Executive Briefing: SAP APO Master Data “Must Do’s”

1. **Unit of Measure (UOM):** UOM needs to be defined, understood, and common across your data.

2. **Data Definition:** Understand what information and assumptions are used to create master and transactional data. One of the major reasons APO projects fail to “go-live” as planned is because master and transactional data requirements were not clearly defined up front.

3. **Data Scrubbing:** If the APO Project fails to allocate enough data scrubbing time during data validation, project testing costs increase by 2x – 3x! Allow plenty of time for data scrubbing and cleansing. Often times “data scrubbing” or “data cleansing” activities are performed multiple times on the same master / transactional data elements.

4. **Data Validation:** Get business users involved with data quality validation. APO Data Validation starts during implementation and must continue through the life of the APO Planning Solution. Repeat APO Data Validation and scrubbing iterations until master and transactional data is validated 100%.

5. **Data Validation Tools:** Provide data exception tools to assist business users with data quality validation. Selecting the right tool for the job is only half of the solution. APO data validators must have proper Data Validation Tool training, access to the base test data, and a place to document the results.

6. **Data Latency:** Transactional data timing must be consistent across data streams and honor any sequence dependencies. The best defense against data latency issues is to secure APO transactional data in real time via the CIF (Core Interface) from SAP ECC.

7. **Master Data Source:** Pull master data from the data mapping source to ensure clean data. Always map APO master and transactional data inputs to original source data where existing. Use APO standard data mapping structures to protect your data source.

8. **Planning Data Storage:** Keep raw master/transactional data storage separate from scrubbed master/transactional planning data. When APO Planning data is not stored in a separate location for the sole use of APO, the data runs the risk of being modified, corrupted, or deleted by non-planning users.

9. **Data Maintenance:** Must be simplistic and easy for users to maintain. When designing the APO Planning solution, constantly challenge the design, especially data maintenance inputs. Always ask the question, “How much data maintenance is required for each data field?”

10. **Data Ownership:** Assign APO input data ownership to the team responsible for the quality of the APO Plan. Determine which team has the most to lose if the APO Plan is incorrect and make sure they own the data.

**Bottom Line:** Master Data is critical to gaining and maintaining value from your APO investments. This requires strategy and governance policy and practical ways to manage it long-term.

*If you need help with Master Data Management, contact us at:*

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