You’re stuck paying an ‘integration tax’. Why not stop?

The guide for internal IT departments and Integration Teams struggling with integrations that inflate IT costs and delay the delivery of business value.

ONEiO

Why are you paying an integration tax?

Integrations may not be the most visible part of internal IT services, but they're essential for execution – and they have a surprisingly large impact on IT costs. They're also among the most critical bottlenecks: slow, manual, expensive, and prone to failure.

This means that, when you take a standard approach to integrations, you end up with unintentionally high costs. In other words, for each business unit you onboard and support and every ITSM process you connect, you're paying a large integration tax.

Why aren't APIs enough to avoid the tax?

According to marketing from major players, APIs should make integration easy – and they're certainly essential. But, annoyingly, they're generally not enough...

ServiceNow needs to integrate with Jira. As does Salesforce. And then there's Slack, Zendesk, Asana and a whole SaaS stack.

Even after the effort of setting up native APIs, integrations often fall short of expectations – because APIs alone don't actually create integrations. They're like wall sockets: necessary, but inadequate without the plugs and cables to link them. As a result, things don't run quite right. Updates lead to issues that are hard to pinpoint and fix. Everything is hard to manage and expensive to maintain. And that's why you still end up paying the integration tax – at the outset and as you deal with ongoing management.

This guide is for IT people who want to support both their business units and their own IT department with smooth, secure, and scalable operations – while keeping IT costs under control.

It's for people who find themselves with expensive and annoying integration initiatives, time and time again – while increasingly having to manage growing IT costs. It's for people who try to avoid the integration topic but end up dealing with the fallout across various business units and ITSM processes.

It looks at:

- **Why integration initiatives drive up IT costs**
- **How high-performing internal IT departments are avoiding the integration tax**
- **Benchmarks (and 4 case studies) for reducing integration costs while improving internal service delivery**
- **Checklist for an integration approach that saves money and improves efficiency**

There's a lot of profit on the table
So read on for how internal IT departments are reducing integration-related costs by **50**% and integration workloads by **90**%.

80%

of IT teams say subpar integrations slow down IT service delivery

€400k

is wasted annually on maintaining outdated integrations

Why is the integration tax so high?

Traditional integration methods rely on consulting, custom development, and internal maintenance. They generally involve project-based implementations (with or without system integrators (SIs – like Accenture, Capgemini, and TCS), native connectors (like ServiceNow's Integration Hub) and/or integration platforms (iPaaS – like MuleSoft, Boomi, and Workato).

These approaches are expensive and significantly affect time-to-value, resource usage, and day-to-day IT operations. Here are 5 ways they hinder cost-effective delivery of internal IT services.

Complexity and resource drain

Integrations require deep, domain-specific knowledge to understand service workflows, ticketing processes, escalation rules, and vendor-specific data formats. They also require deep understanding of the tools involved from both technical and process perspectives. Without this expertise, they're prone to failure, misalignment, and high maintenance costs.

Additionally, traditional integrations require significant technical expertise, manual effort, and continuous maintenance – which increase costs, delivery times, and operational bottlenecks. IT teams waste valuable time trying to build, fix, and maintain them instead of focusing on strategic initiatives.

Ongoing maintenance and support costs

€30k-€200k/year for continuous support contracts

Approx. **€400k** wasted annually on maintaining outdated integrations

Integration lifecycle management costs

IT teams can easily spend **80-90%** of their time managing, troubleshooting, and maintaining integrations.

Inefficient ecosystem management

Multiple vendors, partners, and business units mean you need integrations across different ITSM, SecOps, and DevOps environments. Each party has different processes, data structures, and security requirements, making integrations time-consuming, costly, and prone to failure when external parties make changes.

Without domain expertise, integrations often don't work as expected, causing service disruptions and SLA violations.

Difficulty supporting multi-vendor environments

Requires a custom-built, expensive project (with SIs)
Tied to a single vendor (with native connectors)
Requires API workarounds (with iPaaS)

Manual, inflexible securitys

Requires custom-built and manual elements to maintain end-to-end security and encryption, with limited flexibility

Manual compliance management

Vendor may control compliance when using native connectors, but otherwise internal teams must manage this (often manually)

Vendor lock-in risks and limited data portability

Limited flexibility outside the vendor ecosystem, with portability dependent on the platform

Inconsistent access control and authentication support

Vendor may control compliance when using native connectors, but otherwise internal teams must manage this (often manually)

Manual compliance management

Must be custom per integration, often manual (with SIs)
Relies on vendor-controlled access policies (with native connectors)
Requires customer-managed authentication (with iPaaS)

Expensive projects and unpredictable costs

Traditional system integrators and business-specific solutions require consulting, custom development, and ongoing maintenance – leading to unpredictable costs. These costs increase when ecosystems (ITSM tools, monitoring systems, business units, vendors) become more complex. This makes it hard to budget for integrations, initially and over time.

