

openSAP Invites, Episode 11

LEARN HOW TO AUTOMATE & OPTIMIZE PROCESSES WITH SAP AI BUSINESS SERVICES

With Jana Wuerth

Transcript

Elisabeth Riemann: Welcome to openSAP Invites. I'm your host, Elisabeth Riemann, and in this episode, we'll be learning about SAP AI Business Services with Senior Product Manager, Jana Wuerth. Jana explains how we can kick start our own intelligent processes and gain lots of practical hands-on experience. Join us to learn more about SAP's approach to Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning as Jana talks us through some key use cases and scenarios. Whether you're new to SAP AI Business Services or more experienced, stay tuned to hear about the latest SAP AI Business Services innovations, understand how it's enabling the intelligent enterprise, and discover what's to come in 2021. And for fans of podcasts, like you and me, Jana has some very exciting news to share. Jana Wuerth is a Senior Product Manager for SAP AI Business Services. Her focus is the go-to-market strategy and commercialization topics, and she's always on the lookout for new opportunities to infuse AI into various business processes to improve efficiency and automation rates. Jana has been with SAP for over 10 years and has experience in a number of roles, from consulting to solution management and product management. Taking the best out of these experiences, she's always enthusiastic about new approaches. Let's say hello. Hello, Jana, welcome to openSAP Invites.

Jana Wuerth: Hi, Lizzie.

Elisabeth Riemann: Jana, it's really great that you're here to talk to us about SAP AI Business Services. In October 2020, we saw you and your colleagues in the openSAP MOOC, "Use SAP AI Business Services to Kick Start Your Intelligent Processes." And learners praised the course for the brilliant balance of business use cases and its technical explanations and demos. And as learners, I think we're always really pleased when we can see technology in action that can really automate and streamline our work. So, to our warm-up question, Jana, if you could automate any process to optimize your own working day, what would it be and why?

Jana Wuerth: So, I would definitely try to automate to transform text-heavy PowerPoint presentations into beautiful, nice looking, lean presentations, because I think that is one of the most time-consuming tasks, to actually make PowerPoint presentations appealing. And honestly, I have also seen a lot of bad presentations in my career already, and I think a lot of people could use an automated tool for that.

Elisabeth Riemann: Definitely, and I will be up for that, too. I think that would save us so much legwork. And as you said, there are so many bad PowerPoint presentations. A lot of time always goes into it and it's certainly something to optimize. Brilliant choice. Jana, for listeners who are completely new to the topic of SAP AI Business Services. I'd like us to set the scene by asking you to explain how SAP brings Artificial Intelligence together with business services. Can you tell us more?

Jana Wuerth: Yes, so in general, customers want to use their own data with analytics, predictive and planning and AI and Machine Learning as part of it and also Robotic Process Automation are a necessity to future-proof businesses because they can do exactly that. They can give customers insights into the data. They can give customers the possibility to use their data and take decisions and actions from their data. And that is why SAP embraces these technologies and tries to infuse the intelligent enterprise with those technologies. So, in the end, the goal of SAP is to make the business processes of SAP solutions more intelligent using AI, Machine Learning, and Robotic Process Automation. And the key pillar for SAP here is to increase the adoption of AI within SAP and within the customer base.

Elisabeth Riemann: Excellent. And if I can ask you as well, what business services are we talking about exactly, what does the portfolio include?

