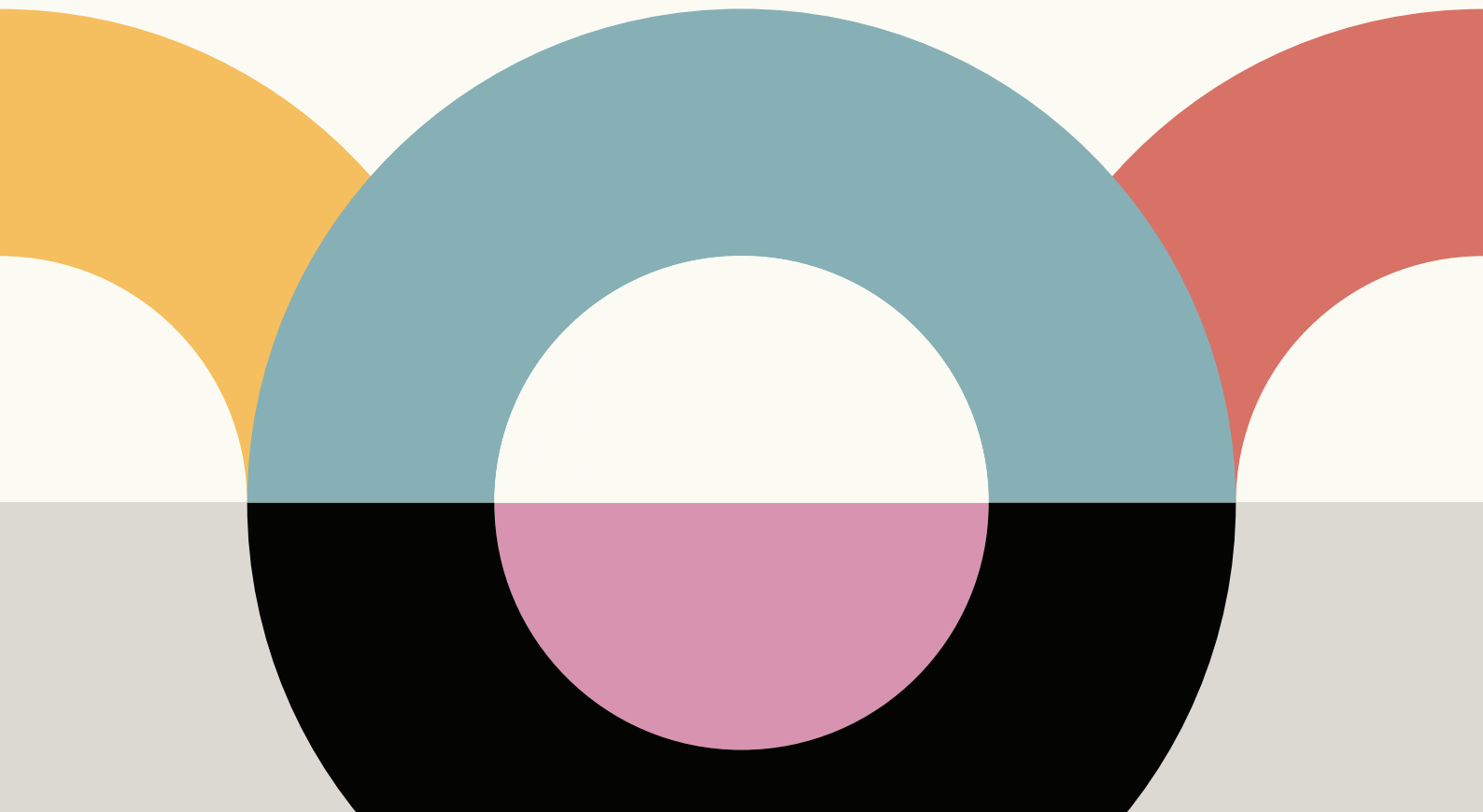


# Turning the tide: Tech-driven strategies for boosting ROI

**A guide to staying competitive with  
tighter budgets and fewer resources**



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## **A guide to staying competitive with tighter budgets and fewer resources**

Economic uncertainty affects all business areas, but poses particular challenges for technology leaders. Today's CIOs, for example, have to balance growth initiatives and the need to stay competitive with tighter budgets and fewer resources. Add in the dramatic changes in the nature of work and commerce that we've seen over the past three years, and you've got a recipe for departmental misalignment, failed technology initiatives, and missed business opportunities.

