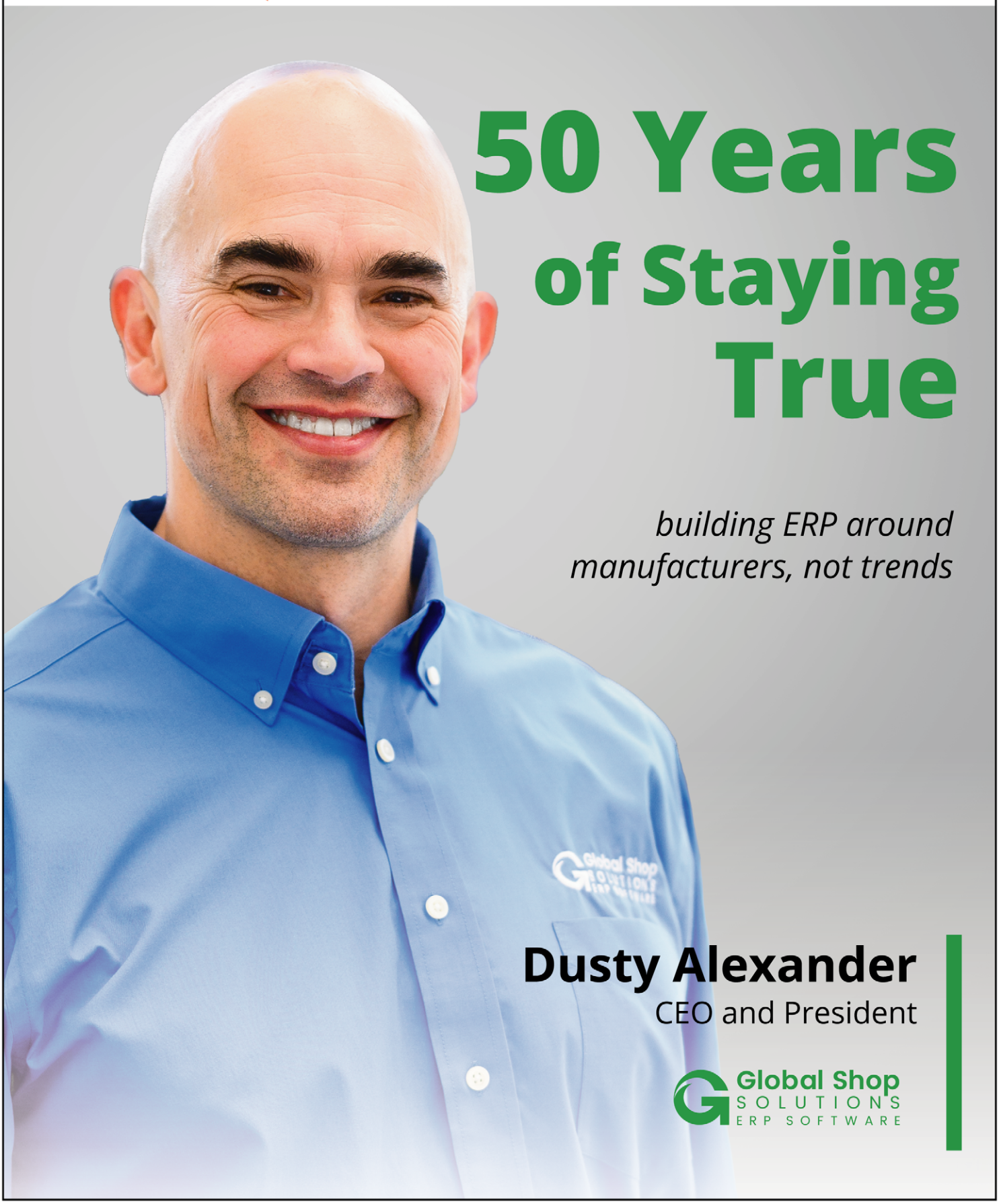
ERP NEWS
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50 Years of Staying True

building ERP around manufacturers, not trends

Dusty Alexander
CEO and President

Global Shop SOLUTIONS ERP SOFTWARE



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EDITOR'S NOTE

As enterprise systems continue to evolve, the conversation around ERP is shifting in a meaningful way. For years, the focus has been on infrastructure—cloud adoption, scalability, and system modernization. Today, a new phase is emerging, one defined less by where systems run, and more by how they connect people, processes, and decisions across the enterprise.

Our Q2 editorial theme, "From Cloud to Collaboration — How ERP Unites People, Platforms, and Intelligence," reflects this transition. ERP is no longer just a system of record. It is becoming a coordination layer—one that enables organizations to align operations, respond faster, and operate with greater clarity in increasingly complex environments.

Within this broader narrative, our April focus turns to a critical dimension of this shift: competing in the service economy. As differentiation moves beyond products to responsiveness, accuracy, and consistency, ERP data is playing a more direct role in shaping customer experience. The ability to translate operational data into timely, confident interactions is becoming a defining factor in how organizations build trust and retain customers.

This issue is anchored by a special cover story marking a significant milestone for Global Shop Solutions. In our conversation with Dusty Alexander, we explore what it means to stay focused in a rapidly evolving market—and how a long-term commitment to manufacturers has shaped both product strategy and customer relationships over five decades.

Alongside this, we feature a series of executive conversations that reflect the breadth of transformation underway across the ERP landscape. From AI-native finance platforms to evolving partner ecosystems, from release intelligence to SAP security and strategic portfolio management, each discussion offers a distinct perspective on how organizations are adapting to new operational realities.

We hear from Lasse Kalkar and Anita Koimur on rethinking financial operations through continuous, AI-driven models. Peyton Burch shares insights into how partner ecosystems are evolving from distribution to value creation. David Zimmerman examines the shift from release management to release intelligence in a world of continuous change.

We also explore how AI is reshaping SAP security with Ivan Mans, and how organizations can close the gap between strategy and execution with Vic Chynoweth.

Across all of these conversations, a common theme emerges: ERP is moving closer to the moment of action. Whether through embedded intelligence, real-time data flows, or cross-functional alignment, the systems that once recorded what happened are increasingly shaping what happens next.

As always, our focus remains on providing an editorial perspective that goes beyond announcements—connecting individual developments to the broader shifts defining the enterprise technology landscape.

We hope you enjoy the issue.



Pinar SENGUL, EDITOR

ERPNEWS

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50 Years of Global Shop Solutions: A Conversation with Dusty Alexander CEO and President, Global Shop Solutions

Half a century is a rare milestone in enterprise software—particularly in a market defined by constant reinvention, shifting architectures, and evolving technology narratives. Yet while many ERP vendors have repeatedly repositioned themselves to align with industry trends, Global Shop Solutions has taken a markedly different path.

Since its founding in 1976, the company has remained singularly focused on manufacturing, building its ERP platform around the operational realities of the shop floor rather than the changing language of the software market. This consistency—across product strategy, ownership structure, and customer engagement—has become a defining characteristic of its long-term relevance.

In this cover story conversation, Dusty Alexander—who leads the family-owned company founded by his father—reflects on the principles that have guided Global Shop Solutions for 50 years. Drawing on decades of close engagement with manufacturers, he shares how the company has maintained its focus in a trend-driven industry and how emerging technologies such as AI are being applied as practical tools embedded directly into manufacturing workflows.

1. Global Shop Solutions is celebrating an extraordinary milestone—50 years in the ERP industry. Looking back at the company's journey since 1976, what do you see as the defining moments that shaped Global Shop Solutions into the company it is today?

When my dad started Global Shop Solutions in 1976, the idea was straightforward. He believed manufacturing software should work as one complete system instead of a bunch of disconnected programs



Interview with
Dusty Alexander
CEO and President,
Global Shop Solutions

that companies had to piece together. That philosophy really shaped everything that followed.

Over the years there have been several milestones. Expanding into new manufacturing industries early on helped us grow beyond our original focus of manufacturers in the oilfield and associated industries. Building our headquarters in The Woodlands marked a defining moment for us. It wasn't just about constructing a building; it was about laying the foundation for a legacy. By planting our roots in the same community where we grew up, we were making a clear statement about our long-term commitment. We wanted our customers to know that we weren't just passing through, we were here to stay, becoming a permanent fixture alongside them as they continued to grow. And when we started opening offices internationally, that was when we really began to see how similar manufacturers' challenges are around the world.

But honestly, the biggest factor wasn't one moment. The biggest defining moment for us doesn't happen just once – it happens every day. It's the daily decision to stay true to our guiding principles and remain laser-focused on one product and one industry: manufacturing. We are committed to serving manufacturers and working to make our software one of the most valuable assets in our customers' businesses. That consistency and discipline – staying true to who we are and what we believe – has allowed us to build deep, long-term relationships and achieve success alongside the customers we serve.

2. Global Shop Solutions has remained a family-owned company for five decades, something quite rare in the enterprise software industry. How has this ownership structure influenced the company's culture, long-term strategy, and relationships with manufacturing customers?

Being family-owned changes the way you think about the business. My dad never built this company with the idea of selling it or chasing short-term results. The focus was always on building something that would last.

Because of that, we've been able to make decisions based on what's best for our customers and employees over the long run. We don't have any debt and invest heavily in product development, support and training because we know those things matter to the manufacturers who rely on our system every day.

"The biggest defining moment for us doesn't happen just once – it happens every day. It's the daily decision to stay true to our guiding principles and remain laser-focused on one product and one industry: manufacturing."

It also creates a very personal connection with customers. I give customers my cell phone number because if someone is trusting our software to run their operation, I want them to know they can reach me if they need something. And they use it. Sometimes to say thank you, sometimes to say they need help and sometimes to just send me great things happening in their life. That level of accountability and personal touch is something my dad always believed in.

3. Your father, Dick Alexander, founded Global Shop Solutions with a vision of simplifying manufacturing operations through software. What lessons from that founding philosophy still guide the company today?

One of the biggest lessons my dad taught me was that you have to truly understand and love your customers. He spent a lot of time on shop floors talking with manufacturers and learning how their businesses actually worked.
My dad has grit. At 89 he still comes to the office most days, in a suit, ready to contribute. You only do that when you love your customers and your business.

That mindset still guides how we build software today. The goal isn't just to create a platform, it's to solve real problems for people trying to run manufacturing operations every day.

He also believed strongly in thinking long term. He used to say that if you take care of your customers and your employees, the business will take care of itself. That philosophy is still very much part of how we operate. Last year I visited hundreds of our customers, taking 95 flights

to see firsthand what we can do to make them more successful. Our entire Executive Leadership Team visits customers and it makes a difference. Grit wins.

4. Manufacturing ERP has evolved dramatically over the past five decades—from on-premise systems to cloud platforms, mobile capabilities, and now AI-driven insights. How has Global Shop Solutions navigated these major technological shifts while staying true to its core mission?

Technology has changed tremendously since the company started. We've gone from early on-premise systems to cloud deployments, mobile access, advanced analytics and now artificial intelligence.

But through all those changes, the mission has stayed the same: to use new technology in ways that genuinely help manufacturers run better businesses.

Today, manufacturers are being asked to do more with less. They need to get more output from their people, more productivity from their machines and more value from every piece of technology in their stack. Walk through a modern shop floor and you don't see large groups of people like you once did. Instead, you see machines, monitors, tablets and highly automated processes – often with equipment running unattended for long stretches. That shift is redefining how manufacturing operates.

Our role is to enable that reality. We build the systems that allow manufacturers to operate more efficiently, connect their operations and make smarter decisions in real time.

And we're able to do that because of how we work with our customers. We love the customer. We show up. We walk their shop floors, visit their facilities and see firsthand how their businesses run.

And when they call, we answer the phone. That closeness keeps us grounded in what manufacturers actually need, and it's what allows us to keep turning new technology into practical tools that help them succeed every day.

"My dad never built this company with the idea of selling it or chasing short-term results. The focus was always on building something that would last."

5. Global Shop Solutions has built a strong reputation specifically within the manufacturing ERP space. Why has the company chosen to stay deeply focused on manufacturing rather than expanding broadly across multiple industries?

Manufacturing is incredibly complex. Every shop floor is different, every production process has its own challenges and there's a lot at stake when something goes wrong.

Early on we made a conscious decision to stay focused on manufacturing instead of trying to expand into a bunch of different industries. That focus allowed us to really understand the problems manufacturers deal with every day.

When you spend decades working with the same industry, you start to see patterns and opportunities to improve operations. That depth of understanding is a big advantage for us.

6. Over the past five decades, Global Shop Solutions has supported manufacturers through multiple waves of change—from globalization to digital transformation. From your perspective, what are the biggest challenges manufacturers face today, and how can ERP systems help them navigate this complexity?

Manufacturers are dealing with a lot right now. Skilled labor shortages, supply chain disruptions, rising material costs and constantly shifting customer expectations have made the environment tricky to navigate. Many companies are also operating with disconnected systems and manual processes

that make it difficult to see what's really happening across the operation.

One of the biggest challenges we hear about from manufacturers is visibility. If you don't have accurate information about inventory levels, job status, machine capacity or costs, it becomes very difficult to plan production and make confident decisions. That's where ERP becomes the backbone of the operation because it connects all those moving pieces into one system.

When manufacturers have real-time information across the shop floor, scheduling, inventory and financials, they can respond much faster to problems and opportunities. Instead of reacting after something goes wrong, they can identify issues earlier and adjust production, staffing or purchasing before they become bigger problems.

7. The ERP market today is experiencing another transformation with artificial intelligence, automation, and intelligent decision-making systems. How do you see these technologies influencing the future of ERP for manufacturers?

Artificial intelligence is here and already changing the way ERP works for manufacturers. Many of our customers are seeing the benefits of moving away from manual processes – things like entering invoices, processing purchase orders or digging through reports to find answers – and replacing them with AI-powered automation that dramatically improves both speed and accuracy.

That's exactly what we're doing with our Genii platform. Genii is a new set of AI capabilities that live directly inside the ERP system and work with the same data, workflows and processes manufacturers already rely on. We're currently seeing customers use tools like AI AP Automation, which scans invoices and moves the data directly into the system, and AI Sales Order Entry, which reads purchase orders and automatically populates order details. Those kinds of capabilities eliminate hours of manual data entry and significantly reduce the chance for errors.

But Genii goes far beyond automating data entry. It introduces a new way for manufacturers to interact with their ERP systems and operational data. Genii Extract helps pull information from documents and enter it directly into the system. Genii Chat allows users to ask natural-language questions – like why a job is late or where a delay occurred – and quickly receive answers from across the ERP. Genii Pulse continuously analyzes operational data to surface potential issues such as late jobs, variances or unassigned work before they become bigger problems. With Genii Build, users can even create custom dashboards, reports or modules simply by describing what they want in natural language. And Genii Assist assigns task-specific agents to interpret conversations – such as production meetings – and turn those discussions into actionable tasks inside the ERP.

What excites me the most is that these tools are already solving real problems for our customers. This isn't theoretical technology – it's practical AI that's embedded directly into the workflows manufacturers use every day. By combining automation, real-time insights and intelligent assistance, AI-integrated ERP becomes a powerful tool for helping manufacturers make smarter decisions, operate more efficiently and stay competitive in a rapidly changing industry.

8. As CEO, how do you balance innovation and modernization with maintaining the reliability and long-term stability that manufacturing companies depend on from their ERP systems?

Testing is critical in ERP because our customers run their entire operation through the system every day. Production schedules, inventory, accounting, shipping – if the ERP system isn't stable, the whole business feels it.

"If someone is trusting our software to run their operation, I want them to know they can reach me if they need something."

So we approach innovation very responsibly. Before we release new capabilities, we spend a lot of time making sure they fit naturally into the way manufacturers actually work. The goal isn't to chase every new technology trend – it's to make sure anything we introduce genuinely improves the system without disrupting the reliability customers depend on.

One thing that helps is our long-term perspective as a company. Because we're not under pressure to rush features out the door, we can take the time to develop, test and refine new capabilities the right way. That allows us to keep moving the technology forward while protecting the stability manufacturers rely on to run their businesses. And the success of our early AI features and Genii platform is evidence that this approach works.

9. Global Shop Solutions has grown alongside many of its customers over the years. What have you learned from working so closely with manufacturers about how technology can truly support operational excellence?

One thing you learn very quickly when working with manufacturers is how practical they are. These are people solving problems every day – machines break, orders change, materials show up late – and they still find a way to keep production moving. There's a lot of ingenuity on the shop floor.

Being around that environment for decades has shaped the way we think about software. Manufacturers don't need technology that looks impressive in a demo – they need technology that actually helps them run their operation better. That means giving them clear visibility into what's happening across the shop floor, inventory, scheduling and financials so they can make decisions quickly. It's also taught us the importance of staying close to the customer. Our team spends a lot of time listening to manufacturers, understanding their workflows and learning where the real bottlenecks are. When technology fits naturally into the way people already work, that's when it starts driving real operational improvements.

10. Reaching a 50-year milestone is a rare achievement in the software industry. What do you believe has been the key to Global Shop Solutions' longevity and continued relevance?

When I think about the last 50 years, it really comes back to a few core principles that we've never moved away from. Our focus on manufacturers has allowed us to really understand the challenges they face and build software that solves those problems.

Another big part of it is the relationships we've built with our customers. Many of the manufacturers we work with today have been with us for decades, and we've grown alongside them. When you stay close to your customers and listen to what they need, it naturally shapes the direction of the product and the company.

And finally, we've always taken a long-term approach to the business. Software companies come and go, but when you stay consistent with your mission, invest in your people and keep improving the product year after year, that foundation gets stronger over time. Fifty years later, that consistency is what has allowed Global Shop Solutions to keep evolving while staying true to what we set out to do in the first place. The result is a company that customers trust and employees are proud to be part of.

> "This isn't theoretical technology – it's practical AI that's embedded directly into the workflows manufacturers use every day."

11. Looking ahead, what strategic priorities will shape the next chapter of Global Shop Solutions as manufacturing continues to evolve globally?

Manufacturing continues to evolve, and our job is to evolve right alongside our customers. A big part of that means continuing to invest in technologies like AI, automation and advanced analytics that help manufacturers run more

efficient, connected operations. At the same time, we're expanding training, services and support so customers can get even more value from the ERP system they rely on every day.

But the strategy behind all of that hasn't really changed since my dad started the company. We're still a family-owned business with no outside investment and no debt, which gives us the freedom to make long-term decisions instead of chasing short-term results. That allows us to keep reinvesting in the product, in our people and in the relationships we've built with customers over the years.

What I'm most proud of is the trust our customers have in our team. I'm on the road visiting customers or attending one of our in-person Game Day training events and frequently hear, "We love your people." The team works closely with manufacturers every day, and that partnership is a big reason customers stay with us for so long. As we look ahead, the priority is simple: keep building technology that helps manufacturers succeed while staying true to the values that have guided the company for the last 50 years.

12. Finally, when you think about Global Shop Solutions 50 years from now, what legacy would you hope the company continues to build within the global manufacturing community?

When I think about the future, I hope Global Shop Solutions continues to be known as a company that truly cares about its customers. Manufacturers depend on our system to run their businesses, and that's a responsibility we take seriously. My hope is that decades from now people will still see Global Shop Solutions as a company that listens to its customers, takes care of its employees and builds technology that makes manufacturing stronger.

That's the legacy my dad started, and it's something we're proud to carry forward for another 50 years.





Reimagining Finance Operations: LiveFlow's Lasse Kalkar and Anita Koimur on Building an AI-Native ERP for Continuous Close

As finance teams face growing pressure to deliver real-time insight across increasingly complex, multi-entity organizations, traditional ERP systems are struggling to keep pace. Lengthy implementations, fragmented data environments, and manual reconciliation processes continue to limit the ability of finance leaders to operate with speed and precision.

A new generation of platforms is beginning to challenge this model. Rather than layering automation onto legacy systems, AI-native ERP solutions are being designed to support continuous close, real-time data flows, and more integrated financial operations from the ground up.

LiveFlow is among the companies advancing this shift with the introduction of Flow, an AI-native ERP platform built specifically for modern finance teams. By unifying accounting and financial planning, and embedding AI directly into core workflows, the platform aims to address long-standing challenges around scalability, visibility, and operational efficiency.



Interview with
Lasse Kalkar
CEO and Co-Founder
liveflow



Interview with
Anita Koimur
COO and Co-Founder
liveflow

In this Q&A with ERP News, Lasse Kalkar, CEO and co-founder, and Anita Koimur, COO and co-founder of LiveFlow, discuss the limitations of traditional ERP architectures, the emergence of continuous finance models, and how AI-native systems are reshaping the role of finance within the enterprise.

Q: LiveFlow recently introduced Flow, described as an AI-native ERP designed for continuous close finance operations. What gap in the market inspired you to build a new ERP platform specifically for finance teams?

A: We built Flow because we kept seeing the same problem across thousands of businesses. Finance teams at growing, multi-entity companies were stuck in an impossible trade-off: stay on systems like QuickBooks that can't scale, or commit to a legacy ERP implementation that takes 12 to 18 months, costs six figures in consulting, and still leaves teams stitching together spreadsheets for the full picture.

"There was no ERP built from the ground up for how modern finance teams actually operate — one that unifies accounting and FP&A in a single system, handles multi-entity complexity natively, and runs in real time rather than in batch cycles."

