The Path to Innovation: Modernization Starts with Integration
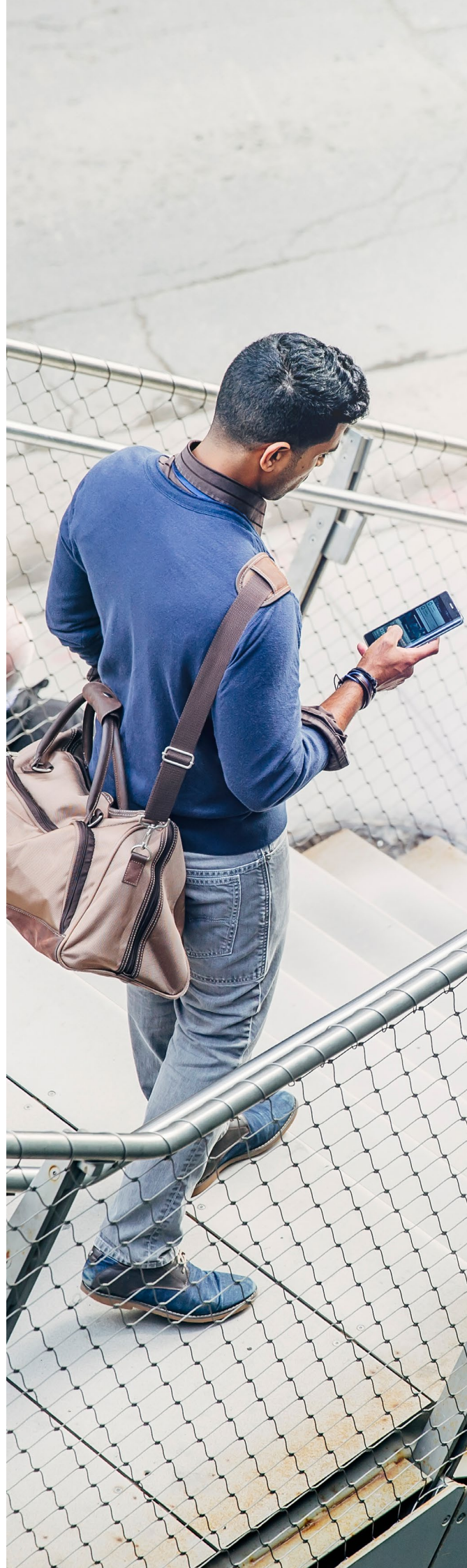
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Modern integration is foundational connectivity automation technology that not only unlocks immediate business benefits but also replaces technical debt that was previously used to connect applications.[1]

1. IDC MarketScape: Worldwide Cloud Integration Software and Services (iPaaS) 2023 Vendor Assessment, doc #US50244723, February 2023.

Introduction

Many companies today are prioritizing modernization of application landscapes to reap the benefits of cloud-native applications, such as agility, flexibility, and resiliency. Benefits of modernization include reduced total cost of ownership and improved productivity by leveraging the latest technologies to better support business demands. Additionally, the pressure to innovate and deliver better outcomes for the business and experiences for customers drives organizations to undertake digital transformation initiatives.

Successful digital transformation enables a company to not just react to change but also to anticipate what's coming – and to be prepared for it. A key imperative of an organization's transformation journey is upgrading its technology landscape to take advantage of the latest innovations, such as artificial intelligence (AI).

Yet, the adoption of new technology leads to highly distributed system landscapes with scattered business information, lacking the ability for real-time insights and actions. Business information today comes from everywhere: from departments like finance, manufacturing, and customer service to suppliers, partners, and broader business networks. This information is captured and stored in a variety of systems, on premises and in the cloud. When these systems aren't properly integrated and managed, that data can't easily be shared between them, leading to a lack of visibility and disjointed end-to-end business processes that span across and outside an enterprise. Collaborating with partners can be challenging if there is no integration platform in place to facilitate the exchange of data between systems.

Early integration approaches used software to connect one application to another. While this was a step up from working with completely siloed applications, it doesn't scale to meet the needs of more-complex IT landscapes and new business demands. Building and maintaining these point-to-point application integrations were also time consuming and resource intensive. That was also true of legacy on-premises integration systems.

WHEN LEGACY MEETS CLOUD

Technical limitations and landscape complexity hinder a company's ability to digitalize end-to-end business processes and explore new business opportunities and models. To combat these challenges, organizations need a solution that supports integration of legacy enterprise systems and new cloud-based applications. Many are taking a hybrid integration approach, but integrating legacy applications with new cloud-based technologies can pose significant challenges, such as the following:

• **Restricted architecture**
Rigid legacy system architecture complicates extending system functionalities or capabilities, as it limits the ability to integrate with other applications or even other pieces of the same business.