How can modern tech leaders navigate this difficult economic environment while driving their teams and companies forward? In this eBook, we'll discuss the unique challenges you face and how a modern iPaaS can help you manage them successfully and bring about major wins both for your department and your organization.

**Let's dive in.**



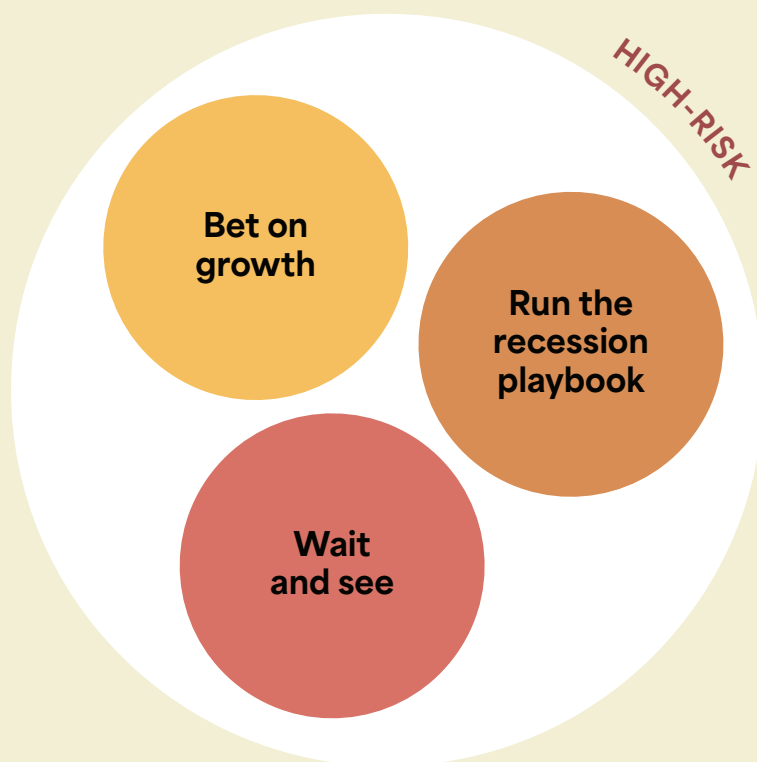
# Uncertainty and risk

When someone says “economic uncertainty,” they usually mean “economic downturn,” aka a period of slow growth and/or recession. During these times, IT leaders have to make do with less: less budget, less resources, and less focus on new initiatives.





**To deal with economic uncertainty, companies usually adopt one of three basic strategies:**



**Unfortunately, all three of these are high-risk for businesses in dynamic industries or highly competitive markets.**

If they bet on growth and the economy continues to stagnate, overly aggressive staffing and investing will lead to losses and layoffs. If they run the “recession playbook,” an economic turnaround might leave the organization stuck behind less risk-averse competitors. “Wait and see” seems like a good compromise but actually offers the worst of both worlds, since the business may endure short-term losses *and* lose competitive positioning.

To make matters worse, CIOs often get caught in a “tug of war” between growth-oriented sales and marketing leaders and the more conservative voices in finance and operations. The end result? IT has to support top-line growth initiatives while also minimizing tech investments and operational costs.

# The big obstacles

## SaaS sprawl and decentralized IT

Even before COVID-19 fast-tracked digital transformation, high-growth companies relied on rapid SaaS tool implementation. Business teams, looking for best-of-breed applications to meet their needs, started using their own SaaS applications—often without consulting IT first.

As a result, IT teams often find themselves rapidly deploying SaaS platforms to appease a variety of business teams with very different needs and use cases. With so many tools in the stack, system and information silos became an unfortunate side effect.

**A 2023 Salesforce survey found that only about 29% of the approximately 1,000 SaaS apps used by the average company are integrated into the organization's core systems.**

Even though businesses are investing more and more in digital technologies, most aren't realizing the hoped-for improvements.

