

RAPID, SELF-SERVICE INTEGRATION APPROACH FOR YOUR DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION INITIATIVES

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Today, we are in a business world where everything is digital, and everything can connect. Connectivity is no longer about integrating systems from diverse sources or developing interoperations between businesses. CIOs and IT leaders of modern businesses need to find ways to become more responsive, and establish more personalized relationships with customers, partners, and suppliers.

With this quest comes many complex and competing integration challenges:

- **More end-points to connect**
[on-premise, cloud, data, mobile, Internet of Things (IoT), web applications, and more]
- **More cloud and hybrid models for applications and data sources**
- **More ecosystem integration requirements**
- **More colleagues needing to perform simple integration tasks themselves to meet digital business demands**

Traditional and systematic integration approaches are complex, expensive, and not agile enough to support modern and challenging integration requirements of digitalization. Implementing an approach that supports self-service delivery of integration capabilities while maintaining a centralized governance and control is a key success factor.

This paper examines the dimensions of a self-service integration approach and explains how ConnectALL can enable a hybrid integration framework that provides access to key integration features and functions while maintaining certain level of control in terms of security, administration, monitoring, and management.



DIGITAL BUSINESS: COMPLEX INTEGRATION

As modern businesses find ways to cope with digitalization's fast technology innovation and accelerate pace of the business, integration becomes increasingly challenging (See Figure 1):

- Fragmented application landscape with functions shifting from server to cloud
- IoT is gaining momentum
- Application portfolios comprise of a mix of on-premise, cloud, data, mobile and web applications, and analytics initiatives.
- More colleagues demand quick integration to support their daily work

Another challenge CIOs and IT leaders face is to operate an IT department, which has to maintain the traditional IT infrastructure, and be rapid, adaptive, and innovative while adapting to new digital business requirements. Gartner calls it bimodal IT. It is about having to establish governance, plan controls as a means to mitigate uncertainty and risk, and create a capability and culture to innovate more, manage uncertainty better, and build more agility (See Figure 2).



Figure 1. Integration Challenges in Today's Modern Business World

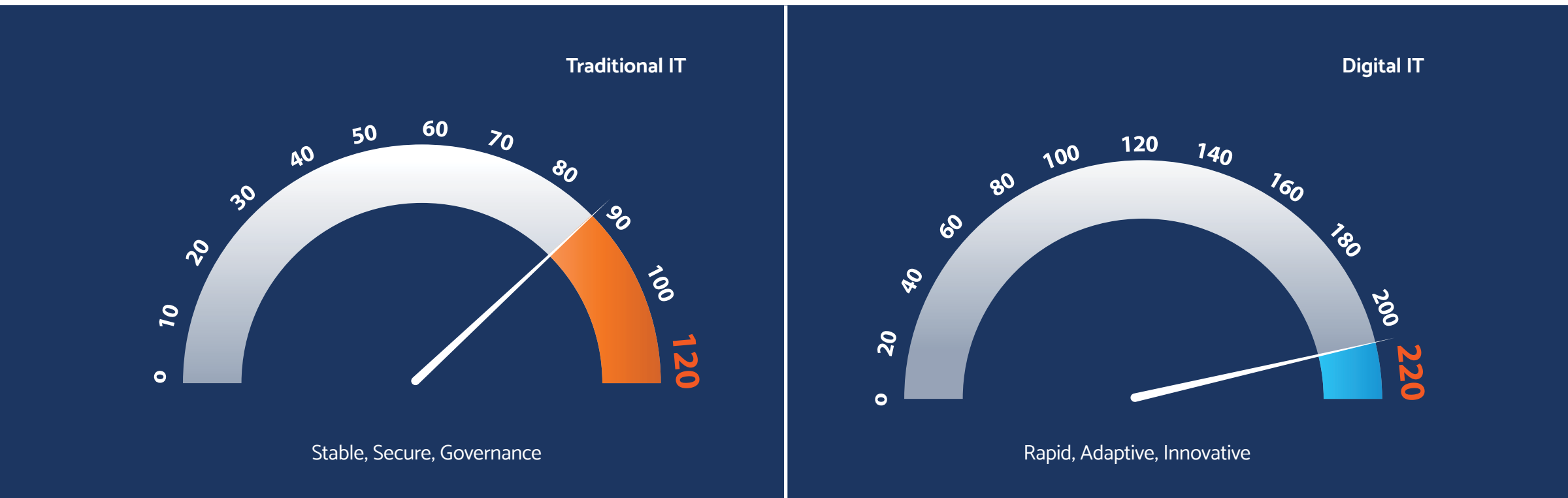


Figure 2. High-Control vs High-Speed IT

In the context of integration, most midsize to large companies have adopted the traditional approach to integration. Typically, these kinds of integrations are middle-ware centric and is dependent on the deep technical knowledge of an integration specialist; but they are effective in supporting complex and demanding systematic integration requirements.