Before LiveFlow, my co-founder Lasse and I spent years at Revolut, one of Europe's largest digital banks. We saw firsthand what happens when finance infrastructure can't keep pace with growth. Then, working with over 6,000 LiveFlow customers, we heard the same pain points again and again: manual work piling up, close cycles stretching longer, systems breaking every time a company added an entity or location.

The gap was clear. There was no ERP built from the ground up for how modern finance teams actually operate — one that unifies accounting and FP&A in a single system, handles multi-entity complexity natively, and runs in real time rather than in batch cycles. That's what Flow is. We didn't want to patch legacy infrastructure with AI. We wanted to rethink the foundation.

Q: Traditional ERP systems often require lengthy implementations and heavy customization. How did your experience building LiveFlow influence your approach to creating a faster, more agile ERP architecture?

A: LiveFlow connects directly to QuickBooks, Xero, and other accounting systems via API — so from day one, we built around the principle that financial data should flow in real time without manual intervention. That DNA carries directly into Flow.

Flow is designed for one-click migration. Because we already have deep API integrations through LiveFlow's existing product, we can migrate a customer's data at the transaction level — not just account balances — in as little as a day. Compare that to the 12-to-18-month implementations legacy ERPs require.

The architecture reads structured data where it already lives. No manual reconstruction required.

We also built Flow to be opinionated where it matters and flexible where it counts. Multi-entity consolidation, intercompany eliminations, and multi-dimensional tagging are native — not bolted on as add-ons. The reporting layer is fully customizable, so finance teams can analyze data across any dimension — entity, project, location, vendor, customer — without inflating their chart of accounts or hiring consultants to configure it. The goal was to eliminate the trade-off between power and speed.

Q: Finance teams today are expected to move from periodic reporting to real-time financial visibility. How does Flow help organizations move closer to that continuous finance model?

A: Flow is architected around the continuous close. Instead of treating month-end as a single, high-stress event, Flow keeps accounting, consolidation, and planning updated in real time — so finance teams always have a current view of where the business stands.

Bank connections are live. Transaction categorization is AI-led — the system learns from your team's behavior, flags anomalies, and routes items for review. Consolidation across entities happens continuously, rather than as a separate process at month-end.

The result: the close becomes a confirmation of what you already know. Finance teams spend less time chasing data and reconciling spreadsheets, and more time advising leadership in real time.

Q: Many companies today operate across multiple entities, locations, and currencies. How does LiveFlow address the complexity of multi-entity financial operations in a modern ERP environment?

A: This is the core of what Flow was designed for. We built it multi-entity-first — not as a feature you unlock at a higher tier, but as the foundational architecture.

Flow handles multi-entity journal entries, intercompany eliminations, and foreign-currency entities natively in one place. Shared costs and intercompany activity are managed cleanly without the workarounds legacy ERPs force teams into. Transaction splitting and expense allocation let you distribute overhead across accounts, dimensions, or entities by amount or percentage.

Multi-dimensional tagging and reporting are built directly into the system. Finance teams can analyze performance across entity, cohort, project, location, vendor, customer, time period, and account — all within any hierarchy view — without inflating their chart of accounts. That flexibility is critical for businesses operating across multiple locations and legal structures, because the questions leadership asks rarely align with a one-dimensional reporting structure.

Our target customers — businesses in Construction, Real Estate, Food and Beverage, and Healthcare — deal with this complexity from day one. Flow was purpose-built for them.

Q: Artificial intelligence is becoming central to the next generation of enterprise systems. In your view, what does it truly mean for an ERP platform to be AI-native rather than simply AI-enabled?

A: The distinction matters. AI-enabled means you take a legacy system — built on decades-old architecture — and layer AI on top. Maybe you add a chatbot or some auto-categorization. The underlying system still operates the same way it always has. That doesn't fundamentally change workflows.

AI-native means the system was designed from the ground up with AI as infrastructure, not a feature. In Flow, AI is embedded in the accounting ledger itself. It handles bulk transaction categorization, learns from your team's patterns, flags anomalies, and keeps humans in control through prompted approvals. It's not replacing the finance team's judgment — it's amplifying it.

The timing matters too. Twelve months ago, AI was helping accountants work faster. Today, AI can run entire accounting workflows autonomously. The same inflection that transformed coding over the last 18 to 24 months is arriving in accounting. The models are ready. More importantly, the market is ready — over the last six to nine months, we've seen a drastic shift in sentiment from finance teams. Most now view AI as an accelerator.

When you build around AI from the start, you can rethink workflows entirely — instead of automating a broken process, you design a fundamentally better one.

"AI-native means the system was designed from the ground up with AI as infrastructure, not a feature."

Q: How do you see ERP systems evolving from traditional back-office platforms into collaborative systems connecting finance teams with the rest of the organization?

A: The days of the ERP as a walled-off back-office system are over. Finance teams are expected to be strategic partners to the business and not just the team that produces reports after the fact. The ERP needs to reflect that.

Flow was built around the idea that financial data should be a shared, living resource — not something locked inside a system only accountants can access. Custom financial reports collapse accounts into management-ready views while preserving the ability to drill down to vendor-level detail. A CFO and a VP of Operations can look at the same data, and both get what they need.

We also built draft-and-post controls with role-based permissions, so work can be prepared, reviewed, and approved collaboratively before it hits the ledger. That creates a natural workflow where finance teams involve other stakeholders without sacrificing control or auditability.

The broader trend: ERP platforms will become the connective tissue between finance and the rest of the organization — not just a system of record, but a system of collaboration.

Q: Finance teams increasingly rely on multiple tools across planning, reporting, accounting, and analytics. How does Flow help unify different financial workflows and platforms into a more connected ecosystem?

A: This is exactly the problem that inspired Flow. Most growing businesses end up with a patchwork — a legacy platform for the books, a separate FP&A tool for planning, spreadsheets for consolidation, another tool for reporting. Every handoff between systems creates lag, manual work, and errors.

Flow unifies the general ledger and FP&A into a single system. Accounting, consolidation, and financial planning all happen in one place, on the same data, in real time. No exporting, no reconciling between systems, no waiting for data to sync.

For companies that still rely on external operational tools, Flow ingests financial activity directly through live integrations — minimizing the gap between when a transaction happens and when it's reflected in reports and plans. The audit trail is stronger too: full visibility into what changed, who changed it, and when.

> "Long-term, the ERP should be invisible in the best sense — it should just work."

The end state is a single, continuously updated source of financial truth. Not a dashboard aggregating data from five different systems, but one platform where the data lives and operates natively.

Q: Modern finance teams are expected to work more closely with operations, leadership, and external stakeholders. How can ERP platforms help create stronger collaboration between finance and the broader business?

A: The biggest barrier to collaboration isn't willingness — it's access and timeliness. When financial data is trapped in a system that takes weeks to close, and reports are static PDFs distributed after the fact, there's no foundation for real-time collaboration.

Flow changes that by providing continuously updated financial visibility. When the close isn't a once-a-month bottleneck, finance teams can proactively share insights with operations and leadership instead of reactively answering questions about last month's numbers.

Multi-dimensional reporting is a big part of this. When an operations leader wants to see performance by location, or a CEO wants to compare business lines, they shouldn't have to submit a request and wait. Flow's tagging and hierarchy views make that analysis self-serve — while maintaining the controls and audit trail finance teams need.

We also think about external stakeholders — auditors, investors, board members. A strong audit trail, draft-and-post controls, and real-time consolidated views make it far easier to share financial information with confidence, without the manual preparation that typically goes into investor-ready or audit-ready reporting.

Q: As new AI-native platforms enter the ERP landscape, how do you see the future role of finance leaders evolving over the next five years?

A: Finance leaders will spend dramatically less time on backward-looking manual work and dramatically more time on forward-looking strategic decisions. That shift is already underway. AI-native platforms accelerate it.

When the close is continuous, reconciliations are automated, and anomalies are flagged proactively, the CFO's role shifts from quality-controlling the numbers to interpreting them and acting on them. Finance leaders become the strategic nerve center of the organization — connecting operational performance to financial outcomes in real time and advising leadership on where to invest, where to cut, and where to pivot.

We'll also see finance teams get leaner and more impactful. The same team that today spends the majority of their time on data collection and reconciliation will redirect that energy toward analysis, planning, and cross-functional partnership. The best finance leaders already think this way — they just haven't had the infrastructure to support it. That's what AI-native platforms unlock.

Q: Looking ahead, what is your long-term vision for LiveFlow and Flow as the ERP landscape continues to shift toward intelligent, cloud-native systems?

A: Our vision is to build the autonomous financial operating system for the next generation of established businesse — one that unifies the ledger, the planning engine, and autonomous agents in a single system that runs continuously.

We've proven the demand with over 6,000 businesses using LiveFlow. Flow is the next chapter — purpose-built for the multi-entity, multi-location businesses that legacy ERPs have underserved or overcharged. We're starting with construction, real estate, food and beverage, and healthcare, because those industries deal with real operational complexity and have been waiting for a system built for how they actually work.

Long-term, the ERP should be invisible in the best sense — it should just work. Finance teams shouldn't think about data entry, reconciliation, or consolidation. Those should happen automatically, in real time, with AI handling the routine and humans focused on the decisions that matter. That's the future we're building.

liveflow





ERP Partner Ecosystems Shift from Distribution to Value Creation Models

ERP partner ecosystems are undergoing a structural transition, moving beyond traditional channel models toward more integrated value creation frameworks. As enterprise applications become increasingly interconnected with adjacent solutions, the role of partners is expanding from implementation delivery to ongoing advisory and strategic enablement.

In mid-market ERP environments, this shift is particularly pronounced. Organizations are placing greater emphasis on partners that can provide domain expertise, support cross-functional use cases, and align technology adoption with broader business outcomes.

This evolution is being shaped by several converging factors, including the maturation of cloud architectures, increased demand for real-time financial insight, and the growing importance of integrated planning capabilities alongside core ERP systems.

In this context, partner ecosystems are no longer defined solely by reach or revenue contribution, but by their ability to support scalable, low-risk implementations and deliver measurable value over time.

In this Q&A, Peyton Burch, Vice President of Channel Sales at Martus Solutions, discusses how partner expectations are evolving, what distinguishes high-performing ecosystems, and how integration maturity and advisory capabilities are becoming central to long-term ERP strategy.



Interview with
Peyton Burch,
Vice President of Channel Sales,
Martus Solutions

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Interview with Peyton Burch

Q: You've spent decades building and scaling ERP partner ecosystems. How has the role of the channel evolved over the past ten years — particularly in mid-market ERP environments?

A: The value of a true partner ecosystem has increased dramatically over the past decade.

The foundational reasons for building a channel (expanded market reach, scalability, lower customer acquisition cost, accelerated sales cycles, increased revenue, domain expertise, local presence, services depth, and enhanced customer experience) remain firmly in place.

What has changed is the depth and breadth of expertise partners are now expected to deliver.

> "It is no longer a route to market — it is a strategic growth engine and a critical layer of value creation for customers navigating unprecedented change."

Customers today need more than a software vendor; they are looking for trusted advisors who can help them interpret change, mitigate risk, and drive measurable outcomes.

That expectation has fundamentally elevated the role of the channel. It is no longer a route to market — it is a strategic growth engine and a critical layer of value creation for customers navigating unprecedented change.

Q: During your time at Sage Intacct, structured VAR programs became a key growth lever. What separates a transactional reseller network from a truly strategic partner ecosystem?

A: The simple answer is this: a strategic partner ecosystem amplifies the value partners create, while a transactional reseller network ultimately commoditizes and diminishes it.

A transactional reseller network measures value purely in bookings. When partners are treated as order takers, it shows. Margins get compressed. Customer experience becomes inconsistent. Over time, the model erodes trust and long-term growth.

In contrast, a strategic partner ecosystem is built on mutual respect and complementary strengths. It recognizes that partners offer deep expertise, industry specialization, and close customer relationships. The software is the enabling platform that brings those solutions to life.

Partners have choices. They will align with vendors that respect their expertise, protect their economics, and invest in shared success.

Transactional networks distribute software. Strategic ecosystems create value for everyone involved – customers, partners, and the developer.

Q: As ERP platforms mature, we're seeing adjacent solutions — including financial planning and performance tools — becoming increasingly embedded in the ecosystem. What is driving this convergence?

A:This convergence is driven by a combination of technological and business forces.

Modern cloud architectures and open APIs have largely eliminated barriers to integrating ERP systems with adjacent solutions. It's easier than ever to build a tech stack that meets an organization's unique needs and budget.

At the same time, business expectations have intensified. Finance teams are asked to deliver more comprehensive planning, deeper analysis, and faster insights. As a result, organizations are turning to specialized technologies to meet those demands.

The convergence of adjacent solutions and ERP platforms is happening because the technology now supports it, the business environment demands it, specialized solutions deliver measurable value, and strong partners are actively bringing these innovations to market.

The organizations that embrace the convergence and adopt adjacent solutions early on will have a more agile, data-driven finance function that can adapt quickly to change.

Q: Many ERP vendors still treat partner programs as revenue channels rather than ecosystem multipliers. What structural elements are required to build a scalable, high-performing partner model?

A: Before structure comes culture.

A high-performing partner ecosystem starts with clearly defined values. Every structural decision should be measured against those principles.

- Partners and developers must set clear, mutual expectations. They should align around shared growth objectives and jointly developed sales targets that reflect vendor goals while recognizing partner capacity and market realities.

- The economic model must also work for both sides. Subscription and annuity-based revenue structures create long-term value for partners who invest and scale. When the economics are misaligned, the relationship becomes fragile.

- Enablement is equally critical. Partners are responsible for delivering exceptional implementations and customer outcomes, which means developers must provide strong training, certifications, demo support, competitive intelligence, and executive sponsorship.

- Marketing must also be aligned. Developers should provide programs, tools, and funding support, while partners should consistently execute multi-channel marketing in their markets.

Great partner ecosystems are not defined by programs or policies, but by the shared values that guide how partners and developers work together.

Q: How should financial planning platforms like Martus position themselves within ERP-centric sales motions?

A: It starts with recognizing your role in the sales cycle.

Martus may not be the primary focus of the ERP sales process, but we are involved to address a critical aspect of the prospect's requirements. In many cases, what we offer can make or break the deal.

"Transactional networks distribute software. Strategic ecosystems create value for everyone involved – customers, partners, and the developer."

That means we must operate seamlessly within the ERP motion. We need detailed knowledge of both sides of the equation — how the accounting platform works with our data and how Martus leverages that data to meet the end user's needs.

From there, the focus shifts to demonstrating value. We must clearly show how our platform addresses a prospect's budgeting, reporting, and planning requirements, often solving problems the prospect didn't even realize they had.

Ultimately, the most powerful marketing any technology company can have is a customer who says their organization was transformed by the combination of a trusted partner and the right technology platform working together.

Q: What are partners looking for today that may not have been priorities five years ago — enablement, margin protection, technical integration depth, co-marketing alignment?

A: In many ways, partners are still looking for the same foundational elements they've always valued: growth, profitability, strong enablement, and a vendor relationship built on trust.

What has changed isn't the priorities, but the intensity of expectations.

Partners today expect a truly strategic environment. In exchange for their investment in certifications, sales resources, and market development, they expect strong, continuous, comprehensive enablement in the form of technical training, sales coaching, demo support, competitive positioning, and ongoing education.

Margin protection has also become more important. Developers have the right to expect year-over-year growth and performance, but partners need predictable economics that justify their investment.

Product quality has also become a bigger factor. Partners expect modern, technologically advanced platforms with strong functionality. You can repair a channel program, but it is far more difficult to compensate for product shortcomings.

In short, the fundamentals remain the same but the standard has changed. Partners are more sophisticated, better capitalized, and more selective than ever. Companies that are relevant today and well positioned for the future will attract the strongest partners.

Q: Integration maturity often determines partner success. From your perspective, what distinguishes a "true ecosystem-ready" solution from one that simply offers API connectivity?

A: From a partner's perspective, the distinction comes down to two critical factors: profitability and risk mitigation.

API connectivity simply means systems can exchange data. In today's environment, that's the starting line. A true ecosystem-ready solution goes much further. It is intentionally designed to reduce delivery risk, protect partner margins, and support scalable growth.

Ecosystem readiness starts with depth and architectural alignment. The integration must support key ERP structures in a way that mirrors how partners already deploy the platform. When solutions operate naturally together, partners avoid costly workarounds, custom builds, and late-stage surprises.

That directly protects margin, but more importantly, it creates predictability and reduces risk.

In today's environment, where private equity, performance expectations, and customer scrutiny are intensifying, partners choose vendors that help lower friction and make their business more predictable.

"Ultimately, the organizations that succeed will be the ones that help partners combine technology, data, and advisory expertise to deliver measurable outcomes for their customers."

Q: As organizations demand tighter alignment between ERP data and strategic planning, how does that shift the advisory role of partners?

A: I actually prefer to use the words extend or expand rather than shift.
As a CPA, I've served on several boards, usually in the role of Treasurer. In that capacity, the budgeting process was the most important part of financial oversight. Board discussions centered on how the organization planned its resources and priorities, and financial performance was evaluated in the context of the approved budget.

What's changing today is how organizations approach that process. Technology is making budgeting and reporting far more dynamic, data-driven, and strategic. Finance teams want to move beyond static annual budgets and use real-time ERP data to guide decisions throughout the year.

That's where partners play a critical role.

Many partners are expanding their advisory capabilities by building FP&A practices and bringing cross-functional expertise that helps clients interpret both macroeconomic and industry-specific trends. They also understand the governance, compliance, and security considerations that must be incorporated into any modern financial planning process.

When that advisory expertise is anchored in ERP data, it becomes incredibly powerful. Partners are uniquely positioned to help organizations move from simply reporting on the past to actively shaping the future.

Technology enables the process, but it's the partner's advisory insight that turns data into meaningful strategy.

Q: Many mid-market ERP ecosystems are becoming increasingly competitive. How can vendors differentiate their partner programs without simply increasing financial incentives?

A: While financial rewards will always play an important role, the true foundation of a strong partner program is its core values.

This industry is built on relationships. Partners are not mercenaries; they prioritize programs that demonstrate genuine commitment to shared success.

The programs that stand out are those that recognize the value partners bring, collaborate to extend their reach, and deliver exceptional outcomes for both customers and partner organizations.

Q: Looking ahead to the next three to five years, how do you see ERP partner ecosystems evolving and what role will integrated financial planning platforms play within that evolution?

A: ERP partner ecosystems will be shaped by two major trends: consolidation driven by private equity and the rapid emergence of AI.

Private equity investment and consolidation are already reshaping the ecosystem. The combination of CPA firms and private equity capital brings scale, investment resources, and deep cross-functional expertise across advisory, technology, and financial services.

This creates an ideal opportunity for integrated financial planning platforms to become mainstream offerings, allowing partners to extend beyond core ERP implementation into higher-value advisory services.

Organizations that enable partners to meet the high expectations of private equity investors—through strong integrations, scalable platforms, and opportunities for recurring services—will thrive.

AI will influence everything from service delivery to marketing to product innovation across the partner landscape. New talent entering the workforce with native AI skills can make an immediate impact within partner organizations by helping firms automate delivery work and extract deeper insights from financial data. AI agents will further improve implementation efficiency, surface more intelligent insights, and allow partners to deliver advisory services at greater scale.

Ultimately, the organizations that succeed will be the ones that help partners combine technology, data, and advisory expertise to deliver measurable outcomes for their customers.

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About Peyton Burch

Peyton Burch is Vice President of Channel Sales at Martus Solutions. He brings decades of experience building and scaling ERP partner ecosystems, including leadership roles within the Sage Intacct channel. Peyton focuses on developing strategic partner relationships that expand market reach, deepen customer impact, and create long-term growth opportunities for partners and technology providers alike.





Managing ERP in a State of Constant Change: How AI Is Redefining Release Intelligence

As enterprise applications shift toward continuous delivery models, the traditional notion of system stability is being fundamentally redefined. Frequent updates from platforms such as Oracle and Workday are creating environments where change is no longer periodic but constant—requiring organizations to rethink how they manage risk, prioritize updates, and maintain operational continuity.

In this new landscape, release management is evolving from a reactive, testing-heavy function into a more strategic discipline centered on intelligence, prioritization, and cross-functional alignment. Manual processes—particularly around interpreting release notes and assessing impact—are increasingly becoming bottlenecks, limiting both agility and the ability to fully capitalize on innovation.

In this Q&A with ERP News, David Zimmerman—an Oracle Cloud and Workday transformation expert with over 17 years of experience—shares how organizations can move "upstream" from testing to decision-making, the role of agentic AI in transforming release management, and why release intelligence is becoming a critical capability for modern enterprises.

1. How has continuous innovation changed system stability and change management?

The shift to continuous delivery from vendors like Oracle and Workday has fundamentally redefined stability. Instead of long periods of equilibrium followed by large upgrades, organizations now operate in a state of "permanent change." This means



Interview with
David Zimmerman,
VP of Product and Solutions,
Opkey

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stability is no longer about freezing systems—it's about managing change continuously and intelligently. Change management has become more proactive, data-driven, and tightly integrated with business processes, requiring faster impact analysis, testing plans that assure workflows are not impacted and tighter collaboration between IT and functional teams.

