Digital Transformation Starts With A Digital Experience Platform

How Iron Mountain Enables the Digital Transformation and AI Journey

Situation Analysis

Digital transformation is a term that has existed for some time. It is also a practice (and trend) that is evergreen. In fact, technology has been used to drive better business outcomes for decades. What's new is the focus on data feeding artificial intelligence (AI) models and analytics engines as key enablers of automated business processes.

The most recent wave of digital transformation has seen a second trend that has caused many organizations to reconsider efforts — generative AI (GAI). The use of foundational models and large language models (LLMs) to drive all facets of business operations has become essential. As a result, many organizations have rescoped transformation efforts to optimize deployments.

With such a focus on data-driven outcomes, the expectations across an organization are understandably high. Faster, better, and higher quality are not just platitudes; they are key metrics that determine success, regardless of whether an organization delivers a new product to the market or provides public services.

Indeed, digital transformation is the monetization of data.

The challenges many enterprises face when undergoing digital transformation can be mapped across four vectors — culture (people), operational (processes, procedures), technology, and data. Each vector is a critical element to the success of any transformational effort.

This research brief explores the tensions organizations face across these success factors while driving toward an AI-enabled, digitally transformed state. Further, this paper introduces the Iron Mountain InSight Digital Experience Platform (DXP) and explains how this SaaS-based platform is critical to the digital transformation process.

The Potential Of The AI Wave Is Significant

Though digital transformation has been discussed as a relatively new trend, the underlying concept is not. The idea of transforming operations through technology can

be traced back decades with business process automation (BPA). And over the different waves of transformation — from BPA to cloud to hybrid cloud — the current AI wave has incredible potential.

Not every technology trend has lived up to its full potential. Any seasoned IT or business executive can point to an experience where a technology investment in software or some service fell far short of its promise. These lived experiences can cause executives to be hesitant to embrace any trend that promises differentiation and advantages in an ever-changing market.

In this latest wave of digital transformation, the AI wave, Moor Insights & Strategy (MI&S), has heard cautious optimism from business and IT executives. Optimism about the potential and caution about the stakes and the impact of a failed initiative.

Indeed, the statistics justify the hopes and concerns of executives. According to global consulting firm Boston Consulting Group (BCG), approximately 70% of digital transformation projects have failed to achieve their potential. While 30% of surveyed executives enjoyed successful implementation, 44% realized only some value, and a shocking 26% considered their efforts a failure.

However, on average, those who did succeed realized an 82% increase in corporate capabilities and 66% more value relative to those who failed in their efforts. Further, on average, these digital winners achieved 1.8 times earnings growth over digital laggards — and more than double the growth in total enterprise value.

One of the key pillars to success is the deployment of business-led modular technology and data platforms. One of the top five challenges IT and business executives cite regarding transformation and modernization projects is making the right choices among disruptive technologies. Surprisingly, 93% of responding companies articulated struggling with this critical decision.

The above is not said to dissuade business and IT executives from embarking on digitization efforts. The benefits of successful digital transformation are both tangible and measurable. Articulating these challenges stresses the importance of proper scoping, planning, execution, and measuring such an endeavor.

Successful Outcomes Require Successful Planning

Proper planning increases the chances of successful project outcomes. Conversely, poorly scoped and planned digital transformation projects are guaranteed to fail by any

measurement — be it an earned value, time to value, or customer satisfaction metric. This is especially true for heavily regulated, process-driven organizations or those with data that originates from multiple sources (physical, digital) in different formats and types.

There are many considerations to take into account to properly manage transformation projects. From the perspective of data readiness and information lifecycle management, there are specific "must haves" for any organization, including:

- Executive stakeholder buy-in and project representation that spans every business unit and every operations function.
- Organization-wide accounting of all the data that resides across the enterprise, along with every *source* of data — from applications to IoT devices to the physical assets that populate the closets, offices, warehouses, and storage facilities that house these assets.
- An agreed-upon process for transforming the raw information within these artifacts into data. That is, how data is collected, cleansed, tagged, and staged for use in AI or other methods of automation. In other words, unified asset management (UAM).

A natural output of this process should be a requirement to identify a platform that can manage this process of ingesting data and information across the enterprise — both physical and digital, regardless of its origination or format.

MI&S recently explored the opportunities and challenges of AI-driven digital transformation in the enterprise. This research report outlines strategies for success that we believe can deliver exponential value to traditional transformation efforts. That research can be reviewed here.

