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Whitepaper

Bridging Vision and Execution: A STRATOS Approach to OSS/BSS Modernization

STRATOS-ready OSS/BSS Modernization for Digital Communication Service Providers



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Executive Summary

Legacy operations support systems/ business support systems (OSS/BSS) were developed for predictable operations and connectivity-based business models. These aspects are increasingly misaligned with the digital economy, including 5G monetization, B2B2X ecosystems, the economics of cloud marketplaces, API-driven service exposure, and AI-powered operations.

TM Forum's Open Digital Architecture (ODA) offers a blueprint for modular, cloud-native, API-driven modernization. However, ODA alone does not outline a modernization path. It illustrates the architectural goal but fails to provide the execution strategy necessary to navigate through intricate, operational, and legacy-laden environments.

Read to understand how STRATOS serves as the execution and sequencing layer embedded into ODA. The whitepaper also outlines a four-phase approach and details four actionable modernization patterns. Additionally, it also connects decisions to quantifiable business results. table of content is missing



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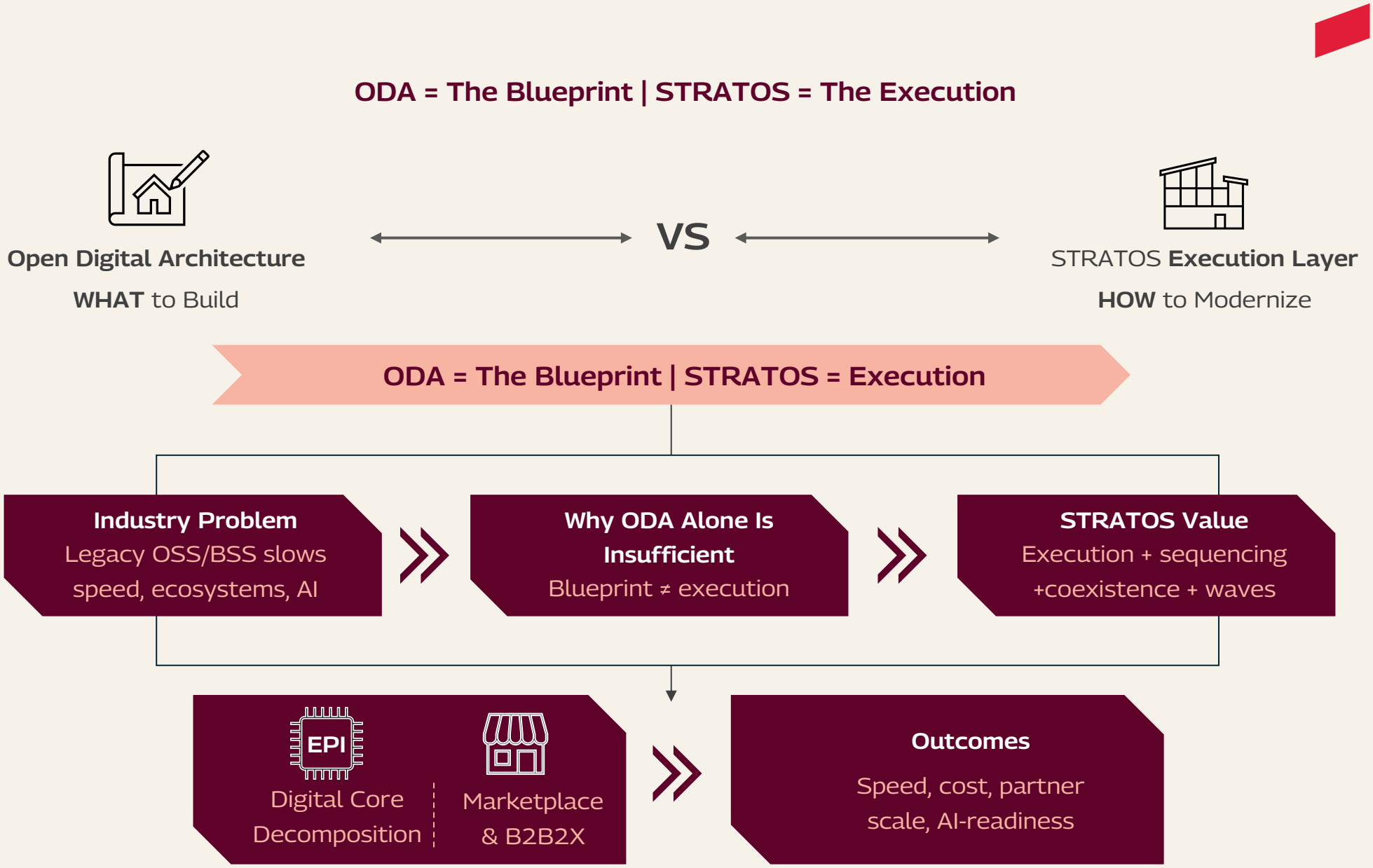


Figure 1: Problem → ODA Execution Gap → STRATOS Value → Business Outcomes.

Background: *OSS/BSS Modernization Has Become a Business Imperative*

OSS/BSS environments have traditionally been constructed using vertically integrated stacks, proprietary data models, point-to-point integrations, batch-focused processes, and manual operational workflows. These systems were effective for relatively stable consumer connectivity businesses; however, they are becoming increasingly incompatible with the current landscape of digitally orchestrated, partner-driven, real-time service models.

Modernizing business practices has become a critical necessity. Communication service providers (CSPs) need digital infrastructures that can support real-time product assembly, partner integration, policy-driven execution, API monetization, and increasing autonomous operations.

Why this Matters Now

- Monetizing 5G and network as a service (NaaS) requires programmable services and charging accessible via APIs.
- B2B2X ecosystems demand effective management of partner lifecycles, automated settlement processes, and the ability to compose commercial offerings in a modular fashion.
- The economics of cloud marketplaces rely on swift onboarding processes, self-service provisioning options, and charging based on usage.
- AI-driven operations require consolidated access to data, real-time visibility, and control loops that are responsive to events.

Key Outcomes: Stratos-ready Architectures For Csps

Business outcomes from modular, API-first modernization

Faster Product Launches

Reusable components accelerate product assembly and launch.

6-8×

Speed Increase

Lower Integration Effort

Open APIs reduce bespoke interfaces and rework.

40-60%

Less Effort

Rapid Partner Onboarding

Structured onboarding and automated settlement.

DAYS

Not Months

MTTR Reduction

Unified observability enables closed-loop action.

30-40%

Decrease

Progressive Legacy Retirement

Coexistence first, then safe domain retirement.

CONTROLLED

Speed Increase

Figure 2: The Key Benefits of STRATOS-ready Architectures for CSPs

The Modernization Imperative for OSS/BSS

To enhance executive readability, the case for modernization can be articulated through four strategic drivers: Speed, Cost, Ecosystem, and Intelligence.

- **Speed**
  Operators must launch, bundle, and adapt services quickly. Modular digital cores enable faster time to market and minimize release friction, which typically hinders legacy environments.

- **Cost**
  Legacy systems incur expenses due to redundant functionality, tailored interfaces, vendor dependence, and complex upgrade processes. Standardized, modular architecture minimizes maintenance and integration costs.

- **Ecosystem**
  Growth depends upon the partner, marketplace, and specific vertical propositions. Telecommunications companies require modular architecture to facilitate onboarding, contract orchestration, revenue sharing, and operations across ecosystems.

- **Intelligence**
  Transitioning from reactive to predictive and agentic operations requires high-quality, accessible data spanning the network, service, customer, and business domains.

