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**Podcast SAP CodeTalk – Björn Schulz:**

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**Mamikee Kanneh:**

Hello, everyone. This is Mamikee. I'm here again with another SAP Code Talk. Today, we join Bjorn Schultz, who will be telling us a little bit about his journey within the SAP ecosystem and how he's been very active within the community and also what he does within his time. Bjorn, would you mind introducing yourself furthermore?

**Björn Schulz:**

Yes, thank you, Mamikee. So I'm Bjorn, I'm a software engineer at Rewe Digital at the moment, but also active in the German-speaking community, also as a SAP mentor, blogger, YouTuber, but too many titles, I think. I call myself SAP developer because our role as ABAP developers is changing, for example, when we also use Fiori Elements and process automation, that's what I normally introduce myself as SAP developer these days.

**Mamikee Kanneh:**

Thank you, Bjorn, for joining us for this Code Talk. So let's just start with your SAP journey. What first sparked your interest in SAP development? And how did you get into it in your current role at REWE Digital?

**Björn Schulz:**

Exactly. REWE Digital was a long way to this. I've started, I think, many years before with the training in Munich. It was my first introduction to SAP and ABAP development language. I never heard before from SAP, but it's a normal case when you are finished with school, so you are going into the world of programming and so on, and then you hear ABAP development the first time. So this was my first contact to ABAP development, and this was also my start into the development area of this.

So after the training, I went also to Cologne for the next company and I've learned many things. I think this was the part for me where I could deepen my skills into ABAP. I learned also many things about the functional side of SAP. I've done many things in the financial module or, for example, in controlling the past years.

And I think after all this time, when I started a new opportunity, this time at Rewe Digital — and this was the time for me where the spark went over, because then I was more interested in the new topics. I thought to myself, I have missed so many things the last year. There was modern development, modern ABAP development, object-oriented programming — this was never a thing in the job before because you only had to work what you needed, so to say.

And so I wanted to upskill myself. This was the part where the passion began for me — to look into all the new topics that are relevant now, also unit testing and so on. And with this company, I also got into the German-speaking community — DSAG in this case. I got to know a lot of people and we talked a lot about different coding examples and how to code and so on.

This was a time for me when I saw the ecosystem is much, much wider and there is much more potential to upskill myself, to learn the new topics that were modern. So this was my entry into the SAP world — and also where the spark was lit for me.

**Mamikee Kanneh:**

That's awesome. And I know you spoke a little about your full-time job, but you're also known for your blogs and the community platform *Software Heroes*. So what inspired you to start that

project, and how do you balance that with your day-to-day work and having that as a side project and something you're passionate about?

**Björn Schulz:**

That's right. For me, it was always a personal upskilling topic because there were so many new topics. And I thought — am I the only person that has problems learning all these new things? Or how to remember how this works, how that works, and so on.

And so I started to write down what I'd learned so far, got into new things, but also to get an overview for myself: What do I have? What should I learn next? Where are my gaps? For example, where do I have to invest more?

So blogging was the first step. I thought, OK, I can learn it myself, but I can also share it with others. That was the first idea. I also checked the SAP blogs or SAP Community as it's known today, but for me it wasn't a starting point.

I write a lot of articles, so I need structure — to structure articles, topics, and so on. And that's something I can't really do on the community platform. On my own platform, I see the articles I've written, and I can organize them the way I want — by theme or by thought process.

So I started my own platform. And I think now — I checked before — I'm at nearly 400 articles written in the last year. That's a lot to manage, and so having my own platform helps.

I started very open — writing about development in general. I also code in other languages like PHP, and Flutter was also a thing. But now the focus is more on ABAP development, SAP development, SAP technologies.

There are also small apps on the platform to help ABAP developers with daily challenges.

To balance this with daily life — I invest a lot of free time: weekends, afternoons. But I'm also grateful that my company supports this. I'm responsible for upskilling internally, so I get time at work to prepare demos, watch the latest updates, and create materials for our internal developers. That same content often becomes blog posts, so it overlaps.

Sometimes I build something in the evening and present it the next day. It's a give and take — I give to the company, and the company gives me space to grow and share with the community.

**Mamikee Kanneh:**

That's awesome — having a company that supports you and even your side projects as well.

Now, you're very active in the SAP community, not just as a blogger, but also as an SAP Mentor and a spokesperson for a DSAG development working group. So I wanted to ask — what motivates you to stay engaged in your free time? What are the things that drive you to continue participating in the community and be so involved in these groups?

**Björn Schulz:**

Yes. I think at the beginning, it was about giving something back.