2. Why do manual release note reviews remain such a persistent challenge?

Despite advances in automation, release notes remain largely unstructured, dense, and vendor-specific, making any manual effort to sift through them and determine what matters an arduous, error-prone, and time-consuming process. Key challenges include:

- Lack of standardization across vendors
- Difficulty mapping technical updates to business processes
- Heavy reliance on tribal knowledge
- High cognitive load to assess relevance

Automation has historically focused on testing rather than understanding intent and impact, which is why this critical step continues to lag behind.

3. What does moving "upstream" from testing to decision-making mean?

Traditionally, tools have focused on validating changes after impact was identified.

Moving upstream means:

- Identifying what matters before testing begins
- Prioritizing updates based on risk, usage, and business criticality
- Enabling stakeholders to have the intelligence/visibility needed to decide what to test, ignore, or fast-track

In practice, this reduces unnecessary testing effort and aligns IT activity with business priorities much earlier in the cycle.

4. Where are the biggest inefficiencies in traditional release management?

The most significant inefficiencies include:

- Manual triage of release notes (time-consuming and error-prone)
- Over-testing low-risk changes
- Underestimating high-impact changes
- Fragmented collaboration across IT, QA, and business teams
- Lack of clear mapping between updates and customizations

This leads to wasted effort, missed risks, and delayed adoption of valuable features.

"Stability is no longer about freezing systems— it's about managing change continuously and intelligently."

5. How does agentic AI change interpretation and prioritization?

Agentic AI goes beyond rule-based automation by introducing context-aware reasoning and autonomous decision support.

Instead of:

- Static keyword matching
- Predefined rules

It enables:

- Understanding of system usage patterns
- Contextual prioritization based on business impact
- Continuous learning from past release decisions

This transforms release management from reactive analysis to intelligent orchestration.

6. How does Release Advisor handle complex enterprise environments?

Enterprise systems are deeply customized with layered integrations. Release Advisor addresses this by:

- Mapping vendor updates to specific configurations and custom objects
- Understanding dependencies across modules and integrations
- Leveraging usage data to highlight what's actually in use vs. theoretical impact

This ensures analysis is environment-specific, not generic.

For learn more about Opkey Release Advisor, visit https://www.opkey.com/release-advisor.

7. How will organizations adopt Lite vs. Pro?

The tiered approach allows gradual maturity.

- Lite: Free entry point for visibility, meaning basic release insights and impact summaries
- Pro: Advanced capabilities, meaning environment-specific analysis, prioritization, and AI-driven recommendations.

Most organizations will start with Lite to replace manual review, then expand to Pro as they integrate AI into governance and decision-making processes.

8. What broader business impact can intelligent release management deliver?

Beyond efficiency, it enables:

- Faster adoption of new features
- Increased ROI from SaaS investments

- Reduced risk of workflow disruptions
- Better alignment between IT updates and business strategy
- Increased agility and competitiveness

Ultimately, it turns releases into a source of innovation rather than a compliance burden.

9. Will release management become more strategic?

Yes. Release management is evolving into a strategic capability. As release velocity increases, organizations must:

- Treat release intelligence as a core function
- Integrate it with product management and business planning
- Build cross-functional teams combining IT, QA, and business stakeholders

The focus shifts from "managing updates" to maximizing value from change.

10. How will AI reshape vendor–customer relationships?

AI will fundamentally rebalance this relationship by:

- Making release consumption more personalized and context-aware
- Reducing dependence on vendor-provided documentation
- Enabling customers to adopt innovations faster and more selectively

Over time, this creates a feedback loop where customers adopt more features; vendors gain better insights into usage, and continuous improvement becomes more collaborative, which results in a more intelligent, adaptive cloud application ecosystem.

opkey

About David Zimmerman

David Zimmerman is an Oracle Cloud and Workday transformation expert with over 17 years of experience. As a product strategy leader, he is focused on delivery innovation leveraging AI agents. He is an active member in the Oracle ACE community, with deep expertise with building for Oracle and Workday apps.





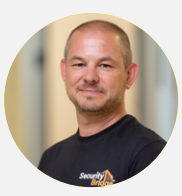
From Detection to Decision: How AI Is Reshaping SAP Security Operations

As artificial intelligence continues to move deeper into enterprise systems, SAP security teams are beginning to explore its practical role beyond experimentation. While initial skepticism remains, early use cases are already demonstrating how AI can accelerate vulnerability analysis, prioritize risks, and support faster remediation.

At the same time, the integration of AI into security workflows raises important questions around governance, accountability, and control. Enterprises are navigating a delicate balance — leveraging AI for speed and insight while maintaining human oversight in critical decision-making processes.

This shift is also redefining how organizations approach SAP security more broadly. Traditional periodic assessments are giving way to continuous, risk-driven monitoring models, where AI plays a central role in identifying and contextualizing threats in real time.

In this Q&A, Ivan Mans, Co-Founder and Board Member at SecurityBridge, shares insights on how AI is being applied in SAP security environments today, what enterprises are learning from early adoption, and how the role of security teams is evolving as AI takes on more analytical responsibilities.



Interview with
Ivan Mans,
Co-Founder and Board Member,
SecurityBridge

AI Adoption, Skepticism, and Real-World Use

Q: Since launching the AI Companion, what has surprised you most about how SAP security teams are actually using AI in day-to-day operations?

A: While it wasn't entirely unexpected, we've seen a degree of skepticism among SAP security professionals about the immediate value AI can bring to their day-to-day operations. That said, this is typical for any transformative technology. As the capabilities evolve and teams begin to experience tangible benefits—particularly in areas like faster vulnerability analysis and accelerated remediation—we expect that skepticism to quickly give way to broader adoption. In our view, AI will soon become a natural part of the SAP security workflow rather than something experimental.

Q: How are enterprises balancing speed and automation with governance and accountability as AI becomes embedded in SAP security workflows?

A: At this stage, SecurityBridge does not yet deploy AI-driven automation for remediation. While AI can significantly accelerate detection and analysis, many enterprises remain cautious about automating corrective actions. In particular, organizations operating in jurisdictions with strong employee representation—such as works councils—often face restrictions around automated monitoring of user identities and SAP terminal activity. As a result, the current balance typically favors AI-assisted insight and prioritization, while keeping remediation decisions firmly under human oversight to ensure governance, transparency, and accountability.

Q: What lessons have you learned from early customer deployments that are shaping SecurityBridge's next phase of AI development?

A: One of the biggest lessons is that AI enablement cannot be reduced to ticking a feature box. In enterprise security environments, AI must be built with full traceability and auditability in mind. Customers need to understand how conclusions are reached and be able to trace decisions end-to-end—especially when those insights influence security operations.

"AI will allow [SAP security teams] to focus more on strategic security decisions and less on manual analysis."

The Evolving Role of SAP Security Teams

Q: How do you see the role of SAP security teams evolving as AI takes on more analytical and advisory responsibilities?

A: Much like in software development, AI may take over parts of the coding, but not the creativity behind it. In the SAP security space, AI will significantly reduce the tedious work of collecting data and identifying meaningful signals within large volumes of noise. However, the critical tasks—such as contextual decision-making, risk prioritization, and determining the right remediation strategy—will continue to require human judgment. Rather than replacing security teams, AI will allow them to focus more on strategic security decisions and less on manual analysis.

From Analysis to Action: Closing the Security Gap

Q: Many organizations struggle to move from findings to remediation. Where does AI make the biggest practical difference in closing that gap?

A: The biggest impact is in turning findings into clear, actionable remediation steps. AI helps teams immediately understand the real risk behind an issue and provides best-practice guidance on how to fix it. Instead of searching through documentation or interpreting lengthy security notes, the solution is effectively presented on a silver platter—making remediation faster and accessible to a much wider group of SAP engineers.

Governance, Explainability, and Trust in AI

Q: How is SecurityBridge ensuring that AI-driven recommendations remain explainable, auditable, and aligned with regulatory expectations?

A: Since the early days of SecurityBridge, we have built and maintained a comprehensive knowledge base of SAP security findings, recommendations, best practices, and technical guidance. This curated body of expertise now serves as the foundation for training our embedded AI Companion and AI-powered support agents. By anchoring AI recommendations in this structured and traceable knowledge base, we ensure that the output remains explainable, auditable, and aligned with enterprise governance and regulatory expectations.

Q: What types of SAP security risks are best suited for AI-assisted decision-making today — and which still require deep human expertise?

A: SAP configuration and authorization recommendations are currently the easiest areas to support with AI, as they are largely based on well-defined patterns and established best practices. More complex scenarios—such as identifying insecure custom code or evaluating the potential impact of implementing SAP Security Notes—still require significant human expertise. These situations depend heavily on context within the customer's SAP landscape and business processes, where experienced security professionals remain critical to making the right decisions.

Toward Continuous, AI-Driven Security Operations

Q: Looking ahead, how do you envision AI supporting continuous SAP security monitoring rather than periodic assessments?

A: Continuous SAP security monitoring should already be the standard today. Periodic assessments largely serve compliance requirements but are often insufficient for managing real security risk in dynamic SAP environments. With AI entering the picture, scarce security resources can be focused where they create the most value—prioritizing the most critical findings, identifying emerging risks faster, and supporting faster remediation. AI therefore strengthens the shift from periodic reviews toward truly continuous and risk-driven SAP security operations.

Q: What advice would you give SAP customers who are interested in AI-driven security but are unsure where to start?

A: In many cases, we still need to evangelize the importance of SAP security, as it has historically been a blind spot for many organizations. Whether AI is involved or not, these customers often need guidance to establish a solid security foundation first. For those looking to embrace AI-driven security, my advice is to start in a controlled and transparent way. Ensure you understand how the AI operates, how data is handled, and where recommendations originate. Most importantly, avoid blindly feeding sensitive configuration data, logs, or system details into large language models that may train on your data. Security and governance must remain the priority.

Q: Over the next 12–24 months, what milestones or developments should the market watch for from SecurityBridge in the AI security space?

A: We continue to innovate at a very rapid pace. While I cannot disclose too many details yet, SecurityBridge is expanding its capabilities beyond traditional SAP security monitoring into areas such as real-time business process monitoring, fraud detection, and complex cross-system correlation of business events. These developments will allow organizations to move from purely technical security insights to a much deeper understanding of business risk within their SAP landscap.

About Ivan Mans

Ivan Mans is a seasoned SAP technology consultant who has worked in the SAP space since 1997, the early days of R/3. In 2012 Ivan co-founded SecurityBridge and in his current role as Co-Founder and Board Member he is a motivated driver who inspires people and pushes technology, contributing to the continuous innovation of the SecurityBridge Platform. In more recent years, Ivan has been a regular speaker at SAP events, evangelizing SAP security.



Closing the Strategy–Execution Gap: Why Portfolio Management Must Become Adaptive

Despite increased investment in enterprise transformation initiatives, a significant proportion of projects continue to fall short of delivering meaningful return on investment. According to recent research from Tempo Software, nearly one in three enterprise projects fails to translate strategic intent into measurable outcomes—highlighting a persistent gap between planning and execution.

This disconnect is not simply a matter of execution quality, but of structural limitations in how organizations plan, prioritize, and allocate resources. Fragmented systems, static planning cycles, and limited visibility across portfolios often lead to what many organizations experience as "strategic drift"—where execution gradually diverges from original business objectives.

In this Q&A, Vic Chynoweth explores why traditional planning models are struggling to keep pace with dynamic business environments, how high-performing organizations are adopting more adaptive approaches to portfolio management, and what role AI and scenario planning will play in closing the gap between strategy and results.



Interview with
Vic Chynoweth,
CEO,Tempo Software

Tempo

1. Tempo Software's 2026 State of Strategic Portfolio Management Report found that nearly one in three enterprise projects fail to deliver meaningful ROI. From your perspective, what are the underlying structural reasons behind this gap between investment and outcomes?

The gap between investment and outcomes is rarely about effort – it's structural. Many enterprises are still planning as if the environment is stable, while the environment in which they operate is anything but.

Many organizations still rely on annual planning cycles, fragmented tools, and siloed decision-making and data across departments. The result is that priorities accumulate faster than teams can realistically deliver. Work rarely gets retired, even when it no longer creates value, so resources end up spread across too many initiatives.

Over time, that creates what we call strategic drift – when the work teams execute gradually becomes disconnected from the strategy they originally set.

"Over time, that creates what we call strategic drift – when the work teams execute gradually becomes disconnected from the strategy they originally set."

2. The report highlights a significant difference between high-performing organizations and traditional planning environments in terms of realized strategic value. What planning and execution practices distinguish these high-performing organizations?

The highest-performing organizations treat planning as adaptive rather than static. They review their portfolios frequently, align teams around shared priorities, and use data to decide when to double down on initiatives – or, more importantly, when to stop them.

In our research, organizations with mature portfolio management practices achieve a substantial advantage in delivering measurable project ROI compared to those relying on traditional planning models.

What distinguishes these organizations isn't perfect forecasting. It's the ability to adjust quickly. They continuously reassess how they allocate their money, people, and time, treating planning as an ongoing decision-making process rather than a once-a-year exercise. By integrating portfolio data across teams, running scenario models before committing resources, and making disciplined decisions about which initiatives deserve continued investment, they stay aligned with strategy even as conditions change.

3. According to Tempo's research, only 37% of organizations report strong visibility across projects. Why does portfolio visibility remain such a persistent challenge for enterprise organizations?

Visibility problems usually stem from fragmentation. Most enterprises still manage portfolios across multiple systems, departments, and reporting structures that don't communicate with one another. Those silos create hidden bottlenecks and force leaders to make decisions based on incomplete or outdated information.

You can see this play out in software development projects. A leadership team may believe a strategic initiative is on track to meet a six-month development timeline ahead of launch, while the delivery team is already struggling with capacity constraints or shifting priorities. Without shared portfolio visibility, those issues often surface too late – after significant time and budget have already been committed.

Visibility isn't just about dashboards – it's about having a unified system of record for strategy, execution, and capacity so leaders can see how work is progressing and make informed decisions about where resources should continue, shift, or stop.

4. Many organizations say they prioritize adaptability, yet cross-functional alignment continues to be a major improvement area in the report. What does true alignment between strategy, planning, and execution look like in practice?

Alignment exists when strategy is directly connected to the work teams that are actually delivering, and when everyone is working from the same set of priorities.

Many organizations say they encourage adaptability, but when we look closer, planning

processes often remain isolated within individual teams or departments. That creates a disconnect where strategy is set in one place while execution decisions are made elsewhere.

In practice, real alignment means three things: shared portfolio visibility, integrated planning processes across teams, and a regular cadence of reviewing priorities based on execution data. That's what keeps strategy and delivery moving in the same direction.

5. The research identifies "understanding team capacity" as the number one barrier to executing strategy. Why is capacity planning still such a difficult problem for many enterprise teams?

Capacity planning is difficult because it forces organizations to confront tradeoffs they often try to avoid. Most teams don't actually lack ideas, but instead, they lack a realistic understanding of how those ideas translate into available time, skills, and resources across the organization.

In many enterprises, new initiatives are approved before leaders fully understand whether the organization has the capacity to deliver them. For example, many companies are exploring how to integrate AI into their products or services. While that's a worthwhile goal, the real question is whether the engineering team has the time and bandwidth to implement it in a way that delivers real value. Without visibility into workloads and priorities, teams end up spreading themselves too thin and trying to do everything at once.

High-performing organizations approach this differently. They treat capacity as a starting point for planning decisions, aligning priorities with what teams can realistically deliver and focusing resources on the initiatives that create the most strategic value.

"Closing the ROI gap isn't about launching more initiatives. It's about making disciplined decisions about which work should continue and which work should stop."

6. Scenario planning appears to be a major differentiator among high-performing organizations in the report. How are leading enterprises using scenario planning differently from traditional planning models?

Traditional planning assumes a single forecast will hold. Scenario planning assumes the opposite – that conditions will change.

Leading organizations use scenario planning tools to run "what-if" simulations around scope, timing, and resource constraints before committing to a plan. For example, they can model how redirecting engineers from one software initiative might affect other projects in the pipeline, or how delays, scope changes, or capacity gaps could impact delivery timelines and budgets.

By testing these scenarios in advance, leaders can anticipate risks, build contingency plans, and make more informed decisions about where to invest resources. Ultimately, that ability to adapt to changing conditions is why organizations that use scenario planning consistently see more projects deliver measurable ROI than those relying on static planning models.

7. The report also shows that organizations using scenario planning are significantly more likely to adopt AI in their planning processes. How do you see AI reshaping strategic portfolio management in the coming years?

The correlation between scenario planning and AI adoption isn't surprising when you think about what both actually require: the discipline to govern against uncertainty rather than pretend you have certainty.

What the data is really showing is a maturity signal. Organizations that have already built the muscle of asking 'what if' are the ones ready to act on AI-generated options when they surface. That's not a coincidence – it's the same underlying capability.

Where I think AI reshapes SPM over the next few years is less about the planning side and more about the execution side. The planning problem has always been relatively tractable – the hard problem is the gap between the plan you approved and what's actually happening in the portfolio three months later. That gap has always existed. What's changed is that AI agents are now executing work continuously, around the clock, in the same systems your teams use – and the governance tools most organizations rely on were built for a world where humans set the pace of execution and reported status on a weekly cycle.

The organizations that are going to win aren't necessarily the ones with the most sophisticated AI strategy. They're the ones that build the governance infrastructure to stay continuously aligned to the strategy they authorized – so when an AI agent consumes budget or advances an initiative in a direction that's drifted from the original intent, someone knows about it before it compounds.

The scenario planning finding in the research points at that readiness. But readiness to adopt AI in planning is a long way from having the infrastructure to govern AI in execution. That's the gap most leadership teams haven't fully reckoned with yet – and frankly, it's the gap that will separate the organizations that can answer their board's AI ROI questions in 2027 from the ones that can't.

8. Based on Tempo Software's work with enterprise customers, what capabilities are becoming most important in next-generation strategic portfolio management platforms?

The most important capabilities emerging in next-generation strategic portfolio management platforms center on helping organizations connect strategy to execution in a more integrated and adaptive way.

Our research shows that high-performing organizations share several common traits: they have integrated portfolio processes across teams, strong visibility into projects and capacity, and the ability to frequently reassess priorities as conditions change. Platforms that support scenario planning, real-time portfolio visibility, and faster reforecasting of budgets and resources are becoming essential to enabling that level of adaptability.

Modern platforms aren't just designed to track projects. They provide leaders with a clear view of how strategy, resources, and outcomes connect, enabling organizations to continuously evaluate whether the work underway still delivers the most value.

9. For CIOs, PMO leaders, and strategy executives reading ERPNews, what is the first practical step organizations should take if they want to close the ROI gap highlighted in the report?

The first step is surprisingly simple: review your portfolio more often.

One of the clearest findings in the research is what we call the "cancellation paradox." Organizations that frequently reassess their portfolios tend to cancel more projects and deliver higher overall ROI. That's because they stop investing in work that no longer delivers value and redirect resources to initiatives that do.

Closing the ROI gap isn't about launching more initiatives. It's about making disciplined decisions about which work should continue and which work should stop.

Tempo

About Vic Chynoweth

Vic Chynoweth is the CEO of Tempo Software, where he drives the company's vision to help organizations achieve digital maturity and strategic agility through adaptive portfolio management.





Navigating Industrial Trends: Meeting Varied Customer Demands with IFS Solutions

In the dynamic landscape of industrial manufacturing, a significant shift has been underway in recent years, marked by an evolution from standard customer requirements to increasingly demanding options and variety. This transformative trend has posed both challenges and opportunities for businesses across sectors, requiring innovative solutions to effectively manage diverse customer needs.

Over the past two decades, industries have witnessed a notable transition wherein customers are no longer satisfied with standardized products or services. Instead, they seek personalized solutions tailored to their specific preferences and requirements. This shift towards greater variety and customization has presented a considerable challenge for manufacturers, particularly those operating in project-based and make-to-order environments.

In project industries, such as construction, engineering, and infrastructure development, the concept of variety takes on a unique dimension. Each project is inherently distinct, with its own set of specifications, timelines, and challenges. For manufacturers serving these sectors, delivering customized solutions for every project presents a complex undertaking, requiring meticulous planning, resource allocation, and project management capabilities.

Similarly, in make-to-order industries encompassing sectors like automotive, furniture, and apparel, catering to diverse customer preferences means offering a vast array of product variations and configurations. With customers expecting a level of personalization that extends beyond color and size choices, manufacturers are tasked with providing thousands of possible combinations to meet individual needs effectively.

Amidst these challenges, organizations are turning to advanced Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) solutions to streamline operations, enhance efficiency, and meet evolving customer demands. In particular, IFS solutions tailored for project industries and make-to-order environments are proving instrumental in addressing the complexities associated with managing variety and customization effectively.

For project industries, *IFS* offers comprehensive project management capabilities, allowing organizations to plan, execute, and monitor projects with precision. By integrating project planning, resource management, and financial tracking functionalities, IFS solutions empower businesses to navigate the intricacies of project-based operations seamlessly. With features such as resource optimization, progress tracking, and real-



Article by
Göksel Sanbay,
Managing Partner,
GUMA Business Solutions

time analytics, manufacturers can efficiently manage diverse project requirements while ensuring timely delivery and cost-effectiveness.