Jana Wuerth: Yes, so first of all, business services basically are small microservices that solve a certain business problem that can be found in many different business use cases. And the AI Business Services provide such business services, such microservices with strategic machine learning capabilities. An example for such a general problem that can be found in many different business processes is the extraction of information, so from documents. So, you might need to extract information from invoices somewhere in the billing, payment, financial processes. But at the same

time, you might need to extract information from orders or from requests from customers in other processes. And the SAP AI Business Services are a portfolio of six different microservices, which have capabilities around document processing. So, we have three services there. The Document Classification Service, which, as the name says, classifies documents. Then the Document Information Extraction service. Also, it can extract information from documents, and a Business Entity Recognition service, which extracts named entities related to business contexts from flow text and then identifies those entities. And we also have Service Ticket Intelligence in our portfolio, which is a service to, on the one hand side, classify incoming service tickets so that the whole choose a category, what kind of service requests do you have for the customer or a classification for the first level support is not necessary or automated, but also this service can recommend similar solutions so that the processing time can be decreased. We have Data Attribute Recommendation, which is a service that can help with the maintenance and creation of master data or transactional data. And last but not least, we also have Invoice Object Recommendation, which can help with financial data. So, it recommends cost center objects for invoices without a reference document.

Elisabeth Riemann: Fantastic, so really services that are really helping save time in our daily tasks than really to extract data and take over the time-consuming tasks for us.

Jana Wuerth: Definitely, that's exactly what they're doing, they're not replacing us, which one might fear, but actually they're just taking the repetitive and honestly mostly boring tasks out of our day. And they manage that we can focus on fun tasks, on value creating tasks on tasks that our brain, yeah, it takes our brain and our intelligence. And it's not just you stupid, repetitive things.

Elisabeth Riemann: Yeah, and I think we're all in favor of getting rid of those boring, tedious tasks and really letting us focus on things that are meaningful, we can really invest our brainpower. So that's really, really good. And Jana if we look at the bigger context of SAP AI Business Services, can you tell us a little bit more about SAP's general approach to AI and to Machine Learning. You mentioned that briefly just before in your response. What's going on there?

Jana Wuerth: Yeah, so as I said, SAP is heavily investing to make the intelligent enterprise more and more intelligent, as the name says. So, what SAP does is that it

infuses the business processes that we can find in our core solutions, like S/4HANA, the Customer Experience solutions, Ariba, SuccessFactors, and so on, and so on. But not also, not only those big solutions, but we are also looking at the SME customers. So, we're also investing, for example, in Business ByDesign and Business One to make all of the core processes in there more and more intelligent. And SAP tries to do that by providing either intelligence with that solution or by at least providing standard integrations so that customers can use the intelligent services and products out of the box.

Elisabeth Riemann: And Jana in the openSAP course that we talk about, it features some key use cases and scenarios and you touched on some of those briefly, too. But I wanted to ask you, which or what kind of intelligent processes should we be focusing maybe initially and what can we progress onto? What's the journey look like?

Jana Wuerth: In general, customers will have very complex use cases, but there are also quite simple use cases and of course, it always makes sense to pick the low hanging fruits, to go with the simple stuff. And that's also the beauty of AI Business Services, because they are provided as those microservices, they're enterprise ready. You don't necessarily need a data scientist to use them. You need the data and you need the integration into your process and then you're more or less ready to go. And therefore, it makes sense to start with those, pick the use cases where they fit without any tweaking and changing. And then start with the bigger AI projects later when where you might need an AI platform, where you might need your own models, where you might need a data scientist in the end. And one very good use case, for example, that we have is a combination. So, you can also combine our services with each other. But also, as I said, with IRPA, Intelligent Robotic Process Automation, as well as Conversational AI. And one of the use cases that I would like to mention is with one of our customers we have used the Data Attribute Recommendation service for a sales order completion use case. What does that mean? The, very often sales orders are not completed. So, the sales guys, they enter some details, for a sales order, but they miss out some of the fields. They don't completely fill all the necessary information. So instead of chasing your sales departments to fill out all of the needed information or trying to complete the sales orders manually, you could use Data Attribute Recommendation to auto fill the missing fields so that you then can process your sales order and complete the sales order faster. And that is a quite simple use case.

Elisabeth Riemann: And I think a really valuable one, though, as well, I mean, when you're filling out forms, there always are some data entry fields that you don't really have the data to hand to know what to put in there. And it's really good that you can support that process then there, too. And you mentioned that we don't necessarily need data scientists, especially to get the low hanging fruit when it comes to these processes and scenarios. But what competencies do we need? What sort of roles are we talking about there? Can anyone start implementing SAP AI Business Services?