Competitive Pressures: What is Changing for the Business

Market Shift	What Changes for the CSP	Legacy Impact	Business Consequence
Marketplace expectations	Instant onboarding, self-service, usage-based offers	Catalog and order flows break under change	Slower launches and weaker digital experience
B2B2X ecosystems	Co-created bundles and automated settlement	Siloed systems and bespoke integration	Partners scale slowly and revenue ramps later
5G and NaaS monetization	API-exposed slicing, QoS, dynamic charging	Hard-coded flows and static policies	5G value capture lags network investment
AI-driven operations	Closed-loop remediation and predictive action	Low observability and fragmented data	High MTTR, high Opex, limited automation

AI-Ready versus AI-Native Digital Core

AI-Ready Digital Core

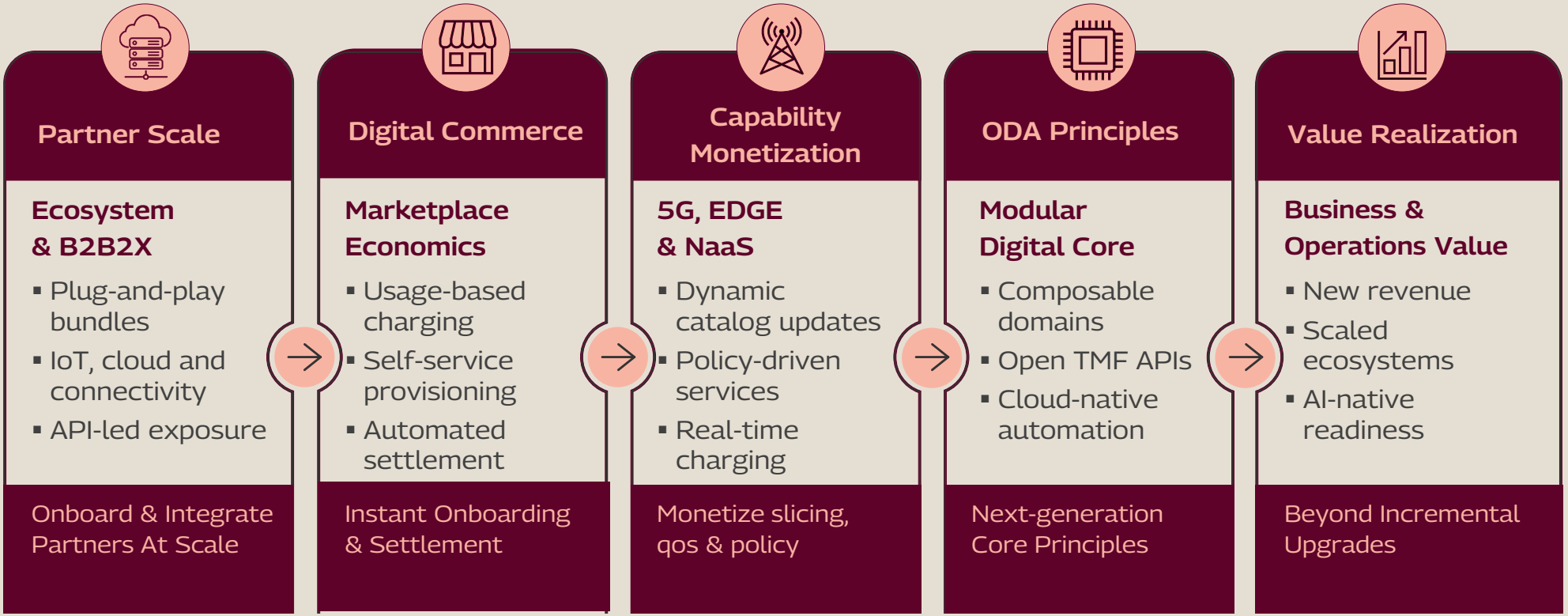
- A uniform semantic model throughout business and operations
- Architecture driven by events and real-time monitoring
- Integrated access to business, service, and network data
- Standardized interfaces across various domains

AI-Native Digital Core

- Orchestration driven by intent
- Automation based on policy
- Execution in a closed loop with human oversight
- Ongoing optimization across services, networks, and customer operations

MODERNIZING THE CSP DIGITAL CORE

From legacy stacks to ecosystem-ready architectures



Revenue growth • Partner ecosystem scale • Automated operations • AI-native readiness

Figure 3: The Difference Between AI-Ready Versus AI-Native Digital Core

ODA and the Open Digital Framework: The Industry Blueprint

TM Forum's ODA offers the industry-standard framework for modular, interoperable, cloud-native telecom IT. It creates a shared language, a component map, Open APIs, governance frameworks, and design/build/operate guidance to help CSPs streamline design, modernize construction, and automate operations.

Consequently, while ODA is essential, it alone cannot execute modernization in complex real-world environments.

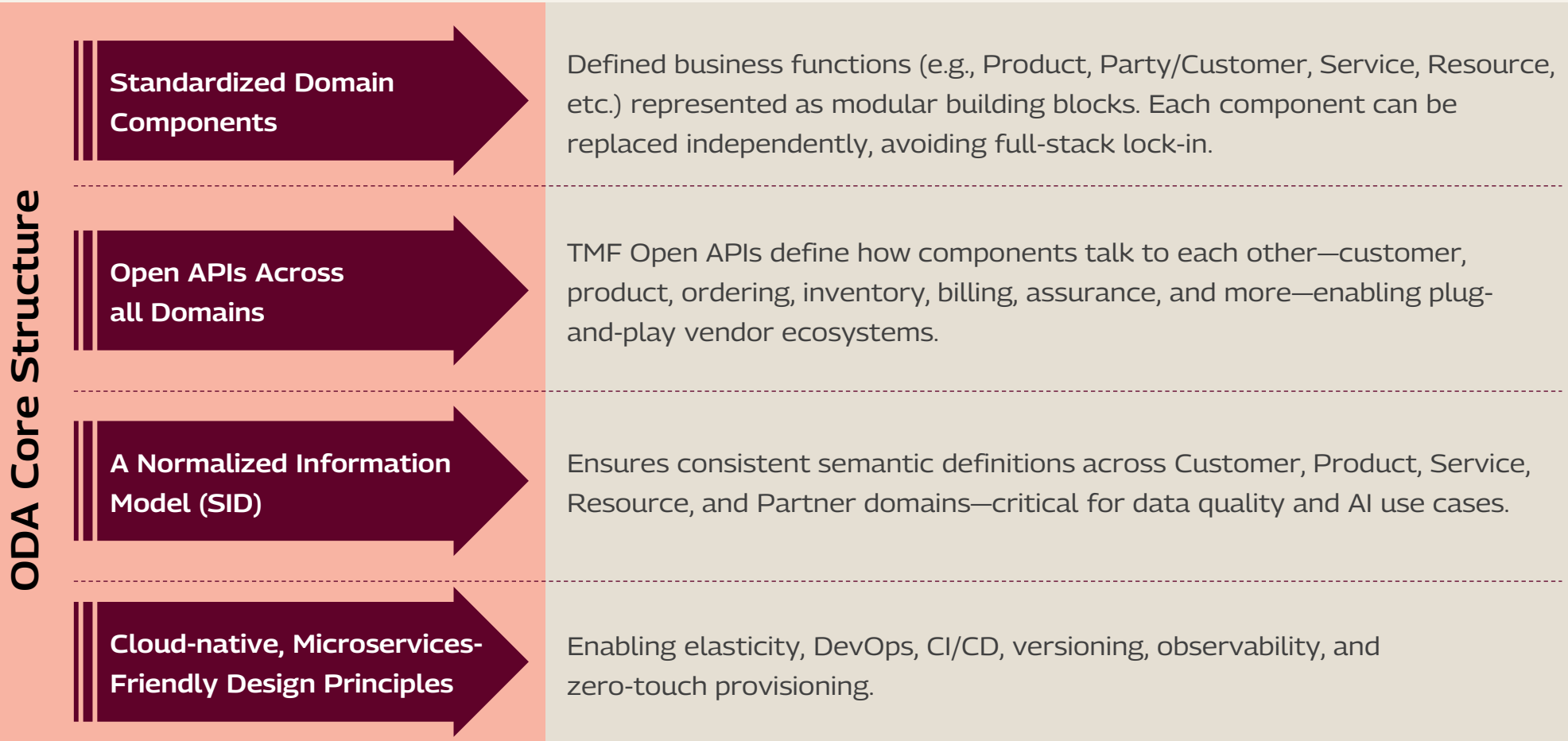


Figure 4: The ODA core structure

What ODA Does Well

- Establishes uniformity in domains and responsibilities
- Encourages modular, cloud-native component design
- Utilizes Open APIs to simplify integration processes
- Facilitates independent lifecycles for components
- Lays the groundwork for architectures that are ready for partners and AI

What ODA Does Not Solve

- Sequencing: determining the order of domain modernization and the rationale behind it
- Coexistence: ensuring that legacy systems and new components function together seamlessly without data discrepancies
- Migration risk: strategies for cutover, rollback, parallel operations, and testing
- Operating model: governance of APIs, ownership of products, DevSecOps practices, and observability for effective execution



ODA Gives The "What." STRATOS Gives The "How."

