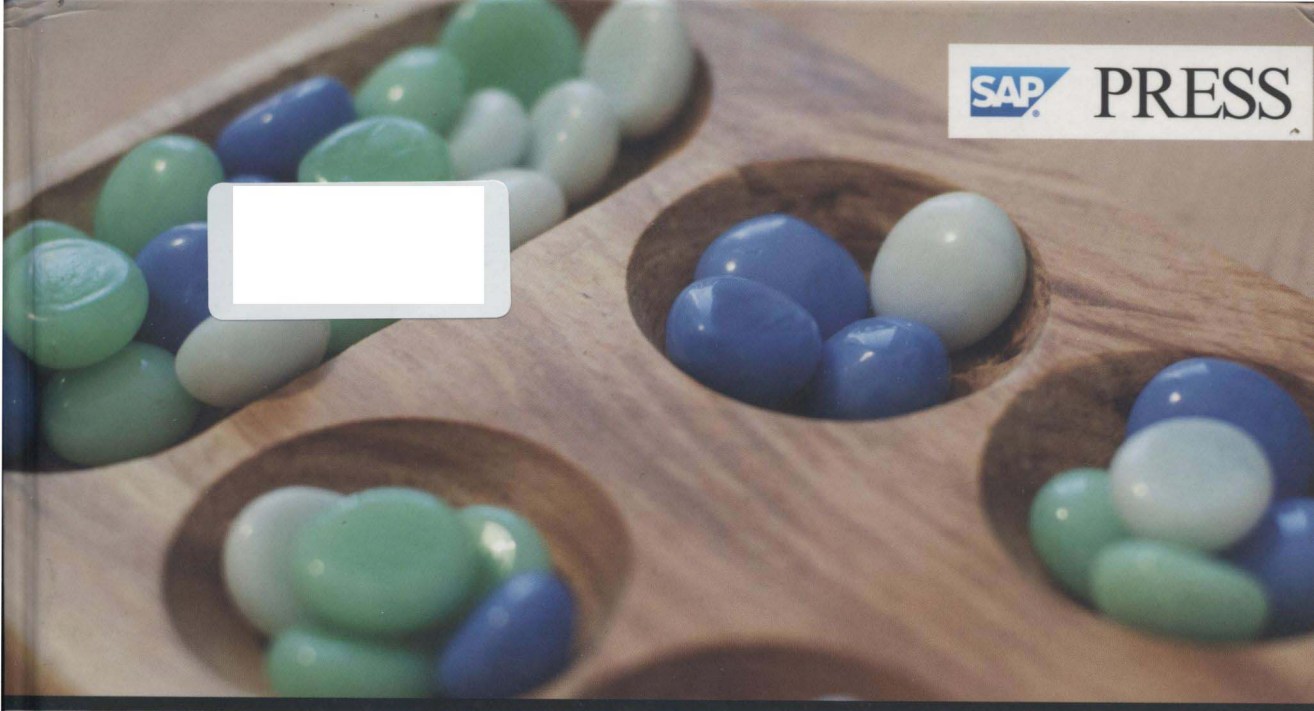

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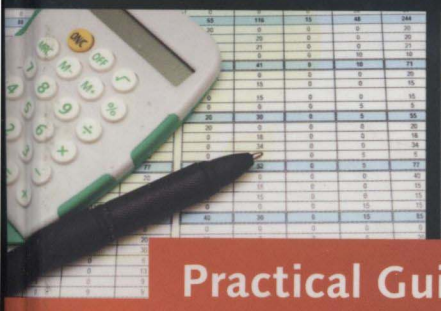

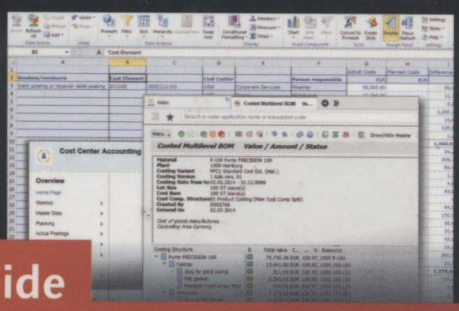

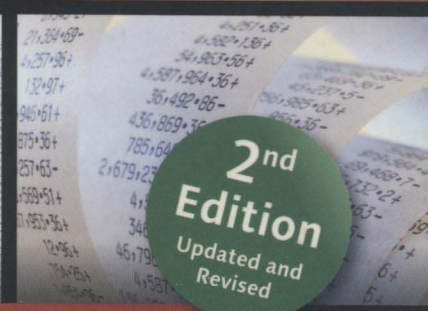

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Dear Reader,

It's not often that I collaborate with authors who are both professional communicators *and* expert technicians. With SAP PRESS legend Janet Salmon, though, I don't have to choose. Her résumé begins with degrees in translation, sashays through technical documentation, and marches into product ownership at SAP, where she is a recognized Controlling specialist.

