

## **Integrating mixed vendor products in an SAP system**

### ***SAP's Complementary Software Program***

The Complementary Software Program (CSP) will ensure customers of upward compatibility with future versions of partner and SAP software via SAP-certified interfaces between SAP's R/3 suite of client/server and complementary software products, such as system management tools, reporting tools, imaging and workflow products. The new program expands the range of options for customers looking to integrate specialized software into an SAP-centric enterprise system.

SAP customer Maic Konrad of CIBA in Switzerland needed a ready-to-use solution when the company opened a new plant. "Because the interface of our new time attendance system was certified by SAP, we saved valuable hours of technical discussion," said Konrad. "Our vendor decision was easy to make, once we knew they could deliver a standard SAP interface."

CSP certification is a standardized acceptance procedure that validates the interface between an SAP module and a non-SAP application. The program targets vendors that are leaders in their market or new technology innovators. The CSP partner commits to building and maintaining valid interfaces to R/3 " in conjunction with SAP developers " and to assisting with customer support service through the product life cycle. To the SAP customer, this means having the availability of integrated functionality of key niche technologies alongside SAP applications, and benefiting from lower implementation risks and costs.

### ***Simplifying the process of integrating products***

"SAP's customers want flexible, open systems that include a variety of specialized technologies," said Professor Dr Hasso Plattner, Vice Chairman of SAP's Executive Board. "SAP offers the CSP and certified interfaces to simplify the process of integrating products that address specific customer requirements." Typical CSP partners will include bar-code readers connected to SAP's Production Planning module, time and attendance systems interfacing with SAP's Human Resources module, EDI translators, and CAD systems communicating with Materials Management.

Other interfaces being certified include SAP ArchiveLink, laboratory information systems, geographical information systems, warehouse control units and mobile data recording. Third-party software vendors become candidates for the CSP following a rigorous evaluation process. CSP partners will work directly with SAP's software partner integration support center and will have access to documentation and training for SAP standard interfacing.

Certification of the interface to R/3 is performed today at SAP's Technology Development Center in Walldorf, Germany. The American Certification Center, located at SAP's Technology Development Center in Foster City, Calif., will begin operations in January 1996.