STRATOS addresses these bottlenecks by offering the 'execution layer' through architectural patterns, modernization initiatives, coexistence strategies, and delivery governance.

The ODA Component Map — Simplified View for Leaders

A streamlined representation of ODA domains can be illustrated as follows:

- **Customer and Commercial Layer:** Management of Customers/Parties, Product Catalog, Order Capture/CPQ, Digital Channels/CRM
- **Digital Core (Operations and Monetization):** Management of Orders, Charging and Policy, Billing
- **Service Management:** Inventory of Services/Resources, Management of SLA/QoS
- **Network and Resource Layer:** Inventory of Resources, Orchestration of Networks, Activation/Provisioning

Supporting cross-cutting capabilities, referred to as "meshes," encompass identity/security governance, data/AI platforms, event streaming/observability, and API gateway/integration fabric—facilitating event-driven, API-based interactions and closed-loop assurance.



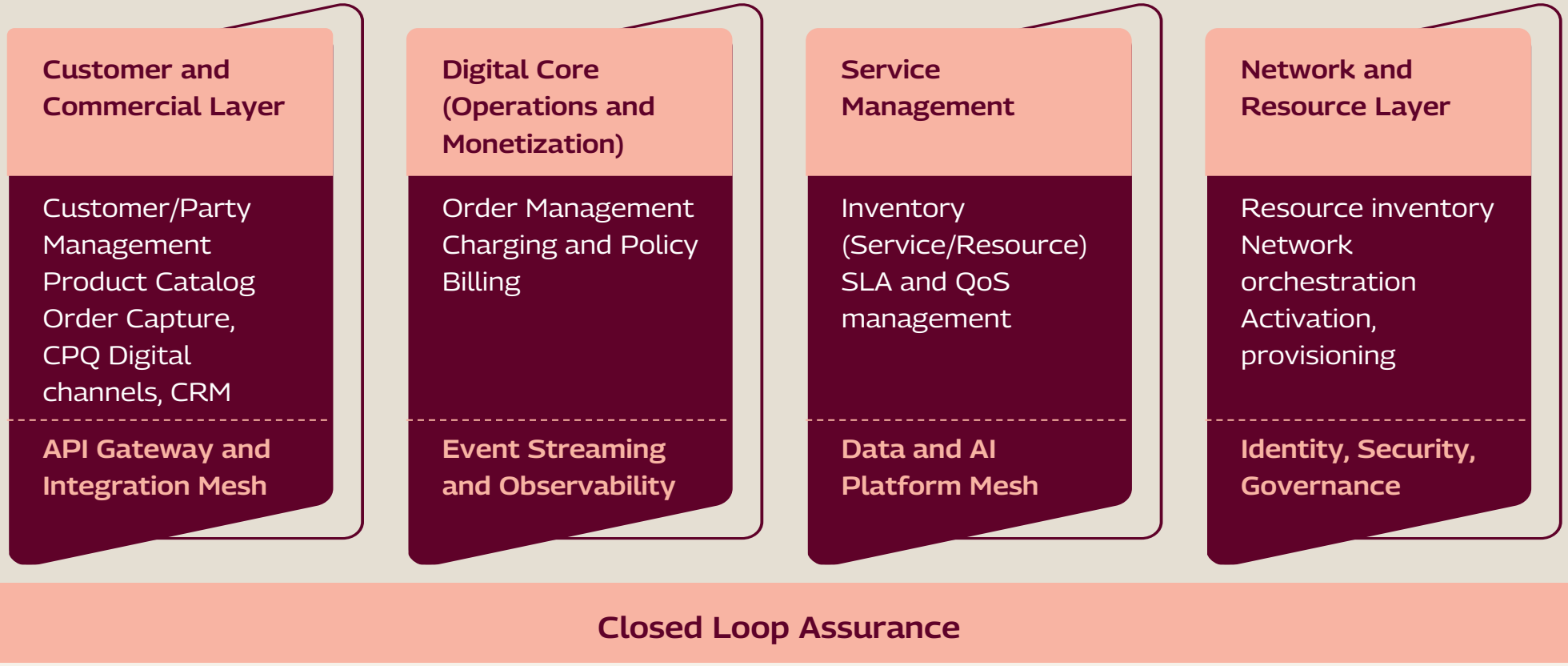


Figure 5: The Different Capabilities of ODA Component Map

The ODA component map offers a structural view of standardized domains, but its true significance emerges through the interactions among these components. The customer and commercial domains generate business intent via standardized APIs. The digital core domains manage fulfillment, charging, and service lifecycle processes. The service and resource domains ensure delivery across network and infrastructure layers. Concurrently, data, event streaming, and observability capabilities consistently provide intelligence to upstream domains. This event-driven, API-centric interaction model facilitates real-time orchestration, ecosystem integration, and closed-loop automation.

ODA APIs: Why They Matter To Business Leaders

API	Domain	Why it Matters
TMF620	Product Catalog	Accelerates offer launch and improves consistency across channels and partners
TMF622	Product Ordering	Standardizes order capture and reduces integration effort
TMF641	Service Ordering	Connects commercial order intent to service fulfillment, critical for 5G/NaaS
TMF637	Product Inventory	Improves visibility into active products, supporting care and self-service
TMF638	Service Inventory	Supports accurate service lifecycle management and assurance workflows
TMF666	Account Management	Supports enterprise hierarchies and B2B/B2B2X commercial structures
TMF678	Billing Management	Enables flexible charging and partner revenue models for digital services

The Link Between ODF, ODA, and Open APIs

It is beneficial to elucidate relationships:

- **Open Digital Framework (ODF):** A comprehensive set of TM Forum resources, encompassing ODA, Open APIs, and associated frameworks and maturity models.
- **Open Digital Architecture (ODA):** The architectural blueprint contained within ODF.
- **TM Forum Open APIs:** The contractual layer that facilitates interoperability among modular components.

This enables an operator to construct an OSS/BSS that is open, modular, and adaptable. It is also prepared for collaboration with partners and can be easily updated in the future.

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Modernizing The CSP Digital Core

