6 KEY FACTORS FOR A SUCCESSFUL MIGRATION OF SAP BUSINESSOBJECTS TO POWER BI

Practical guidance for reliable reporting and a smoother migration

By Raghav Ladha, Sr. Consultant at Blue Altair

CORE IDEA

A successful SAP BusinessObjects (SAP BO) to Power BI migration depends on trusted numbers, reusable data models, useful reports, and a delivery process teams can repeat.

Moving reports to Power BI can seem straightforward: rebuild the reports, check the numbers, and publish them. In practice, it takes more thought. A report can look familiar and still have incorrect calculations, slow performance, or data definitions that are hard to maintain.

In our view, organizations should use this move as a chance to improve how reporting supports the business. Over time, reports can overlap, business needs can change, and the logic behind familiar numbers can become harder to maintain. A migration gives teams an opportunity to review what is still useful, understand where users face challenges, and identify what needs to change.

Making the most of that opportunity requires a clear approach, from early planning through release. The following six factors offer practical guidance for teams looking to build reliable reports and make their SAP BO to Power BI migration easier to manage.

01 Start with the reports that matter

Before building anything in Power BI, understand what exists in SAP BO. Review the SQL queries, filters, variables, calculations, and the way each report is used. This often reveals reports that are no longer needed, reports that overlap, and areas where the logic needs to be clearer.

We recommend grouping reports by business purpose and agreeing on the key measures before development begins. Also decide on common standards for layouts, navigation, and naming. These early decisions prevent teams from spending time rebuilding reports that add little value.

02 Build shared models, but do not force a fit

The semantic model is the foundation of a Power BI report. It connects data, relationships, and business calculations so users can work with consistent information. When several reports use the same data and measures, a shared semantic model can reduce duplication and make future changes easier.

However, reuse should not come at the cost of clarity. Some reports need different fact tables, dimensions, or historical data. We recommend checking these needs before deciding which reports should share a model. A well-planned model is more valuable than a model made large simply to support everything.

03 Protect the meaning behind the numbers

Matching the old report's appearance is not enough. Differences in SQL, filters, joins, measures, or data history can change the results in Power BI. Even small differences can affect business decisions.

Our advice is to compare important figures with the SAP BO output and investigate every meaningful mismatch. Confirm record counts, calculation rules, and data coverage. When a number differs, fix the underlying logic rather than adjusting a visual to make it appear correct. Trust in the report must come before polish.

04 Make review and performance checks routine

Quality checks work best when they happen during development, not just before release. Review the proposed model first, and then check what was actually built. Keep simple evidence of relationships, measures, validation results, and report behavior. Tools such as Tabular Editor and Power BI Performance Analyzer can help with model and performance reviews.

We recommend short, practical checklists at key stages. They should help people spot issues and understand decisions, not create paperwork for its own sake. Finding a modeling problem early is much easier than correcting it after several reports depending on the same design.

05 Bring users in early, and release with care

Business users often discover what they need once they see a working report. A preview may bring out requests for a missing field, a better filter, clearer wording, or a different layout. Getting this feedback early saves time later.

Share mockups or working versions during development, and then confirm that the report is useful as well as accurate. After that, move changes through Development, Test, User Acceptance Testing (UAT), and Production with clear checks at each stage. Late fixes should be tested again so they do not affect other reports.

06 Use the proof of concept to improve the whole approach

A proof of concept should show more than whether an SAP BO report can be rebuilt in Power BI. It should test the full way of working: report grouping, model design, review evidence, user feedback, and deployment. The lessons from this stage can make the main migration more predictable and easier to manage.

The takeaway

A good migration is not measured only by how many reports reach Power BI. It is measured by whether people trust the numbers, understand the reports, and can maintain them over time. Start with the business need, design for reuse, check the logic, listen to users, and keep releases controlled. That is how a platform change becomes a lasting improvement.



About the Author

Raghav Ladha

Sr. Consultant, Data Management

Raghav serves as a Sr. Consultant within the Data Management practice at Blue Altair. He brings over five years of experience in data engineering, analytics, and data governance, helping organizations transform complex data ecosystems into reliable, insight-driven outcomes.

He has engineered scalable ETL pipelines, modernized Power BI reporting, and built governed data platforms leveraging Azure Data Factory, SQL, and Azure AI services to streamline workflows and enhance data integrity. Raghav also brings deep expertise in master data management and data quality using Ataccama and Informatica MDM.

© 2026 Blue Altair