

The Automation Mandate

Why automation is the missing link in digital transformation and must be a priority for IT



A Culprit in Why 70% of Digital Transformation Efforts Fail

Companies have ambitious goals for digital transformation. By digitizing processes in a cloud-first environment, they aim to improve business agility, time to market, cost-efficiency and customer experiences—and ultimately profitability and competitive advantage.

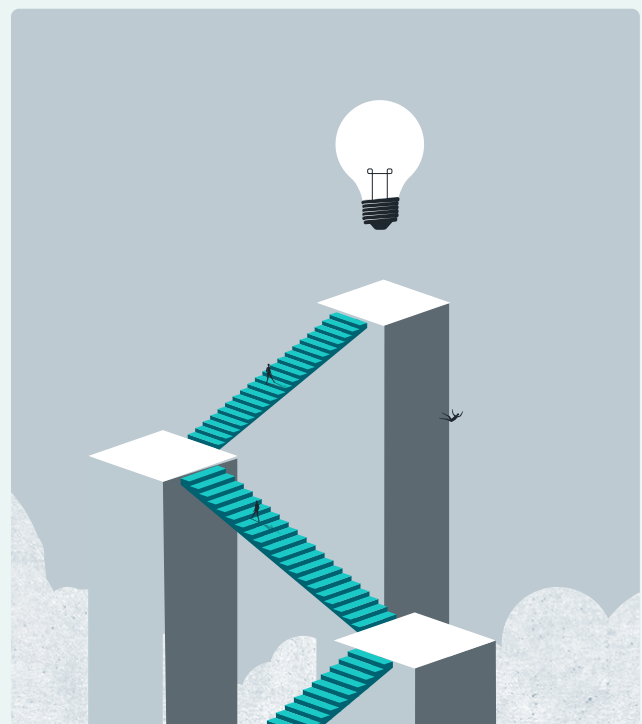
Yet the failure rate is alarmingly high. Research in 2020 by the Boston Consulting Group finds that 70% of digital transformation initiatives fall short of objectives, in line with other research studies. 🚩

One culprit behind digital transformation failures is overlooking the vital role of IT workload automation. Many companies focus on upgrading IT platforms and applications such as ERP and CRM, yet continue using outdated legacy IT automation tools not suited for modern and increasingly complex IT environments.

It's almost like trying to build a smart home based on a dial-up Internet connection from the 1990s. You're bringing in the latest technology to adjust temperature and lighting, see who's ringing the doorbell, or play a favorite song with

a simple voice command. Yet you'd be relying on outdated digital plumbing to do the work, dialing in manually through a screeching modem.

Capitalizing on the promise of digital transformation requires a close evaluation of whether your existing incumbent workload automation tool is a good match as you plan and modernize the broader tech stack.



Why Digital Business Transformation?

Gartner says, “Digital business transformation is the process of exploiting digital technologies and supporting capabilities to create a robust new digital business model.” 🚩 It's about using technology for business innovation. It's a vision of a future where business and IT goals are the same.

What started with digitizing aspects of IT for business is now an inescapable wave that continues to push the global economy. Most organizations are engaged in digital transformation initiatives. 🚩 This ongoing process has moved IT leadership into the spotlight. For I&O professionals, the right strategic response to new challenges is critical. Alignment between the C-level and IT is essential.



Gartner recently released their CIO Agenda,² which provides an overview of where we are now. When a mix of C-level leaders were asked to describe what their organization's top five strategic business priorities are for the near future, "IT-related" priorities were the third most often cited on the list—after corporate structural development and growth of the organization.

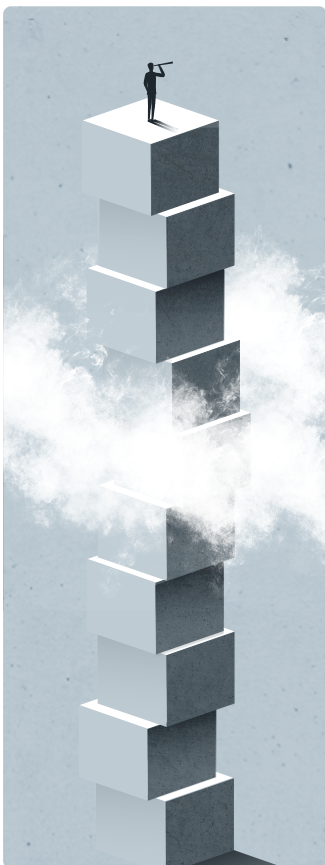
CIO.com lists "driving innovation/increase relevance of IT" among its top CIO priorities.
And IDC predicts that by 2024, over 50% of all IT spending will be directly for digital transformation and innovation.³