In make-to-order industries, IFS provides robust configurator tools that enable manufacturers to create and manage vast product catalogs with ease. Through intuitive interfaces and rule-based configuration logic, organizations can facilitate thousands of product variations while ensuring accuracy and consistency across orders. By automating the configuration process and streamlining order fulfillment workflows, IFS solutions help manufacturers accelerate lead times, minimize errors, and enhance customer satisfaction.

> "Customers are no longer satisfied with standardized products or services. Instead, they seek personalized solutions tailored to their specific preferences and requirements."

Moreover, IFS solutions offer a unified platform that integrates critical business functions, including sales, procurement, production, and inventory management. By centralizing data and processes, organizations gain visibility and control over their entire value chain, enabling seamless collaboration, informed decision-making, and improved resource utilization.

As industrial trends continue to evolve towards greater variety and customization, the role of advanced ERP solutions like IFS becomes increasingly indispensable. By providing tailored solutions for project-based and make-to-order industries, IFS empowers organizations to thrive in a dynamic marketplace, delivering value-driven outcomes while exceeding customer expectations.

In conclusion, the shift towards demanding more options and variety represents a defining trend in industrial manufacturing, posing significant challenges for businesses worldwide. However, with the right technology partners and innovative solutions, organizations can embrace this trend as an opportunity for growth and differentiation. By leveraging IFS solutions tailored for project industries and make-to-order environments, manufacturers can effectively manage complexity, drive operational excellence, and deliver exceptional value to customers in an increasingly diverse and dynamic marketplace.

About Göksel Sanbay

With over 20 years of professional expertise in the IT software industry, including an impressive 19-year tenure in a managerial position at IFS Turkey, Göksel Sanbay brings a wealth of experience to the table. Throughout his career, he has successfully managed dozens of hands-on ERP, EAM, and ESM projects, leaving a trail of satisfied clients and successful implementations. Notably, he has also excelled as a solution architect, leaving his mark on various reference IFS projects. His passion for innovation and driving efficiency has led him to embark on a new journey. In July 2022, he founded GUMA Business Solutions, a dynamic consulting company exclusively dedicated to crafting cutting-edge business software solutions, with a specialization in IFS Applications. At GUMA, we thrive on challenges and aspire to take businesses to new heights through tailor-made software solutions that streamline operations, boost productivity, and empower growth.

About GUMA Business Solutions

GUMA Business Solutions is a technology partner with over 20 years of experience in the IFS ecosystem and strong expertise in global project delivery. GUMA helps organizations simplify business processes, integrate systems, and improve operational efficiency through IFS solutions.

Headquartered in Türkiye, GUMA delivers projects for multinational companies across Europe, the Middle East, Asia, and the Americas. With experience gained across different regions, GUMA manages complex business environments and delivers IFS projects in line with international standards. GUMA provides end-to-end services including consulting, implementation, integration, upgrades, system efficiency assessments, support services, and user training. The company's goal is not only to implement systems, but to ensure customers achieve measurable and sustainable value from their IFS investments. Through its product development activities at Bilişim Vadisi, GUMA develops integration platforms, data solutions, and AI-driven applications. This approach helps customers prepare for both current and future digital business needs. With global project experience and a results-oriented mindset, GUMA is a trusted IFS partner.

Article by Göksel Sanbay



From ERP Data to Customer Experience: The New Competitive Layer in the Service Economy

The shift toward a service-driven economy is changing how organizations compete, often in ways that are less visible but more impactful than traditional product differentiation.

Increasingly, the defining factor is not what companies sell, but how effectively they respond—how quickly they can provide accurate information, how consistently they deliver on expectations, and how clearly they communicate with customers.

At the center of this shift is ERP.

Where Customer Experience Meets Operational Reality

Customer experience is often discussed in terms of front-end systems—CRM platforms, digital channels, and engagement tools. But in practice, most customer interactions depend on something deeper: operational data.

Questions around order status, delivery timelines, availability, or billing cannot be answered reliably without access to real-time information from across the business. This includes inventory, logistics, finance, and procurement—domains traditionally managed within ERP systems.

As a result, ERP is becoming increasingly relevant to customer-facing processes, even if it remains largely behind the scenes.

> "The challenge is not availability, but usability."

The Gap Between Data and Action

Many organizations already have the necessary data within their ERP environments. The challenge is not availability, but usability.

Customer-facing teams often operate with partial visibility, relying on manual checks or delayed updates to confirm information. This introduces friction into interactions that are expected to be immediate and precise.

The consequence is not necessarily failure, but inconsistency—responses that are correct, but not timely; helpful, but not always confident.

Closing this gap between data and action is becoming a priority. It requires not only better system integration, but also a shift in how ERP data is accessed and used across the organization.

ERP as an Enabler of Consistency

In a service economy, consistency plays a central role in building trust. Customers expect reliable answers and predictable outcomes, particularly when interactions involve multiple touchpoints.

ERP systems provide the foundation for this consistency by acting as a shared source of truth. When data flows effectively across departments, organizations are better positioned to align internal processes with external commitments.

This alignment reduces the need for verification, minimizes discrepancies, and supports more confident communication with customers.

A Subtle but Important Shift

ERP is not becoming a customer-facing system in the traditional sense. Its role remains largely operational. However, its influence on customer experience is becoming more direct.

The ability to respond accurately and in real time increasingly depends on how well ERP data is integrated into day-to-day workflows.

In that sense, ERP is evolving from a system that records what has happened to one that supports what happens next.

And in a service-driven environment, that distinction is becoming increasingly important.

ERPNEWS



Article by ERP News Editorial Team



Enhance customer satisfaction with ERP data visibility

ERP gives organizations a holistic view of customer data, allowing them to better understand customers' needs and deliver personalized experiences.

Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) is crucial in driving customer satisfaction. ERP technology provides a centralized platform for managing customer data and interactions by integrating various business functions and processes. This functionality gives organizations a holistic view of customer data, allowing them to better understand customers' needs and deliver personalized experiences.

An ERP solution will streamline customer-facing processes such as sales, marketing and customer service. By automating these business functions, organizations can enhance efficiency, reduce errors and improve response times – which leads to increased customer satisfaction.

Moreover, ERP systems enable businesses to track customer interactions and gather valuable data. This data is then analyzed to identify trends, preferences and pain points, allowing organizations to proactively address customer needs and deliver better products and services. Overall, ERP technology provides a foundation for enhancing customer satisfaction by streamlining processes, providing insights from customer data and facilitating personalized experiences.

The role of ERP in customer satisfaction

One of the key advantages of an ERP solution is its ability to consolidate and analyze vast amounts of customer data. Organizations can leverage this data to gain valuable insights into customer behavior, preferences and buying patterns. Many ERP systems include *customer relationship management (CRM)* capabilities to help businesses build relationships and improve customer retention.

ERP systems track customer interactions across various touchpoints, including sales, marketing, and customer support. The consolidation of all of this information allows businesses to create a unified customer profile, which can be used to provide personalized recommendations, targeted marketing campaigns and timely support.

In addition, ERP technology enables businesses to analyze customer data in real time, facilitating quick decision-making and proactive customer engagement. For example, you can identify and resolve customer issues before they escalate. With ERP data visibility, organizations are not only able to enhance the overall customer experience, but they can also routinely build stronger relationships and drive customer loyalty.

Improving data visibility and accessibility

Data visibility and accessibility are critical for delivering exceptional customer service. ERP systems improve data visibility by centralizing customer information and making it easily accessible to relevant stakeholders.

With an ERP solution, businesses can eliminate data silos and ensure that customer data is consistently updated and remains available to appropriate staff. This improved accessibility enables a seamless flow of information, empowering employees to deliver prompt and effective service.

Furthermore, ERP systems enable organizations to enhance data accuracy and integrity. Businesses can minimize errors and ensure customer data is reliable and up-to-date by automating data entry and validation processes. Not only does this real-time data increase visibility for your staff, but it also instills confidence in customers.

Streamlining customer service processes with ERP

ERP systems offer powerful tools and functionalities that streamline customer service processes to help users deliver exceptional support. Organizations can automate various activities, such as ticket management, issue tracking and incident resolution. This automation enables faster response times, reduces manual errors and quickly addresses customer concerns.

Additionally, ERP systems integrate customer service data with other business functions like sales and inventory management. This integration facilitates a better flow of information, allowing customer service representatives to access real-time data and provide accurate support. ERP systems can also promote self-service options for customers, such as online portals and knowledge bases. These self-service tools empower customers to find answers to any queries independently, improving their overall experience and freeing up support team members.

> "ERP technology provides a centralized platform for managing customer data and interactions… giving organizations a holistic view of customer data, allowing them to better understand customers' needs and deliver personalized experiences."

Utilizing analytics to drive customer-centric strategies

Analytics plays a crucial role in establishing a customer-centric approach. ERP systems provide robust analytics capabilities that generate advanced business insights from customer information to help users make data-driven decisions.

With ERP analytics, businesses can analyze customer preferences and purchase history to identify trends in behavior. This information can be used to develop targeted communications, personalized product recommendations and optimized pricing strategies.

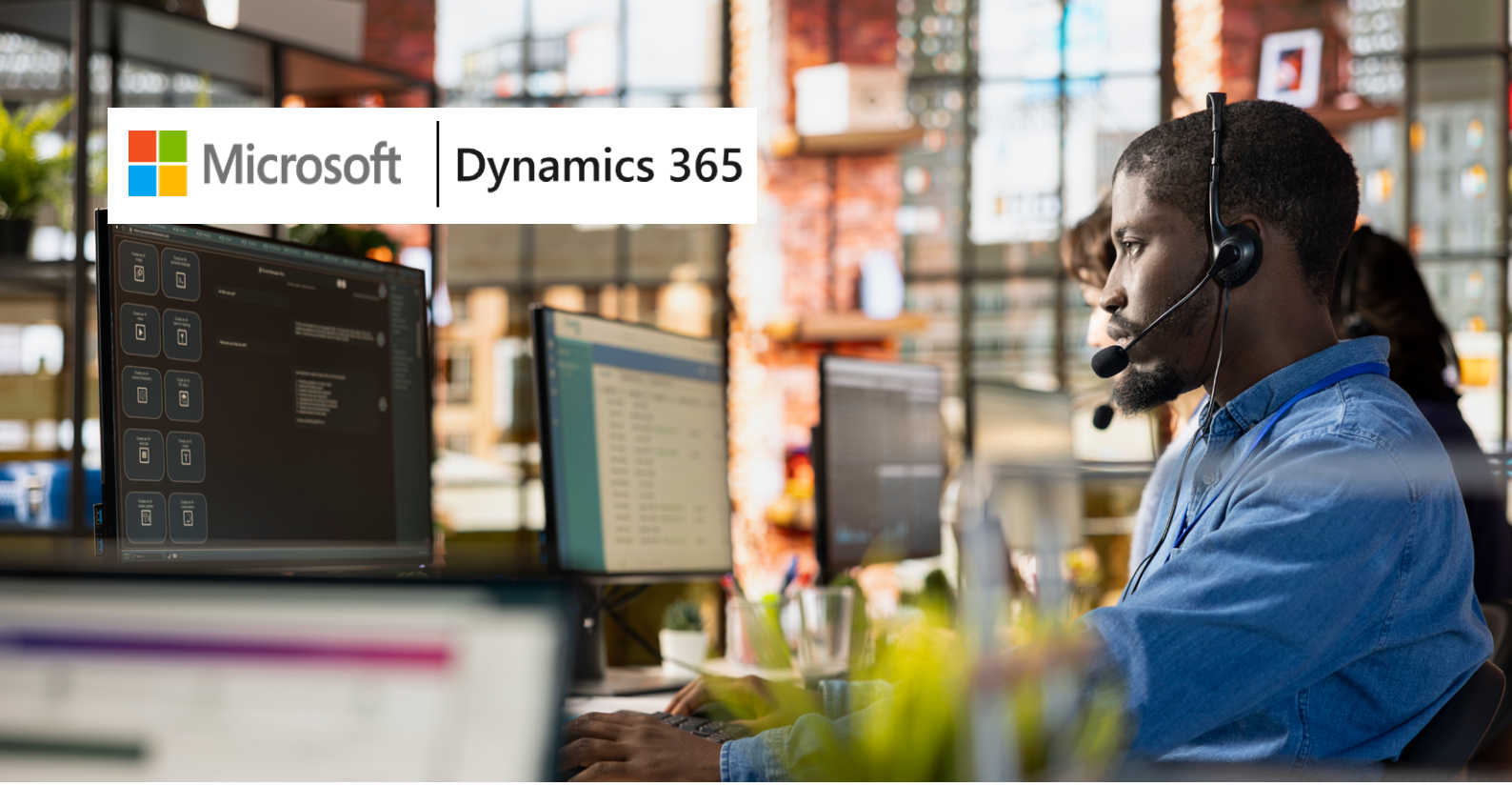
Furthermore, ERP systems enable organizations to measure customer satisfaction and gather feedback through surveys or other evaluation tools. This data can then be analyzed to identify areas for improvement and implement customer-centric initiatives.

By utilizing analytics, organizations can align their strategies with customer needs and preferences, improving customer satisfaction and boosting business growth. *Kerridge Commercial Systems (KCS)* understands the need to consistently deliver superior customer service. Our *fully integrated trading and ERP system* is designed for distributors, wholesalers, suppliers and retailers. Combining an array of modules, the solution helps you source effectively, stock efficiently, sell profitably and service competitively.

Contact us today to learn more, or *request a free demo* to experience the power of KCS ERP technology.

Kerridge Commercial Systems

Article by Kerridge Commercial Systems



Microsoft named a Leader in The Forrester Wave™: Customer Service Solutions, Q1 2026

As organizations continue to seek ways to differentiate through exceptional customer service, many are turning to emerging agentic AI capabilities as a catalyst for transformation. However, the promise of agentic service—better experiences, greater efficiency, and continuous improvement—can only be realized when AI is deeply embedded and seamlessly orchestrated across every workflow and channel. This requires more than just automation; it demands a unified context and intelligence layer that travels with the work.

At Microsoft, we believe the future of customer service is one where *Microsoft Dynamics 365* becomes the context and intelligence platform for Copilot and AI agents, grounding every interaction in rich customer data and business processes. With Dynamics 365 providing composable skills across the tools people already use every day, we enable intelligent, proactive self-service and augment human capabilities. This empowers service reps, supervisors, and leaders to amplify their impact, delivering more consistent, personalized, and effective service at scale.

With *Microsoft Dynamics 365 Customer Service*, we're already delivering on this vision, helping our customers achieve tangible business outcomes with agentic service. Dynamics 365 Customer Service combines our latest AI advances with robust core capabilities, all deeply integrated with the entire Microsoft portfolio across *Microsoft 365*, Dynamics 365, *Microsoft Power Platform*, *Microsoft Azure*, and the *Microsoft Fabric* data platform.



Article by
Deva Rajamohan,
Corporate Vice President,
Dynamics 365 Customer Experience

Dynamics 365

Today, we're excited to announce that Microsoft has been named a Leader in *The Forrester Wave™: Customer Service Solutions, Q1 2026.*

Delivering measurable outcomes with agentic service

Our customers and the industry at large recognize we're leading the way in agentic service innovation and enterprise adoption.

In Dynamics 365 Customer Service, AI agents orchestrate context and automate workflows in simple and complex inquiries across voice and digital channels. Agents can handle routine interactions and execute actions autonomously within robust governance and compliance guardrails. *Customer Intent Agent* continuously discovers new intents from conversations across channels, enabling evergreen self-service.

Agents like *Case Management* Agent automate repetitive tasks and integrate with Copilot to surface next-best actions during human-assisted interactions, helping reps offer rapid resolutions.

Importantly, these service agents create self-learning loops, helping improve resolution accuracy and speed. This continuous improvement extends to service reps as well. *Quality Evaluation Agent* monitors service quality in AI-powered and human-assisted interactions to enhance agent performance and recommend coaching opportunities for reps. Meanwhile, *Customer Knowledge Management Agent* adapts knowledge bases, updating content and generating new articles based on fresh insights or recurring issues.

This powerful combination of agentic and human service is orchestrated through Agent Hub, which routes tasks to the most appropriate AI agent or service rep and optimizes task distribution based on real-time KPI results.

Customers like *Visa* are saving time by using the Customer Knowledge Management Agent to turn customer conversation data into knowledge articles.

> "Auto-knowledge generation reduces article creation time by 88%, from four hours down to 30 minutes per article. And by mining 7,000 cases, we've been able to produce 700 knowledge articles, just for one line of business and we continue to accelerate knowledge creation at scale."
>
> -Lidia Daldoss,
> Vice President, Service Digitization & AI Acceleration, Visa

Accelerating successful AI adoption

Despite the numerous benefits on offer, navigating the AI adoption journey can be extremely complex for many organizations. Sometimes there's uncertainty about where to start, or a lack of clarity about how to get a measurable return on AI investments.

Microsoft simplifies AI adoption, enabling organizations to quickly realize significant efficiency and productivity gains in customer service operations. We offer structured guidance and proven methodologies to help accelerate adoption success for organizations at every level of AI maturity.

Our customers particularly value the *FastTrack for Dynamics 365* program, which is built on our *Success By Design* framework that paves the way for effective solution design, deployment, and operation. With proactive, expert guidance, organizations can confidently implement an agentic service platform based on advanced technologies that are already delivering tangible business outcomes for enterprises worldwide.

Enhancing core customer service capabilities

While AI agents automate and orchestrate workflows, and Copilot provides contextual guidance for reps, Dynamics 365 Customer Service also offers a strong set of core capabilities.

Intelligent, omnichannel routing, for example, is a cornerstone of effective service, directing inquiries to wherever customers will find the fastest path to resolution. Similarly, Microsoft's longstanding strengths in business intelligence, process management, and forecasting and scheduling provide an essential foundation for efficient operations.

Integration with Microsoft Teams also enables seamless collaboration across service, sales, and marketing, streamlining issue resolution and highlighting opportunities to enhance the end-to-end customer experience.

Article by Deva Rajamohan

Another notable strength of Dynamics 365 Customer Service is its extensibility, both within Microsoft's suite of business applications and productivity tools, and across our extensive partner ecosystem and third-party marketplace.

"The biggest impact of Dynamics 365 is that the customer information is more centralized, which saves time and gives us a 360-degree view of the customer."

-Petra Velten,
Business Expert Customer Service,
Lufthansa Cargo

"With Dynamics 365, our team has a single pane of glass with all customer information and tasks in one place. The Rheem knowledge base within Dynamics 365 Customer Service also gives [reps] fast, easy access to specific product information during customer calls."

-Jordan Bond,
Senior Manager, Product Owner, Dynamics Service,
Rheem

Amplify your impact with Dynamics 365 Customer Service

We're delighted to be recognized as a Leader in The Forrester Wave™, but this is just the beginning of the agentic service era that Microsoft and our partners are shaping. We'll continue to make significant R&D investments that help accelerate AI breakthroughs and work alongside our pioneering customers to define the future of service.

Explore how you can boost efficiency and enhance service in every channel:

Dynamics 365 Customer Service
Dynamics 365 Contact Center

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How Agentic AI is Turning 'Systems of Record' into 'Systems of Action' for Manufacturers

Manufacturing is in the middle of a once-in-a-generation reset. Tariffs, reshoring and legislation like the CHIPS and Science Act are restructuring supply chains and driving billions in new investment.

Across the U.S., new plants are being built. But the pressure is just as real as the opportunity. Volatile demand, persistent labor shortages and a global market that favors whoever moves fastest.

In a *recent Gartner piece*, QAD | Redzone CEO Sanjay Brahmawar explored why this moment demands a new kind of ERP. Gartner's Greg Leiter and Denis Torii echoed similar sentiments in the research note, *Innovation Insight: AI Is on the Cusp of Reshaping ERP*. Combined, the articles are a powerful indicator that the systems manufacturers have long relied on are fundamentally unprepared for the complexity they now face.



Article by
Caleb Finch,
QAD | Redzone's Corporate Marketing team

The solution isn't a better version of the same tool. It's a new operating model entirely.

The Problem with Traditional ERP for Modern Manufacturing

ERP was never designed to make decisions; it was designed to track them. A transaction happens, the system records it. An inventory level drops, someone notices and reacts. A production schedule changes, someone rebuilds it manually. Every step involves a person in the loop, which was fine when manufacturing moved at a certain speed. It's less fine now.

"Traditional ERP was built for structure and control, not for the pace and complexity manufacturers face today. These systems track data but don't act on it," shared Sanjay.

The problem isn't a lack of investment or effort. It's simply that legacy ERP systems, especially those still running on-premise, weren't built to sense changes in real time or reason through options. The result is slower decision-making, reliance on manual processes and a disconnect between the speed of the market and the speed of the business.

What Makes Agentic AI Different?

Most manufacturers are familiar with AI and using it in their operations to some degree – with mixed results. A great example of this, according to Gartner's Greg Leiter and Denis Torii, is generative AI. There are some real use cases, such as supplier communications and drafting job posts, but the technology is fundamentally reactive.

Agentic AI is different because an AI agent doesn't wait to be asked. It perceives what's happening, reasons toward an objective and acts, escalating to a human where appropriate. Leiter and Torii describe this as a spectrum from low to high agency, and we're still in the earlier stages. That said, the gap between where Agentic AI is today and where a fully autonomous system would be is closing faster than most enterprise software has historically moved.

