



**SUCCESS STORY**

**Pioneering Global Trade Compliance:  
Krones rolls out SAP GTS to China.  
First GTS to Single Window Integration  
for customs declarations.**

## About Krones AG

The technology company Krones, headquartered in Neutraubling, Germany, is a leading international developer and manufacturer of modern machines and complete lines for the areas of process, filling and packaging technology. Numerous products and services from Krones' subsidiaries, such as solutions for digitalisation, intralogistics and plastics recycling, complement the product portfolio. Krones employs more than 20,000 people worldwide. Group revenue in 2024 amounted to 5.3 billion euros. In addition to the listed Krones AG, the Krones Group includes more than 100 subsidiaries and locations worldwide.

### Abstract

Krones, a global leader in filling and packaging technology, faced the challenge of adapting its foreign trade processes—particularly customs clearance – to local requirements in China. The previously used software lacked sufficient compliance transparency and made customs declarations more difficult.

What makes Krones' approach unique is its platform strategy, reflected in the close integration of SAP Global Trade Services (GTS) with the global S/4HANA rollout. Krones is pursuing a holistic IT strategy that unifies various systems and processes on a single platform. In collaboration with cbs, not only was GTS implemented, but also a direct connection to China's national customs platform, the so-called "Single Window" system, was established.

This integration is the first of its kind worldwide using SAP GTS. The result: standardized, compliant, and efficient foreign trade processes.

### Initial Situation

Until now, Krones had not used SAP systems in China to manage its foreign trade processes. Instead, various non-integrated third-party solutions were in place, which did not allow for centralized control.

There was no end-to-end compliance monitoring for import and export activities, leading to regulatory risks. Additionally, the foreign trade processes were not systematically integrated into procurement and sales logistics. A globally managed, standardized product classification was also not consistently implemented.

The project plan involved a transition from a non-SAP system to SAP GTS 11.0, followed by a conversion to SAP



GTS edition for SAP HANA.

The organizational structure was lean: a Foreign Trade Organization (one company code) and a user operation (plant) formed the foundation for the implementation.

### Global IT Solution for Foreign Trade with SAP S/4HANA in China

The goal of the project was to implement a centrally managed IT solution for customs and foreign trade as part of a larger SAP S/4HANA transformation for the Chinese market.

The internationally defined, standardized processes were to be rolled out in China and automated wherever possible. A particular focus was placed on the direct integration with China's "Single Window" system for electronic customs processing.

In addition, all relevant data from the existing local legacy systems were to be migrated into SAP GTS to provide a unified data foundation and transparency for potential audits. To achieve this goal quickly, the foreign trade implementation began with the existing GTS 11.0 system, followed by a technical upgrade to SAP GTS, edition for SAP HANA.

## Pioneer in Single Window Integration – A New Benchmark for Customs Declarations in China

One of the project's key features was its pioneering nature: there were no reference cases for a direct integration of SAP GTS with China's "Single Window" system. Established standards or best practices to rely on were not yet available—even among the partners involved: SAP and SEEBURGER.

The project team therefore had to independently determine what was technically feasible and how the integration could be implemented—from the architecture and interface logic to regulatory compliance. This pioneering work required a high level of expertise, creativity, and intercultural collaboration.

## Excellent Collaboration: SAP, SEEBURGER, cbs, and Krones

The implementation was carried out by a globally organized project team from cbs, which included local experts in China, Germany, Japan, the USA, Switzerland, and Spain. A key factor in the project's success was the team's language proficiency—not only were official publications understood, but the local Krones team was also heard and actively involved.

"What stands out is the expertise of the project team, their strong commitment, and the professional collaboration between Krones and cbs," explains Matthias Kümmer, Project Manager at Krones.

In addition to configuring the GTS system, many other aspects had to be considered, such as SAP Basis, roles & authorizations, review of delivery processes, master data management, and more.

Jiaxiang Zhang, cbs Project Manager and GTS China Lead, emphasizes: "A good SAP GTS solution is always industry-specific and globally scalable. cbs understands this and provides consulting with a clear focus on industry requirements, international applicability, and the entire global supply chain."

## Comprehensive Compliance Requirements Met

In addition to the groundbreaking integration of SAP GTS with China's "Single Window" system, the project addressed numerous compliance-related requirements arising from current Chinese regulations. These included:

- The Export Control Law and regulations for dual-use goods
- CCC certification requirements in the import process
- Sanctions list screening (SPL) based on Chinese "Controlled Party Lists," integrated across the entire supply chain

From a technological perspective, the direct integration with the Chinese "Single Window" system was a central project feature with significant innovative character.

Some of the major technical challenges included:

- Correct generation and segmentation of GTS IDocs, considering product-specific control attributes (e.g., inspection requirements for CIQ products)
- Transformation of SAP IDoc structures into SEEBURGER XML formats in accordance with Chinese standard specifications
- Ensuring consistency between SEEBURGER messages and the requirements of Chinese customs

Since the Single Window system does not provide a dedicated test environment, the complete technical mapping of the feedback logic had to be implemented solely based on official specifications. In close collaboration with the SAP Product Team in China and SEEBURGER experts from both China and Germany, all customs responses were analyzed, correctly processed, and reliably integrated into the SAP system within the first few days after go-live.

This approach marked a significant milestone in the digitalization of foreign trade processes and now serves as the foundation for a best-practice model for SAP GTS-based Single Window integration in China. The mechanisms and configuration approaches developed during this project are now also available for other customer projects.



## SAP GTS Enables Efficient, Transparent, and Future-Proof Foreign Trade Processes

With the implementation of SAP GTS in China, Krones was able to establish transparent foreign trade processes that are fully integrated into logistics. The automated creation of customs declarations significantly reduced manual effort. At the same time, data quality improved, and process throughput times increased.

Krones now benefits from the world's first direct integration of SAP GTS with China's "Single Window" system for electronic customs processing. This technical pioneering achievement has become a reference point in the foreign trade community and highlights the innovative strength of both Krones and cbs. Despite the project's trailblazing nature, it was completed on time and within budget.

With a local team of experts based in Shanghai, cbs supports both international and Chinese companies in localizing their GTS projects. Jiaxiang Zhang emphasizes: "We are the go-to partner for SAP GTS consulting—especially when it comes to China. This project is a prime example of that."

**"With SAP GTS and the expertise of cbs, we were not only able to localize our trade processes in China, but also harmonize them globally – a true milestone for our international supply chain."**

**Matthias Kümmel**

**Project Lead**  
Krones AG

**"The direct integration of SAP GTS with China's Single Window is a groundbreaking lighthouse project – not just for Krones, but for the entire industry. It demonstrates how global standards and local requirements can be successfully combined."**

**Jiaxiang Zhang**

**Project Lead &  
GTS China Lead**  
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