Jana Wuerth: Yes, so in the end, actually, if you want to use one of the AI Business Services in a scenario where we already have set up the integration, actually it is. Yeah. You need some configuration in the system. So, for example, in S4 and you need to be able to extract the data potentially for some of the services. You need your own data. For others you don't because they are pre-trained already and, in some cases, you need to train your own model. So, for example, in the Service Ticket Intelligence area, service categories are very specific to organizations. That is why you need to train the model on your own data, so it shows or has the input from your own service categories. But for example, Document Information Extraction service, it is pre-trained because the fields that organizations need from an invoice or the information that organizations need from invoice is usually quite the same or similar, and therefore we can provide that out of the box and you don't even need your own data for training. So, in the end, if you use one of the use cases that we already have implemented and pre-configured, it's more or less a turning it on and doing a configuration. If you want to do it with a service that or with a use case that we don't have in our portfolio yet, or that solution that you're using doesn't didn't integrate yet, you might need a developer to set up the integration. Maybe you also want to have someone who changes the UI so that the end user has a seamless integration into the business process. Yeah, but that's basically it.

Elisabeth Riemann: I think it's really great that you have those two options that you have the pre-trained content and the other things that you can train as well. So, it's really good that you fulfill those customer requirements on both sides as well. And based on your experience, how much time do customers really need to plan and schedule to get these projects up and running?

Jana Wuerth: So, in our experience, honestly, the setup of AI in or the integration into the business process is not the long part. The long and tedious part is getting the data if you need the training, because a lot of organizations have massive amounts of data and you want to use, let's say, your good data for it. So, you would want to do some data cleansing, some data tweaking to use the data that will lead to the best result. And that is usually the part that takes the longest time. Getting to the data and then cleaning it up. And the setup of the integration and the services has taken sometimes only two weeks. So, our consulting, our consulting colleagues are also offering services for prototyping our AI Business Services in the business processes of our customers. And they also have only few days planned for a full prototype. So, you can see that it's actually quite easy, if you have the data available.

Elisabeth Riemann: Really the key to the whole situation, right, if you have good, high quality, clean data, then it's pretty quick to set up, but it's really the data cleansing phase, I suppose that takes up most of the time.

Jana Wuerth: Definitely, you need to consider if you give, the old rule, garbage in garbage out here applies definitely because if you feed the machine learning with that data, it can't give you good results. You always have to consider that.

Elisabeth Riemann: Yeah, that makes total sense. Yeah, and that saying is very fitting, I think, in that case too. Jana, learners of the openSAP course they've really provided some great feedback online, and especially regarding the mix of business and the technical hands-on exercises, which I think are really key and a real strength of the course. And I think when you do any learning, you really want to get that hands-on experience. So, I'm curious to find out, what are some of your favorite hands-on exercises for doing with customers or what are your own particular highlights of the course?

Jana Wuerth: Yeah, I think I was definitely also very happy about the positive feedback about the mix. So in the openSAP course we have it always one unit which was covering the business side with a few sample use cases for each of the services, and then a hands on exercise where one of my colleagues was really showing and demoing how the SAP Cloud Platform trial system can be used to, yeah, just try out our services and use them. And the learners were really happy about that. Yeah, of course, some

inexperienced learners also had some questions around the usage of the trial system and our services, but I think we were able to answer all of them as well. And it was a really great success.

Elisabeth Riemann: That's really good, and I think it's really good, as you say as well, that it's available on SAP Cloud Platform trial. So that's part of the free trial, right, available to customers. You can sign up and then you can really try those services out for yourself and see how you can really implement and streamline your own business processes. So, I think that's a really big advantage as well there.