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IT priorities are becoming strategic imperatives. Constellation Research analyst Dion Hinchcliffe puts this in perspective with a dynamic model in his "CIO Predictions," showing how the enterprise is now centered on digital transformation to cope with new opportunities in the operating environment. He positions the CIO as "influencer and innovator."⁴

Of course, this new strategic position for IT comes with big challenges for everyone involved.

Complex to the Core



Technology continues to move at a highly disruptive pace. Necessity often dictates that as modernization and innovations take place, new cloud-based tech is implemented right on top of older legacy IT. But this increasingly layered complexity introduces challenges as organizations pursue digital transformation.

For one, it's tough to manage innovation. Add to that the expanding use of containers and microservices along with the steady pace of virtual machine sprawl while legacy technologies, platforms and environments persist. The IT landscape at many organizations today, particularly those built over a long history, is anything but simple.

According to ZDNet, most organizations characterize their cloud strategy as multi-cloud—using multiple public and private clouds for different application workloads.⁵


Combine this with the fact that much of the migration to the cloud takes place on an ad hoc basis, it's easy to see how many teams miss out on digital transformation.




More Data and More Stakeholders


Enterprise-level, cross-team collaboration is a requirement for organizations today, but stakeholders throughout the organization need to avoid being drowned in data. They need meaningful information presented in ways that different teams can all understand—all while they gather more data every day. A recent post on the Forbes Tech Council site describes the problem:



It's not even just the fabled IoT-device deluge that is causing proverbial data streams to overflow. Things like website clickstreams and financial market data also take the form of rivers through an analytics infrastructure. The trick is to drill into the most important parts and turn them into something valuable. 

Forbes


Companies need a way to quickly and accurately move massive quantities of data with absolute accuracy and consistency into analytics and business intelligence tools. After that, they need a way to just as rapidly and assuredly pull useful decision support information from these tools and make sure it gets in the hands of those who need it most. Gartner Senior Director Analyst Ross Winser explains: “There is a dramatic evolution of I&O happening right now. It's no longer about hardware or software—it's about delivering services that accomplish business needs. The future of infrastructure is everywhere and anywhere and will be business-driven by nature.” 

The answer to this challenge is the key to unlocking digital business transformation. Aligning goals between business and IT—or within siloed organizational compartments of the IT organization itself—are still hurdles companies face every day. It remains a top concern among IT leaders. 

Overcoming the Risk of Failure

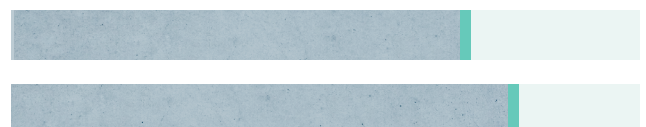
IT leaders are right to be concerned about these challenges.

In a recent survey of global IT decision makers, 81% of respondents reported that a digital transformation project has failed, suffered a significant delay or had to be scaled back.

 Eighty-six percent cited that complexity of implementing technologies, lack of resources, skills deficits and reliance on legacy

technology stopped them from reaching their transformational goals.

But there's hope. Aligning the transformation strategy and technology across both the IT team and the C-suite can dramatically reduce the risk of failure.



Make Automation a Top Priority



How can organizations use technology to bridge gaps across platforms, silos—even knowledge and lines of business?

In the face of the multi-faceted challenges of digital transformation, IT and business teams need only to look as far as current technology and the daily processes they manage to find answers. Automating processes reduces the need for manual handoffs and extra work. Automation for IT brings tech complexity back down to size—it's also a critical factor to support intelligent IT.



Traditionally, CIOs have spent much of their workdays (and careers) maintaining legacy systems and 'keeping the lights on.' As AI, ML and other cognitive tools drive automation across the IT ecosystem, CIOs and their teams may spend less time on maintenance and more time helping the enterprise with informed decision-making..."

Deloitte.