Upfront project costs

€**50**k-€**200**k/project

Integration technology licensing costs

High initial set-up and ongoing costs, unpredictable licence fees Pay-per-use model can become expensive with volume-based pricing

Slow time-to-value (and business value)

Integration initiatives generally take weeks or months due to complex business logic, multi-system dependencies, and the need for domain-specific configurations.

Delays with integrations slow down internal service delivery, lead to operational inefficiencies, and cause frustration for IT teams and end business units.

Lengthy set-up time

6-18 months/project (with SIs)

1-4 weeks/vendor (with native connectors)

2-6 months/integration (with iPaaS)

Time spent maintaining integration availability and stability

Requires internal (manual) monitoring and fixes (with SIs and iPaaS)
Limited to vendor updates (with native connectors)

Time spent ensuring continuous delivery

High risk of production downtime (with SIs)
Continuous delivery is limited to vendor updates (with native connectors)
Requires manual monitoring (with iPaaS)

Lack of scalability and agility

Integrations must be able to adapt to new services and evolving business unit needs. Traditional integrations require rework, additional development, and constant updates to keep up with these demands. And with every new integration, the complexity rises exponentially. Without a scalable solution, IT teams are stuck maintaining fragile integrations instead of focusing on strategic initiatives like automation and process optimization.

Scalability costs

€50k+/expansion

Manual change management and updating

Internal resources are required to track changes and adaptability to API updates

Limited automation and AI capabilities

70% of failures happen due to lack of automation

How high-performing IT departments or Integration Teams are avoiding the integration tax

So if you're not grappling with expensive initiatives and insufficient APIs, how should you manage integrations (to save those costs and hassle)?

Integration Ops: The next evolution in IT service management

Integration Ops (IntOps) is a structured, automated, and scalable way of managing integrations – turning them into a continuously improving operational function aligned with business outcomes (rather than a project-based burden).

Just as DevOps transformed software delivery and SecOps redefined security, IntOps is the next evolution in IT service management. It applies the same principles to save money and improve performance:

Automation:
Eliminating manual work and reducing human error

Continuous monitoring:
Treating integrations as living components with real-time monitoring, optimisation, and proactive issue resolution

Scalability by design:
With a framework that ensures integrations are adaptable, allowing business units to onboard new services and enabling ITSM processes to be extended or adjusted as needed – without adding unnecessary complexity for your IT team

Operational efficiency:
Standardising integration management for predictable and reliable internal service delivery

Outcome-driven approach:
Focusing on service availability, efficiency, and business impact rather than just technical execution.

When you implement **IntOps**, you reduce all the costs in the previous chapter – and go live faster (meaning you start earning business value faster, too). Your business no longer has to invest so much in integration technology, expertise, or maintenance. And by automating integration delivery and management, you remove complexity, save money, speed up time-to-production, and free up teams for more valuable work. It's not complex to implement – and you can always get it as a managed service.

DevOps revolutionised development, SecOps redefined security, and **Integration Ops is the missing piece for IT departments or Integration Teams.**

IntOps supports key KPIs

Streamlined processes and reduced IT admin workload

BENCHMARK:

90% reduction in integration-related workload, freeing IT teams to focus on strategic initiatives.

MINI CASE STUDY:

A customer reduced integration-related tickets by **75%**, minimising operational overheads.

Improved reliability and reduced downtime across the ecosystem

BENCHMARK:

99.9%+ uptime, ensuring integrations run smoothly without unexpected failures.

MINI CASE STUDY:

An enterprise customer eliminated **95%**, of manual error handling, significantly reducing IT firefighting.

Lower TCO and predictable pricing

BENCHMARK:

50% reduction in total integration costs over time.

Fixed subscription with no surprise costs for updates, maintenance, or consulting (with IntOps as a managed service).

MINI CASE STUDY:

A customer saved **6 figures** annually by switching from custom-built integrations to IntOps as a managed service.

An IT service provider reduced integration spend volatility by **70%**, improving financial predictability.

Fast time-to-value

BENCHMARK:

Fully operational integrations in hours or days instead of weeks or months.

MINI CASE STUDY:

A customer achieved **80%** faster integration deployment.

Scalability and agility

BENCHMARK:

Onboard new integrations up to 5x faster, allowing you to scale operations seamlessly.

MINI CASE STUDY:

A managed service provider expanded their ecosystem 3x faster.

4 IntOps case studies

MSP reduced onboarding time by **70**% by automating customer integrations

Challenges

This managed services provider struggled with the growing complexity of integrating customer ITSM tools into their service ecosystem. Each customer required custom-built integrations, leading to:

- 6-8 weeks to onboard a new customer
- High maintenance overheads for custom-coded integrations
- Increased risk of service disruptions due to integration failures
- Increased risk of security breaches

Solution

They took a co-managed approach to IntOps where ONEiO provided a managed service covering:

- **Proactive integration monitoring:** To detect failures before they occurred
- **Assisted troubleshooting:** For complex issues
- **Handling of critical API updates:** To maintain integration functionality
- **A safety net for their integration team:** Allowing them to retain control while having expert support available