Digitalization drives change even faster. Business initiatives typically involve innovation and high-velocity IT projects. This has led to the emphasis on time to deployment and delivery handled by application developers who

need to leverage integration to achieve their delivery goals. Teams working in an agile environment have complete freedom to use tools they want and need, if these tools interoperate with each other to help them achieve their goals of collaboration, informed decisions, and time to market.

In some cases, business users with no special IT skills carry out integration themselves using simple, self-service tools, to facilitate and orchestrate a simple workflow; for example, connecting Salesforce/CRM data to various applications to automate workflows.



Figure 3. Systematic and Complex vs Simple Integration

The challenge here is that the traditional, systematic approach to integration is complicated, and therefore slow and inflexible to support faster time to value and modern integration needs driven by functions/departments and LOBs. This must evolve to tackle the realities of integration

(See Figure 3). Enabling non-technical users to freely perform integration tasks using whichever technology they prefer comes with security, governance, and compliance risks.

RESHAPING INTEGRATION STRATEGY

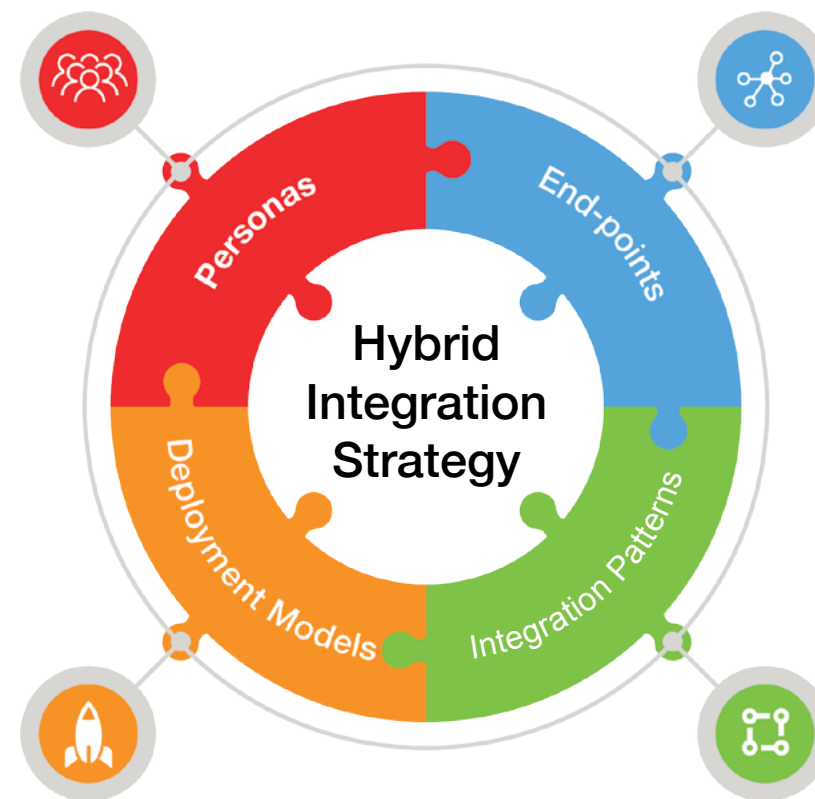
The ability to support fast integration of applications, data, partners, providers, citizens, clients, employees, temporary workers, and other constituents is crucial to succeed in terms of efficiency, effectiveness, and innovation. As a result, IT leaders are reshaping their integration strategy and adopting what Gartner calls a Hybrid Integration Platform (HIP). As defined by Gartner, a HIP is a federated set of Enterprise Service Bus (ESB) and cloud-based integration technologies.