And it shows! Janet's approach to technical writing strikes a comfortable balance between eloquence and accessibility, and her commitment to updating each page and screenshot for the second edition of this practical guide to Controlling was matched by her knack for beating deadlines—by months. She knows what you, dear reader, need to know to do your job well, and brings clarity to the CO features and functionality that you rely on in your daily work. With Janet, you're truly in good hands.

We at SAP PRESS would be interested to hear your opinion of this book! What did you think about *Controlling with SAP—Practical Guide*? How could it be improved? Your comments and suggestions are the most useful tools to help us make our books the best they can be, so we encourage you to visit our website at *www.sap-press.com* and share your feedback.

Thank you for purchasing a book from SAP PRESS!

Emily Nicholls
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In this chapter, I'll discuss my own roots in the Controlling component of SAP ERP Financials (CO), how I came to write this book, and what I am trying to achieve as I introduce the individual chapters.

Preface

When I joined SAP back in 1992, the documentation available in English was minimal, and what there was came in blue binders. My job was to translate some of these binders into English. The short form was a series of cardboard quick reference guides that listed the transaction codes needed to perform the tasks and the tables required to configure the system in each module. I spent my early weeks in Germany in the training center working my way through RK, RM, and RF courses (in those days we were still on SAP R/2). Each week, I would add another German binder and quick reference guide to my pile. In theory, I was learning lots, but I was frustrated because I couldn't see the big picture and couldn't relate what I found in my heap of English accounting books with what I was learning about SAP. It was soon clear that translating CO was going to require more than a good dictionary.

The breakthrough came when a colleague suggested that I read Wolfgang Kilger's cost accounting bible, *Flexible Plankostenrechnung und Deckungsbeitragsrechnung*. Given my level of business German at that time, I sometimes wonder how much I actually took in. In retrospect, it hardly matters. Kilger's book told me how the pieces fit together and how my ever-growing list of transactions related to the business world. It allowed me to ask the right questions of the consultants who would spend time in our office testing the new software. When SAP R/3 came along, I stopped translating and started writing documentation.

For most English speakers, the breakthrough came with the publication of *Product Costing Made Easy* in 1998. This book walked users through every posting performed in Product Costing, giving the T-accounts for each step in the process. I still meet controllers and consultants who go misty eyed at the mention of this

book and confess to a terror of losing their copy. This book was the ultimate reference, and I still pull it out when I'm testing new functions and trying to remember how they should work.

In 2009, I gave a presentation at SAP Financials in Prague that was based on the postings described in *Product Costing Made Easy* to a full house. It showed me that 10 years on people were still struggling to relate the business processes in Sales, Production, and Purchasing with the T-accounts in Financials and the various cost objects used to provide information to management. There were still people searching for the big picture, as I had been back in 1992. The germ of this book was contained in that presentation.

However, things have moved on in the last 10 years, not least in the fact that SAP R/3 has become SAP ERP. In this book, I'll give you the same menu paths and transaction codes that I would have given 10 years ago. I loved the menus when we moved from transaction codes in R/2 to menus in R/3, but the sheer number of transactions means that the menus are now becoming as unwieldy as my quick reference guides for R/2, so I'll also show you how to use roles to present those transactions in a more user-friendly manner.

I'll show you where to find the reports you'll need in SAP ERP, but I'll also tell you where SAP Business Warehouse (SAP BW) fits into the picture. I'll introduce the new reporting options available with SAP BusinessObjects. I'll show you how to plan in SAP ERP, but I'll also show you how to use the newer planning options. I'll tell you how to set up your master data in SAP ERP but also how to use a change request to document why you need to make changes to your master data at all and introduce the newer solutions for managing master data in a multisystem or shared service environment. I'll talk about allocations in SAP ERP but also about when to consider SAP Profitability and Cost Management. I'll walk you through the period-close activities, but I'll also show you how to use the SAP Financial Closing cockpit to provide a framework for the close. I'll also introduce SAP HANA, SAP's in-memory database, and its impact on Controlling.

In 2010, I took over the role of chief product owner for management accounting and now manage new developments that are taking place in CO. This book will explain the basics for a reader new to CO, but it will also look at the enhancements that affect CO in all releases up to EHP 7 for SAP ERP 6.0, so it should provide information relevant for more experienced controllers and consultants. When I wrote the first edition, things did not seem to be changing as fast as they

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