• **Vendor lock-in**
Vendor lock-in forces organizations to continue with the same technology, even if it's getting older, isn't compatible with modern technologies, or isn't flexible enough to integrate with others.

• **Inadequate security controls**
Legacy systems present a huge security risk if they're no longer supported by vendors, as they don't receive security updates and patches to address evolving security.

• **Unstable and deficient systems**
Legacy systems are often inefficient and hamper employee productivity because they were designed and purpose built to meet less up-to-date businesses and markets.

• **Incompatibility with modern technology**
Typically, legacy systems are standalone products that weren't designed to integrate with multiple systems and aren't flexible enough to work with future-ready systems.

• **Cost of managing legacy applications**
Legacy business applications tend to have a complex system architecture that not only creates an additional burden for IT teams but also brings unforeseen expenses in maintaining application availability and functionality.

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MODERN INTEGRATION AT THE CORE OF PROGRESS

To address these challenges, organizations turn to adopting a modern integration platform. Today's modern integration solution is a cloud-based integration platform as a service (iPaaS) designed to solve a broad range of integration challenges (for example, business-to-business, application-to-application, and business-to-government integrations, and the streamlining and standardization of integration activities). This platform makes it easier to automate processes and share data across the business and across multiple organizations.

An iPaaS includes tools for developing and deploying integration scenarios without having to install or manage hardware or middleware. It becomes a central place to create, manage, and modify application and process integrations across the business and its partners. A good iPaaS provides a library of connectors and prebuilt integrations to jump-start projects. It also has an event-driven architecture to support scalable real-time processing of business event data to help organizations efficiently and systematically deliver better customer experiences and improve operations.

Beyond making consistent enterprise-wide connections, an iPaaS delivers a host of other advantages:

- **Faster-than-ever integration** through connectivity, prebuilt connectors, integrations, application programming interfaces (APIs), events, and API management
- **A single version of the truth,** thanks to better communication between applications, processes, and systems
- **Adaptability to rapid change** through real-time big-picture insights from all relevant sources
- **Support for business innovation**, such as new processes, services, and experiences – fueled by connected information
- **Automation of complex business processes** across the business and beyond and seamless connectivity across systems, whether in the cloud or on premises
- **Tight security and compliance** through vendor-managed enterprise-grade security, data privacy, and protection
- **Increased efficiency** through a centralized management system that can be accessed from anywhere

Integration is foundational connectivity automation technology that not only unlocks immediate business benefits but also replaces technical debt that was previously used to connect applications.[2]

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SAP Solutions and Modern Integration

SAP has over three decades of innovation in the integration space, from on-premises solutions to iPaaS technology that is central to our business technology platform offering.

SAP® Integration Suite integrates applications inside and outside of your IT landscape. You can accelerate connectivity to SAP and third-party applications with prebuilt integration flows, connectors to hundreds of systems, thousands of APIs, and other capabilities that simplify integration. Connecting in real time becomes a reality, with event-driven architectures and intelligent technology that help you automate comprehensive business processes to gain efficiency and visibility of your business (see Figure 1).
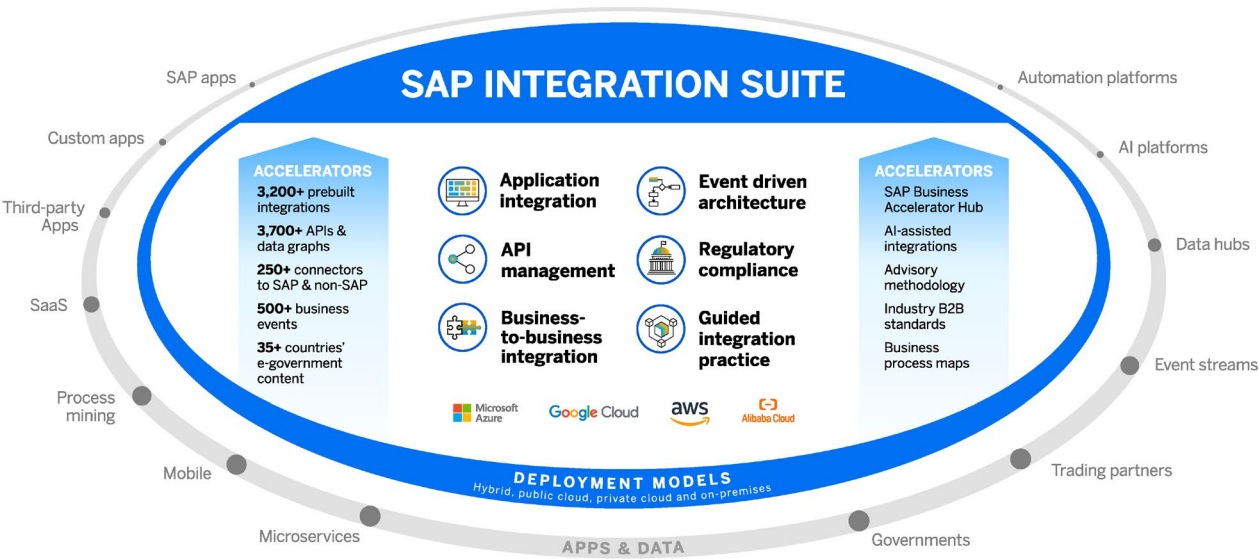