Instead, employees are overloaded with too many siloed solutions and complex workflows spanning multiple systems, leading to reduced employee productivity and team performance. Plus, companies often end up paying for SaaS licenses for seats that aren't used; for example, a salesperson being given access to an ERP or help desk system. Not only is this expensive, it can have major security implications.

Today's employees, particularly members of the Millennial and Gen-Z generations, have a high degree of digital fluency and experience with modern interfaces. Many will proactively find and implement cloud apps that bridge any gaps left by company-approved platforms. This "Shadow IT" is widespread, with 32% of employees admitting to using unapproved tools at work.

What does all of this mean for you? In essence, IT leaders are faced with a workforce of hackers.

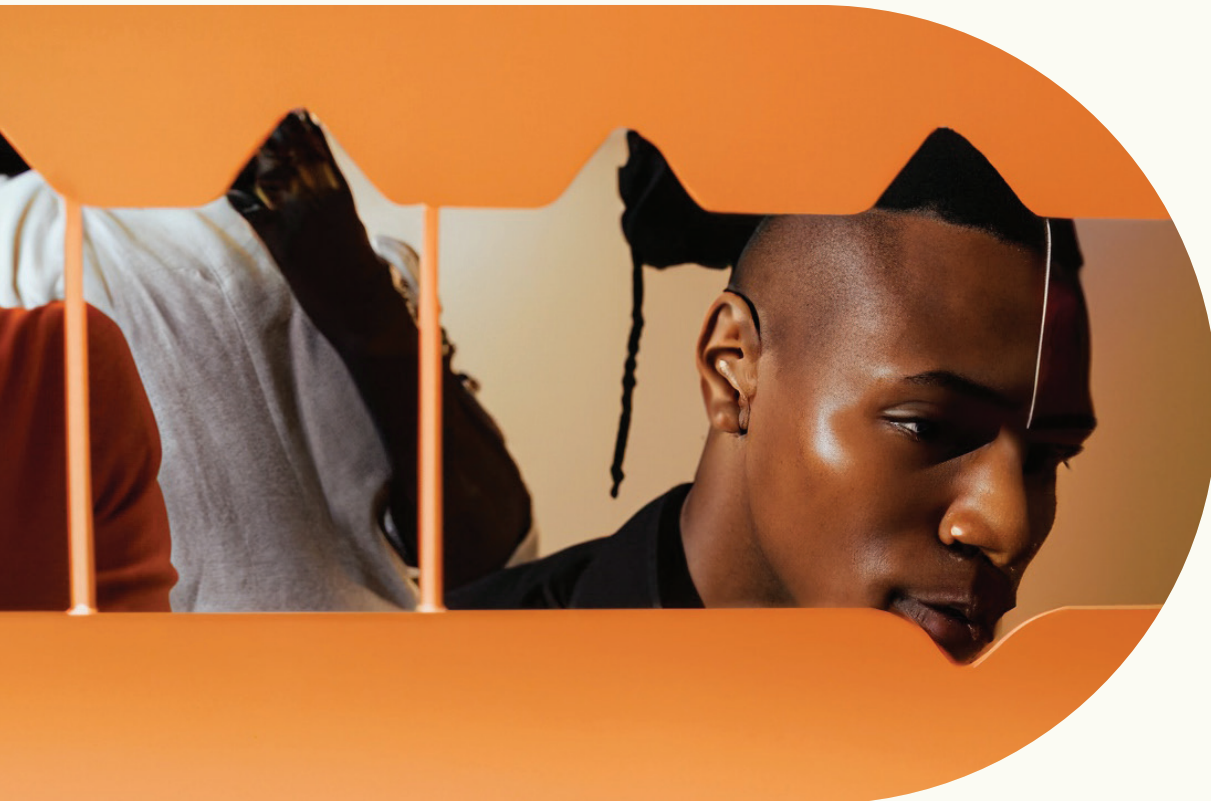
**32% of employees  
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## Ongoing digital transformation initiatives

Most organizations today are moving forward with digital transformation plans, regardless of what the economy does. After all, digital transformation has become “table stakes” in most industries, driving increased efficiency and ultimately unlocking new value for employees, customers, and shareholders.