"Traditional ERP was built for structure and control, not for the pace and complexity manufacturers face today. These systems track data but don't act on it."

And that's significant, explained Sanjay, because agentic AI is so much more than a layer of intelligence. It's an operating model for how ERP works. Embedded AI agents can detect anomalies, simulate outcomes, recommend actions and even execute next-best steps autonomously, escalating only when needed.

The Value of Agentic AI on the Factory Floor

The power of agentic AI is visible in several critical aspects of manufacturing operations. Supply chain management is one of the most immediate. AI agents can identify unusual supplier transactions and manage the initial resolution steps independently, empowering procurement leaders to focus on other important tasks.

Agentic AI is also a game changer on the labor side, which is a massive opportunity considering the industry is facing a *3.8 million skills gap by 2033*. It can help with simple tasks like automating job posts and candidate sourcing, but also address a much larger challenge: preparing the next generation of manufacturing workers. Younger workers demand technology that feels as intuitive as the apps and devices they interface with every day, making outdated systems a recruiting liability. Modern, conversational AI interfaces are essential.

On the plant floor, agentic AI can model multiple production scenarios, create new schedules in response to shifting demand and surface actionable insights from data that would otherwise sit in a dashboard waiting for human review. In an environment where keeping up with delivery demands and shifting customer expectations are key, agentic AI provides the competitive edge that modern manufacturers need.

For new facilities, the technology is especially transformational. Manufacturers using QAD's Agentic AI capabilities have gone live in 90 days. Traditional ERP implementations at greenfield sites have routinely taken six to eighteen months.

> “Agentic AI is so much more than a layer of intelligence. It’s an operating model for how ERP works.”

Gartner’s Hot Take on Agentic AI in ERP

The market data makes the future of agentic AI clear. In 2024, *14% of ERP spending* went to applications with GenAI or agentic AI capabilities. Gartner forecasts that number to reach *62% by 2027*. That’s not gradual adoption – it’s a market undergoing massive change in a three-year window.

Gartner’s Greg Leiter and Denis Torii also had some good advice for manufacturers considering agentic AI: keep an eye out for “agent-washing” – the practice of relabeling chatbots or basic automation as AI agents. Instead, anchor every vendor evaluation to a specific, proven use case. And don’t forget that quality is king. Agentic AI with weak data governance doesn’t just underperform. It can compound bad decisions faster than a human would.

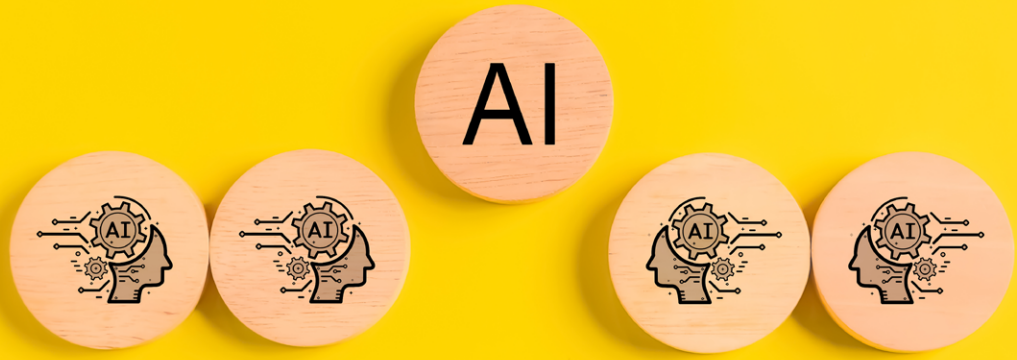
For most manufacturers, the practical question is where to start. Gartner recommends identifying the specific processes that cost the most in delay or manual effort, then mapping them to available AI use cases with proven outcomes.

Agentic AI in ERP, like *Champion AI*, is no longer theoretical. The competitive gap between manufacturers using traditional ERP and intelligent systems like *Adaptive ERP* will continue to widen. The real question is whether to move now or wait for competitors to make the move first.

About Caleb Finch

Caleb is a member of QAD | Redzone’s Corporate Marketing team and avid follower of emerging technologies. When he’s not managing the company’s corporate content programs, he can be found exploring mountain biking trails, snowboarding or playing pickleball.





Price the Work, Not the Workers: Why Enterprise Software Must Catch Up to the AI Era

How many times have you seen your software bill climb just because you brought in specialist contractors who need to access your system? For too long, enterprise software pricing has rewarded headcount, rather than the value brought by the industrial operation. That approach might have worked in the age of spreadsheets and desktops, but it doesn't reflect how industrial organizations actually run. There is absolutely no denying that we are no longer in the world of the 1990's.

Industrial Operations Have Outgrown Legacy Models

It's time to hit the reset button. In asset-intensive industries, business impact comes from assets, manufacturing production, and operational scale. Headcount is no longer the best measure of value. Yet, most pricing models still cling to the past, creating friction for organizations that want to innovate and grow at the pace we are now living in. To quote our CEO, Mark Moffat, speed is life, and that really does ring true for industrial organizations that want to survive and grow in our current climate. But not speed for its own sake. Listening, deciding, and delivering value faster is what separates winners from the rest in mission-critical environments and that's what we are doing.



Article by
Melanie Karunaratne,
Senior Product Marketing Director

AI Has Changed the Economics of Work

The rise of Industrial AI and automation is fundamentally changing how work gets done. As technology takes on more operational tasks, the old model of pricing by user becomes increasingly disconnected from real value creation. Industrial Value Pricing is designed for a world where AI, automation, and digital workflows drive outcomes. It removes the financial barriers that have traditionally limited AI adoption, giving organizations the freedom to apply AI wherever it drives operational value.

I've seen too many organizations stall their digital transformation because every new user triggers another licensing headache. That's why we're introducing a new pricing model, Industrial Value Pricing. Instead of tying software investment to the number of users, we align it with the operational units that matter: assets, fleets, infrastructure, and production environments. Pricing should reflect how work is performed and where value is created. This shift supports how industrial companies actually scale and challenges long held assumptions about how industrial software should be packaged and priced.

A Predictable Model Built Around How Operations Actually Run

Seat-based pricing often means costs rise with headcount, budgets become unpredictable, and expanding automation or digital workflows increases licensing costs. That disconnect can limit growth and efficiency. A model tied to operational footprint enables predictable budgeting and a more direct link between technology investment and business outcomes. Our model removes a longstanding tradeoff in enterprise software: choosing between investing in your operations and controlling software costs.

> "Pricing should reflect how work is performed and where value is created."

Industrial Value Pricing introduces a new economic model for industrial software, one that scales only when a customer's operational footprint grows. An increase in employees, contractors, or additional processes does not increase cost. Instead, organizations invest in based on the operational work being managed through operational metrics that are defined upfront and designed to be measurable, auditable, and provide greater transparency. This approach ensures software spend aligns directly with real operational value. As IFS technology increasingly drives the work and outcomes inside industrial operations, the pricing model now reflects where that value is created.

IFS technology now directly drives industrial work and outcomes, which means the pricing model must match the reality of where value is created.

Consider an airline that pays based on the aircraft or fleet assets being maintained. A utility pays based on the grid infrastructure and service assets it operates. A manufacturer pays based on production assets or plants. As operations grow, you can budget in a predictable and transparent way.

IFS Cloud software captures these operational structures natively, making Industrial Value Pricing practical and scalable.

Ready to Rethink

Organizations that stick with legacy pricing often face hidden costs and slower innovation, especially as automation and asset complexity increase. Moving to operational pricing gives leaders the freedom to invest in what drives business outcomes and scale without barriers.

Is your pricing model holding back your ambitions? How would pricing based on operational footprint change your approach to digital transformation? I invite you to share your perspective below or reach out to start the conversation.

About Melanie Karunaratne

Melanie Karunaratne is the Senior Director of Product Marketing at IFS and is responsible for product messaging and positioning. With her team, she helps buyers, sellers, and service providers understand how IFS solves commercial problems and creates customer value. Melanie is a seasoned marketer whose commercial experience spans hi-tech start-ups, scale-up, and global enterprises across a wide range of B2B tech areas, including CRM, IT service management, asset management, security, application development software, and semiconductor.



The Rise of the Agentic Government

New research: Majority of government leaders say they are outpacing the private sector when it comes to AI

Long viewed as digital laggards, government agencies are emerging as pioneers of the agentic era. A new IDC study of U.S. federal, state, and local government leaders and decision makers reveals that 82% of government organizations surveyed have already adopted *AI agents*, and leaders anticipate a fundamental transformation — driven by AI — in how the public sector operates.

Agencies are moving to leverage *agentic AI* — autonomous digital workers that can reason and take action — to drive productivity and efficiency at scale, and 60% of government leaders believe they are significantly or somewhat ahead of the private sector in agentic AI adoption. These leaders see AI agents as a catalyst for a more responsive, mission-driven government; furthermore, 83% of those surveyed say AI agents are the key to transforming their organizational structure.

"Government leaders no longer see AI as a back-office experiment. They see it as a critical pillar of national competitiveness and service delivery. In today's landscape, integrating agentic AI is now mission critical." – Paul Tatum, EVP, Public Sector Solutions, Salesforce

The Agentic Era Will be More Transformational than the Internet

Government leaders see this shift as a generational milestone. A majority (56%) of those surveyed believe agentic AI will have a more profound impact on government than the rise of the internet:

- 56% say AI will have a greater impact than the internet and cloud computing; 51% say it will have a greater impact than the PC; and 46% say it will be more transformative than the smartphone.

- 71% of organizations plan to increase their use of agentic AI in the next year alone.

- 94% believe AI agents will fundamentally transform the nature of work.

The move toward agentic AI isn't just about efficiency — it's about delivering mission-critical outcomes and maintaining a national advantage. For government leaders, it is a strategic imperative: 83% believe agentic AI will transform service delivery and operating models, and almost as many (80%) believe agentic AI will be critical to competing in the current geopolitical environment.

- 85% of leaders estimate AI already saves them up to 45% their time in a typical workweek, signaling massive efficiency gains for government work.
- 63% of leaders believe agentic AI will have a greater impact on government than generative AI alone, signaling the value of systems that can execute complex tasks autonomously.
- Leaders expect AI agents to drive the biggest impact in high-stakes mission areas, including social benefits management (24%), public safety (22%), and defense-specific applications (22%) like predictive intelligence and command systems.
- Fraud, waste, and abuse detection (44%), followed by cybersecurity threat management (36%), was identified as the top mission-specific use case for AI agents.

Agentic AI is also expected to fundamentally reshape the daily *responsiveness* and *effectiveness* of government agencies. When asked to choose where AI agents will have the biggest impact, leaders reported the following areas:

- 42% of leaders reported that AI agents will drive increased workforce productivity.
- 41% believe agentic AI will make the government more proactive and responsive to citizen needs.
- 31% see agentic AI as the key to faster program and service innovation.
- 30% reported agentic AI will improve decision-making.
- 28% believe AI agents will enable them to reduce the cost to serve.

The Government Workforce of 2030

Government leaders and decision makers widely view AI as a catalyst for a total organizational and workforce overhaul:

- 89% agree that the future of the public sector involves humans working side-by-side with AI agents. In fact, 74% expect most human employees to have an AI agent reporting to them within the next five years.
- 83% stated agentic AI will transform their organizational structure, and 74% believe it will spur the creation of entirely new teams and departments.
- 59% reported that agentic AI will actually increase the size of certain teams and departments, and 57% believe AI will increase the need for people in leadership positions.
- 77% agreed that AI agents will empower them to move employees into more relevant and satisfying roles, which 80% stated would enhance the workforce's human-centric soft skills.

Illustrating the scale of this workforce transformation, an overwhelming 91% of leaders reported that the vast majority of their workforce (up to 74%) will step into brand-new roles, while 92% expect a similar portion of existing jobs to be fundamentally transformed.

- In the next five years, agencies expect to hire the most for AI management and strategy (29%), IT and technical support (22%), and AI governance and ethics (17%).
- The current roles expected to see the most substantial change include IT (29%), administration and clerical (22%), and management and leadership (19%).
- To thrive, leaders say the workforce must prioritize AI literacy, operational integration of AI, responsible and ethical AI use, and skills that support agency innovation and culture.

"We are past the point of experimentation; the agentic era has arrived. For government leaders to truly deliver, they must prioritize the human and strategic elements — bringing their workforce along and selecting the right foundation. Since nearly 40% of leaders identify trusted partners as their most critical success factor, the focus must be on vendors with a proven track record and the unified platform and ecosystem that can bridge the gap between AI's potential and the government's mission."

-Paul Tatum,
EVP,
Public Sector

Article from Salesforce



From Cloud to Collaboration: How ERP Is Becoming the Enterprise Coordination Layer

Cloud adoption has been one of the defining trends in ERP over the past decade. Organizations have moved away from on-premise systems toward more flexible, scalable platforms that are easier to maintain and extend.

While this transition has addressed many technical challenges, it has not fully resolved a more fundamental issue: coordination across the enterprise.

Beyond Access: The Need for Alignment

Cloud ERP has made data more accessible, but accessibility alone does not guarantee alignment.

Many organizations continue to experience disconnects between functions. Sales teams operate with different assumptions than operations, service teams lack full visibility into financial or supply chain constraints, and decisions are often made based on incomplete or delayed information.

These issues are not necessarily the result of missing data, but of fragmented workflows.

ERP as a Shared Operational Context

The role of ERP is gradually shifting from centralizing data to enabling a shared operational context across the business.

This means that different teams are not only accessing the same information, but doing so in a way that supports coordinated action. Sales commitments can be aligned with operational capacity, service teams can respond with full context, and finance can operate with visibility into ongoing activities.

When this level of alignment is achieved, the impact is noticeable. Processes become more predictable, communication becomes more consistent, and decision-making becomes more efficient.

Reducing Friction Across Functions

Organizational friction often arises from differences in perspective. Each function operates with its own priorities and data points, which can lead to misalignment even when systems are technically connected.

ERP provides a mechanism to reduce this friction by establishing a common structure for data and workflows. It allows different parts of the organization to operate from the same baseline, reducing the need for reconciliation and revalidation.

This is particularly valuable in environments where timing and accuracy are critical, and where delays can directly impact customer outcomes.

> "Accessibility alone does not guarantee alignment."

The Role of Embedded Intelligence

As ERP systems evolve, intelligence—particularly in the form of AI—is becoming more embedded within workflows.

However, the value of this intelligence depends on how it is applied. Insights are only useful when they are delivered within the context of decision-making, not as separate analytical outputs.

Embedding intelligence into ERP workflows allows organizations to identify issues earlier, respond more effectively, and automate routine coordination tasks without losing control.

From Infrastructure to Coordination

The move to the cloud was primarily about infrastructure. The next phase of ERP evolution is focused on coordination.

Organizations are increasingly looking for systems that not only store and process data, but also help align people, processes, and decisions in real time.

In this context, ERP is taking on a broader role. It is no longer just a system of record, but a platform that supports how the business operates as a whole.

That shift—from infrastructure to coordination—is what defines the next stage of ERP development.



Article by ERP News Editorial Team



Before and After: How AI in Transportation and Logistics Enables Smarter and Smoother Operations

I've spent most of my career in transportation and logistics, working with operations teams, dispatchers, planners and drivers who keep freight and deliveries moving every day. And in every conversation I have now—whether it's with a prospect just starting their journey or a longtime customer—artificial intelligence (AI) comes up. Not because it's trendy, but because it's the future of the industry.

But while everyone can see the theoretical benefits, not everyone can easily imagine how AI makes a tangible difference by solving day-to-day problems. Therefore, I'm always looking for ways to explain the value of AI in transportation and logistics, and I've found a good analogy really does the trick.

So think of your transportation business like a brain. Your core systems and functions—*enterprise resource planning (ERP)*, carrier management, vehicle maintenance, driver scheduling, *route planning* and so on—is a mass of neurons making up one of the major brain regions. The integrations between your business solutions are the synapses, connecting those masses of neurons so they can talk to each other.

AI is the spark that sets all those connections firing, extending the information stored in the various systems across your entire organization, automating processes and providing actionable guidance. Agents monitor for triggers, issue alerts and facilitate communication between systems. *Intelligent workflows* handle routine



Article by
Jim Endres
Regional Account Director,
Aptean

processes to save your staff time. *Generative AI* analyzes your data and surfaces insights.

All of that is to say, when you combine an integrated tech stack with AI in logistics, your operation just works better. Instead of wrestling with siloed tools, you get a clear, unified picture of your routes, assets and data—everything you need in one place.

To illustrate my point, I'll first give a brief explanation of the key elements of integrated AI platforms, and then we'll take a look at a few "before and after" scenarios in transportation operations where the technology enables you to turn typical logistics challenges into opportunities. I'll also share more with you about how Aptean and our *AppCentral* platform can help your business accelerate for the next generation of transportation management.

"ERP was never designed to make decisions; it was designed to track them."

The Elements of AI Platforms That Make These "Afters" Possible

Before we jump into our scenarios, let's make sure you're familiar with the qualities and tools of AI platforms that make these possibilities into reality. These are the technologies that keep everything connected, responsive and intelligent, making the "after" in every scenario possible.

- ***Integrated solutions:***

What used to be disconnected point systems now operate as a unified ecosystem where information flows seamlessly.

- ***Connected data lake:***

All systems feed into one secure and centralized source of truth, keeping your data protected, eliminating silos and ensuring that every team sees the same real-time data.

- ***Vertically focused AI:***

AI is designed for transportation and logistics realities—tight timelines, shifting conditions, fast decisions—so the guidance fits how the industry works.

- ***Natural language queries:***

Users can ask questions in everyday language and get answers instantly, without needing deep system or database expertise.

- ***Automated workflows:***

Cross-system processes run autonomously with human supervision, reducing manual steps and giving teams meaningful time back.

- ***AI agents:***

Configurable agents carry out tasks, relay data between systems and support automated workflows to keep operations moving.

- ***Role-based workspaces:***

Each employee gets a personalized interface that brings the tools, alerts and data that matter to them together in one place.

- ***Predictive intelligence:***

AI uses historical patterns, real-time data and market forecasts to deliver accurate predictions that enable smarter decision-making.

Taken together, these capabilities form the foundation of an AI-powered operation—one where your people stay focused, your systems stay synchronized, and your business moves with clarity instead of chaos. Now let's dive into what that actually means for your day-to-day operational challenges.

From Maintenance-Related Disruptions to Synchronized Scheduling

Before: Vehicle Maintenance Derails the Delivery Schedule

When a truck gets flagged for required maintenance, it can throw your entire schedule off, especially if your systems are operating in silos and you don't have AI tools to pull all the pieces together. Someone has to catch the alert, toggle between solutions, pull the truck from upcoming routes and reshuffle assignments—all while risking missed deliveries and upset customers. It's tedious and stressful work, and the burden usually falls on the same people who are already stretched thin.

After: Connected AI Systems Sync Maintenance and Routing Automatically

With an AI-powered, integrated tech stack, the process is almost entirely hands-off. As soon as the enterprise asset management (EAM) software flags that a vehicle needs routine maintenance to stay roadworthy, it schedules the order for an optimal

Article by Jim Endres

time. Then, a workflow is triggered to immediately update the routing system's *transportation resource management* tool so that the truck's unavailability is factored into vehicle utilization.

> "AI is the spark that sets all those connections firing, extending the information stored in the various systems across your entire organization."

Meanwhile, every team member is kept in the loop with the same real-time source of truth—no inbox relay, last-minute reshuffling or risk of promising deliveries you can't make. Because the systems stay in sync, dispatchers, planners and drivers can trust the schedule and resource assignments in front of them. That means fewer firefights, and a transportation organization that moves with confidence instead of scrambling to keep up.

From Compliance Gaps to Proactive Continuous Coverage

Before: Safety and Compliance Concerns Slip Through the Cracks

Whether it's an expiring commercial driver's license (CDL), missing medical card or hours of service (HOS) overage, issues that prevent drivers from hitting the road can sneak up on even the most organized teams. Such an issue forces dispatch to scramble for a replacement or, worse, incur safety and compliance risks. Such unnecessary stress, last-minute reshuffling and exposure to avoidable penalties are the last things you need.

After: AI Flags Issues Early and Keeps Your Operation Fully Compliant

In an AI-connected environment, none of the aforementioned issues of driver eligibility cause a fire drill. Because all your data and systems are connected in a secure data lake, an AI agent can quickly compare shift rosters, credentials and HOS, then alert the right supervisor as soon as a problem is identified—well before it puts a route or driver at risk.

That advance notice means coordinators can renew credentials on time, keep schedules intact and avoid compliance headaches altogether. Drivers stay on the road, dispatch avoids emergency coverage calls, and your entire operation runs with far more predictability and peace of mind.

From Hidden Inbound Delays to Early Guided Response

Before: Inbound Freight Delays Create Risks Downstream

Inbound shipments can fall behind schedule for many reasons. Without AI tying systems together, those supply chain delays tend to stay hidden until they've already created a problem. The first sign might be a production line running short on materials or a customer service rep discovering too late that an order can't ship as promised. Teams have to hunt across solutions and email threads—losing hours while the downstream impacts pile up.