Jana Wuerth: Yeah, that's correct, and one of the things that is also very nice, and I can mention here is that the trial period has extended. So, as you said, it's a free trial and before the free trial could only be used for 90 days and now it's for a full year. So that is also a very nice thing to mention here, that you can take your time with it. You don't need to rush because there is a soon approaching end date for the trial then.

Elisabeth Riemann: Yeah, I think that's a real big advantage now, too, that you have that longer period to try things out and get everything set up. And Jana, the course ran for three weeks in October 2020, it's not a long time ago exactly, but things move on quite fast and development's always ongoing as well. So today, I'm hoping that you can share some updates with us. What can we expect and look forward to in 2021 when it comes to SAP AI Business Services? What's to come?

Jana Wuerth: Yeah, so definitely a lot has changed already. So, one of our big focus areas at the moment is the whole Business Document Processing area and also a lot of changes have happened for the different services. So, one very nice thing that is currently happening is that we are in a beta phase for templates for document information extraction. So what that means is that when you have invoices or invoices that are not properly recognized or information that's not properly extracted from with the Document Information Extraction service, what you can do is you can now create templates in which you basically say, so in the top left corner, if the document comes from that supplier or from this and that party, we usually expect the invoice number to be in this area here in the top right corner. And with that, customers can increase the accuracy of the information extraction and can use also the service for documents or invoices that have not worked that well in the past. It's a really big development. And as

I said, we're currently in beta phase there. But there are also other improvements for document information extraction. So we are, of course, working on adding new document types because as I said, currently, the service is mainly working for invoices and now we also added purchase and sales orders. We are always working on adding new languages. So, we currently just add Japanese language that can be used and also, we are always adding new fields that can be extracted.

Jana Wuerth: So, we just added two new header fields, the discount and due date that can now also be extracted. And also one really big thing is that we just released a new pre-trained model for Document Classification for business documents so the service can now, without training, extract business or classify business documents, for example, invoice, payment advice, dunning letter and so on. Additionally, we have created content on the SAP Cloud Platform Integration platform for Document Information Extraction and Data Attribute Recommendation, which makes it easier for customers to integrate those services into their own business processes, because we have this predefined integration content on SAP Cloud Platform integration available. And of course we have added lots of tutorials and enhanced the trial experience, published, for example, a blueprint for Document Classification, which explains the whole service in more detail, how it can be used, how it can be set up, how it can be integrated, and so on. And last but not least, we have also added new integrations into other SAP solutions. We have, for example, just added sales order automation in S/4HANA Cloud, where the information from sales orders that comes in via a PDF document can be extracted automatically and then a sales order is created in the S/4HANA Cloud system that has just been released with the 2011 release. And also, we have introduced a standard integration for invoice capturing in Business One. Just now, in January, actually end of December, so.

Elisabeth Riemann: That's very impressive, well done to the whole team. That's a lot that's really been added since the course was held. That's incredible. And I guess we should really include all those links in the show notes as well to make sure that everyone can get access to all those updates there as well.

Jana Wuerth: Definitely, we will do that.

Elisabeth Riemann: That's really good and there's another thing that you haven't mentioned here, but it's also to come this year and I'm excited about it, and I make no secret of the fact that I love podcasts. And so, I was thrilled when I heard that you've been working hard on producing your very own SAP AI Business Services podcast. And Jana you're going to be the host, so I'm hoping that you can tell us a little bit more. What's the name of your podcast series? When and where does it launch?

Jana Wuerth: Yes, so we're very happy to announce that here, we're very excited about it. We will have our own podcast series with the name of Getting Down to Business with AI Business Services. It will be a closed podcast series with 10 episodes. And our guests will be the product managers of the different services, as well as the leadership team of our unit. And we will cover an overview of SAP AI Business Services, as well as all of the services in detail. And we will also add some information about ethics in AI or ethics that you need to consider when dealing with AI, as well as some insights on how our services can give you or can make you gain some competitive advantage. So, we're really happy about this and I'm really excited to get that started.

