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Authors:
Stewart Bond
Maureen Fleming
Matthew Marden

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Business Value Highlights

291%
three-year ROI

\$291,900
in total benefits per 100
trading partners per year

\$73.08 million
in higher annual revenue
per organization

45%
faster to onboard
new partners

85%
more productive document
management teams

61%
faster delivery of documents
and desktops

80%
fewer document
transaction errors

99%
less unplanned downtime

The Business Value of IBM Sterling B2B Integration and Managed File Transfer Solutions

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The flow of information and data securely, with integrity and in a timely manner between multiple disparate businesses, partners, employees, and customers, is an enabling capability for organizations wanting to compete in the digital economy. But business-to-business (B2B) integration and managed file transfer (MFT) capabilities are not new requirements, with technologies such as electronic data exchange (EDI) and basic file transfer protocol (FTP) having been available for many decades. IBM Sterling B2B collaboration, the focus of this study, was a pioneer in and continues to be a mainstay in B2B data exchange workloads. What is new is a fundamental shift where B2B integration middleware and MFT software are increasingly being used to serve a broader ecosystem of stakeholders, requiring broader visibility, intelligence, and collaboration among partners, retailers, institutions, and consumers.

There has also been a significant shift toward cloud-native architectures in commercial and bespoke software solutions. Cloud-native architectures use software containers to enable portability and scalability of software in hybrid cloud and multicloud environments. IBM has re-architected the Sterling portfolio of software into containerized components, providing customers with multiple deployment options and opportunities to optimize computing resources. IBM Sterling B2B collaboration software customers interviewed as part of this study were not yet using the re-architected solutions, and even though we do not yet have fully quantifiable impacts of containerized versions of the portfolio, cost savings associated with optimized compute resources should contribute to higher value and return on investment (ROI).

At the core of B2B integration middleware and MFT software is the exchange of documents between multiple parties, both internal and external to the enterprise. Data exchange requires onboarding, mapping, transport, monitoring, and management across the entire ecosystem of trading partners. The IBM Sterling B2B collaboration software portfolio enables the entirety of

the data exchange process, delivering real business value to customers as the B2B processes of the past are expanding into the broader ecosystem in the digital economy.

IDC interviewed organizations using IBM Sterling B2B integration and managed file transfer solutions (IBM Sterling B2B collaboration) to understand the impact on their B2B document transfer and business operations. These organizations' businesses rely on the consistent, secure, and timely flow of documents and other information between their employees and partners, customers, and other third parties. Study participants reported achieving significant value with IBM Sterling B2B collaboration by improving business results and increasing their capacity and ability to exchange B2B documents. IDC calculates that interviewed IBM customers will realize value worth an annual average of \$14.72 million per organization (\$108,700 per 100 employees whose work relies on IBM Sterling B2B collaboration and \$291,900 per 100 trading partners) by:

- **Generating higher revenue** by better serving customers, addressing new business opportunities, and bringing forward recognition of revenue
- **Reducing the cost of unplanned outages** by limiting productivity and revenue losses associated with B2B-related downtime
- **Enabling more efficient handling of B2B document management** by automating processes, consolidating multiple tools, reducing the frequency and impact of errors, and increasing B2B platform capacity
- **Allowing efficient management of B2B platforms** through consolidation, improved performance, and increased functionality
- **Increasing productivity for line-of-business (LOB) users** by providing self-service capabilities and improving workflows for LOB teams that rely on B2B documentation and data