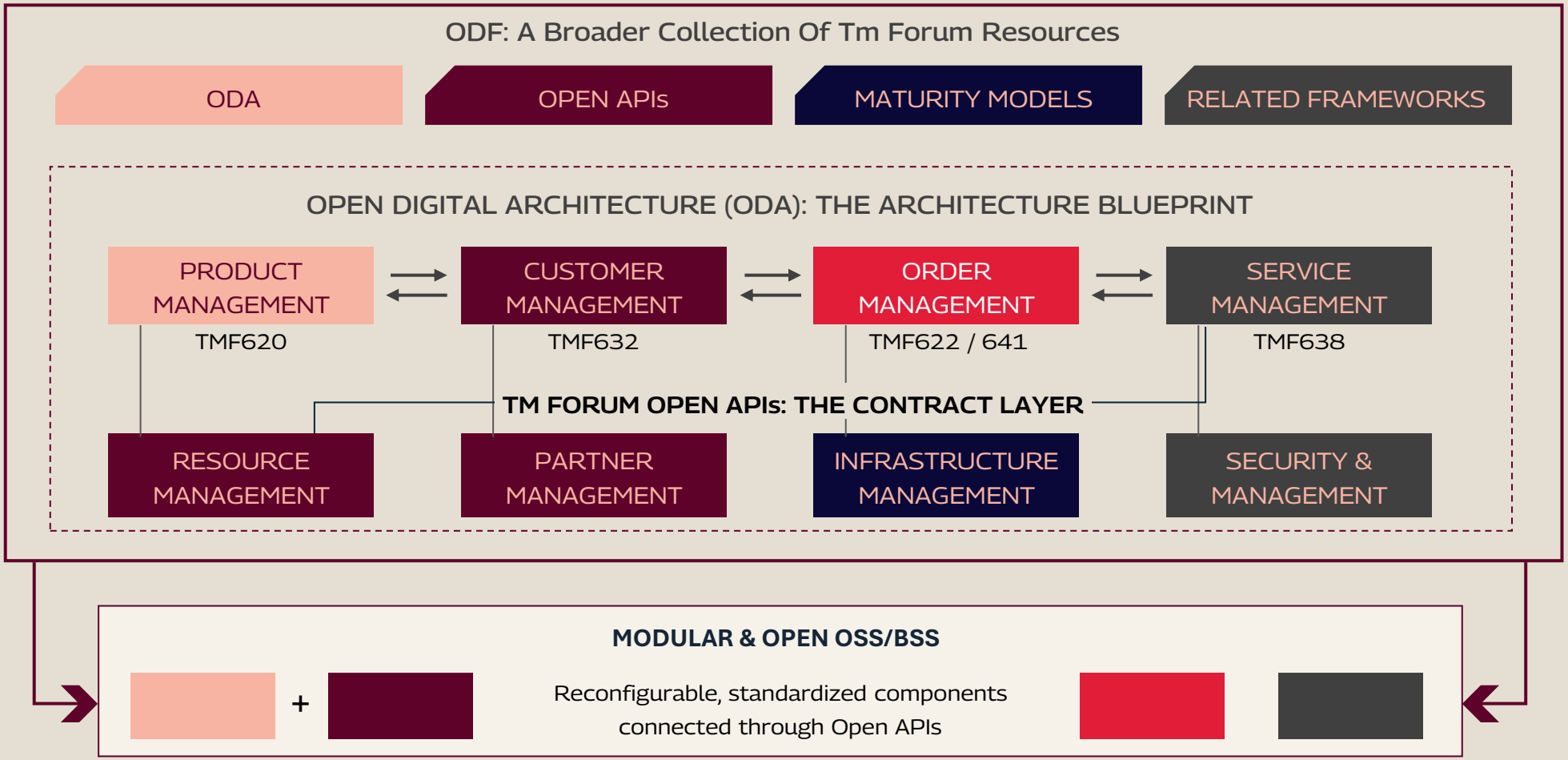


Figure 6: The TM Forum's Open Digital Framework (ODF)

What a STRATOS-Ready OSS/BSS Looks Like



What STRATOS is not

- A platform for products or vendors
- A comprehensive replacement initiative for OSS/BSS transformation
- A middleware solution masquerading as a transformation
- An IT-focused endeavor disconnected from business results

STRATOS represents a systematic modernization approach that helps communication service providers (CSPs) progress toward an open, modular, ecosystem-compatible, and AI-driven digital core through managed phases of change.

Legacy OSS/BSS Versus ODA Alone Versus STRATOS-Ready

Dimension	Legacy OSS/BSS	ODA Alone	STRATOS-Ready
Architecture	Monolithic	Component-based target state	Modular target state plus execution path
APIs	Custom	Standardized	API-first strategy with governance
Modernization model	Big-bang or local fixes	Conceptual architecture	Wave-based modernization
Ecosystem readiness	Low	Medium	High
Business agility	Low	Medium	High
Coexistence model	Fragile	Not defined in detail	Explicitly designed
Business outcome focus	Indirect	Possible	Central to modernization logic

What This Means for Business?

- Speeds revenue generation by enabling faster offer launches and partner packaging.
- Expedites partner growth via organized onboarding and settlement processes.
- Minimizes execution challenges by decreasing the effort required for custom integrations.
- Strengthens resilience through enhanced observability and the isolation of modular failures.
- Fosters AI readiness by establishing the necessary data and event frameworks for automation.



Design Principles of A STRATOS-Ready Stack

- Designed with an API-first approach—All new functionalities should both expose and utilize standard interfaces.
- Isolation of domains and modular development—Core domains such as product, catalog, order, service, policy, charging, and inventory should evolve independently whenever feasible.
- Parallel operation before decommissioning—Both new and legacy functionalities should run concurrently until it is safe to retire the old systems.
- Cloud-native and composable runtimes are enhanced through containerization, automation, and CI/CD pipelines.
- Observability as a control mechanism—The architecture must inherently include metrics, logs, traces, events, and control loops.
- Connection to business outcomes—Architectural choices must be validated based on speed, profit margins, partner growth, resilience, and customer value.

Design Principles For A Stratos-Ready Stack

Architecture choices linked directly to controlled evolution and business value

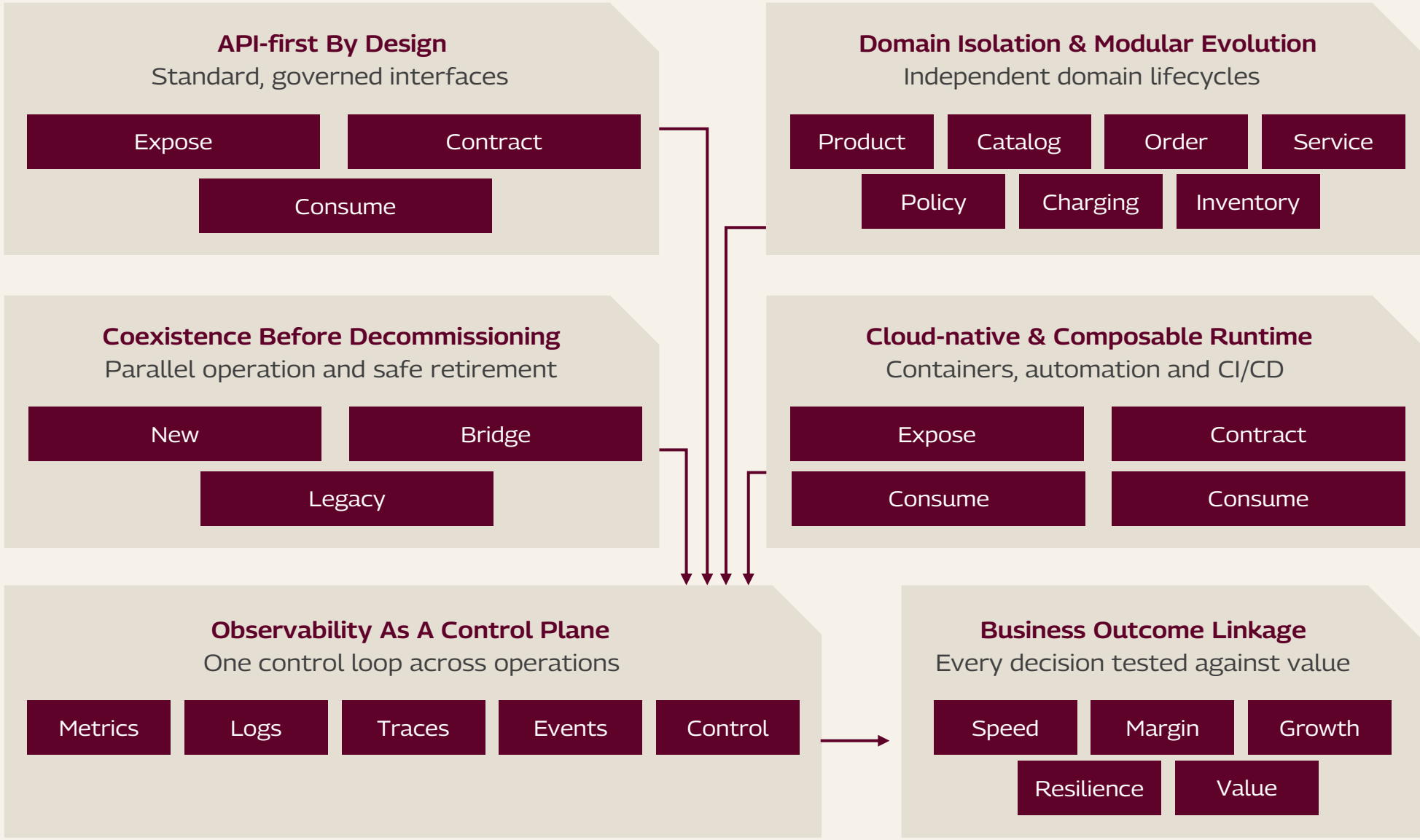


Figure 7: The Different Stages of Design Principles for a STRATOS-Ready Stack

STRATOS Macro-Architecture

A structured narrative is an effective way to convey the STRATOS architecture. This structured narrative can be outlined as follows:

- **Layer 1 (Engagement):** Comprehensive digital experience across multiple channels, including both assisted and self-service journeys.
- **Layer 2 (Partner and Ecosystem):** Processes for marketplace onboarding, partner lifecycle management, and commercial onboarding workflows.
- **Layer 3 (Digital Core):** Components such as catalog management, order orchestration, charging and policy management, billing and settlement, inventory management, assurance, and workflow/rules/configuration studios.
- **Layer 4 (Integration and Data Fabric):** Features including API gateway, event streaming, observability, and data products.
- **Layer 5 (Infrastructure):** Elements encompassing cloud platform, security measures, runtime environments, and foundations of DevSecOps.