Digital Transformation is Built On a Digital Platform

Data is the fuel that drives digital transformation and modernization in the enterprise. Generally speaking, the more data available, the better. However, data must have relevance to drive effective change — be it in analytics platforms or GAI models that help organizations dramatically drive down the time to value or production.

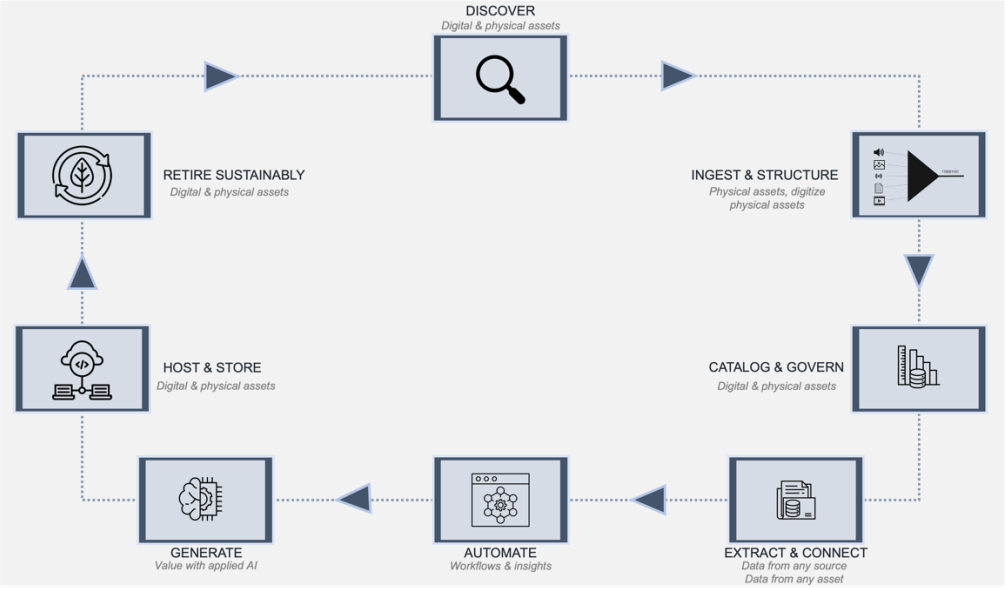
Data relevance begins with a comprehensive information lifecycle management (ILM) framework. One in which all sources (and potential sources) of data are accounted for. These could be analog readings from sensors in a decades-old power plant. Or they

could be audio transcriptions of depositions at a law firm or film reels and recordings from a media production company. The sources could be X-ray films, medical records, and even hospital patients themselves. In today's digitized world, everything and everybody is a potential source of data.

In the previously referenced MI&S research, unified asset management (UAM) is identified as a critical element of the ILM framework. UAM is the process by which an organization effectively locates all digital and physical assets and prepares them for use in workloads that drive automation. The cleansed, tagged data from this UAM process feeds the previously mentioned modular digital platform that drives organizational efficiency and automation.

The ideal modular digital platform can ingest, transform, and manage data across its lifecycle for use in applications across the organization and with external partners. It can also secure, store, govern, and eventually archive or delete data in an auditable manner.

FIGURE 1: DIGITAL PLATFORMS DELIVER UAM



Digital Platforms employ AI to manage digital and physical assets.
Source: Moor Insights & Strategy

Perhaps most importantly, the ideal digital platform is flexible enough to be easily tailored for the specific needs of the individual enterprise so users can manage content on a single platform and deploy that content across any digital channel. The result? Maximized intelligence, and monetized data.

Defining the Ideal Digital Platform

While each organization is unique in how it ingests, manages, uses, and shares data, MI&S believes there are common traits that any organization should look for when evaluating potential solutions:

1. Openness and modularity: The ability to ingest large amounts of unstructured data from hundreds of sources, cleanse that data, and then use and/or share it with third-party applications is critical to the digitization efforts of an organization. This requires a digital platform designed from the ground up with a design goal of openness through the use of APIs and other programming hooks.
2. Cloud-driven experience: Cloud-based and cloud-driven applications and platforms aren't simply a trend. They are resilient, secure, scalable, and mobile. A digital platform born in the cloud is necessary for organizations looking to drive the maximum return on their digital transformation efforts.
3. Simplicity: The cloud has driven the requirement for consumable technology. Simply put, the ideal digital platform is one in which business users can configure and customize workflows and other capabilities without enlisting the services of an IT staff that is over-indexed and unavailable. MI&S recommends organizations include business-line workers in evaluating digital platforms to test low-code/no-code capabilities claims.
4. AI-driven: Like the cloud, AI is more than a trend. AI drives many of the efficiencies that are delivered through digital transformation. Digital platforms that don't employ AI at some level should be removed from consideration as it demonstrates two underlying issues. The platform's functionality and the solution provider's not understanding the market's needs.
5. Further, the ideal digital platform will employ generative AI, using company-specific large language models (LLMs), enabling the highest quality results in the fastest time.
6. Auditable: Being able to stand the scrutiny of industry and government regulators is critical. The ability for business users to have such capabilities in the information management lifecycle is a double-edged sword. Along with the ability to easily configure and customize workflows (and data) comes a responsibility to track when such changes occur.

MI&S believes that another consideration should be taken into account when evaluating digital platforms. One of the foundational elements of digital transformation is the company behind the product. While many solutions in the market make incredible claims supported by synthetic benchmarks, very few companies have the breadth and

depth of experience to deliver on the promise of the characteristics described above. One of those companies is Iron Mountain. Its decades-long existence in managing information for the most prominent companies worldwide has enabled it to deliver a comprehensive platform with the InSight Digital Experience Platform (DXP).

InSight Digital Experience Platform - The Cornerstone of Digital Transformation

Iron Mountain's InSight DXP is a scalable, low-code platform that powers digital transformation through its ability to ingest and process unstructured data for use across the organization.

Information management is the key to InSight DXP. This modular solution can be used to quickly build content management, intelligent document processing, workflow automation, and information governance capabilities from templates and retention schedules that can be easily customized.

Consider the following use case:

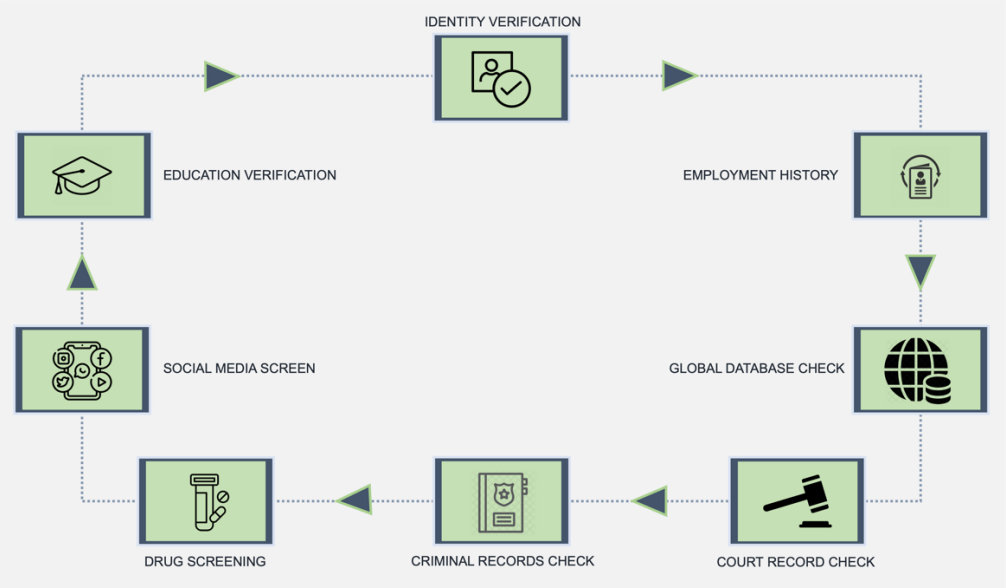
HR departments perform many functions in an organization — from resource planning to sentiment analysis to managing the careers of employees. Each one of these functions requires the ability to collaborate with both internal and external partners.

One specific process, employee onboarding, is incredibly complex from a workflow perspective, even if this seems straightforward to casual observers. This workflow depends on several other processes, including strategic and resource planning (of which HR is involved), job creation and listings, and recruitment. Adding to the complexity, each of these processes have their own set of workflows.

Once a potential employee is identified, onboarding requires a workflow that interacts with several internal and external partners. From offer letters to formal acceptance to background and educational checks (and exception workflows for each), this function has many if/and/or function trees that must be accounted for. And the larger and more regulated the organization, the more complex this onboarding process becomes.