Gartner describes it as 'a capability framework that allows even non-technical users to implement their own integration' with four critical dimensions (See Figure 4):

- Hybrid integration personas (integration specialists, ad hoc integrators, and citizen integrators)
- Hybrid deployment models (cloud, on-premise, and hybrid)
- Hybrid integration patterns (application, data, B2B, and process integration)
- Hybrid endpoints (cloud, on-premise, mobile, and IoT)

- Integration Specialist
- Ad-hoc integrators
- Citizen integrators

- On-prem
- Cloud
- Hybrid



- Server-based
- Cloud
- Mobile Applications
- IoT

- Application
- Data
- B2B
- Process integration

Figure 4. Four dimensions of Hybrid Integration Platform (HIP) Strategy

INTEGRATION PERSONAS

Many functions or groups of people need integration but each have different use-cases and purposes. In expanding the integration persona dimension of HIP, Gartner offers three types of personas:

Integration Specialists typically do application integration, B2B integration, and data integration. Integration work is the primary focus of the integration specialist. Typical profiles: Enterprise Architects, Application Architects, System Integrators.

Ad hoc Integrators typically do application development, API creation, mobile application development, or cloud service integration. Integration is not their main focus but is required to complete their job. Typical profiles: Developers, API product managers, and SaaS administrators.

Citizen Integrators are typically business users of IT, or non-technical users who view integration as a means to automate workflows to improve their productivity and to enable them to get the most value from the data they are authorized to access. Typical profiles: CRM users, QA Managers, IT Ops, or Service Managers.



HYBRID INTEGRATION TECHNOLOGIES

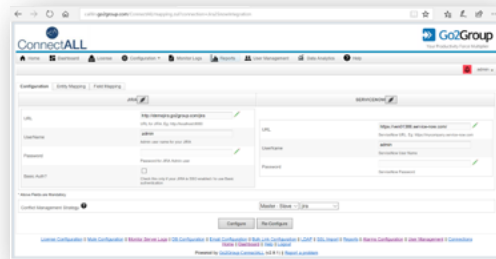
No single product comprehensively supports the four dimensions of the hybrid integration today, but there are integration technologies that can cover multiple aspects of it. While you can choose from a wide range of integration platform offerings, it must be managed as a federated and cohesive whole.

Most companies worldwide have invested in a classic, on-premise integration platform from well-established vendors. These integration platforms are quite effective in supporting complex and systematic integration requirements but are proving to be complex and expensive to support the integration requirements of ad hoc and citizen integrators.

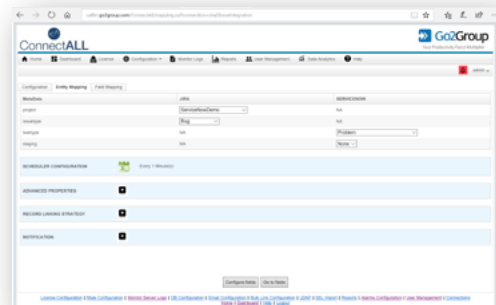
Ad hoc and citizen integrators need specific tools that are focused on ease of use, faster time to integration, low cost of entry, and short learning curves. This is where self-service delivery of integration capabilities becomes a key aspect.



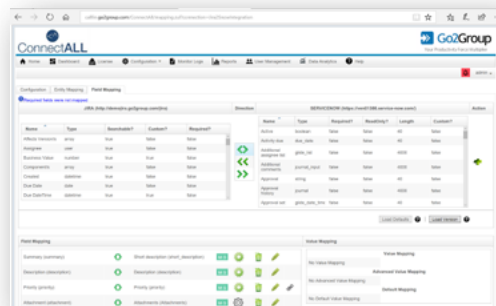
Easy to use; non-programmatic;
3-step point-and-click approach



