In Pursuit of Digital Transformation
The use of technology for greater agility, customer centricity, innovation, real-time intelligence and time to value has emerged as an imperative for competitive survival. Digital transformation is a top strategic initiative for many CEOs, as well as executives in IT, marketing, operations, finance and other areas.

By now, any business or IT professional who’s strategized over what digital transformation can mean for business is familiar with the groundbreaking success of leading digital disruptors. These and other consumer-facing pioneers have transformed how billions of people shop, share, interact, learn and move about:

• Amazon gives a simple, intuitive, highly personalized shopping experience that has made it the world’s largest retailer by market value.
• Facebook delivers a rich, immersive and easy-to-use platform that has reshaped how people communicate, across the street and around the globe.
• Google makes it simple to explore and communicate from a laptop or smartphone, with content and ads tailored to individual interests.
• Uber has upended the taxi cab industry with a mobile app that connects passengers with drivers in a transparent and easy model.

These tales of digital transformation are fundamentally stories of integration and connectivity. Each of these companies did more than simply build websites and mobile apps. They mastered data and application integration to transform from startups to digital behemoths.

“MIT Center for Information Systems Research (CISR) has found that only 28% of established companies have successfully digitized”
Jeanne Ross, MIT-CISR

Beginning the Journey of a Thousand Steps

While many legacy businesses may want to be the next Amazon or Uber of their industry, desire alone will not get it done. There are no guarantees in the digital economy.

In the digital era, successful businesses understand that competitive advantage takes more than strategy; it takes execution of an integrated set of business capabilities that creates a unique value proposition that is difficult to copy.

To accomplish this — a transformative experience for your employees, customers and partners — requires more than technology. It also takes a cultural and organizational shift towards heightened customer centricity, agility and innovation that is most effectively captained from the C-level.

Still Silos After All These Years

Getting rid of data and application silos has been on the IT agenda for decades. And it still is. Silos are more prevalent than ever. And they lead to data that can’t be trusted and applications that work well on their own but hinder company efforts to coordinate customer, supplier, and employee processes. What they don’t do is offer a foundation for execution in the digital era.

When organizations embark on digital transformation, they often find that most of their programming code is Band-Aid code, dedicated to linking disparate legacy systems. They end up with complex, fragile integration nightmares that resemble a Jenga tower waiting to fall. (In building a Jenga tower players take turns removing one block at a time from a tower constructed of 54 blocks. Each block removed is then placed on top of the tower, creating a progressively taller and more unstable structure.)

The worst and slowest of these integrations determine the end-to-end speed and efficiency of the business processes they support. And they unleash a cascade of negative effects: higher maintenance costs, greater risk of failure, and limited future use.

Stop Paving the Cow Path

For organizations that are serious about digital transformation, it’s time to move away from cobbling together integrations. This means reimagining business processes and building a modern data architecture.

Historically IT organizations often just “paved the cow path” — automating essentially broken processes to make it them run faster. Of course, processes need to be efficient, but they must also be effective. Not just doing things right but doing the right things.

As CIOs are learning the hard way, hard-coded legacy integrations have little room for improvement. They may have made sense at the time, but years later they’re expensive excess baggage.

“Competitive advantage will come from taking capabilities that others may or may not have and integrating them in ways that make something extraordinarily powerful”

Jeanne Ross, MIT-OISR
Fixing the Integration Mess

As companies come to terms with the scope of their integration woes, most realize that their on-premise middleware solutions are costly to maintain and, more importantly, lack the flexibility their business needs. And, trying to extend these solutions to accommodate cloud and mobile integration scenarios has not shown a good track record.

What companies are looking for is an integration approach that can:

- Offer greater business agility
- Lower total cost of ownership (TCO)
- Accelerate development of new process flows
- Reduce implementation time from months to weeks or days
- Eliminate the need for expensive support services

In short, what organizations need is an integration platform as a service (iPaaS): a low-code, cloud-based environment for rapidly connecting any combination of older, legacy on-premise systems and modern cloud applications and services.

Novartis Simplifies Integration and Reduces TCO with iPaaS

For digital transformation to thrive, integration needs to be as fast and flexible as today’s leading cloud applications. That’s why iPaaS has emerged as the technology of choice for forward-thinking enterprises. iPaaS has less overhead and a smaller footprint than traditional on-premise integration systems. iPaaS excels in simplicity and ease of use, which translates into faster deployment, lower cost and faster time to value.

That’s why Novartis chose Dell Boomi’s iPaaS when it was looking for a suitable alternative to two on-premise middleware solutions that were expensive to support and lacked flexibility. The project migrated 31 integration processes associated with the on-premise middleware to the Boomi integration platform.

According to Ovum Research, which published a study of the project, Novartis estimated the first phase of the project delivered overall cost savings of around 30 percent, with a 50 percent reduction in server capacity requirements.

Boomi reduced development time for new process interfaces by two to three weeks. As a result, Novartis could deploy twice the number of interfaces and processes in one-sixth of the time it would have taken with its on-premise solutions. Over the long term, Novartis expects the shift to iPaaS to produce TCO savings of around 50 percent.
Integration Is the Cornerstone of Digital Transformation

Organizations that make data and application integration a central element of digital transformation are positioned to outpace competitors that persist with unwieldy, outdated legacy integration technology.

A flexible and agile integration-centric approach to digital transformation generates bottom-line business impact and competitive differentiation in areas such as:

**Greater business agility.** When applications are connected and data flows freely, businesses can better spot and capitalize on opportunities. They can innovate new engagement models with customers and partners.

**Rapid time to value.** Fast, flexible and future-proof integration based in the cloud swiftly unleashes value from cloud IT investments and maximizes business impact.

**Customer centricity.** Putting the customer at the center of the business requires coordination across diverse back- and front-office applications, and the strategic use of multi-source data to deliver a personalized experience.

**Data-driven decisions and operations.** Rich, real-time data is everywhere. Digital transformation depends on harnessing that information to evolve from guesswork to data-driven decision making, and to increase operational efficiency.

**Freedom to innovate.** When IT doesn’t need to invest time and money in difficult integration projects, it liberates resources for high-priority initiatives.

Business benefits of integration

- Executives have broader, more timely visibility for decision-making
- Managers have real-time data and reporting for budgeting and planning
- Front-line personnel can access data on demand for better customer service
- The IT department spends less time and money maintaining in-house systems
- Partners and customers gain multi-channel and self-service options to engage with the business

About Dell Boomi

Dell Boomi, a business unit of Dell Technologies, provides a multi-purpose iPaaS platform trusted by thousands of companies around the world. The Dell Boomi AtomSphere integration platform simplifies complex environments with a single development and management environment that encompasses:

- Data and application integration across any-to-any sources and targets, supported by a scalable, secure, enterprise-grade cloud platform.
- Data quality management to reconcile data across multiple applications into a single version of the truth.
- API management to create, publish and manage fast-growing numbers of APIs for use across internal and external applications.