audit table then refines.
- **Gain simulation:** how much the database shrinks under each residence scenario — so the conversation with the business starts with numbers, not opinions.

How Inove does it — we built the **SAP Archiving Analyzer**, our own tool that analyzes the tables in your landscape and proposes an archiving strategy with AI support. The assessment that used to open the program in weeks is ready in days — with the same depth and an executive report at the end.

The result is not only speed: it is a program that starts with the full map in hand — and therefore makes fewer mistakes about sequence, scope and expectations.

Who takes care of the foundation of your SAP landscape

Archiving is one of the fronts where Inove Solutions looks after the **IT foundation** that supports SAP — alongside infrastructure, cybersecurity, cloud, FinOps and application management:

- **Assessment with our own tool** — SAP Archiving Analyzer, with AI in the analysis and a specialist in the decision.
- **End-to-end program** — from the residence policy to the monthly routine, with tax and audit at the table from day one.
- **Cost lens** — the archiving gain connected to sizing, to backup and to the cloud/RISE monthly bill (FinOps).
- **Application management** — our 'life insurance' model: the landscape cared for end to end, Opex optimized.

We serve companies such as **Petrobras, Nespresso and Qualicorp** — and we treat data the way we treat the landscape: with method, measurement and routine.

Our vision — we want our clients to stop having headaches with IT and be happy. Including paying only for the memory the business actually uses.

How much of your SAP database is data nobody ever queries?

Ask for an assessment with the SAP Archiving Analyzer — numbers from your own landscape, not market estimates.

To go deeper, at the Inove Academy: the quick guide **S/4HANA: brownfield vs. greenfield** (archive before you convert) · the archiving infographic · blog articles — inovesolutions.com/en/inove-academy-en

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