Step 1: Configure to establish connection

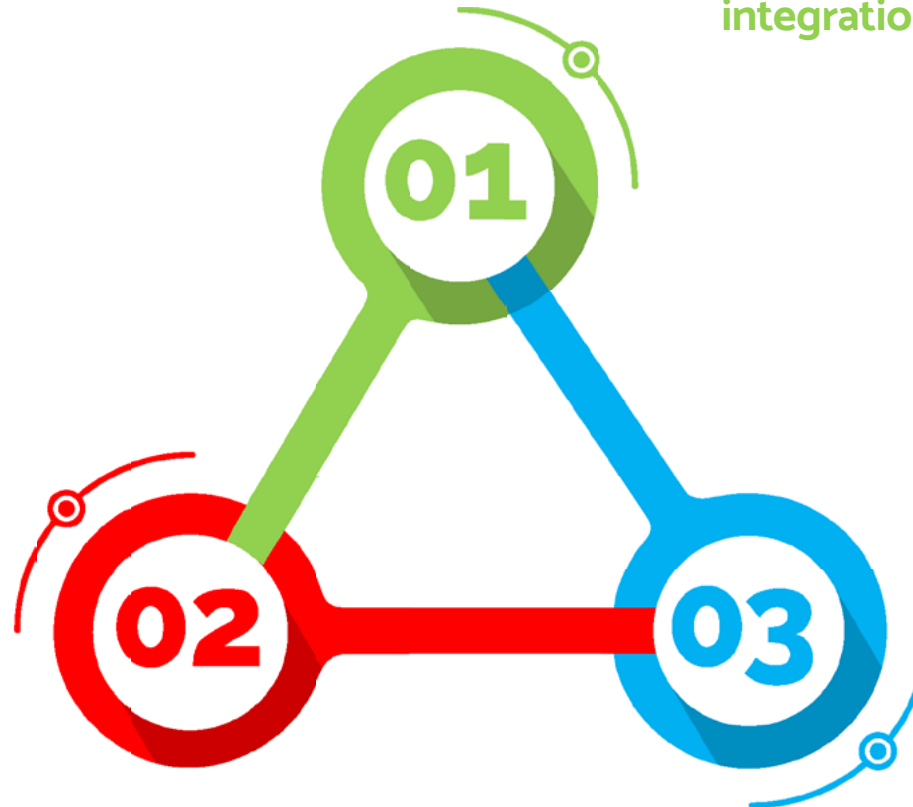


Step 2: Map entities



Step 3: Map fields

Self-service delivery of
integration capabilities



Customizable business scripting

Figure 6. ConnectALL's Self-service Integration Capabilities

KEY BENEFITS

With the right integration platform (See Figure 7), organizations can experience a number of benefits in terms of:

Seamless collaboration. Everyone in your organization can continue to work with the tools or systems they choose. The right integration platform enables organizations to seamlessly connect the wide variety of end-points, and synchronize data, workflow, and requirements automatically.

Improved productivity. Integration between internal teams, customers, and suppliers becomes faster and more reliable. This minimizes errors, reduces business risks, and improves project completion rates and time to market for a greater overall competitive advantage.

Lower operational costs. Using a cloud-based software-as-a-service platform reduces costs and eliminates the issue of maintenance and system upgrades. A platform like ConnectALL can even automate implementation and integration so you are free to choose the best, and most cost-effective software solutions for your business without fear of incompatibility.



Seamless
collaboration



Improved
productivity



Rapid
information
delivery



Lower
operational
costs



Figure 7. A Single Platform with Endless Possibilities

CONCLUSION

Building a hybrid integration framework is not a simple task - whether you are an organization with a complex and varied set of integration requirements or an organization with minimal integration skills.

Plan an incremental implementation of hybrid integration based on your business priorities, available skills, and budget. It may be risky to engage in a massive project to implement your target hybrid implementation framework – all at once.

Evolve your integration strategically toward a self-service oriented integration. The key to building an effective hybrid integration platform lies in its ability to enable decentralization through a self-service portal that selectively provides access to the integration features and functions according to the user profile while maintaining some level of centralized control by enforcing security, administration, monitoring, and management.

Work with your central IT team to formulate a cohesive integration strategy that provides different users with appropriate integration tools to access data, while at the same time maintaining consistency and governance across the organization.

Consider integration solutions like ConnectALL that can cover multiple aspects of your hybrid integration requirements. For more information, visit www.connectall.com or contact us at sales@connectall.com.



ABOUT CONNECTALL

ConnectALL® powers businesses in achieving higher agility and increased velocity. Teams from software development and delivery, IT and business units across large and small enterprises worldwide use ConnectALL's integration platform to unify people, processes, applications and tools from multiple ALM and DevOps providers, such as Atlassian, Micro Focus, Microsoft, IBM, Salesforce, BMC, ServiceNow, and more. Designed to break down barriers to continuous delivery, ConnectALL helps companies rapidly create business value by bringing software innovation to market faster and increasing productivity through cross-team collaboration.

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