Even risk-averse organizations want and need the productivity improvements and cost savings that digital transformation projects provide. For CIOs, this means that these projects must move ahead, even if staffing and budgetary resources are scarce.





## Budget challenges

According to Gartner, IT spending is expected to increase by 8% in 2024, a significant jump over the past two years. However, the firm also found that a significant amount of that increased budget will be earmarked for addressing cybersecurity concerns, particularly those raised by AI.

That means yet another challenge for CIOs, as AI is a new frontier when it comes to IT security. You'll still have to innovate, drive digital transformation efforts, and show the overall impact of the IT budget, while potentially bringing on new security tools and managing their effects on your current systems.

**IT spending is expected to increase by 8% in 2024**



## Talent shortages

While layoffs at major tech companies have dominated the headlines recently, skilled technologists make up a small percentage of these—and the demand for their talent is only growing. According to [TechTarget](#), 70% of digital leaders felt like they couldn't keep up with tech trends due to a lack of skilled workers, with 11% of their team churning each year in search of higher salaries.

**70% of digital leaders felt like they couldn't keep up with tech trends due to a lack of skilled workers**

The global developer market is especially tight. A recent [CodinGame and CoderPad report](#) found that two-thirds of developers received a pay raise over the past year. Those who got a raise at their current company saw salary bumps of 5% or less, while those who switched companies saw 25% or more. More than half of the developers surveyed plan to leave their jobs within the next year.

**More than half of the developers surveyed plan to leave their jobs within the next year.**



# Challenges meet their match with modern iPaaS

**While all of these challenges certainly pose major hurdles for today's tech leads—a modern iPaaS can help solve them.**

**An integration platform as a service (iPaaS), for example, can help you better manage SaaS implementation and usage, drive digital transformation, and make the most of your budget.**

What do we mean by a “modern” iPaaS? Traditionally, an iPaaS was designed to maximize the productivity of technical resources. A modern iPaaS, however, increases *everyone's* productivity. It enables the whole organization to proactively address integration problems and identify areas for performance improvement. With a modern iPaaS, only the most complicated integration projects require dedicated developer resources. Instead, business users can create their own basic integrations, which democratizes everything from automation and analytics to data access. **Let's look at how a modern iPaaS can help you and your team address the challenges we discussed above.**

## Control SaaS usage and spending

With SaaS sprawl and Shadow IT on many organizations' radar, CIOs are increasingly under pressure to rein in both SaaS spending and unauthorized usage. Discovery tools and Cloud Access Security Brokers (CASB) are two popular options for doing both, but they address the symptoms, not the underlying problem.

After all, you can't simply cut off access to Shadow IT applications or unnecessary SaaS licenses without offering some kind of replacement—at least not without dealing with some very irritated coworkers.

An iPaaS, however, lets you reduce SaaS usage and sprawl by automating key business processes and integrating data across applications. It also allows you to take full advantage of your data, giving everyone in the org access to the right data at the right time—this time with IT oversight and guardrails. Rather than resorting to Shadow IT apps, your employees can now configure their own analytics or process automations using a common (and secure) toolset.



## Drive digital transformation

Digital transformation is a risky undertaking, with most projects failing to achieve their objectives.