Results

- **70% reduction in customer onboarding time:** From 6-8 weeks to just 2 weeks
- **Lower operational costs:** 40% reduction in integration maintenance effort
- **Improved service reliability:** 75% fewer integration-related incidents

SecOps provider sped up incident response time by **50%**

Challenges

The SecOps team relied on multiple security tools (SIEM, SOAR, ITSM platforms) that required manual data exchange between systems. This led to:

- Delayed response to security threats due to integration lag
- High operational costs from maintaining security tool integrations
- Increased risk of compliance issues due to integration failures

Solution

We acted as their dedicated integration team. This fully managed service included:

- **Full integration lifecycle management:** Ensuring continuous security data exchange
- **Proactive monitoring and automated issue resolution:** To prevent integration failures
- **API updates and modifications:** Fully handled to keep integrations functional

Results

- **50% faster incident response:** Reduced mean time to resolution (MTTR) from hours to minutes
- **Significant cost savings:** 35% reduction in integration maintenance costs
- **Improved compliance:** Ensured seamless data flow for security reporting

Service integrator reduced integration-related support tickets by **60%**

Challenges

The service integrator managed a large service ecosystem with multiple vendors and tools including ITSM, ERP, and HR systems. Their biggest challenges included:

- Integration failures caused delays in IT service requests and lengthy ticket resolution times
- High reliance on IT staff for troubleshooting integration errors
- Lack of visibility into integration performance across systems

Solution

This SI wanted to retain control while leveraging our platform and automation. They benefitted from:

- **Integration automation platform:** Helped them manage integrations independently
- **Management console:** Simplified self-service set-up, troubleshooting, and monitoring
- **Platform stability and security:** Gave them a firm foundation while they maintained full control over their integrations

Results

- **30% reduction:** In IT service request resolution time
- **Less manual effort:** 60% decrease in integration-related support tickets
- **Increased visibility:** Real-time integration monitoring for proactive issue resolution

Global logistics company streamlined IT operations through managed integration

Challenges

A leading logistics enterprise needed to connect multiple ITSM tools and internal systems to support reliable service delivery. They encountered:

- Unstable point-to-point integrations causing workflow disruptions
- Frequent manual interventions to synchronize incident data
- Delayed responses and poor visibility across IT

Solution

Using a managed Integration Ops platform, the organization replaced fragile interfaces with a scalable, centralized integration model. This provided:

- **Unified integration logic:** All mappings and rules handled outside the core systems
- **Consistent stakeholder engagement:** One dedicated expert for all integrations
- **Flexible scaling:** Six systems integrated within one

Results

- **>90% faster synchronization:** Data updates now within seconds instead of minutes
- **Up to 6 hours saved per day:** Elimination of manual error handling and status calls
- **Improved SLA performance:** Real-time transparency and faster issue resolution

It’s time to stop paying integration tax

So, in summary, what should internal IT departments or Integration Teams change to avoid paying an integration tax (and improve efficiency, reliability, and internal service quality)?

Here’s your headline IntOps checklist

- **Think about the benefits of DevOps and SecOps:**
  And apply that mindset to integrations
- **Start with a holistic strategy that defines the integration scope, specifications, and outcomes:**
  So you align with the requirements of your business units and internal workflows – rather than forcing them to adjust to IT constraints.
- **Focus on outcomes aligned with KPIs, not just technical execution:**
  So integrations become a strategic advantage
- **Move from costly custom integrations and tool-focused thinking to IntOps with some level of managed service:**
  So you get the domain expertise you need without increasing headcount (or burdening internal teams)
- **Approach integrations the same way you approach applications:**
  They also require whole lifecycle support across planning, implementation, operations, monitoring, and change management
- **Think in terms of broader ecosystem support:**
  So you escape the limitations, inflexibility, lock-ins, and gaps that come with single platforms
- **Leverage AI-powered automation:**
  To reduce costs, speed up deployment, and enhance reliability
- **Look for transparent, subscription-based pricing:**
  That eliminates upfront project costs and variable maintenance/scaling costs
- **Maintenance MUST be part of your approach:**
  If you treat integrations as projects, you create cost, risk, and hassle down the line

There’s a lot of money and operational valie at stake if you let IntOps pass you by

We’re talking a

50%

reduction in integration-related costs

90%

reduction in integration workloads

Just think of what that means for your efficiency, people, performance, and value proposition...

(...And if you want to discuss in more detail, just **get in touch**.)

ONEiO is a pioneer in Integration Ops, transforming integration from a costly and complex project into an ongoing, reliable service

Most companies struggle with integrations because they rely on traditional system integrators or custom-built, project-based integrations that are slow, expensive, and hard to maintain. We solve this by delivering Integration Ops as a service – a fully managed, cloud-based solution that removes the need for complex, manual integration work.

By automating integration delivery and management, we remove complexity, reduce costs, and guarantee fast time-to-production, allowing you to focus on you core business and free up IT professionals for more valuable work.

Contact us to learn more:

CONTACT US

ONEiO

The Integration Success Company

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