For years, before I became active in the community, I was on the consumer side. I attended lectures, watched information sessions, joined events, and learned from people who were giving back to the community.

So I thought to myself, "It's a good time to contribute something from my side."

That's what led me to engage.

At first, it was more about sharing what we had done in the company — our tech stacks, our projects.

But now, I focus more on sharing experience and insights into modern development. I see that many people need motivation or activation — to start learning, maybe start an open-source project, or just build confidence to learn more about ABAP and newer skills.

Even in our own company, there are developers who say, “I don’t need the new stuff.” But I think the role of a developer is to keep learning — little by little, every day — to get better at what we do.

And recently, I've started introducing new projects, like open-source components. I demo them and explain how to use them. That’s what my community engagement looks like now — showing people how the new things work and making them easier to learn.

**Mamikee Kanneh:**

Yeah, I totally agree.

Now, throughout your community involvement and DSAG work, you speak to many developers and companies. What common challenges do you see when it comes to adopting new SAP technologies?

**Björn Schulz:**

That’s a good question.

For me, there are two topics — and they’re very connected:

One is the **release level of the company**, and the other is the **developer mindset**.

Many developers want to build with the latest tech, but their company is still on an older SAP release. That creates a gap — the developer can’t explore the new tools because the system doesn’t support them.

On the other hand, there are also companies that have already adopted modern tech, but their developers don’t want to change or learn the new things.

So the problem is on both sides sometimes.

And yes, SAP has moved faster in recent years. The tech stack evolves quickly, and it can be overwhelming. But it’s still possible to keep up — it just requires consistent self-education and time investment.

So those are the two biggest challenges I see:

- Company systems not being modern enough
- Developers not being motivated or equipped to learn what’s new

**Mamikee Kanneh:**

I agree.

Now, you've written about the importance of evolving with new technologies while also staying rooted in core skills. How do you see that playing out for ABAP developers today — especially with SAP BTP?

**Björn Schulz:**

It’s a great challenge — to use the skills you already have, but also push them further.

I believe ABAP developers are absolutely still needed, especially with SAP BTP.

The ABAP environment on BTP is a great opportunity to continue developing modern

applications with the skills you've already built.

But yes, you'll need to upskill a bit — for example, you might need to integrate APIs, use HTTP communication, or call other services like process automation.

So it's not "classic ABAP" anymore — you need to understand interfaces and integration.

But still, all the ABAP knowledge you've gained from on-premise systems can be reused and evolved on BTP.

You don't always need to use CAP. That's something we talk about a lot — CAP vs RAP.

Both tech stacks have advantages and disadvantages. For CAP, you might need to upskill your team more. For RAP, maybe there's less flexibility — but it's more familiar for ABAP developers.

So companies need to decide:

- Do they want both tech stacks?
- Do they want to focus on one based on the skills they already have?  
ABAP developers are already there — so the upskilling required for RAP and ABAP on BTP is a small step.  
For CAP, the learning curve is steeper.  
At the end of the day, it's a company decision.

### **Mamikee Kanneh:**

Yeah, I agree.

Like you, many developers are curious about how to get started and get more involved in the SAP ecosystem — through mentoring, blogging, speaking, and so on. What would you say to someone who's trying to break into that space? What's the first step you'd recommend?

### **Björn Schulz:**

From my personal experience, I started with **local user groups**.

It's a good entry point — they speak your language, and you can engage with real people in your region.

You might even get your first chance to give a talk. I started with a virtual talk, for example.

It's easier when you have a topic you want to present — that's a good way to join the community.

You can also start with **SAP Community blog posts**. There's a lot of knowledge there.

But if you notice a topic is missing or poorly explained, that's your opportunity to write about it — if you understand it well.

And please — I'm not a fan of AI-generated content. Don't let AI write it for you.

Write it yourself. When you explain something, you learn the topic more deeply.

That's what helps you grow — not just consuming content but producing it.

I actually wrote this out in a blog post recently:

1. Know the topic you want to learn
2. Learn it
3. Teach or explain it to others

That third step is where real understanding happens.

And if you're attending events or local user groups, you'll see mentors and champions —

usually wearing some swag — and you can go talk to them.

They're approachable, and they'll help you navigate your first steps in the community.

Also, don't underestimate **meetups** or **Stammtisch** events — even if they're not developer-heavy.

You'll meet SAP professionals who talk about interesting challenges, company projects, and relevant topics.

It's a great way to leave your bubble — your team, your company — and see what others are doing.

That's when the learning really starts.

### **Mamikee Kanneh:**

Yeah, I totally agree.