Figure 1: SAP Integration Suite

SAP Integration Suite supports many forms of legacy and modern-day integration patterns and includes prebuilt content and built-in AI technology to help accelerate the development of new integration scenarios, both within an organization and with its business partners, suppliers, and customers.

Not only does SAP Integration Suite provide comprehensive capabilities to address a broad range of integration challenges, but it also comes with a built-in methodology to help you take a systematic approach to integration and unique accelerators to help you achieve results faster – whether your applications are on premises, in multiple clouds, or in hybrid landscapes (see Figure 2).
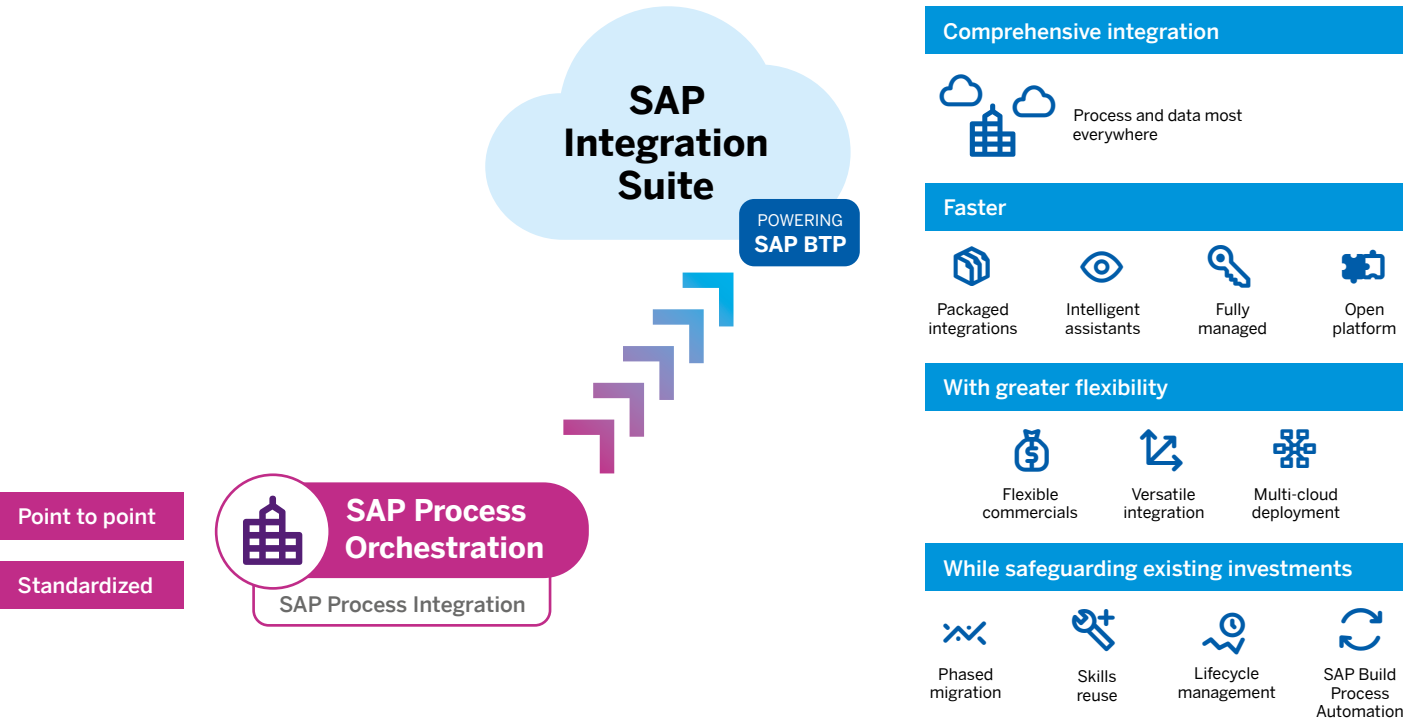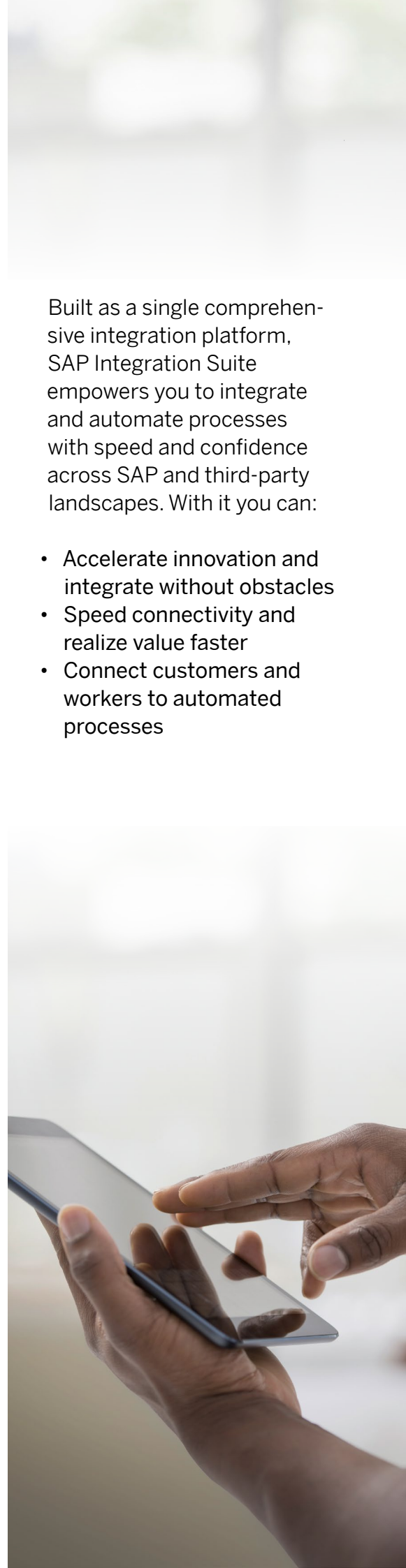