In his "CIO Predictions," Constellation Research analyst Dion Hinchcliffe agrees that automation is required for success within the transforming enterprise. He calls it "Automation for Agility" and it's at the base of the "Primary Areas of Focus for the CIO."

Dion explains that automation will become "...a widespread priority with the most internal stakeholders to date. It turns out that a key strategy to achieve a lot more in IT while experiencing relatively flat budgets is simply to automate more of what IT does."

Mission Critical: WLA

In his influential report, "Modernize to Digitize" Enterprise Management Associates® (EMA™) analyst Dan Twing observes that workload automation (WLA) is the most used form of automation across IT and business processes.

Workload automation is the critical element to making successful digital business transformation possible—yet unfortunately, it's often the missing link at organizations relying on outdated legacy WLA tools.



Many WLA tools in use right now are based on core technology that's more than a decade old. The average age of products in the WLA market is 24 years.² Further, according to the EMA report, 60% of organizations surveyed have more than one workload automation technology in use. One reason for this profusion of duplicated and outdated technology is because updating these tools has not been a priority.

A majority of organizations are now considering migrating to a different WLA technology.

But this situation is changing rapidly. The EMA paper "Good to Great" shows that the majority of organizations are now considering migrating to a different WLA technology. The top two reasons for this are digital transformation and application modernization.²

The Weight of the Past

Sharp CIOs are recognizing that legacy schedulers and WLA tools are inefficient, unscalable technology that can weigh down efforts for digital transformation.

Outdated legacy automation tools serve as a breeding ground for inefficient workarounds and growing complexity. They hide process details in multiple lines of code and complex batch processing that's hard to even see—harder still to document. These invisible, undocumented processes make collaboration of any kind—especially between the business and IT—virtually impossible.

The drain on IT resources is sizable. Maintenance, troubleshooting and workarounds on aging WLA tools consume valuable IT time—and diverts IT professionals from higher-value innovation and broader digital transformation initiatives.

As experts in these tools retire, details on scheduled processes go missing. The tools themselves come with heavy infrastructure footprints and poor licensing models that keep the costs of using them going up. Having more

than one of these tools simply compounds their weaknesses.

Many WLA tools currently in use are also now backed up by weak or non-existent support because their parent company has been acquired or sold. Many have an unclear future in development as a result. That's a serious risk for any organization. What if something goes wrong? The technical debt accumulated by coping with inferior tools is real.

This reality is that reliance on legacy WLA tools is one of the greatest barriers to digital transformation.



The Promise of Now

Fortunately, CIOs have begun to recognize the profound effect more modern WLA solutions can have in enabling transformation.

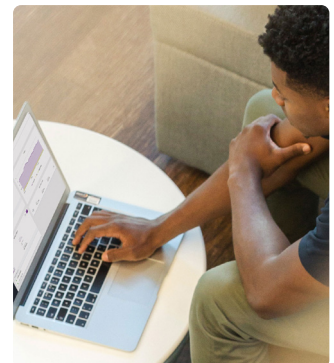
To be successful, workload automation solutions must be able to handle huge volumes of data across multiple technologies quickly, securely and without a single error. WLA also should provide visibility into complex processes that can be used for collaboration and optimization across multiple teams.

On top of this, transformation-ready WLA needs to be agile in delivery and seamlessly integrated with multiple platforms, tools and technologies in the enterprise. It should work anywhere—whenever and wherever it's needed.

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Automated Agility

Redwood's RunMyJobs® is designed to support this kind of transformation. It's the world's only purpose-designed software-as-a-service (SaaS) solution for workload automation and process orchestration. RunMyJobs provides automation that can both securely move data mountains and enable effective teamwork. It offers the ability to run, manage and monitor processes for multiple applications across any mixed operating system and server environment. It simplifies complexity and supports an organization's greatest assets—its human resources.



Global companies use RunMyJobs to manage processes across any application, connectivity and/or protocols, platforms, middleware, systems management and application interfaces. It works easily with both legacy and the latest technologies. It comes with full auditability, event-based monitoring and alerting as well as service level agreement (SLA) dashboarding. Integration is at the core of our solution with APIs that span web services, command line and Java. It also integrates with deployment tools such as SAP® CTS+, Bamboo, Jenkins and more.

See how Redwood can empower your digital transformation with workload automation.
[Get a customized demo now.](#)

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