STRATOS Macro-Architecture Overview

A next-generation digital ecosystem translated into editable architecture layers

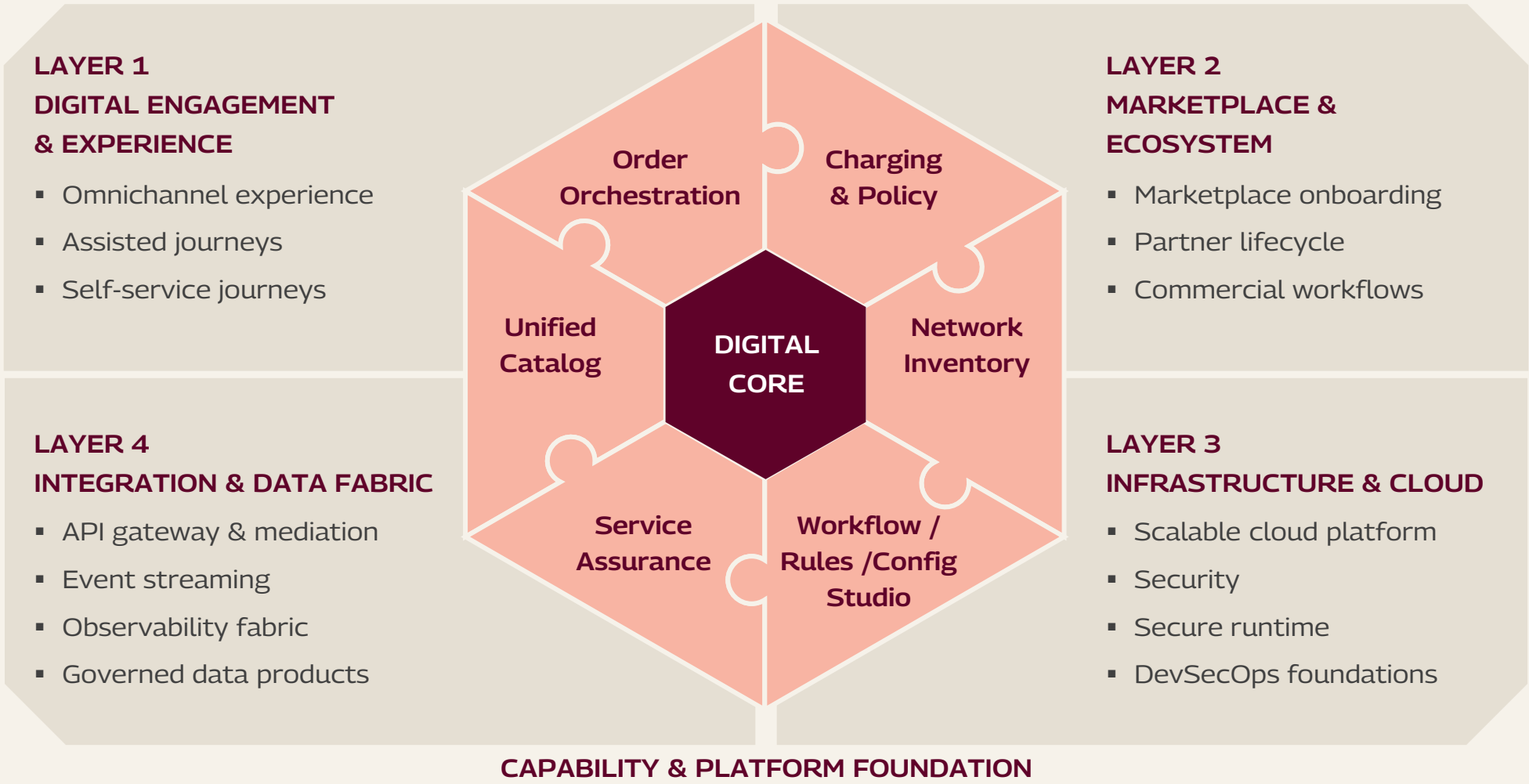


Figure 8: Layered View of Engagement, Partner Ecosystem, Digital Core, Integration/Data Fabric, and Infrastructure/Runtime

Architecture Patterns for STRATOS-Led Modernization

Pattern 1:
Progressive Digital CoreDecomposition

- **Problem**
  Legacy systems are tightly interconnected, expensive to modify, and too risky to replace all at once.

- **Pattern**
  The proposed solution involves establishing a modular digital core alongside the existing system and progressively transferring essential components—typically catalog, order orchestration, charging/policy, CRM, and inventory. Implement anti-corruption layers, API mediation, and event streaming to maintain coexistence.

- **When to Use**
  - Legacy environments that are critical to revenue
  - High-risk estates where a comprehensive overhaul is not feasible
  - Cloud Service Providers aim to achieve early benefits without causing complete disruption
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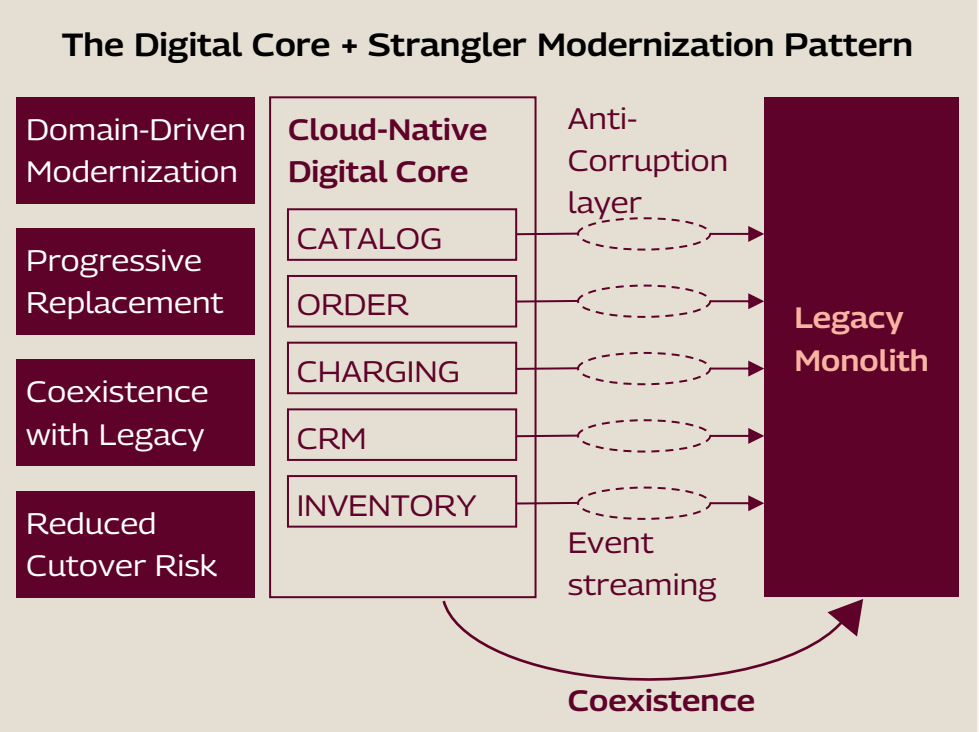


Figure 9: The Digital Core + Strangler Modernization Pattern

- **Business Value**
  - Accelerated value achievement from the initial modernized domains
  - Decreased integration costs over time
  - Minimized delivery and transition risks
  - Defined strategy for gradual legacy system retirement

Pattern 2:
Marketplace-Centric B2B2X Architecture

- **Problem**
  Outdated legacy BSS systems cannot manage partners, establish commercial setups, handle contract management, facilitate settlements, and oversee digital ecosystem management at scale.

- **Pattern**
  Develop a marketplace-ready architecture that integrates a modular catalog, a configure-price-quote (CPQ) system, partner onboarding processes, contract management capabilities, and billing and settlement capabilities.

