

# Heads in the cloud

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**In an increasingly digital, globalised world, where real-time data and consumer expectations fuel the need for immediate results, organisations today are faced with an often-confusing myriad of challenges when it comes to meeting brand promises: not least, how to source, purchase, and deploy applications to support critically important supply chain operations.**

Around the world, no two organisations are undergoing digital transformation for the exact same reasons; each journey, while similar, will ultimately be unique, making the ability to pivot, innovate and scale in one's desired direction so important. Some organisations will be looking to exploit new market opportunities or deliver better experiences, while others may be reacting to the increasing pace of innovation or responding to competitive disruption. Some will likely want to address all of these points and more.

Despite the multiple and varied reasons driving change, all organisations do share areas of commonality; not least, the compelling need to address the accelerating pace of business change, as well as the requirement to be more effective when it comes to delivering new business opportunities. Most organisations today, however, are still limited in their ability to adapt at pace and deliver agile solutions to evolving challenges.

This is primarily due to the state of application portfolios, which are often unnecessarily complicated, outdated, difficult to change and often still aligned to older, now redundant technology strategies.

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### **Seamlessly integrated**

To deliver on the true value of digital transformation, organisations need applications that can be assembled, reassembled, extended and operated at the pace of business change. They need applications that can work interoperably, seamlessly and provide any member of the team with the full transparency, extensibility and levels of personalisation needed to immediately affect change.

Gartner outlines two contrasting (some would argue philosophical) architectural models for supply chain applications: it ultimately comes down to a simple discussion around a 'loosely coupled portfolio of solutions' versus 'seamlessly integrated platforms on a common architecture' approach. A legacy portfolio approach is one that offers multiple functional applications that might share some elements such as single sign-on, but which are for the most part still stand-alone applications with their own unique process and data models, not written on a common shared architecture.

An integrated converged approach (commonly built on cloud-native, microservice architected platforms), by contrast is one that has all of its applications built on a shared technical unfractured architecture; from the data and process modelling, right through to the actual user experience itself.

# THE FIRST MAJOR CLOUD-NATIVE WMS

According to Gartner's latest assessments, Manhattan Associates "has rewritten its WMS and TMS using a microservices architecture that allows continuous innovation, updates and extensibility in a cloud native environment." Ultimately, offering the only true, unified supply chain execution offering currently available today.

The fact that we have been recognised as the leader in the WMS space for 13 consecutive Gartner Magic Quadrants, and the first major vendor to rewrite WMS onto a microservices multitenant cloud architecture (fully supporting composability, extensibility and zero upgrades) is affirmation of our commitment to the platform-first approach to supply chain convergence and the concept of the composable enterprise more widely.



Gartner Magic Quadrant for WMS

**Gartner®**

**Platform-first approach**

Manhattan Active Warehouse Management along with the most recently launched Manhattan Active Transportation Management solution effectively brings TMS and WMS functionality under the same platform 'roof', allowing for a fully transparent view of inbound and outbound goods from the warehouse environment to the front door of the end customer. This game-changing approach to previously siloed areas of supply chain execution, highlights the elegance of supply chain convergence and underlines the Manhattan commitment to a platform-first approach to supply chain execution.

Gartner's survey of supply chain professionals shows that most organisations are focused on integration across core supply chain processes and the extended value chain -in other words, supply chain convergence. According to the same survey, analysts Dwight Klappich and Christian Titze suggest that organisations are showing strong signs of wanting to engage with fewer supply chain vendors, thus reducing the complexity and work involved in implementation, integration, support and maintenance; essentially endorsing the modern platform-first vision, elegantly embodied by the Manhattan Active Supply Chain suite of solutions, encompassing WMS, TMS and OMS on the same platform.

### **Unified execution**

As we set our sights on 2022, the convergence of supply chain applications across single platforms is going to become increasingly important for organisations across all verticals. To deliver on the true promise of digital transformation within the supply chain space, 21st century organisations need to be agile, responsive, scalable and fast. In order to deliver this however, they will also need technology architecture and applications that can be assembled, reassembled and extended to remain competitive.

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