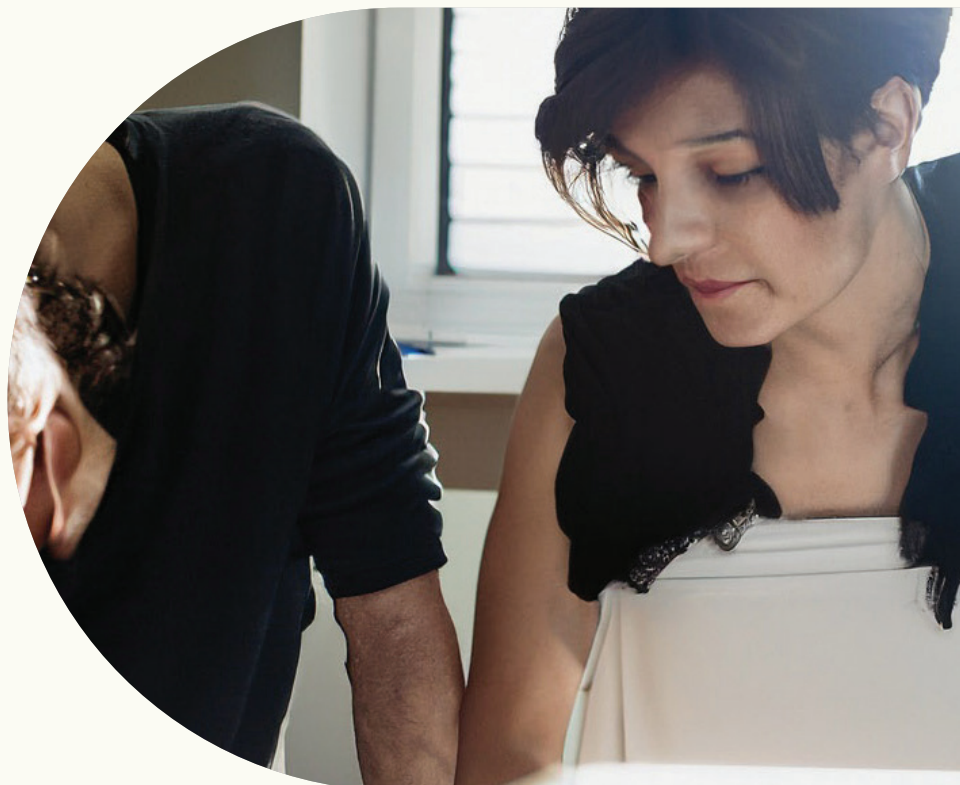
**Why?** According to industry thought leader [Didier Bonnet](#), “The most under-appreciated reason that digital transformations fail is by going too big, too fast. There’s a learning curve to digital transformation, and most companies need to walk before they can run.”

Bonnet calls the first stage of digital transformation “Modernization,” and it’s a step you can’t skip. During this period, the company has to focus on simplifying and digitizing the functions and processes they already use. Luckily, a modern iPaaS lets you do just that by bringing all of your data connections into a single, easy-to-navigate system. And it does so at scale, which is foundational to driving enterprise-wide digital transformation.

**“The most under-appreciated reason that digital transformations fail is by going too big, too fast..”**

To learn more about this topic, check out our blog post, [\*The key to executing your digital transformation strategy.\*](#)

[Read blog →](#)



## Demonstrate value

In today's economic environment, every dollar spent ends up under the microscope, which means CIOs have to justify tech expenditures and show how they're optimizing current investments. In fact, a [TechTarget article](#) named "making better use of what's already on hand" the number one task for CIOs.

One way to do that is by automating existing manual processes. Automation projects are unique in that they're generally pretty simple to quantify, and the results are easy to communicate to business and financial leaders. Plus, they tend to drive measurable improvements in key metrics.

Let's say you decide to automate your organization's order-to-cash process. Here's an example of how you might quantify the results:

### FINANCIAL

#### Goals:

- Reduce order processing costs by 50%
- Return 40 headcount hours back to the business
- Revenue growth
- Refunds reduced by 10%

#### Measures:

- FTEs involved in order processes
- Time to process an order

### PEOPLE

#### Goals:

- Reduce contract/temp labor
- Increase FTE's job satisfaction with more meaningful work
- Increase capacity to start new initiatives

#### Measures:

- Employee satisfaction
- Employee retention
- Number of concurrent corporate initiatives

### CUSTOMER

#### Goals:

- Increase 5-star reviews by 40%
- Increase repeat orders by 60%
- Reduce customer support tickets by 20%

#### Measures:

- Positive reviews
- Repeat orders
- Customer ticket volume



In our previous example, the organization estimated the annual cost of their heavily manual process at \$5.4 million.

**FINANCIAL**

- Lost hours to the business
- Cost of refunds due to errors

**PEOPLE**

**Labor costs:**

- Current time (total hours) spent performing process multiplied by hourly labor costs

**CUSTOMER**

- Number of refunds due to errors
- Orders canceled due to processing delays
- Lost business from bad reviews



By comparing that cost to that of automating the process, you can provide business leaders with a quantified value for the project.