- **When to Use**
  - Operators focused on B2B solutions.
  - CSPs aiming at IoT, SaaS, private networks, cloud services, or specialized bundles
  - Operators pursuing growth through ecosystem collaboration

- **Business Value**
  - Accelerated onboarding process for partners
  - Enhanced composition of offers across both internal and external services
  - Scalable revenue sharing and settlement mechanisms
  - Strengthened capability to position the CSP as an orchestrator of the ecosystem

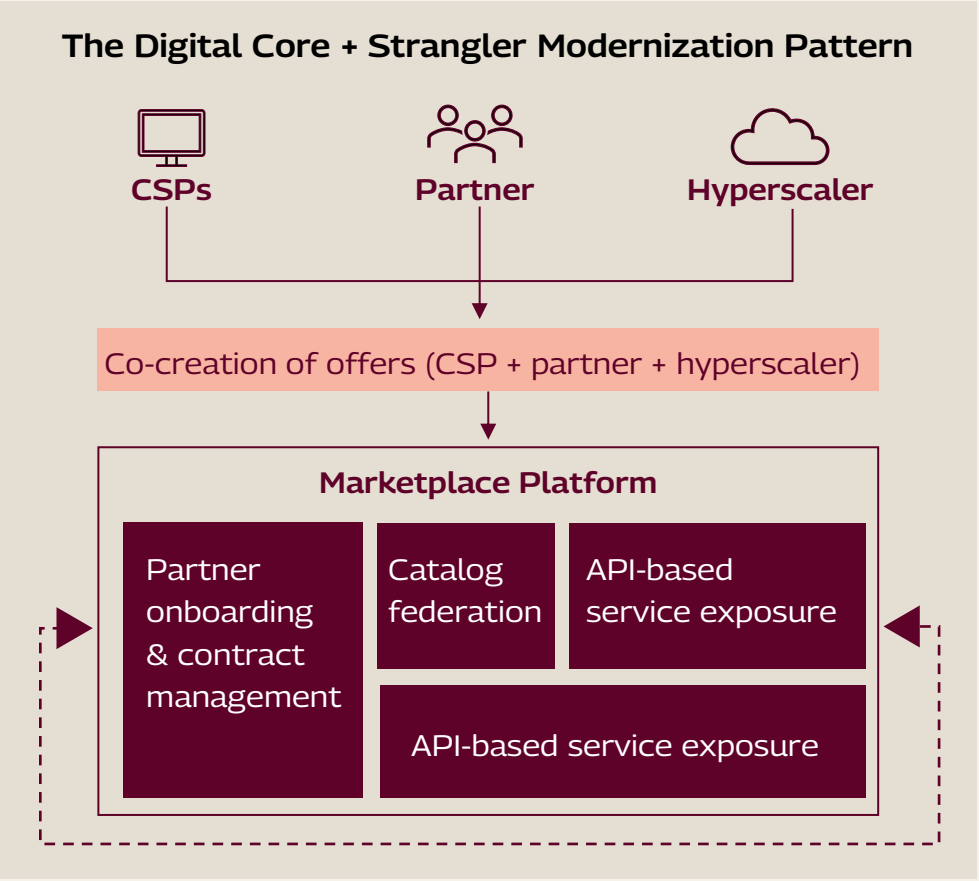


Figure 10: Marketplace- Centric B2B2X Architecture

Pattern 3:
API-First NaaS and Service Exposure

- **Problem**
  Implementing 5G network slicing, on-demand quality of service, private networks, and edge services requires programmable network exposure. Nevertheless, legacy OSS/BSS systems cannot manage and monetize real-time APIs effectively.

- **Pattern**
  The proposed solution involves utilizing an API-centric approach that incorporates TM Forum APIs, service exposure gateways, monetization controls, and intent-driven management.

- **When to Use**
  - Strategies for enterprise 5G and private networks
  - Exposure of wholesale and federated services
  - Scenarios for quality-on-demand and API monetization

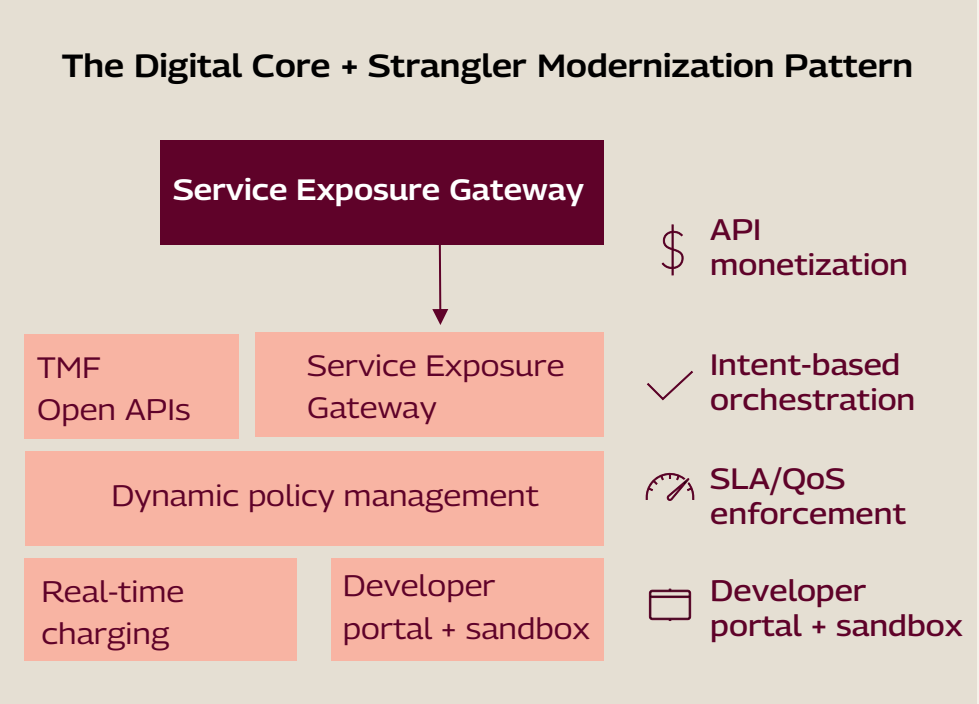


Figure 11: API-First NaaS and Service Exposure Pattern

- **Business Value**
  - Accelerated market entry for NaaS offerings
  - Additional revenue sources for enterprises
  - Streamlined onboarding processes for developers and partners
  - Enhanced alignment between network capabilities and commercial revenue generation

Pattern 4:
Autonomous Operations with AIOps and Closed Loop

- **Problem**
  Reactive assurance models are inefficient, expensive, and unable to manage the intricacies of 5G, cloud, edge, and ecosystem operations.

- **Pattern**
  Transition from a reactive operations model that relies heavily on tickets to one that integrates events, anomaly detection, root cause analysis, workflows, and actions into a cohesive operational loop.

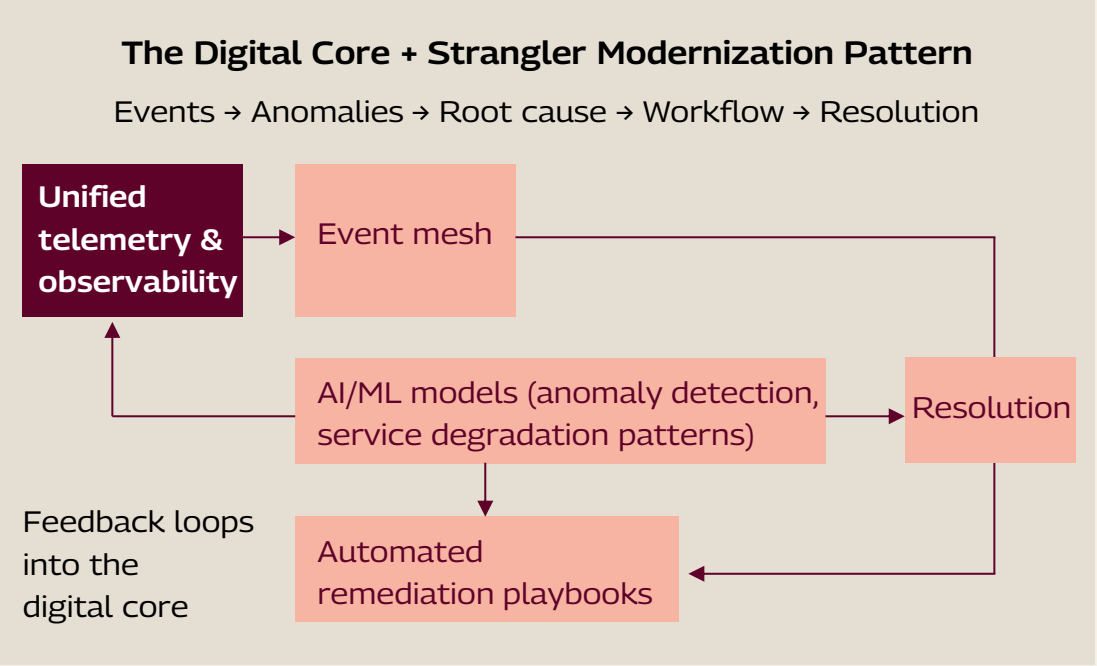


Figure 12: Autonomous operation with AIOps and Closed loop

- **When to Use**
  - Operational environments characterized by high complexity
  - Operators focusing on enhancing proactive customer experiences and reducing Mean Time to Recovery (MTTR)
  - Organizations that are currently investing in observability and automation