After: AI Surfaces Delays Early and Guides the Right Response

When you've got the right AI applications in your logistics management suite, an intelligent agent can flag any shipment that deviates from its expected timeline. From there, it sends notifications directly to the people who need to know—warehouse managers, production planners and customer service. Instead of sifting through disconnected systems (or remaining in the dark), they get a clear, early alert paired with recommended next steps.

Whether it's best to source from an alternate supplier, or to adjust delivery commitments with customers, the important thing is that you've got time to act. And because every team is working from the same real-time picture, nobody gets blindsided. Production stays on track, customer satisfaction stays high, and staff can spend their time acting on solutions instead of chasing down the problem.

From Last-Minute Carrier Selection to Smart Suggested Actions

Before: Capacity Constraints Force Expensive, Last-Minute Carrier Choices

A sudden surge in freight can quickly eat up the capacity your preferred carriers normally reserve for you, leaving your tender unassigned and triggering an exception. Without the right technology in place, the issue often goes unnoticed until it's already urgent—when only a few options remain and rates have spiked. The scramble to secure a backup carrier adds stress for your logistics team and chips away at already-tight transportation margins.

After: AI Analyzes Historical Data and Suggests Strategic Action

Instead of discovering the problem once it's already a crisis, an AI agent flags the exception as soon as it appears and uses historical context to determine potential next steps, like pulling spot quotes, and alerts the human in the loop. The system "remembers" what actions have been taken in similar circumstances and presents them as recommended actions—right inside the logistics manager's *personalized workspace.*

What would normally require frantic back-and-forth becomes a clear set of options, delivered in time to act on them. Transportation teams can choose the best path forward without last-minute negotiations, surprise costs or operational disruption, keeping both margins and customer commitments intact.

From Missing Orders to Consistent Revenue and Relationships

Before: Missing Orders on Fixed Routes Put Revenue and Relationships at Risk

Imagine that a regular customer's order is missing from its expected slot on a fixed route. If you're relying solely on your staff to manually monitor for gaps, the truck may already be on the road by the time the problem's identified—leaving sales teams in the lurch, the customer disappointed and a revenue opportunity on the table. When someone eventually investigates what happened, the damage is done.

After: AI Flags Order Anomalies, Protecting Your Bottom Line and Customer Relationships

AI in transportation and logistics can catch a missing order anomaly for you and prompt corrective action. By assigning an agent to compare expected orders against what's actually been entered and surface any discrepancies, an alert can be sent straight to a salesperson's customizable workspace so they can reach out immediately, confirm the need and secure the order before the truck rolls out.

You can even configure the agent to fetch customer contact information from your *AI route optimization* software and reach out to them directly, keeping communication timely and personal. That helps you miss fewer orders, ensure stronger customer satisfaction and empower your sales team to act early, long before a small oversight becomes a lost relationship.

"When you combine an integrated tech stack with AI in logistics, your operation just works better."

From Weather-Driven Chaos to Predictable, Coordinated Operations

Before: Severe Weather Throws Routes and Customer Commitments Into Chaos

A blizzard, flash flood or fast-moving tornado can upend even the best-planned schedule, leaving drivers navigating dangerous roads or stuck waiting with no way to finish their routes. Back at the dispatch office, staff scramble to understand what's happening in real time, divert trucks, call drivers for updates and field customer questions without clear answers. Speaking of customers, the delay makes their stormy day even worse.

After: AI Predicts Weather Impacts and Keeps Every Team in Sync

By continuously monitoring third-party weather data and mapping it to active and upcoming routes, AI in logistics can flag trouble long before it becomes a crisis. Instead of your staff reacting to a weather alert, the system anticipates how a storm front or flood risk will affect each stop, suggests route adjustments and calculates updated ETAs for customers ahead of time.

Dispatchers and warehouse staff get a clear set of recommended actions—reroute these trucks, delay this departure window, notify these customers—allowing you to shift from firefighting to proactivity. Drivers receive updated instructions before they hit dangerous conditions, and customers hear from you early, not after they start wondering where their order is. Everyone's in the loop, and the fleet management nightmare is averted.

Article by Jim Endres

> “The solution isn’t a better version of the same tool. It’s a new operating model entirely.”

No More Cruise Control: The Future of Logistics Is Now

As I wrap up, it’s important to emphasize that none of these “before and after” scenarios are purely hypothetical. Businesses can and do use AI to solve these problems (and more) every day—but it requires a mature, unified AI platform designed specifically for transportation and logistics. That’s exactly what we’re building with AppCentral; not just a beta experiment, but a stable, future-proof foundation.

One of AppCentral’s strongest qualities is how it *empowers every member of your team*, from data analysts and IT experts to planners, dispatchers and sales. Our AI, *Aptean Intelligence*, is purpose built to be intuitive even for non-technical users, so everyone gets information in a form they can use, in real time. That helps your business overcome the very real *adoption challenges of AI* and accelerate your return on investment (ROI).

What’s more, we provide a breadth of solutions—ERP, *transportation management systems (TMS)*, enterprise asset management (EAM), *route optimization software*, *shipping software* and more—you can build a comprehensive tech stack at your pace, scaling as you grow. Plus, they’re all linked via one centralized, private data lake, so you can have confidence you’re seeing the whole picture, and that your data is always yours alone.

Finally, I’ll stress that with Aptean, you’re not just getting next-generation transportation technology. You’re also getting a by-your-side partner with decades of experience in the industry, with a strong track record for working with logistics companies around the world, which you can read about in *our customer success stories.*

About Jim Endres

With decades of experience working with transportation and logistics operations, Jim is a trusted authority on routing, scheduling and last-mile delivery optimization. He specializes in helping fleet operators and distribution teams increase efficiency, reduce fuel costs and improve customer satisfaction through advanced logistics software.

About Aptean

Aptean is a global provider of purpose-built, industry-specific enterprise software that helps manufacturers and distributors run and grow their businesses. Aptean’s solutions span ERP, supply chain planning, execution, and industry-focused applications – delivered on cloud and on-premise platforms. Headquartered in Alpharetta, Georgia, Aptean operates worldwide across North America, Europe, and Asia-Pacific. www.aptean.com

aptean





Oracle's AI-Powered Financials Help Federal Agencies Modernize Operations and Advance Mission Outcomes

Oracle Cloud Federal Financials joins the U.S. Treasury's financial management solution marketplace as the first cloud-native offering to strengthen agency efficiency and fiscal stewardship

Oracle Cloud Federal Financials, a purpose-built, industry-specific solution in *Oracle Fusion Cloud Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP)* has been added to the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Financial Management Quality Service Management Office (FM QSMO) Marketplace. With Oracle Federal Financials, federal agencies can automate finance processes and leverage embedded AI to help increase productivity, reduce costs, improve transparency and auditability, and enhance the quality of services they provide to constituents.

Established by the U.S. Department of the Treasury, the FM QSMO Marketplace enables federal agencies to identify vetted financial management solutions. By providing access to commercial and federal offerings that meet government-wide standards for financial systems and data, it helps increase standardization and improve the efficiency, transparency, security, and performance of federal financial operations.

Press Release from Oracle

"The inclusion of Oracle Federal Financials in the FM QSMO Marketplace builds on our proven track record across the public sector and enables federal agencies to transform finance operations while staying aligned with government standards and compliance requirements," said Rondy Ng, executive vice president of Applications Development, Oracle. "With Oracle Federal Financials, agencies can use embedded AI capabilities to improve visibility and reporting and streamline core finance operations, freeing teams to focus on mission-critical priorities."

Oracle Federal Financials helps federal agencies:

- ***Automate federal financial processes:*** Agencies can reduce redundancies, improve data quality, and streamline finance processes with automated accounting, budget planning and execution, funds control, delinquency processing, and debt collection capabilities in a single platform.

- ***Accelerate insights:*** Agencies can reduce the amount of time spent on manual tasks, accelerate financial reporting, and make more informed decisions with automated transactions and AI-powered insights.

- ***Secure data in dedicated government data centers:*** Agencies gain role-based controls and top-to-bottom security features to help safeguard against cyberattacks and data leaks with Oracle's dedicated government data centers that are FedRAMP and Impact Level-authorized.

- ***Scale and adapt IT resources:*** Agencies can scale for changing needs without compromising performance or availability with the ability to dynamically increase and decrease consumption (cost) based on mission-critical workload requirements via Oracle Cloud Infrastructure (OCI).

- ***Embrace continuous innovation:*** Agencies can adopt hundreds of new features and capabilities each year to continuously optimize and enhance finance and operations with Oracle's quarterly update cycle.

11,000 organizations spanning nearly every industry and geography turn to Oracle Fusion Cloud ERP to run their businesses. As more organizations join Oracle's community of innovators, customers benefit from a comprehensive set of AI-powered enterprise finance and operations capabilities, including *financials*, *accounting hub*, *procurement*, *project management*, *enterprise performance management*, *risk management*, *subscription management*, *supply chain management & manufacturing*, and *Oracle B2B*, that help revolutionize the way organizations transact, pay, finance, and ship sustainably across the globe.

About Oracle Fusion Cloud Applications

Oracle Fusion Cloud Applications provide an integrated suite of AI-powered cloud applications that enable organizations to execute faster, make smarter decisions, and lower costs. Oracle Fusion Applications include:

- ***Oracle Fusion Cloud Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP):*** Provides a comprehensive suite of AI-powered finance and operations applications that help organizations increase productivity, reduce costs, expand insights, improve decision-making, and enhance controls.

- ***Oracle Fusion Cloud Human Capital Management (HCM):*** Provides a unified AI-powered HR platform that connects all people-related processes and data to help organizations automate tasks throughout the employee lifecycle, improve the employee experience, and give HR leaders actionable workforce insights.

- ***Oracle Fusion Cloud Supply Chain & Manufacturing (SCM):*** Provides a unified AI-powered platform that integrates supply chain and operations processes and helps organizations enhance resilience and quickly adapt to market changes.

- ***Oracle Fusion Cloud Customer Experience (CX):*** Provides a suite of AI-powered applications that helps organizations manage marketing, sales, and service processes to win business, build stronger customer relationships, and improve customer experiences.

ORACLE

About Oracle

Oracle offers integrated suites of applications plus secure, autonomous infrastructure in the Oracle Cloud. For more information about Oracle, please visit us at www.oracle.com.



Aptean Launches Its Most Advanced Cloud-Native, AI-Powered Equipment Dealer Management System

Purpose-built for equipment dealers, Aptean Equipment DMS runs on Aptean AppCentral and Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central to unify operations on a single AI-powered platform.

Aptean, a global provider of mission-critical B2B industry-specific software, announced the launch of Aptean Equipment Dealer Management System (DMS). Leveraging the power of Aptean's agentic AI platform, AppCentral, and Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central, Aptean Equipment DMS unifies sales, rentals, service, and parts on a single intelligent platform so dealers can act faster, serve customers better, and manage the full equipment lifecycle with confidence.

The AI Difference for Equipment Dealers

Aptean Equipment DMS is purpose-built from experience with over 7000 active users across 550 locations for equipment dealers managing complex, end-to-end operations. AI agents tackle the workflows that drain dealer profitability most: delayed and inconsistent damage repair estimates, incomplete asset specifications, and missed cross-selling opportunities. Aptean Equipment

Press Release from Aptean

DMS gives dealers the tools and intelligence to solve those challenges and work more efficiently, serving customers better and protecting profitability at every stage of the equipment lifecycle.

"The era of AI that simply generates insights is over. What industries need now is AI that executes, understands how a business runs, and acts within it. With AppCentral powering Aptean Equipment DMS, that's exactly what we're delivering for equipment dealers. AI that knows the difference between a rental lifecycle and a service workflow, that protects margins at the point of decision, and that keeps every part of the dealership moving in the same direction. This is what it means to put vertical AI to work," said TVN Reddy, CEO, Aptean.

A Platform Built Around How Dealers Actually Work

Aptean Equipment DMS runs on AppCentral and Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central to deliver enterprise-grade security, seamless integration with other Microsoft 365 apps, and the assurance of always running on the latest software. Key capabilities include:

- End-to-End Rental Management: From quote to contract, scheduling to delivery, invoicing to return, Aptean Equipment DMS gives rental teams full control of the rental lifecycle to maximize profitability and customer service.
- Mobile Rental Management: At the critical equipment handover point, capture asset condition, photo documentation, meter readings, and signatures through simple, easy-to-use checklists, minimizing damage costs and ensuring seamless synchronization whether in the yard or onsite.
- Repair Shop Workflow Management: Comprehensive repair and service workflows include parts pricing integrations with OEM and third-party aftermarket suppliers, alongside labor time estimation tools so shops can move faster and bill with confidence.
- Maximized Asset Resell Revenue: Full visibility into an asset's purchase, service, damage, configuration and depreciation history enables dealers to price disposals with precision. The Machine Portal Online centralizes used-machine data and pushes listings to 20+ marketplaces with a single click.

"This is a pivotal moment for equipment dealers," said Sandeep Patel, Senior Manager, Product Management, Aptean. "AI is no longer a future consideration for this industry, it's a competitive opportunity. Aptean Equipment DMS puts that capability directly in the hands of dealer teams, in the workflows they use every day, so the impact is immediate and measurable."

Learn more

To learn how Aptean Dealer Management System can transform your business with AI-driven insights and intelligent automation, visit *https://aptean.com/aptean-equipment-dms*

About Aptean

Aptean is a global provider of purpose-built, industry-specific enterprise software that helps manufacturers and distributors run and grow their businesses. Aptean's solutions span ERP, supply chain planning, execution, and industry-focused applications – delivered on cloud and on-premise platforms. Headquartered in Alpharetta, Georgia, Aptean operates worldwide across North America, Europe, and Asia-Pacific. www.aptean.com





Salesforce Teams With NVIDIA to Bring High-Performance, Cost-Efficient AI Agents Into the Flow of Enterprise Work

AI agents are becoming more capable, but most remain isolated from the systems, data sources, and workflows organizations require for day-to-day operations. For regulated enterprises operating at massive scale, agents must do more than generate answers. They must run securely, integrate with governed data, control cost, and execute actions inside business workflows.

Salesforce and NVIDIA are addressing this challenge for enterprises by bringing high-performance, cost-efficient AI agents into the flow of work. Powered by Agentforce, Slack, and *NVIDIA Nemotron* models — part of the *NVIDIA Agent Toolkit* — organizations can now deploy governed agents across regulated and on-premises environments while enabling employees to use them directly in the flow of their work.

At the core is Agentforce, Salesforce's platform for building and orchestrating enterprise AI agents. Agentforce grounds agents in trusted data through Data 360, applies business logic, and coordinates actions across Customer 360 applications and connected systems, ensuring governance, compliance, and predictable performance at scale.

Press Release from Salesforce

NVIDIA Nemotron Models Available in Agentforce

NVIDIA Nemotron 3 Nano is available within Agentforce, providing a model optimized for enterprise scale and efficiency. Its *1 million token context window* enables agents to reason across long customer histories, large documents, and complex multi-step workflows without losing context. Built on a *Mixture of Experts architecture*, it increases computational efficiency, reduces reasoning tokens, and lowers compute demand and cost in multi-step agent workflows.

For regulated industries, customers can deploy Nemotron models on NVIDIA AI infrastructure in on-premises or tightly controlled, private-cloud environments, allowing organizations to keep model processing within their own security boundary while meeting strict compliance and data residency requirements.

Slack connects these agents to the people doing the work. Slackbot acts as the coordination layer for those agents. It receives requests from users in Slack, triggers Agentforce workflows, and orchestrates agent actions across enterprise systems. A request in Slack can trigger an Agentforce workflow, reason over Data 360 context, invoke Nemotron powered processing, and execute approved retrieval actions across enterprise systems before returning recommendations into the conversation.

For a regulated financial services company, this could mean a compliance agent reviewing transactions, applying policy rules, and surfacing risk signals in a secure Slack channel. For a healthcare organization, it could mean summarizing extensive case histories at scale while enforcing data access controls defined within Salesforce.

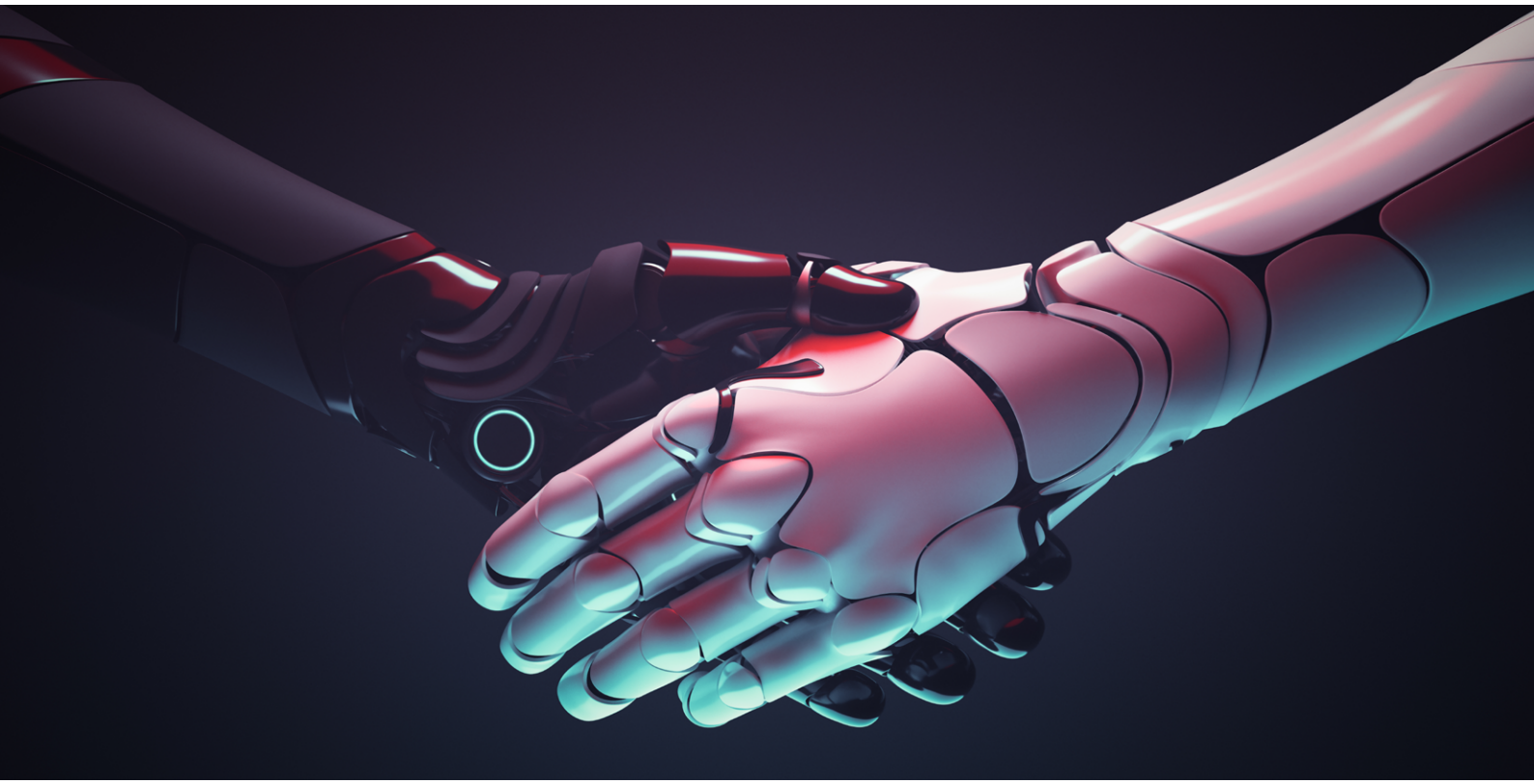
Clear Architecture for Companies

Enterprise AI adoption often slows down due to uncertainty about how orchestration, data grounding, infrastructure, and collaboration fit together.

Salesforce and NVIDIA are developing reference architectures that clearly define each layer:

- Slack as the collaboration and engagement layer
- Slackbot as the coordination layer for enterprise agents and workflows
- Agentforce as the reasoning, execution, and agency layer
- Salesforce Data 360 as the trusted enterprise context layer
- NVIDIA AI infrastructure and Nemotron models as an accelerated AI processing layer

These patterns give companies a practical blueprint. They show how prompts originate in Slack or Customer 360 applications, how Agentforce coordinates reasoning and actions, how Data 360 provides context, where model processing runs, and how responses return into business workflows. This removes ambiguity and enables customers to implement secure, scalable agent solutions with confidence.





IFS Breaks with Industry Convention Pricing to Unlock Enterprise-Wide AI Adoption

Pricing based on assets, not headcount

Model supports broad adoption & increasing demand for Industrial AI

IFS, the leading provider of Industrial AI software, announced a new pricing model that fundamentally changes how enterprise AI is bought and deployed. With this announcement, organizations will now have the freedom to deploy Industrial AI wherever it creates value, without constraint, and without the fear of escalating costs.

IFS is disrupting enterprise software pricing models, that traditionally price 'per user'. By moving away from user-based licensing to a model grounded in operational reality, IFS is enabling customers to pay by assets, rather than users. For example, an energy company managing 400 offshore assets pays based on those 400 assets rather than the 12,000 people and machines that need to access the data.