The amount of structured and unstructured data generated per potential employee is tens of gigabytes. And this data collected — in whole or part — is shared among internal and external partners. Further, unique privacy laws and employment rules must be applied depending on an organization's location and where the employee will reside.

FIGURE 2: INSIGHT DXP AUTOMATES HR OPERATIONS



InSight DXP simplifies and automates employee onboarding.
Source: Moor Insights & Strategy

This scenario is merely one example of managing the recruitment, career and satisfaction of employees at companies that range in size from a few to hundreds of thousands. When considering the entire span of an employee's career, the HR staff immediately realizes the value of InSight DXP. The ability to create and utilize workflows from a single interface, with point-and-click simplicity enables HR organizations to be responsive and agile without any assistance from an IT organization that's already overburdened.

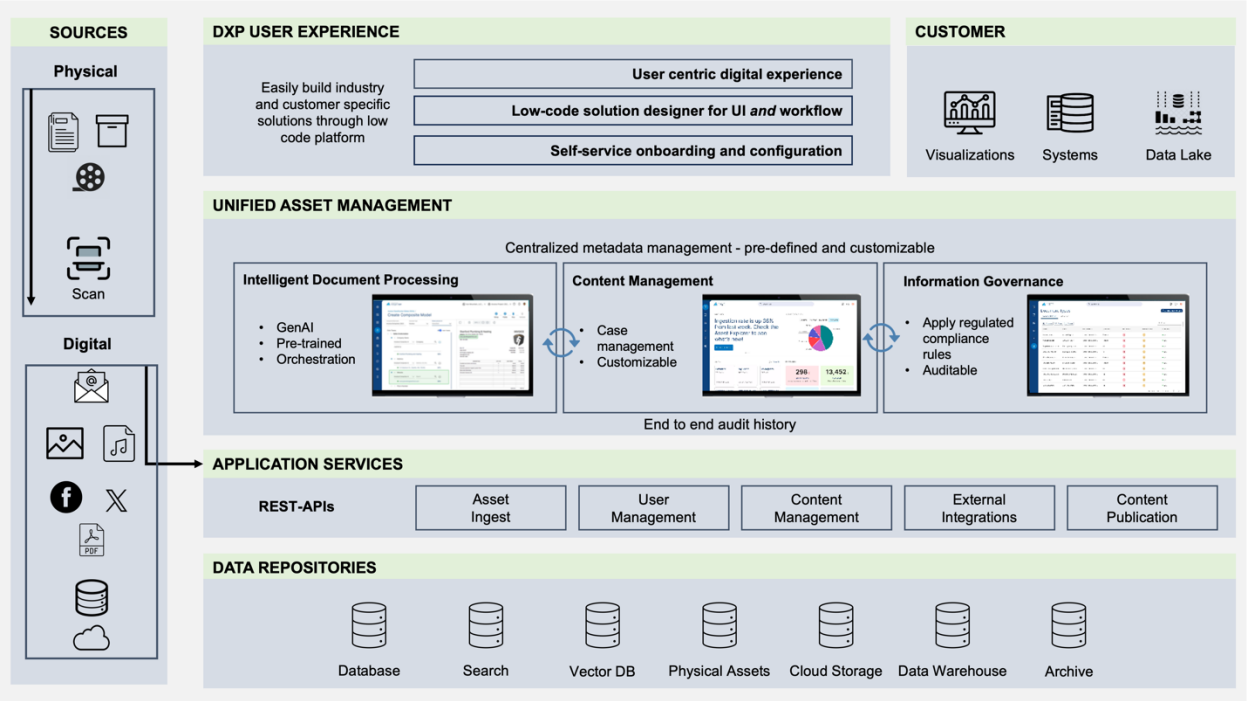
DXP – LOOKING UNDER THE HOOD

As mentioned, InSight DXP is a SaaS platform that enables business users in organizations to simply deploy and use a comprehensive information lifecycle management platform. This digital platform appears to have been designed with an eye on usability for all user types. Rather than the deeply technical and complex systems that can require highly specialized training and users, InSight DXP is designed to allow users to hit productivity velocity quickly.

InSight DXP centers its enterprise-wide content management approach around understanding information management, which requires awareness and support for the assets across the enterprise — physical, digital, structured, and unstructured data. And the ability to ingest, cleanse, tag, and use such data for any purpose must be simple, repeatable, reliable, and secure.