**FINANCIAL**

- Hours back to the business
- Cost of refunds due to errors
- Cost of automation tool and training

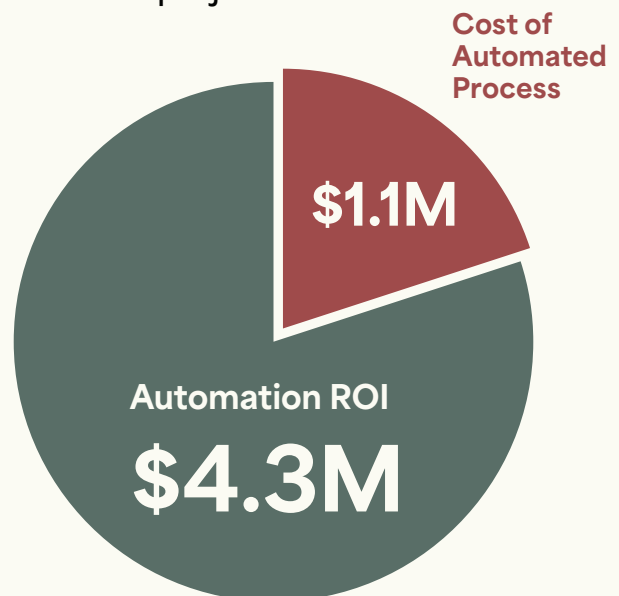
**PEOPLE**

**Labor costs:**

- Estimated time (total hours) spent performing process multiplied by hourly labor costs
- Cost of maintaining/monitoring integrations

**CUSTOMER**

- Number of refunds due to errors
- Orders canceled due to processing delays
- Lost business from bad reviews



This model is primarily based on cost savings from improving operational productivity; however, an iPaaS offers other cost-reduction benefits as well. For example, it streamlines customer experiences and lets business teams access real-time data that helps them do their jobs better.

## Better leverage current talent

Integration and process automation projects have traditionally required highly skilled and expensive developer resources, meaning a company could only take on a few at a time. A modern iPaaS like Celigo, however, democratizes these initiatives.

As we mentioned earlier, today's employees are digitally savvy. While that poses risks when it comes to issues like Shadow IT, it also presents major opportunities when harnessed properly. A technically adept workforce enabled with the power of an iPaaS is a major untapped resource for CIOs, particularly when dealing with the digital talent shortage.

**And Gartner agrees!** The firm has identified three different integration personas that you can leverage within your org:



### Integration Specialists

Highly skilled, in-demand technologists

- Enterprise Services
- Bulk Data Processing
- QoS/Governance
- Comprehensive tools

### Ad Hoc Integrators

Technically adept workers who don't sit in IT. Also known as business technologists.

- Mobile App Dev
- API Development
- LOB projects
- Time to integration
- "Fit-for-purpose" tools

### Citizen Integrators

Workers without designated technical responsibilities but who can adapt technology to their needs.