The model aligns software investment with the operational assets customers manufacture, manage, and maintain, such as vessels, components, infrastructure, or production assets. The result for IFS customers is predictable costs that align with operations, enabling projects to expand and enterprises to grow without the constraints of user-based licensing.

The move will force the broader industry to rethink how it packages and prices software.

Press Release from IFS

Why now?

Industrial organizations are on the cusp of an unprecedented expansion in what they can produce, maintain, and deliver using Industrial AI. There is no reason for it to be constrained.

Through this pricing model, IFS technology is no longer just enabling workers to do more; it is directly driving work and outcomes. This is a commercial model directly tied and aligned to the success of IFS's customers.

The model is designed for industrial systems of action, where software investment aligns with the operational environments a company manages rather than the number of users accessing the system.

This drives greater value for customers by creating a system with metrics that are measurable, auditable, and transparent, ensuring organizations pay for the operational value the system supports, not every individual, contractor, or automated process interacting with it.

This evolution in pricing directly supports IFS's Industrial AI strategy and anticipates changing market needs. At its core, this shift is about enabling customers to navigate an increasingly AI-driven industrial landscape and capitalize on the opportunities it presents.

Mark Moffat, CEO, at IFS, said: "This is a clear message to our customers: rather than rationing users, IFS wants you using AI everywhere you can to create value. Our customers should not have to choose between automating their operations and controlling their software costs. This progressive move on pricing removes that trade-off entirely. We're not pricing the workers. We're pricing the work."

Mickey North Rizza, Group Vice-President, Enterprise Software IDC noted: "IFS moving into the next realm of pricing means buyers have flexibility in the Agentic world. IFS new pricing model helps companies operationally scale their investment to the value levers it needs to run the business. This new methodology will help clients sustain their economic value."

Aly Pinder Jr, Research VP, Aftermarket Services Strategies, IDC added: "Asset-centric organizations have made the shift to expect to work with technology vendors that can align the partnership in a way for shared benefit and flexibility enabling growth as market conditions evolve."

About IFS

IFS is the world's leading provider of Industrial AI for hardcore businesses that service, power and protect our planet. Our technology enables businesses which manufacture goods, maintain complex assets, and manage service-focused operations to unlock the transformative power of Industrial AI™ to enhance productivity, efficiency, and sustainability.

IFS's AI-powered platform is fully composable, designed for ultimate flexibility and adaptability to a customer's specific requirements and business evolution. IFS technology leverages AI, machine learning, real-time data and analytics to empower our customers to make informed strategic decisions and excel at their Moment of Service™.

IFS was founded in 1983 by five university friends who pitched a tent outside our first customer's site to ensure they would be available 24/7 and the needs of the customer would come first. Since then, IFS has grown into a global leader with over 7,000 employees in 80 countries. Driven by those foundational values of agility, customer-centricity, and trust, IFS is recognized worldwide for delivering value and supporting strategic transformations. We are the most recommended supplier in our sector.





Syspro Announces CEO Succession; Leanne Taylor Appointed Chief Executive Officer

Leadership transition reflects the company's next phase of growth following a year of strong customer expansion

Syspro, the purpose-built ERP platform for manufacturing and distribution, announced that Chief Revenue Officer Leanne Taylor will assume the role of Chief Executive Officer, succeeding Jaco Maritz, as part of a planned leadership succession.

The transition marks the next phase of Syspro's evolution as the company continues to scale its platform and global operations following a year of strong customer expansion and growth under Advent ownership.

Press Release from Syspro

Over the past four years as CEO, Jaco has led Syspro through a period of sustained progress and transformation, including the transition to Advent ownership over the past 18 months and the company's first phase of growth under private equity. He will remain on the Board as a non-executive director.

"Personally, and on behalf of the Board, I want to thank Jaco for his leadership during an important period for Syspro," said Mike Ettling, Chairman of Syspro. "The company has strengthened its leadership team, evolved its operating model and built the foundations for scalable growth. As Syspro moves into its next phase of growth, the Board has asked Leanne to step into the role of Chief Executive Officer as part of a planned succession. We are confident in her leadership as the company continues to scale."

"It has been a privilege to lead Syspro over the past four years and during such an important chapter in the company's history," said Jaco. "I'm proud of the momentum the team has built and confident that the company is well positioned for the future. I look forward to seeing Syspro's continued momentum under Leanne's leadership."

Since joining Syspro in April 2025, Leanne has played a leading role in shaping the company's global strategy, strengthening its partner ecosystem, and deepening relationships with customers across key manufacturing and distribution sectors.

"Syspro has a strong foundation and bold opportunity ahead to lead the next wave of ERP with AI," said Leanne. "We are entering a new era where intelligence, automation and operational context will reshape how industrial businesses run. Our focus is to continue evolving the platform into the trusted digital backbone for the True Pros of industry, combining deep operational expertise, modern platform architecture and embedded AI to deliver contextual intelligence inside the real workflows of manufacturing and distribution."

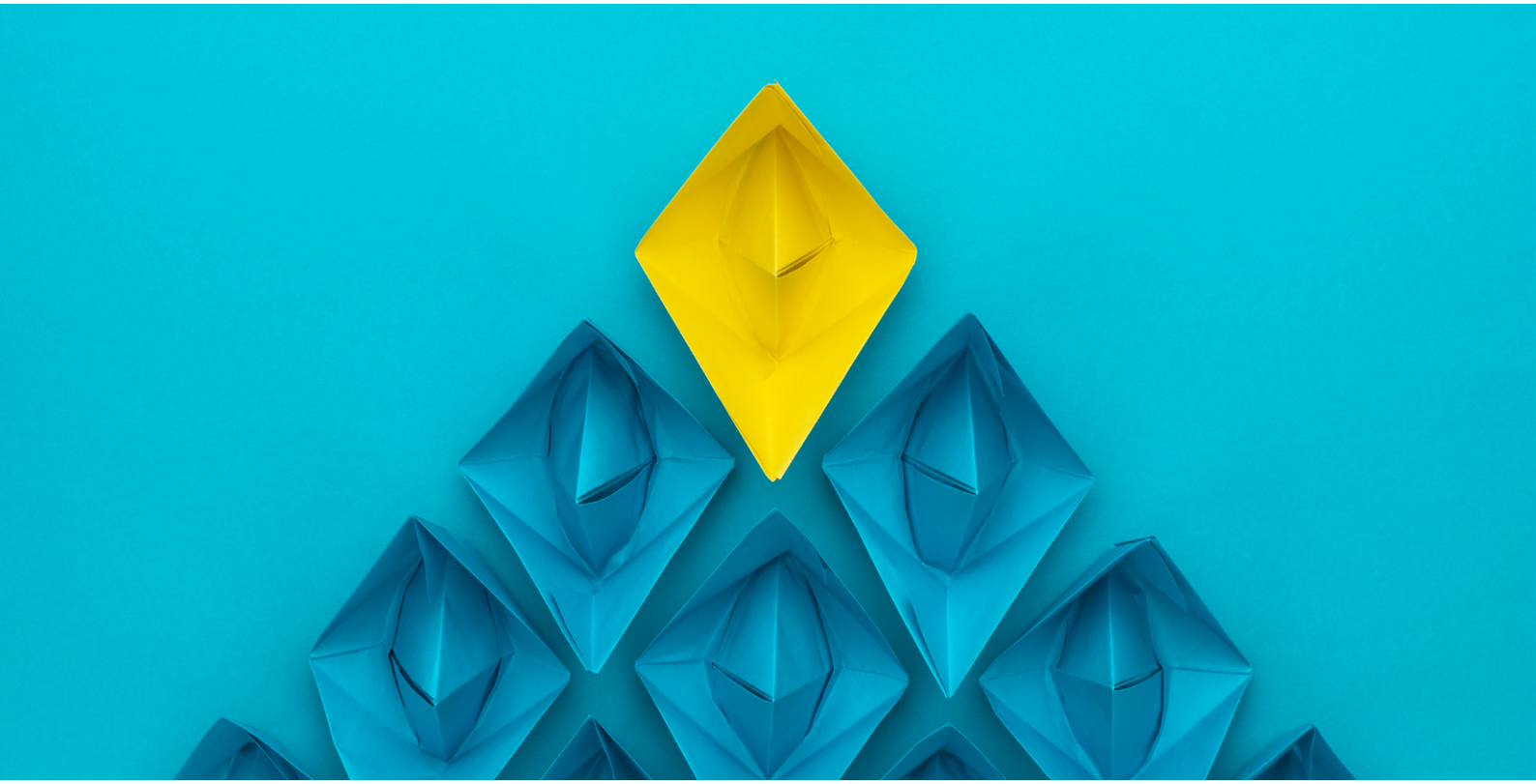
About Syspro

Syspro is a purpose-built platform for manufacturing and distribution that helps mid-sized companies operate and grow with confidence. With a cloud-first, AI-enabled foundation and nearly 50 years of sector expertise, Syspro is engineered around how the True Pros of industry buy, make, move, and sell.

Its solutions bring clarity to complex operations, strengthen supply chains, and unlock measurable value through smarter planning, faster execution, and industry-ready integrations. Customers from family-owned businesses to some of the world's most established manufacturers rely on Syspro to keep operations running smoothly, margins strong, and decisions well informed.

Syspro. Smarter. Faster. Built for Your Industry.

For more information, visit www.syspro.com.





New Mexico Military Institute to Modernize Technology Operations with Ellucian Student, HCM and Finance, Streamlining Cadet Services and Administrative Processes

NMMI will implement a SaaS-native, AI-powered foundation — streamlining core services and automating processes across admissions, registrar, student accounts, HR, and finance for nearly 1,000 Cadets. NMMI's selection builds on continued statewide momentum toward Ellucian SaaS, as New Mexico institutions modernize with technology purpose-built for higher education.

Ellucian, the leading higher education technology solutions provider, announced that New Mexico Military Institute (NMMI) has selected Ellucian Student, Human Capital Management (HCM), and Finance powered by Colleague, a comprehensive SaaS-native and AI-powered Student Information System (SIS) and Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) solution, to modernize core technology operations. By transforming student, HR, and financial management processes, NMMI will streamline Cadet services and advance the administrative backbone that supports nearly 1,000 Cadets.

Press Release from Ellucian

Strengthening the technology systems behind the Cadet experience

Building on nearly 25 years as an Ellucian customer, NMMI is investing in a more modern, SaaS-native technology foundation to better connect the people, processes, and information that support Cadets throughout their journey — enabling consistent support, improved visibility, and modern self-service experiences aligned to the Institute's mission to develop leaders in a distinctive military learning environment.

"As New Mexico Military Institute modernizes its core operations, it is doing so in service of a diverse Cadet community," said Laura Ipsen, President and CEO, Ellucian. "With Ellucian Student, HCM, and Finance, NMMI is strengthening the foundation behind every Cadet interaction so teams can deliver consistent, dependable support across the learner journey. This selection reflects a broader shift we're seeing across New Mexico as institutions prioritize modern technology built specifically for higher education."

Positioning the Institute for continuous improvement

As NMMI modernizes, the Institute will standardize and automate key workflows to deliver faster, more reliable service to Cadets — while simultaneously improving data consistency and making reporting more efficient to support compliance needs.

"NMMI is a unique institution, and we needed a technology partner that could support our model while helping us modernize in a practical, mission-aligned way," said Lt. Col. Matthew Klipstine, Director of Information Technology, New Mexico Military Institute. "With Ellucian, we're unifying core systems that support Cadets and the teams who serve them — improving insight, streamlining key processes, and expanding self-service capabilities. This modernization strengthens how we deliver services today and positions us well for the future."

With implementation planning underway, NMMI will transition in phases aligned to institutional timelines, establishing a strong foundation for continuous improvement in how the Institute supports Cadets, faculty, and staff.

To learn more about Ellucian, visit *https://www.ellucian.com/.*

About New Mexico Military Institute

The New Mexico Military Institute (NMMI) was established in 1891 as a public military High School and Junior College in Roswell, New Mexico. Known as "the West Point of the West," NMMI operates under the auspices of the State of New Mexico, under a dedicated Board of Regents that reports to the Governor of New Mexico. The school enrolls nearly 1,000 Cadets at the junior college and high school levels each year from 45 states, 2 U.S. territories (Puerto Rico and American Samoa), and 35 foreign nations.

About Ellucian

Ellucian powers innovation for higher education, partnering with approximately 3,000 customers across 50 countries, serving more than 21 million students. Ellucian's AI-powered platform, trained on the richest dataset available in higher education, drives efficiency, personalized experiences, and strengthened engagement for all students, faculty and staff. Fueled by decades of experience with a singular focus on the unique needs of learning institutions, the Ellucian platform features best-in-class SaaS capabilities and delivers insights needed now and into the future. These solutions and services span the entire student lifecycle, including data-rich tools for student recruitment, enrolment, and retention to workforce analytics, fundraising, and alumni engagement. Ellucian's innovative solutions, vast ecosystem of partners and user community of more than 45,000 provides best practices leading to greater institutional success and achieving better student outcomes.





CGI signs strategic collaboration agreement with AWS to accelerate AI and streamline digital transformation across U.S. public sector

CGI, one of the world's largest independent technology and professional services firms, announced a strategic collaboration agreement (SCA) with Amazon Web Services (AWS) to accelerate trusted artificial intelligence (AI) innovation, advance secure cloud adoption and streamline digital transformation across the U.S. public sector.

Through this multi-year agreement, CGI will deliver scalable, mission-critical solutions that address the most complex challenges facing the public sector.

AWS and CGI each bring expertise, experience, innovation and a deep understanding of their customers' missions and operating environments to help U.S. public sector organizations:

- Accelerate trusted AI adoption across public sector missions, including analytics, fraud prevention and operational decision support;
- Strengthen Zero Trust cybersecurity architectures to improve protection of sensitive government systems and data against evolving threats;

Press Release from CGI

- Unlock value from government data by improving interoperability, accessibility and advanced analytics across agencies;

- Improve citizen-focused digital services through innovative solutions that increase access, responsiveness and service delivery and

- Continue to modernize legacy government systems and data environments through secure, cloud-based platforms.

"This agreement enhances our proven ability to better serve government, education, nonprofit and healthcare organizations in the U.S.," said Tim Hurlebaus, President and Chief Operating Officer, CGI. "As a Premier Tier Services AWS partner, this new agreement complements CGI's deep understanding of public sector missions and enables us to co-deliver innovative and transformative solutions that meet the evolving needs of our clients."

The collaboration focuses on deploying advanced cloud-based solutions that leverage AI and other emerging technologies. It also includes dedicated investments in cloud and AI training and certification programs to deepen the expertise of CGI professionals who are driving public sector outcomes.

"Government agencies need AI that works at mission speed," said David Levy, Vice President, Worldwide Public Sector, AWS. "This collaboration puts advanced cloud and AI capabilities directly into the hands of agencies tackling their toughest challenges, from stopping fraud to securing critical systems to delivering better citizen services."

"The new collaboration between CGI and AWS represents a further advancement," said Massimiliano Claps, Research Director at IDC, a global technology market intelligence firm. "By uniting CGI's mission-focused expertise with AWS, IDC expects that the collaboration will accelerate the delivery of secure, scalable solutions to help public sector organizations drive innovation, improve operational agility and address their mission challenges."

CGI's collaboration with more than 150 technology firms through its *Global Alliances network* further strengthens its cloud, data and *AI capabilities* to help clients modernize operations. *CGI's Premier Tier Services* status with thousands of AWS-accredited professionals worldwide combines CGI's local expertise with global delivery to provide innovative, industry-leading AI-integrated cloud services that drive client success. CGI is well positioned to support clients throughout their AI journey, guiding strategy development, prioritizing business use cases, building machine-learning models and mobilizing a roadmap to maximize AI investments, including services such as its "12 Weeks to AI" program.

About CGI

Founded in 1976, CGI is among the largest independent IT and business consulting services firms in the world. With 94,000 consultants and professionals across the globe, CGI delivers an end-to-end portfolio of capabilities, from strategic IT and business consulting to systems integration, managed IT and business process services and intellectual property solutions. CGI works with clients through a local relationship model complemented by a global delivery network that helps clients digitally transform their organizations and accelerate results. CGI Fiscal 2025 reported revenue is CA$15.91 billion, and CGI shares are listed on the TSX (GIB.A) and the NYSE (GIB). Learn more at cgi.com.





Henkel: Driving innovation by migrating critical data and AI workloads to the cloud

16 TB
of data centrally managed on SAP HANA Cloud.

15
hours to execute the database migration.

100%
of promotions calculated in minutes, not days.

Henkel's scalable data management transformation

Henkel AG & Co. KGaA overcame limited scalability in its database architecture by migrating to SAP HANA Cloud. The flexible data management foundation better serves highly complex database application requirements by combining structured, unstructured, and semantic data in one place and allowing it to adjust database resources and accelerate AI workloads.

"We achieved a well-coordinated migration over a weekend. With no break in business continuity, our teams picked up on Monday morning exactly where they had left off on Friday evening. Henkel's innovation landscape on SAP Business Technology Platform is now utilizing 16 terabytes of data and processing power within SAP HANA Cloud."

-Manjinder Singh
SAP BTP Lead Architect,
Henkel AG & Co. KGaA

Recalibrating its innovation engine for scalability and performance

With its brands, innovations, and technologies, Henkel holds leading market positions worldwide in the industrial and consumer business sectors. Its Adhesive Technologies business unit is the global leader in the market for adhesives, sealants, and coatings. With its consumer brands, the company is also a leader in many markets and categories around the world, especially in laundry and home care and hair care. The company's three strongest brands are Loctite, Persil, and Schwarzkopf.

Guided by its drive to enrich and improve daily life through its products, services, and solutions, Henkel carries a long-standing legacy of innovation, responsibility, and sustainability into the future. It's this commitment that led Henkel to seize the opportunity to redesign its database in the cloud. With highly complex database application requirements and its database volume growing fast, a lack of scalability and elasticity was a significant concern. Other major priorities for the company's new database architecture were access to the latest innovations and self-service database tools as well as the potential for lower total cost of ownership (TCO).



Enabling elastic scalability to serve current and future innovation

For its database transformation, Henkel made the decision to migrate its legacy SAP HANA database running on *SAP Business Technology Platform* (SAP BTP) to *SAP HANA Cloud.* The inherent flexibility, scalability, and security offered by the database were a perfect fit for its large number of applications running on SAP BTP. This included Henkel SPARC—its solution for sales promotions and revenue cloud.

Manjinder Singh, SAP BTP lead architect at Henkel, says scalability and TCO were some of the key factors influencing the shift. He comments, "We chose to upgrade to SAP HANA Cloud because we needed the flexibility to be able to scale our database resources up and down to suit specific application workloads. TCO was another key factor, and we could see that the self-service tools offered by SAP HANA Cloud would provide an opportunity for efficiency and time savings through automation. From an operations point of view, upscaling database resources would be a matter of one or two clicks, not a migration project."

To perform the migration, Henkel took advantage of the self-service migration service for SAP HANA Cloud to automate key migration tasks and shore up business continuity during the shift. In doing so, Henkel paved the way for the 9 TB migration to proceed without any issues in about 15 hours, including the cloning of Henkel's source systems and execution of the self-service migration.

Because Henkel carried out the automated migration over a weekend, there was no break in business continuity, allowing its teams to pick up on Monday morning exactly where they had left off on Friday evening.

> "Bringing together the self-service migration, consultation with SAP product experts, and education on SAP HANA Cloud delivered a well-coordinated migration experience without any friction."
>
> -Manjinder Singh
> SAP BTP Lead Architect,
> Henkel AG & Co. KGaA

Extracting more business value from data assets

Thanks to Henkel's innovative business applications, there has been substantive growth in its data footprint, with the company operating on a 16 TB data landscape and using automations and features offered by SAP HANA Cloud. The in-memory database integrates a significant volume of information in one location and facilitates fast data exchange. And various query engines give the company's business and product owners more capabilities for implementing complex logic.

Singh comments, "We've seen a significant benefit to our operations in terms of lower cost of ownership and innovative database features. Henkel SPARC is a good example, because there are a huge number of calculations that need to be made for adjusting promotions and determining revenue potential while balancing factory production. Inside SAP HANA Cloud, we are calculating the promotion price using what we call a tree of one billion nodes. And because of the in-memory computing power, it's very fast. In the past, it took three to four days to calculate a promotion. Now, it can be done during live negotiations in a matter of minutes."

Since the migration, Henkel has also used the generative AI capability in SAP HANA Cloud vector engine.