When you're always in your own space, you don't get to see the kinds of problems other developers are facing or how they're approaching challenges.

That's why the SAP Community is there — to ask questions, to learn from one another.

And being at events is so helpful because you're face-to-face with mentors and champions who can guide you.

So I completely agree — staying in your own bubble doesn't help much. But once you step out and connect, there's so much to learn.

Now, you spoke a little bit about this already, but what are some reoccurring hesitations or misconceptions you hear from developers about moving to SAP Cloud or adopting the new development model — like RAP?

### **Björn Schulz:**

Exactly. I've written down three things that I hear a lot — common misconceptions:

#### **1. "Clean Core is only for BTP."**

That's not true. Clean Core isn't limited to BTP — you can also build a clean core on-premise without using BTP services.

For example, there are companies in Germany who say, "We can't move to the cloud because of regulations," and I say, "You can still go clean core."

If you're running an up-to-date release — say 2022 or 2023 — you can set up ABAP Cloud in your system and apply clean core principles. So no, clean core is not exclusive to BTP.

#### **2. "ABAP Cloud doesn't work."**

This is something I've heard from developers who maybe tried it once, ran into issues, and gave up.

They'll say things like, "I have too many modifications in my system," or "This doesn't fit my use case."

But ABAP Cloud is more than just avoiding modifications. It's also about building your own apps, your own jobs — using the right extension model.

The problem is, there are a lot of rules and best practices to absorb all at once — and it's overwhelming.

That's why we need more people who can explain it in simple terms, help others get started, and show them that ABAP Cloud isn't as hard as it seems.

And yes — public APIs are a pain point. Some industries or modules don't have everything exposed yet. But you can still build ABAP Cloud extensions — it's possible.

3. **"RAP development is slow."**

That's another misconception.

Yes, RAP can feel slow at first — but that's because it's new. Like anything, once you understand the framework, you speed up.

SAP has released great tools to help — RAP generators, deployment bridges, etc.

Once you know your way around the framework and what it can do, you'll be just as fast as with classic development.

It's all about familiarity and practice.

**Mamikee Kanneh:**

Yeah, and I love how you're able to not only call out those misconceptions but also explain the reality behind them and how developers can approach them differently.

Now, finally — what are you personally most excited about when you think about the future of SAP development?

Is it clean core? AI? More openness? Or something totally different?

**Björn Schulz:**

Right — I guess I'm supposed to say AI, right?

But for me, that's not the biggest thing right now.

AI is a hot topic, but not every company is using it yet. A lot of organizations are still focused on solving other foundational problems first.

What I'm most excited about is the **evolution of the RAP framework**.

I've built a lot of apps with RAP, and I see where the gaps are.

For example, I'd love to see **easier integration of remote sources** — whether that's a table, a CDS view, or an OData service from another system.

It would help a lot if we could model those things locally with better tooling.

I'm also really looking forward to the **new table entities** that are coming to replace DDIC objects.

The new CDS-based data model is going to make RAP development more flexible and let us finally move away from some of the "old stuff."

And yes — clean core is still a big priority for me.

We're going to see more companies doing **ABAP Cloud migrations for existing applications**, and that's going to be huge.

It's not just a technical change — it's a mindset shift in how you approach development.

And that also depends on SAP — we need more **public APIs**.

Some customers are ready to move to public cloud, but they can't yet because the APIs just aren't there.

So getting full API coverage is one of the biggest challenges SAP and customers need to solve together in the coming years.

**Mamikee Kanneh:**

Yeah, I'm excited for those changes too — and hopefully we'll start to see them happen soon!

And now for my last question — not related to anything we've talked about, but we always end SAP CodeTalks with a fun question...

So, if you could only eat **one fruit** for the rest of your life — just one — what would it be?

**Björn Schulz:**

For the rest of my life? Hmm...

I always need a PC with internet — that's my first answer. 😊

**Mamikee Kanneh:**

Haha — that's a good one! I totally agree. But I mean in terms of **fruit** — like apple, orange, grapes...

**Björn Schulz:**

Ah — well, I'd actually say **no fruit**, because I have a bit of an issue with fruit sugar.

So I'll stick with my original answer — the PC is better for my stomach!

**Mamikee Kanneh:**

Fair enough — we'll accept that! 😊

Thank you so much, Björn, for taking the time to be one of our speakers for SAP CodeTalk.

It was really great speaking with you, and I'm looking forward to seeing what you create next — and reading all your blog posts.

We'll be sure to link where people can find you and your content.

**Björn Schulz:**

Yes, thank you for having me — and enjoy the session. Bye-bye!

**Mamikee Kanneh:**

Bye!