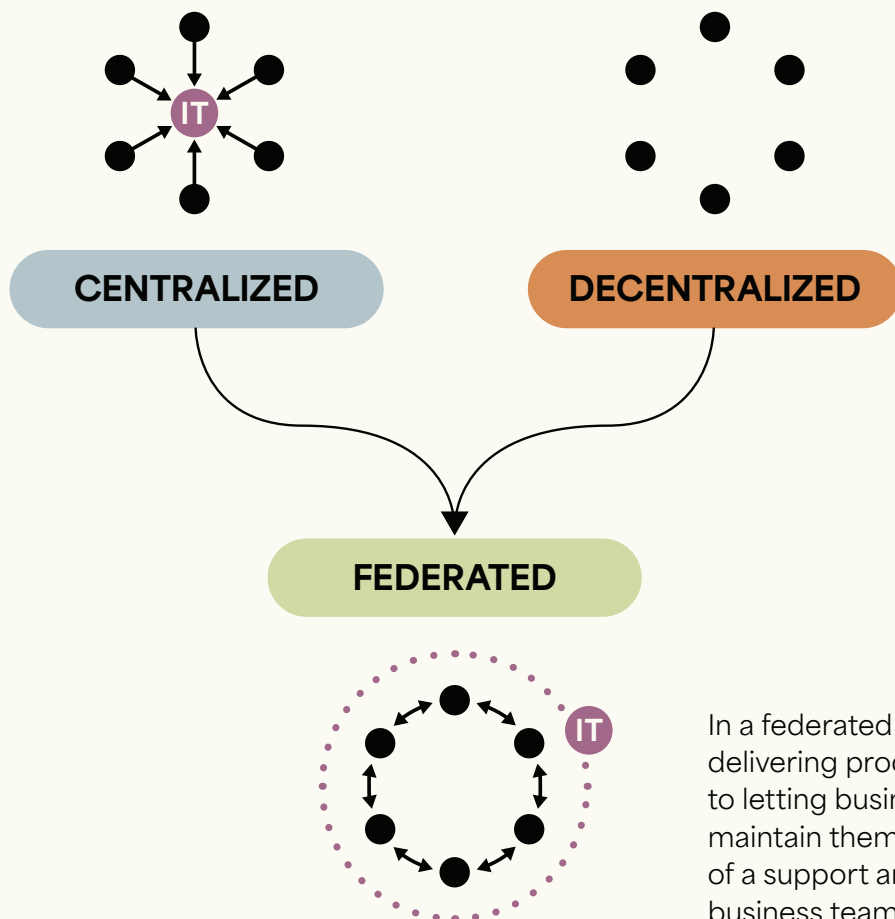
- Data Sync SaaS Apps
- Update Spreadsheets
- Personal projects
- Instant gratification
- Whatever works



A modern iPaaS doesn't just improve the productivity of integration specialists; it also reduces their workload by letting business technologists and citizen integrators shoulder some of the load. The organization is less reliant on them for all but the most complex integration projects which enhances job satisfaction and improves retention by allowing them to focus on more interesting and strategic work.

To make sure that business technologists get the opportunity to take part in integration projects, many IT organizations are adopting a "federated" model.

A traditional, centralized model tends to create bottlenecks that slow automation and limit innovation, while a decentralized one maximizes agility but comes with security and compliance risks. The decentralized model also makes it harder to coordinate between departments.



In a federated model, however, IT moves from delivering process automation and integrations to letting business teams implement and maintain them. In essence, IT takes on more of a support and governance role while business teams do everything else. Because they don't have to wait for IT approval, business technologists can move much faster and innovate more freely, leading to greater agility for the entire organization.



# Reduce risk and get ready for change

**Want to decrease risk in an economic downturn? Then invest in a modern iPaaS. Celigo reduces risk for CIOs by providing a flexible resource that cuts operational spend while supporting growth initiatives. With Celigo, IT can better evaluate tool usage and get more value out of existing SaaS platforms. And because you're better able to leverage technical talent inside and outside of the IT team, you can drive digital transformation initiatives forward faster and at less cost.**

# The Celigo platform

**The Celigo platform is a modern iPaaS, built for those who want a flexible integration platform that helps you both manage common IT challenges and navigate uncertain economic waters.**



## **Celigo comes with...**

### **A best-in-class business process automation development workspace**

With Celigo, both IT and non-IT users can build custom integrations, mappings, and embedded business logic to automate and optimize their business processes.

### **Prebuilt business process automations**

No need to reinvent the wheel when it comes to integrations. Celigo has a library of ready-to-install integrations and automations for common use cases and data flows. With our Integration Application Framework, we're the only iPaaS that delivers managed prebuilt integration applications that automate up to 100% of a business process and optimize it as well.

### **A self-service platform for business teams with enterprise-grade governance for IT**

The Celigo platform allows IT to support business teams as they build, manage and monitor their own business processes, while also ensuring unified best practices, data security, and scalability to meet the needs of the business today and in the future.

## **Ready to see Celigo in action?**

Learn more or schedule a demo today.

[Visit our site →](#)

Celigo's purpose is to  
blaze the trail for a tech-  
empowered future. We create  
software that thinks ahead,  
keeps you connected, and  
moves you forward.

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