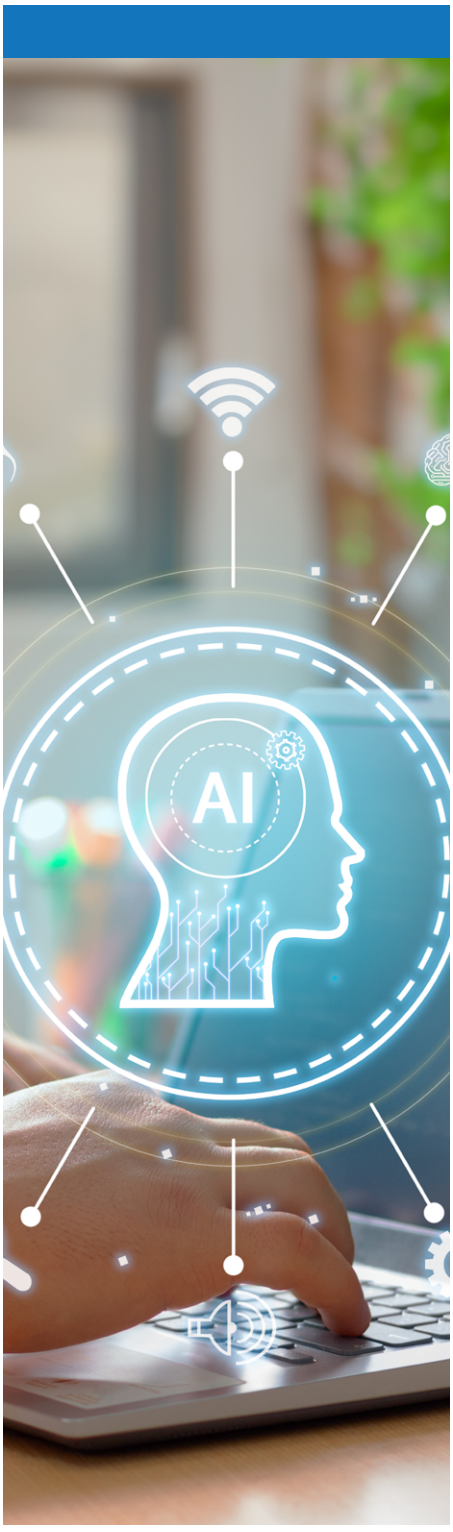
> "With SAP HANA Cloud, complex trade promotion calculations that used to take days now take minutes."
>
> -Manjinder Singh
> SAP BTP Lead Architect,
> Henkel AG & Co. KGaA

Bringing together semantic, relational, and structured data in real time

Henkel is currently looking to introduce more AI-enabled features and automation to its database operations, including using AI capabilities to analyze performance bottlenecks in the database and trigger proactive alerts.

The company is also planning to adopt automated code-generation tools, particularly for automatically generating SQL queries, to help it significantly reduce its development lifecycle.

In parallel, Henkel is in the early stages of experimenting with and identifying use cases for SAP HANA Cloud knowledge graph engine to enable faster decisions by connecting data with context and semantics.





Pandora wants to replicate the magic of in-store shopping online

AI agents help customers find the perfect jewellery and get instant answers to their questions.

PANDORA

Pandora wants to replicate the magic of in-store shopping online. With Agentforce, they're focusing on building personalised recommendations and on-demand guidance to boost customer engagement and loyalty.

60%	**10%**	**22%**
autonomous case deflection	boost in net promoter score with agent-first service	of total sales handled through Commerce Cloud

The Challenge for Pandora

Pandora's bold growth ambitions required a reimagined digital shopping and customer support experience.

Pandora began in 1982 in a small Copenhagen shop, where a jeweller and the brand's first in-house designer set out to create unique, hand-finished pieces. Today, Pandora is the world's largest jewellery brand and their charms, bracelets, rings and necklaces are sold in more than 100 countries through 6,800 points of sale, including 2,700 concept shops.

"What sets us apart is that our jewellery is something you can associate with specific memories or passions," said Baltazar Hasselsteen Ozonek, Vice President of AI and Innovation for Pandora. "Our shop associates are specially trained to help customers connect their stories and moments to an item that will hold meaning forever."

For decades, physical shops where associates built personal connections with customers and shared the stories behind each piece have driven Pandora's growth. This storytelling is instrumental in helping customers choose meaningful gifts for loved ones and Pandora saw an opportunity to extend their in-store magic further, into the digital world.

"You could spend an hour in-store with one of our wonderful associates putting together a bracelet for your loved one and talking about your family," said David Walmsley, Chief Digital and Technology Officer. "That richness of conversation is the heart of the Pandora experience and always will be. We want to figure out how to bring that online."

Part of creating that seamless digital journey also meant reimagining customer service. In 2024, the company's team of 500-600 specialists managed a considerable volume of enquiries via email, web and live chat. These specialists are dedicated to providing personalised service, but manually responding to each enquiry could slow response times, leading to longer service queues. Even though Pandora brought in seasonal support staff to support holiday surges, peak demand still overwhelmed capacity. A traditional chatbot was able to assist with "Where is my order?" requests, which account for a significant amount of their total service enquiries, but the chatbot's rigid, transactional conversation style didn't match Pandora's trademark warm, personalised service.

To reach their goals around providing even better online experiences, Pandora knew they needed a way to automate routine requests and create a digital shop front that captures the same magic customers feel in person.

"That richness of conversation is the heart of the Pandora experience and always will be. We want to figure out how to bring that online."

-David Walmsley
Chief Digital & Technology Officer, Pandora

How Salesforce Helps

Agentforce is expected to increase online conversion rates with personalised recommendations.

Pandora is using *Agentforce*, the agentic layer of the *Agentforce 360 Platform*, to make online shopping feel as personalised and thoughtful as stepping into a shop. With Agentforce, they built a personal shopper agent named Gemma that's designed to help customers choose the perfect piece of jewellery. Gemma gets to know what each shopper is looking for and then makes recommendations based on the occasion, who the gift is for, and the shopper's budget.

For example, imagine a customer visits Pandora's website looking for a gift for their mother. They start a chat with Gemma, which greets them and asks a few simple questions to understand who they're shopping for and what their budget is. When they share that their mother loves ballet, Gemma surfaces pieces inspired by dance, movement and elegance, weaving in anecdotes and product stories much like an associate would in-store. The customer feels guided, understood and supported, while discovering items they may not have found on their own.

"For the first time ever, we're going to be able to have a dialogue with shoppers online," said Ozonek. "We're creating something that will set us apart by taking the best of that in-store experience and bringing it online."

To deliver tailored recommendations, Agentforce draws on data across Pandora's ecosystem. It reasons across customer order history and product information from *Commerce Cloud*, as well as recommendation data from Bloomreach and

unstructured insights like mystery shopping and UX research insights stored in Databricks via *Data 360*. Together, this data helps Agentforce pinpoint key moments in customer interactions, understand context, recognize when someone is ready to purchase, spot cross-selling opportunities, and deliver more thoughtful, timely recommendations. And while the qualitative research guides Gemma's sales approach, granular tone controls ensure it sounds like a Pandora sales associate by matching the warm, distinctive tone used by in-store associates.

Pandora is testing Gemma in select markets before rolling out globally, but they're excited about the expected impact. With Data 360, they can analyse conversations that once disappeared in brick-and-mortar shops — like which questions customers ask most often, which stories and recommendations resonate and which tactics drive conversions. These insights will fuel future marketing and sales campaigns.

"I want to create an overview that will literally become the world's biggest library of people's loves," said Ozonek. "This will inform the next decision, the next experience and our next value proposition as a brand."

> "We're creating something that will set us apart by taking the best of that in-store experience and bringing it online."
>
> -Baltazar Hasselsteen Ozonek
> VP, AI & Innovation, Pandora

Agent-first service answers FAQs instantly and provides on-demand order status updates.

To ensure that thoughtful, personalised experiences continue after each sale, Pandora built a customer service agent named Clara to automate routine customer service requests. Built in collaboration with *Salesforce Professional Services* and *Publicis Sapient* in just weeks, Clara specialises in answering "Where is my order?" requests and FAQs like how to clean and store jewellery.

Instead of rigid, transactional chatbot conversations, Clara uses friendly, conversational language to help customers quickly. For example, when a customer wants to track their order, they can start a chat with Clara and type, "I ordered stacking rings last week. When will they arrive?"



Clara requests an order number or email address, taps into order information from *Service Cloud* and *Commerce Cloud* and responds in seconds.Commerce Cloud brings in fulfilment details from Pandora's IBM Sterling order management system via direct connectors, giving Clara real-time visibility into order status.

If a request goes beyond what Clara is designed to handle, such as changing an order after it's been placed, Clara seamlessly hands the case to a human representative. Clara always includes a summary of each conversation so representatives get up to speed quickly and customers don't have to repeat themselves.

"We were blown away by Agentforce straightaway," said Walmsley. "You get the cellophane off the software, get it installed and it's like, okay, that actually works."

Clara is already deflecting 60% of cases and a net promoter score increase of 10% indicates that customers are more satisfied with the service they're receiving. Pandora started by routeing one-tenth of their FAQs traffic in North America and the United Kingdom to Clara and are scaling with more traffic and more markets as their confidence in Clara grows.

For now, Clara is separate from Gemma, but Pandora sees Agentforce as a foundational element for their future digital shopping experience. As they transform into an agentic enterprise, they envision a seamless digital experience where customers get assistance from AI agents before, during, and after each sale — wherever and whenever they need it.

> "We were blown away by Agentforce straightaway. You get the cellophane off the software, get it installed and it's like, okay, that actually works."
>
> -David Walmsley
> Chief Digital & Technology Officer, Pandora

The Agentforce 360 Platform powers ecommerce and loyalty across global markets for Pandora.

Pandora is driving growth through digital sales with a sophisticated and reliable ecommerce experience built on the deeply unified Agentforce 360 Platform. Their Salesforce apps work hand in hand with third-party solutions to deliver the personalised shopping and service experiences customers expect.

"Salesforce could have gone down the route of saying, 'No, we're a walled garden. Take our products as they are.' Instead, they pivoted toward composability," said Walmsley. "All the work Salesforce has done to open up the platform has made it much easier to work with in a modern engineering sense."

Commerce Cloud powers Pandora's ecommerce business across the U.S., Canada, Europe and Asia-Pacific region — with Latin America coming next.Commerce Cloud handles 22% of total sales and provides a scalable platform for Pandora's global ecommerce operations. They began their ecommerce journey with Salesforce's digital shop front reference architecture and are now moving toward a fully composable set-up with the PWA Kit for faster, app-like shopping across devices. For search and personalisation, they take a best-of-breed approach.

Behind the scenes, *MuleSoft* connects Commerce Cloud with IBM Sterling for order management, while Kong manages corporate APIs. A digital orchestration and service layer ties it all together, helping teams across ecommerce, shops and customer service create connected shopper experiences. Built on a microservice, API-led architecture, the system is flexible and easy to adapt — simplifying integrations, speeding up customisations and making it easier to keep pace with changing customer needs.



This approach shines during peak shopping moments. In the 2024 holiday season, Pandora saw an increase in orders, more site traffic and a lift in average order value compared to the previous year. AI-powered recommendations from Einstein also boosted products added to baskets, which drove a jump in attributed revenue.

On the service side, Pandora replaced Zendesk with Service Cloud to support B2B and B2C customers. Now, reps have a complete view of each shopper's history, making support faster and more personal.

Looking ahead, Pandora is extending that same personalisation to loyalty. Working with Salesforce Professional Services and Publicis Sapient, the company recently launched Loyalty Management in Austria, Germany, France, the UK, the U.S. and Canada. Pandora's loyalty programme has millions of dedicated members worldwide and *Loyalty Management* helps Pandora reward them with personalised promotions that inspire long-term brand advocacy.

> "All the work Salesforce has done to open up the platform has made it much easier to work with in a modern engineering sense."
>
> -David Walmsley
> Chief Digital & Technology Officer, Pandora

The Salesforce Difference

With Salesforce, Pandora brings its ecommerce, customer service and loyalty data together on a deeply unified platform. "I love that I don't have to focus so much on the infrastructure and the hurdles of managing the infrastructure," said Catarina Runa Miranda, Global AI Director and London Digital Hub Lead. "Without that pain, I can focus way more on coming up with innovative new ways to capture the in-store experience online."

But innovation only works if customers can trust it. The *Salesforce Trust Layer*, along with built-in governance controls, were key to Pandora's decision to partner with Salesforce for their agentic AI. Agentforce's zero-retention capabilities that automatically delete prompt outputs after every interaction keep Pandora compliant with European data retention rules. With these safeguards in place, Pandora felt confident rolling out *AI agents* broadly, balancing innovation with privacy and compliance.

Ease of use has been another driver of adoption. Low-code and no-code *Agent Builder* tools make it simple to design and launch agents quickly. "Agentforce doesn't require a highly technical person to operate," said Ozonek. "It's configurable by anyone, which means our nontechnical staff who understand each aspect of a business challenge can build agents to solve those challenges."

With their customer-obsessed commerce, unified platform and strong privacy safeguards, Pandora is setting a bold new standard for the future of retail.

> "I love that I don't have to focus so much on the infrastructure and the hurdles of managing the infrastructure."
>
> -Catarina Runa Miranda
> Global AI Director &
> London Digital Hub Lead,
> Pandora





Centralizing Field Service and Customer Operations with Odoo in the Locksmith Industry

Always Affordable, Always Available Locksmith LTD, a Canadian locksmith service provider, has transformed how it manages field operations, customer requests, and internal workflows using Odoo. By replacing disconnected systems with an integrated platform, the company improved visibility, reduced revenue loss, and increased responsiveness. This customer story shows how a growing locksmith business uses Odoo to centralize operations and support scalable service delivery.

About the Company

Based in Calgary, Alberta, Always Affordable, Always Available Locksmith LTD operates in the locksmith and security services industry, serving both residential and commercial customers. With approximately 20 users, the company combines technical expertise with a strong focus on customer service and operational efficiency.

From its early days, the company differentiated itself through a strategic market approach. Instead of competing directly in the crowded commercial segment, it focused on residential customers, an underserved market at the time. This positioning allowed the company to build trust at the household level and naturally expand into commercial services.

"We groomed our name and our advertising to be more in tune with the residential market… and then naturally expanded into commercial work through those same customers."

-Lee Alderman
National Account Manager
at Always Affordable, Always Available Locksmith

This strategy, combined with a problem-solving mindset, continues to define the company's growth.

Before Odoo: Manual Data Transfers and Limited System Visibility

Before adopting Odoo, the company relied on multiple disconnected tools to manage its operations. These included High Five Software for field service management, spreadsheets for customer tracking, and QuickBooks for accounting.

While each platform served a specific purpose, data had to be manually transferred between systems, creating inefficiencies and increasing the risk of errors. "We had a lot of different platforms trying to accomplish different tasks, and the communication between those platforms was non-existent," says Alderman.

This fragmentation led to operational issues, particularly in inventory tracking and invoicing. Products were sometimes installed without being properly billed, and invoices could be missed. Email-based communication also created bottlenecks, as information was not always accessible across teams.

Operational Impact: Field Service Management, CRM, and Inventory Tracking with Odoo

The company implemented Odoo approximately five years ago while searching for a more unified system. Although the exact discovery moment is unclear, the decision was driven by the need to centralize operations and eliminate inefficiencies caused by fragmented tools.

"We can actually respond to clients' needs a lot quicker than we were before."

-Lee Alderman
National Account Manager
at Always Affordable, Always Available Locksmith

- One of the most significant improvements came from using Helpdesk to manage incoming requests. The company now handles a high volume of tickets through a centralized system, ensuring that each request is properly routed and tracked. Compared to email-based communication, this approach improves visibility and response times.
- With Odoo Field Service, customer requests can be seamlessly converted into field tasks. This enables efficient technician dispatching and ensures continuity between customer intake and service execution. The integration reduces manual coordination and supports smoother operations.

- Odoo Sales and Invoicing have addressed previous billing challenges. Before Odoo, missed or improperly processed invoices resulted in lost revenue. Now, sales orders, invoices, and payments are connected within a single workflow, improving accuracy and financial control.

Inventory tracking with Odoo has also improved significantly. Products used during service operations are now properly recorded and linked to jobs and invoices, eliminating gaps that previously led to unbilled materials.

On the procurement side, Purchase supports supplier management and plays a critical role in the company's multi-company structure. The business operates multiple entities, including a wholesale distribution company. With Odoo, creating a purchase order in one company automatically generates a corresponding sales order in another, reducing duplication and saving time.

Internal communication has been streamlined through features like log notes and chatter. Teams can collaborate directly within records such as tickets and invoices. For example, when a payment is received, a confirmation can be attached to the invoice, instantly notifying relevant teams and enabling faster order processing.

Overall, these operational improvements have translated into measurable efficiency gains. "It's anywhere between 30 and 35%. We're a lot more efficient now," says Alderman.

Next phase of growth powered by Odoo

Looking ahead, the company is focusing on integrating AI-driven capabilities to further automate operations. A key initiative involves connecting external AI tools with Odoo to streamline customer interactions and internal workflows.

> "We're taking it to another level where AI can create the client, generate the helpdesk ticket, and even dispatch the job."
>
> -Lee Alderman
> National Account Manager
> at Always Affordable, Always Available Locksmith

In parallel, the company is expanding its SEO strategy across Canada and continuing to explore additional Odoo functionalities, including its evolving AI features.

As the business grows across multiple entities, Odoo remains central to its operations, enabling scalability through its integrated and multi-company architecture. Interested in improving field service management, inventory tracking, and customer operations? Contact Odoo to discover how an integrated platform can support your growth.

About Odoo

Odoo is an open-source suite of integrated business applications actively programmed, supported, and organized by Odoo SA. Odoo is similar to many open-source projects where customized programming, support, and other services are provided by an active global community and partners network. The community is comprised of more than 1,500 active members and has contributed more than 4,500 modules to the ongoing enrichment of Odoo. The network of certified partners, established in more than 120 countries, deploys the solution locally. The software, with more than 1,500 downloads a day, is one of the most frequently installed business suites worldwide.





Building quantum readiness for the Netherlands' critical infrastructure

Next Generation Infrastructures (NGinfra) is a collaboration of six major Dutch infrastructure operators: ProRail (rail), Schiphol Airport, Port of Rotterdam, Alliander (energy), Vitens (tap water) and Rijkswaterstaat (public road and waterways). Its purpose is to accelerate the development and deployment of secure, sustainable, and future-proofed digital and energy infrastructure in the Netherlands. NGinfra does so by aligning public and private stakeholders, fostering knowledge sharing and innovation, and initiating joint programs and pilot initiatives that strengthen critical infrastructures.

Facing growing pressures from aging networks, climate change impacts and geopolitical tensions, these operators sought clarity on how quantum computing and artificial intelligence (AI) could strengthen the resilience, sustainability and cybersecurity of the Netherlands' critical infrastructure.

The challenge: Scaling quantum and AI innovation across their infrastructure

The infrastructure operators needed to align fragmented innovation initiatives and scale promising AI and quantum pilots beyond proof-of-concept stages throughout their ecosystems.

Applying quantum readiness to future modernization

We partnered with NGinfra to deliver a cross-sector AI and *quantum readiness strategy* to turn existing technology into coordinated, practical action across the Dutch infrastructure ecosystem.

"AI and quantum are not goals in themselves, but powerful means to build a resilient, future-proof infrastructure – faster, smarter, and more sustainable."

-NGinfra & CGI White paper, 2025

"Quantum connectivity could provide an essential defense against threats like hacking."

-Martin Streekstra
Regional Director
IJsselmeergebied at
Rijkswaterstaat

Our approach

Conduct in-depth interviews and analysis with the six infrastructure operators to assess opportunities, barriers and maturity levels in AI and quantum use. We helped to develop a shared roadmap prioritizing quantum communication networks, post-quantum security (new methods to keep information safe even when quantum computers become capable of cracking current encryption), and optimization pilots that included computing intensive tasks such as logistical planning systems, traffic models, or airport gate scheduling.

We also:

- Facilitated knowledge exchange among the six operators through a proposed Community of Practice for AI and Quantum, with a common goal of accelerating vendor-neutral collaboration and long-term capability building.
- Supported compliance alignment with the EU AI Act and international standards such as ISO 55000 to ensure responsible and sovereign adoption of emerging technologies.
- Identified and prioritized quantum-ready pilot programs, such as Post-Quantum Cryptography (PQC) implementation and Quantum Key Distribution (QKD) in the Port of Rotterdam—a world-first in advancing quantum-secure critical infrastructure security.

PQC is a way of updating today's encryption so it stays secure even when powerful quantum computers are available, while QKD is a different approach that uses the laws of quantum physics to securely send encryption keys, so that if anyone tries to intercept them, the system immediately detects it. QKD is a different, complementary approach to PQC in that it uses the laws of quantum physics to enable secure communication—if anyone tries to eavesdrop, the system immediately detects and prevents information leaks.

Business outcomes: Advancing quantum readiness

- ***Strategic preparedness:*** Established the Netherlands' first whitepaper for quantum and AI readiness across critical transport, energy and water infrastructure sectors.
- ***Enhanced cybersecurity:*** Advised how early adoption of PQC and QKD pilots positions the operators as leaders in quantum-safe critical infrastructure.
- ***Knowledge leadership:*** Created the foundation for a multi-sector learning network to accelerate secure innovation and strengthen sovereign digital capability.
- ***Future resilience:*** Strengthened cross-sector quantum and AI innovation to ensure energy grids, water systems, transport, and logistics systems remain robust and adaptive.

Through our partnership with NGinfra, we helped translate quantum readiness and AI strategy from promising theory into a coordinated roadmap by aligning the six infrastructure operators around a shared strategy of resilience and cybersecurity. By advancing focused initiatives such as PQC and QKD, and encouraging structured cross-sector collaboration, NGinfra is helping lead the charge in the Netherlands' quantum-secure infrastructure.

While the journey toward scalable quantum computers will continue to evolve, this foundation ensures that the Netherlands' essential energy, water, transport, and logistics systems are prepared for the future and positioned to navigate it with confidence.


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