MI&S sees openness as perhaps one of InSight DXP's most vital features, with a library of RESTful application programming interfaces (RESTful APIs) that allow the power of data to be fully realized. These RESTul APIs allow InSight DXP to seamlessly work with other applications — from powering workflow applications to sharing data with partners.

FIGURE 3: A MODULAR VIEW OF INSIGHT DXP



InSight DXP focuses on delivering full functionality with an emphasis on simplicity.
Source: Iron Mountain

Perhaps most compelling about InSight DXP is the ease at which it can be consumed and configured. Many digital transformation projects stall as technical resources become the bottleneck to deploying and optimizing the very applications intended to drive value and efficiency — this mindset of focusing on the "how" instead of outcomes leads to many digital transformation failures. As a cloud-based offering, InSight DXP was designed to be easily scaled and consumed.

MI&S views InSight DXP as a value to enterprise users and those delivering IT services to the market (VARs, systems integrators, managed service providers). For larger organizations, support staff can use InSight DXP templates to quickly create intelligent document processing and workflow automation solutions ranging from industry-specific (e.g., mortgage post-close processing) to business function-focused solutions (e.g., HR and invoice automation).

For service providers such as MSPs, InSight DXP delivers solution templates and low-code tools that allow for real-time customer-specific solutions. This is genuinely a SaaS platform that enables integrators to stand up for far more cost-effective customer-centric services.

While organizations in many industries can derive benefits from InSight DXP, MI&S sees this digital platform delivering the most significant value to those that have the following operating conditions:

- Richness of physical and digital assets
- Workflow-driven with an appreciation for automation
- Internal (application) and external (partner) interfaces
- Regulatory requirements

Because of this, financial services, insurance, healthcare and life sciences, governmental, and energy companies appear to be very well suited to realize the benefits of InSight DXP.

Successful digital transformation projects result in returned value to the organization. The returned value is achieved by performing functions faster and more accurately by outperforming customers' expectations. Success is only realized when data fuels the organization. And this begins with a digital platform like InSight DXP. A platform that manages the information lifecycle automates workflows and manages the source of data — physical and digital assets — all from one framework and one interface.

Iron Mountain is The Original Data Company

In a world of tech startups that seem to offer new revolutionary products or services daily, Iron Mountain has proven to be one of the original enterprise data management companies.

Before the cloud, big data and unstructured data were called unstructured data, and long before generative AI, Iron Mountain was storing and archiving unstructured data for some of the world's largest organizations.

It is this experience and the company's 70+ year reputation for securing and protecting information that separates Iron Mountain from the crowd. It's this experience that enables Iron Mountain to deliver tailored solutions that can provide maximum value to the market and its customers.

For any organization that must balance the need for business efficiency with regulatory requirements in a complex, diverse data environment, “betting on” a startup is a non-starter. MI&S sees Iron Mountain technology as the logical choice for these organizations upon which to build the digitally transformed data environment.

SUMMARY

The era of the digitally-driven business is upon us. AI-driven automation of workflows is no longer an option. It is a must-have. This requirement is causing organizations of all types and sizes to leverage data to achieve business efficiency, solve the most significant challenges, and improve the experience of their customers and constituents.

This latest wave of digital transformation holds promise for many organizations. If implemented correctly, the data wave can help organizations deliver immediate value in the short term and market differentiation in the long term.

The data that drives this new digital transformation wave has its roots in two dimensions: the physical and digital realms. This data is either structured or unstructured, with seemingly countless formats. It is this unstructured data that is experiencing the largest explosion of growth.

To achieve fundamental digital transformation goals, a platform can manage data from ingest to transforming to use (and sharing) to storage, archival, and deletion — all done securely and in an auditable fashion.

Intelligent document processing must be done simply to deliver a comprehensive digital platform that spans content management. Cloud-based, easily consumed, and no additional burden to an IT staff that is already overwhelmed.

While the above may seem contradictory and nearly impossible, MI&S sees Iron Mountain’s new SaaS-based InSight DXP as a strong solution for enterprises looking to deploy and for service providers that support industry-specific customers.

While there are many vendors to choose from, very few can demonstrate a long and proven track record in the information lifecycle management and governance space. This experience, combined with a scalable and modular architecture that delivers security, openness, functionality, and simplicity, makes InSight DXP worthy of serious consideration.

For more information, visit here.

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