- **Business Value**
  - Decreased Mean time to repair (MTTR)
  - Enhanced customer satisfaction and a reduction in recurring incidents
  - Lowered operational costs
  - Strong groundwork for AI-driven operations

- **Prerequisites**
  - Organized and uniform domain data
  - Cohesive visibility across metrics, logs, traces, and events
  - Event mesh / streaming infrastructure
  - Established automation guidelines and human-in-the-loop oversight

The Modernization Pathway:
Discover → Design → Build → Scale

The STRATOS Modernization Pathway provides a structured approach for progressing from the current-state assessment to enterprise-wide transformation. Each phase builds on the previous one, translating identified business and technology challenges into a target architecture, production-ready capabilities, and a repeatable modernization model.

This approach enables modernization to move from an initial assessment into a sustainable and scalable transformation engine.



STRATOS Modernization Topology

A state-based transformation map from fragmented legacy to a connected ODA core

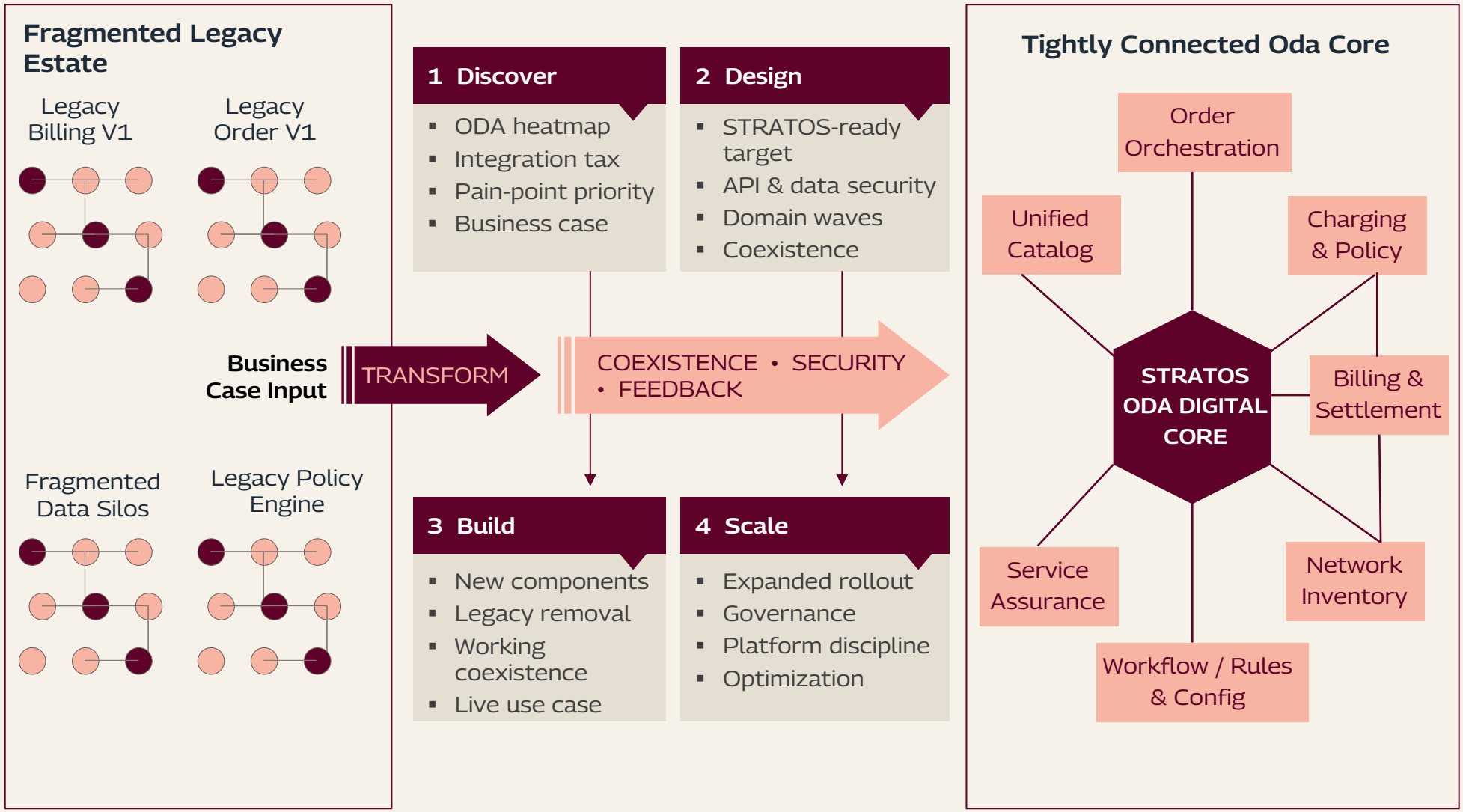


Figure 13: Summarizes the Four-phase STRATOS Modernization Pathway in a Tightly Connected ODA Core Ecosystem

Discover

- Present architecture and ODA heatmap
- Evaluation of integration tax
- Prioritization of domain pain points
- Justification for modernization

Design

- Target architecture prepared for STRATOS
- Strategy for API and data
- Prioritization of domains for wave 1 and wave 2
- Approach for coexistence and migration
- Selection of lighthouse use cases

Build

- Newly introduced components in production
- Initial phase of retiring legacy systems
- Functional coexistence models
- Real-time business use case

Scale

- A modernization engine that can be reused
- Broadened rollout across various domains
- Enhanced governance and a more disciplined approach to platform engineering
- Ongoing agility in both business and technology

Business Case and Value Realization

Justifying modernization solely based on cost is insufficient. A more compelling argument revolves around revenue growth, ecosystem monetization, agility, resilience, and readiness for artificial intelligence. A digital core that is STRATOS-ready and aligned with ODA allows Communication Service Providers (CSPs) to tap into new revenue streams from enterprises and partners, lower integration and operational expenses, and enhance time to market for B2B, IoT, and NaaS services.

Illustrative Example: Faster Digital And Product Outcomes

A modular, ODA-aligned digital core can significantly enhance commercial agility by shortening the time required to launch and expand new offerings.

B2B Catalog Modernization (High Impact)

By modernizing the product catalog and CPQ as the initial focus area, the enterprise reduced bundle launch cycles for a Tier-1 operator from several months to just weeks. This transformation also minimized order fallout and facilitated quicker partner bundle development.

Illustrative example: Faster architecture execution

Implementing standardization and cloud-native execution environments can significantly reduce delivery friction, particularly for gateways, components, and API enablement.

- QoS On Demand / NaaS Exposure

Introducing TMF- and CAMARA-Aligned APIs for QoS-on-Demand Enabled:

- New revenue opportunities in NaaS
- Automated assurance of service level agreements
- Real-time telemetry for corporate customers

Illustrative Example: Faster Products with Lower Legacy Drag

Using reusable, cloud-native, vendor-agnostic components offers an effective path to accelerate product launches while gradually eliminating legacy expenses and complexity.