Figure 2: Moving to a Modernized Integration Landscape with SAP Integration Suite

Organizations that adopt SAP Integration Suite can do the following:

- **Connect SAP and third-party software systems more efficiently**
  - SAP Integration Suite is a versatile enterprise-grade iPaaS that supports application-to-application, business-to-business, and business-to-government integration with advanced API management and other modern integration technologies.
- **Accelerate connectivity from day one**
  - SAP Integration Suite offers prepackaged integrations and connectors, consumable business events and APIs, AI-powered advisors, and readily discoverable data semantics to jump-start your integration projects.
- **Enable real-time business interactions**
  - SAP Integration Suite enables an API–based approach with event-driven architecture so that you can publish and process business events and real-time data inside the enterprise – and beyond.
- **Integrate hybrid and multi-cloud landscapes flexibly**
  - SAP Integration Suite helps you connect your on-premises and cloud applications. It runs on major public-cloud infrastructures and gives you the flexibility to deploy to your on-premises landscape and private-cloud environment.
- **Modernize with confidence**
  - SAP Integration Suite is straightforward to adopt. You can rely on a proven methodology, insightful assets, tools, and consulting services from SAP and partners to simplify your migration from legacy solutions and reap the rewards of integration in the cloud.

Built as a single comprehensive integration platform, SAP Integration Suite empowers you to integrate and automate processes with speed and confidence across SAP and third-party landscapes. With it you can:

- Accelerate innovation and integrate without obstacles
- Speed connectivity and realize value faster
- Connect customers and workers to automated processes

Rewards Abound for Integrated Modernization Investments

The reward of modernization cannot be fully realized when investments are siloed and disconnected. Business processes and data that span cloud and on-premises applications – inside and outside the organization – must be connected to allow the entire company to adapt to changing needs and work efficiently and effectively.

At the heart of successful innovation projects are new business opportunities and improved processes. Critical to the success of innovation projects begins with building an integration layer between applications. SAP Integration Suite enables you to connect applications, data sources, processes, services, and events across cloud and on-premises environments, from inside and outside the business – paving the way for faster innovation and unprecedented automation.

Contact Us
For more information about SAP Integration Suite, visit us **here**. For a personalized demo, contact our integration experts, or for a self-guided demo, click **here**.

THE RIGHT INTEGRATION SOLUTION CAN HELP YOUR BUSINESS THRIVE

Optimize and automate business processes
Optimize and automate fragmented business processes to harmonize experiences across your organization.

Power e-commerce
Achieve a holistic view of customer engagements across multiple touch points.

Deliver customer insight
Gain a 360-degree understanding of your customers to increase loyalty and profitability.

Help create a future-proof IT landscape
Unlock the value of your existing investments with an API–first approach.

Help meet e-government and regulatory compliance
Standardize the digital registration of documents to help meet regulatory compliance requirements.

Enable the API economy
Unlock unique services and create new business models to grow competitive advantage.

Connect business-to-business (B2B) partners
Create an efficient, secure, and scalable B2B platform to connect with your trading partners.