Elisabeth Riemann: That's really exciting, and can you give us a little hint about what we can expect in the very first episode? Don't give too much away, but maybe just kind of tease us a little bit.

Jana Wuerth: Sure, the very first episode will be an overview of SAP AI Business Services so that everyone can set their mind on what it is all about, what is there, what can I do with it, why is it good and that's what we will cover.

Elisabeth Riemann: Excellent. And how often will the episodes be released; do you know that already? You said it's a closed series, so how often will you be releasing?

Jana Wuerth: Yes, we will be releasing every two weeks, so the learners can look forward to having our podcast every two weeks from us and we hope everyone will tune in.

Elisabeth Riemann: Yeah excellent, and it's a real privilege to have you here today, Jana, and for you to share that news with us as well. So that's certainly one to look out

for. And Jana aside from us listening and subscribing to your brand-new podcast, what other ways can we use to stay up to date on SAP AI Business Services? What's the best approach there?

Jana Wuerth: So definitely you can follow and look at our SAP Community topic page for SAP AI Business Services because you can find blog posts there. We are regularly posting about our services, feature updates, but also use case examples, and so on. We also announce events and webinars there. So, we are also doing webinars via the SAP Community Webinar. Yeah. And also, you can find there questions from other customers that might be relevant for you as well. And we will answer to those questions, of course, there. And maybe the answer or solution to your question is already there. You just don't know it yet.

Elisabeth Riemann: Well, that's really good, and that saves time too. And Jana, which are the courses or tutorials that you can recommend for both beginners and experts? What can you recommend there?

Jana Wuerth: So actually, I think it applies for both beginners and experts, of course, first of all, look at the openSAP course, that we have done, the replay is still available on the site. You can get a lot of details there if you have, if you're a beginner, maybe to get a first idea of what are the services and what you can do with them. Watch out for videos and demos that we put on YouTube. We have short clips there that can that just show what is the service, and like, one example for a use case that can be really helpful. And then also we have tutorials on the developer.sap.com site. Where, that really start from a beginner level. How do I set up the service and so on and also go a bit deeper for experts. And then we also have missions on the Discovery Center available where you can then really also have a step-by-step guide for setting up your first project, first integration maybe, and then of course, last but not least, try it out on the free trial for SAP Cloud Platform, because that is how you usually learn, learning by doing.

Elisabeth Riemann: Absolutely, learning by doing and I guess the missions and the tutorials they're all possible to do, if you've got access to the trial. So, you sign up for the trial and then you can work your way through the different tutorials and missions that you've published?

Jana Wuerth: Correct, most of them are possible to do with a trial. There is one or two where you need an enterprise account, but it clearly states that as well.

Elisabeth Riemann: Oh, that's good, but a good selection of content there to get us all started and to really get hands-on experience there too, thank you. And Jana to conclude today's episode, there's a lot that you've really told us and highlighted about what's to come for SAP AI Business Services. Maybe you can summarize three main reasons why we should be excited about the potential of SAP AI Business Services this year.

Jana Wuerth: Yeah, I think first and foremost important is because it makes jobs of end users more interesting by eliminating repetitive and totally boring tasks. Second, I would say because they deliver enterprise-ready machine learning capabilities and you don't need a data scientist. That's especially important, I think, for smaller organizations that don't have a huge data scientist team available and that still want to profit from AI and automate their processes as well. And third, I think because they come integrated into SAP's core solutions and there will be more and more integrations coming this year as well, we are continuously working on making them available in more and more business processes all over the SAP portfolio.

Elisabeth Riemann: Excellent. Jana, thank you so very much for speaking to us today. I'm certainly fascinated by the potential of AI in the business context. And I honestly, I can't wait to listen to your brand-new podcast on openSAP and really start learning more. So, thank you very much.

Jana Wuerth: Thanks for having me. It was really a pleasure. I enjoyed it a lot, and I hope everyone will tune into our new podcast series.

Elisabeth Riemann: You heard it first here and tune in.

Jana Wuerth: Great.

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