Value framework

Value Dimension	Illustrative Benefits
Revenue uplift	Faster product launch, B2B/vertical offer composition, marketplaces, API-based services
Cost efficiency	Lower integration cost, lower maintenance burden, automation, gradual legacy retirement
Risk reduction and resilience	Phased migration, observability, lower vendor lock-in, clearer governance
Strategic positioning	Improved agility, stronger partner ecosystem role, better AI-native readiness

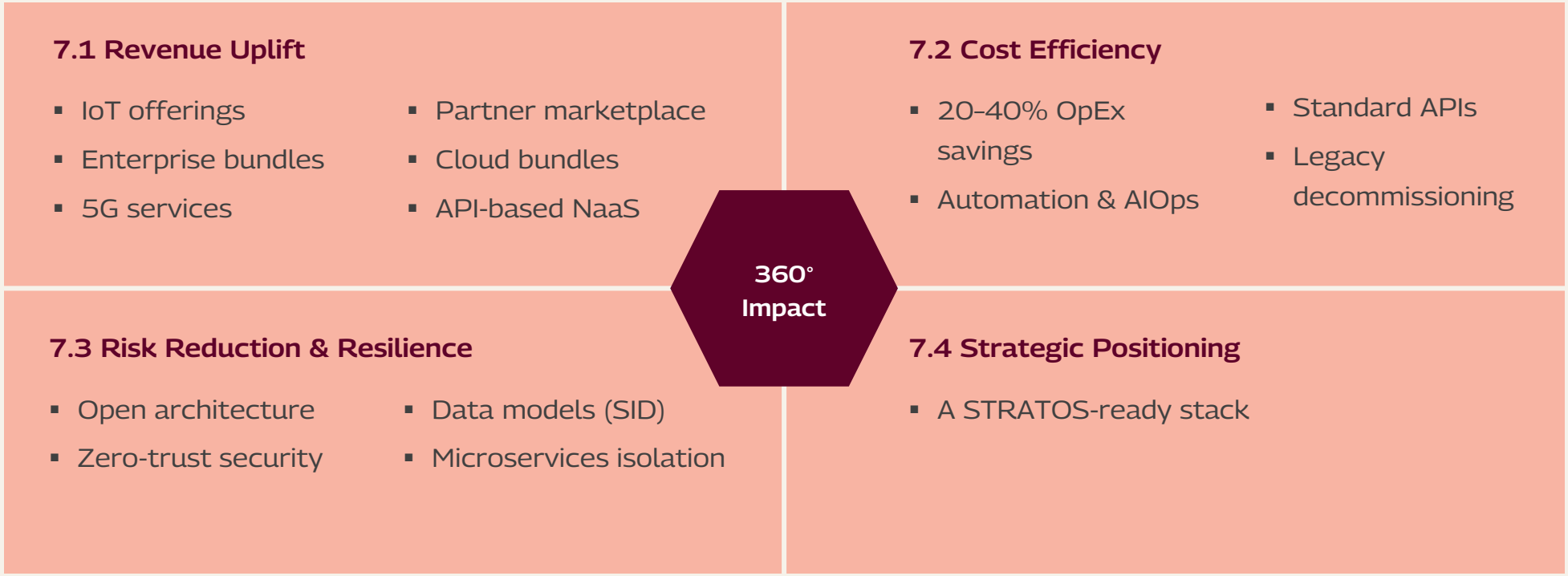


Figure 14: A Comprehensive Value Framework

No-Regret Moves: If a CSP Does Only Three Things

CSPs do not need to wait for a full transformation blueprint before taking meaningful action. These no-regret moves address immediate structural constraints while creating reusable capabilities that accelerate the broader STRATOS modernization journey.

1 Perform an ODA Heatmap and Integration Tax Evaluation

- Determine functional and data deficiencies relative to ODA.
- Measure fragmentation, duplication, and integration tax.
- Develop a modernization priority matrix for prompt decision-making.

2 Implement an API First Governance Framework

- Specify required TMF Open APIs for every new project.
- Establish governance for the API lifecycle, including versioning protocols and service level agreements (SLAs).
- Guarantee that all programs utilize a consistent contract-first integration methodology.

3 Prioritize the Modernization of the Product Catalog

- This domain has the greatest potential impact.
- It enhances all subsequent processes: ordering, billing, customer relationship management, and partner onboarding.
- It offers the quickest path to observable improvements in time to market.

Next No-Regret Moves (High-Value Accelerators)

4 Initiate a Lighthouse Program (B2B, IoT, or NaaS)

- Delivers rapid wins and builds stakeholder trust.
- Aids in promoting STRATOS architecture.
- Cultivates internal advocates for subsequent phases.

5 Implement AIOps and Observability Layer at an Early Stage

- Before completing modernization, a unified observability framework improves Mean Time to Recovery (MTTR).
- Facilitates proactive detection and sets the stage for autonomous operations.
- Enhances cross-domain visibility across both legacy and modern technology stacks.

Conclusion and Call to Action

The telecommunications sector is not short on architectural vision. However, many communication service providers (CSPs) still struggle to find a practical, value-driven, low-risk approach to implement that vision in complex live environments. STRATOS aims to resolve this issue. The Open Digital Architecture (ODA) serves as the foundational blueprint; STRATOS functions as the execution and sequencing layer that enables the realization of this blueprint.

Recommended Next Steps for Tech Mahindra Clients

- Conduct an ODA heatmap and integration-tax assessment.
- Focus on high-value domains including product catalog, ordering, charging, and partner management.
- Choose a lighthouse use case within B2B, marketplace, IoT, or NaaS.
- Establish modernization waves, coexistence patterns, and governance for implementation.
- Utilize STRATOS as the execution layer to transform architectural intent into scalable business results.

Path Forward: Baseline → Align to ODA → Execute in STRATOS waves → Scale through reusable modernization capability.



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With over 25 years of cross-sector experience in consulting and industry, spanning vendor management, demand planning, and AI-led transformation, Dr. Shekhar Tankhiwale has led large-scale vendor management transformations and GenAI-enabled spend-visibility reporting initiatives for global enterprises. His expertise includes IT sourcing strategy, demand management offices (DMO), and digital operating models. A frequent industry speaker and panelist, he has authored more than 20 publications on sourcing, AI, and digital strategy. He holds a PhD and MBA.



Sumeet
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Engagement Manager,
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About the Author

Sumeet Pandita has over 10 years of experience in consulting and industry, with expertise in digital and business transformation. He has developed business operating models and transformation roadmaps for direct sales and operational automation, as well as business value realization frameworks to identify high-value use cases. His experience includes defining digital transformation roadmaps, solution systems, and implementation methodologies, and leading go-to-market planning for new product development. He holds a Master's in telecom management.



Abhishek
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About the Author

Abhishek Kumar brings 18 years of experience driving transformation across telecommunications and business excellence. With an MBA from NMIMS and a B.Tech from NIT Jalandhar, he is also an ASQ-certified Lean Six Sigma Black Belt, PMP, and Scrum Master who has delivered high-impact outcomes, including post-merger synergies between Idea Cellular and Vodafone. Abhishek's methodical approach to transformation positions him as a valuable asset for strategic initiatives requiring cross-functional collaboration and disciplined execution.

About **TechM Consulting**

At TechM Consulting, we empower clients to turn disruption into opportunity by building future-ready capabilities. Our unique value velocity V Factor methodology, rooted in co-creation deep listening agile execution and seamless collaboration, enables enterprises to deliver greater stakeholder value with greater speed and agility. Please visit: TechM Consulting: Strategy & Consulting Services | Tech Mahindra . Contact us at TMCMarketing@techmahindra.com

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Tech Mahindra (NSE: TECHM, BSE: 532755) offers technology consulting and digital solutions to global enterprises across industries, enabling transformative scale at unparalleled speed. With 150,000+ professionals across 90 countries, Tech Mahindra provides a full spectrum of services including consulting, information technology, enterprise applications, business process services, engineering services, network services, customer experience & design, AI & analytics, and cloud & infrastructure services. It is the first Indian company in the world to have been awarded the Sustainable Markets Initiative's Terra Carta Seal, which recognizes global companies that are actively leading the charge to create a climate and nature-positive future. Tech Mahindra is part of the Mahindra Group, founded in 1945, one of the largest and most admired multinational federation of companies.. For more information on how TechM can partner with you to meet your Scale at Speed™ imperatives, please visit https://www.techmahindra.com/.

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