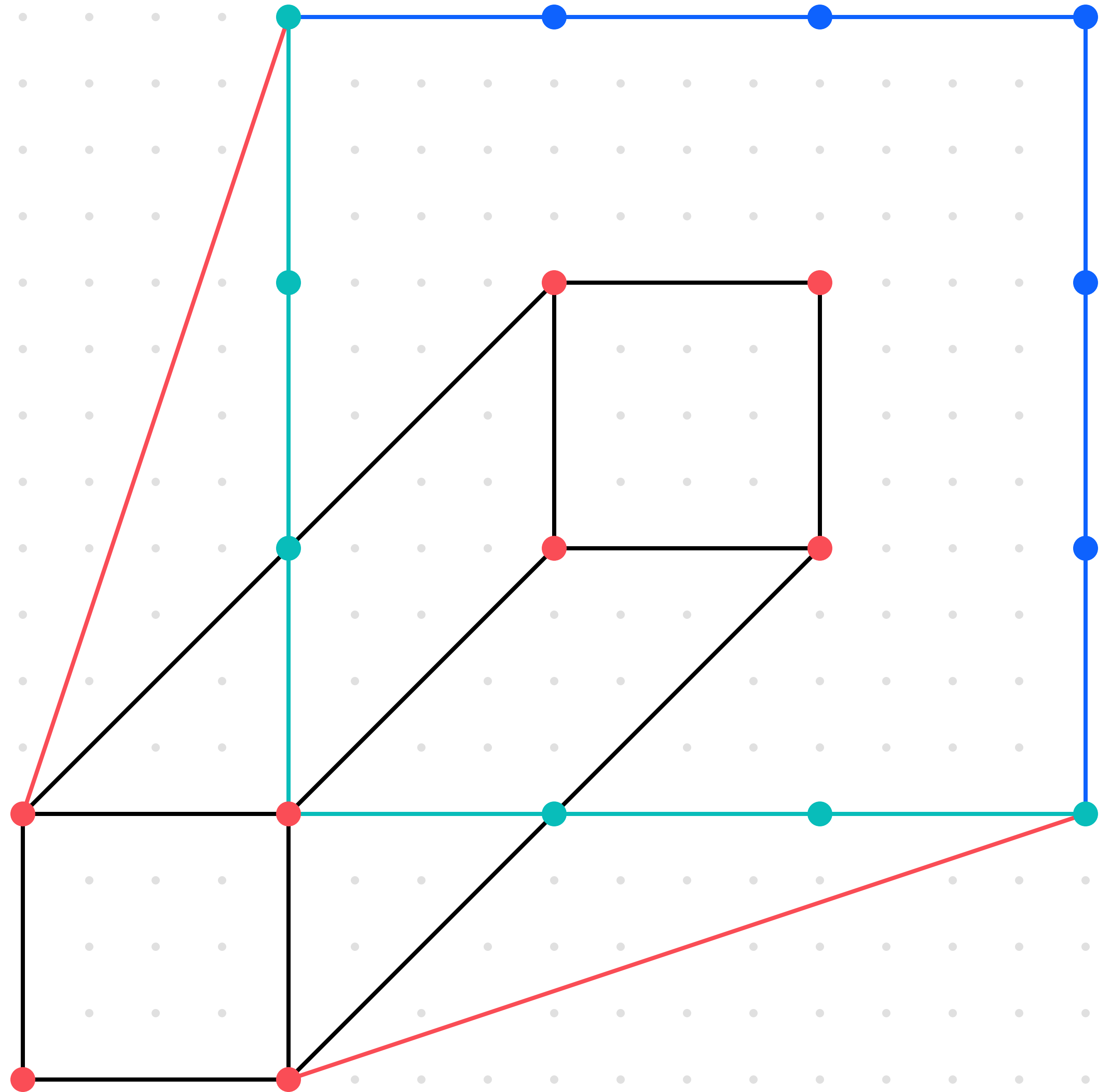# Digital transformation

4 steps to successful cloud implementation

IBM

Contents

Introduction

The strategic imperative for cloud transformation

The cloud is a global network of servers with a large capacity to process and store data and software. Cloud-based applications help companies improve customer service, grow revenue, lower operating costs, streamline processes and work more efficiently.

As IT continues to evolve, more companies are migrating to cloud applications to remain competitive. This trend has accelerated and is expected to surge. Migrating to the cloud increasingly looks like an inevitability for companies across the globe.

Despite the challenges associated with moving to cloud applications, the benefits far outweigh the effort required. Some benefits include improved accuracy and productivity through automating processes, cost savings

and revenue growth opportunities. According to Fortune Business Insights, "the global cloud computing market is projected to grow from $480.04 billion in 2022 to $1,712.44 billion by 2029, at a compound annual growth rate of 19.9% during the forecast period."[1]

This ebook will provide an overview of the four steps you need for a successful digital transformation:
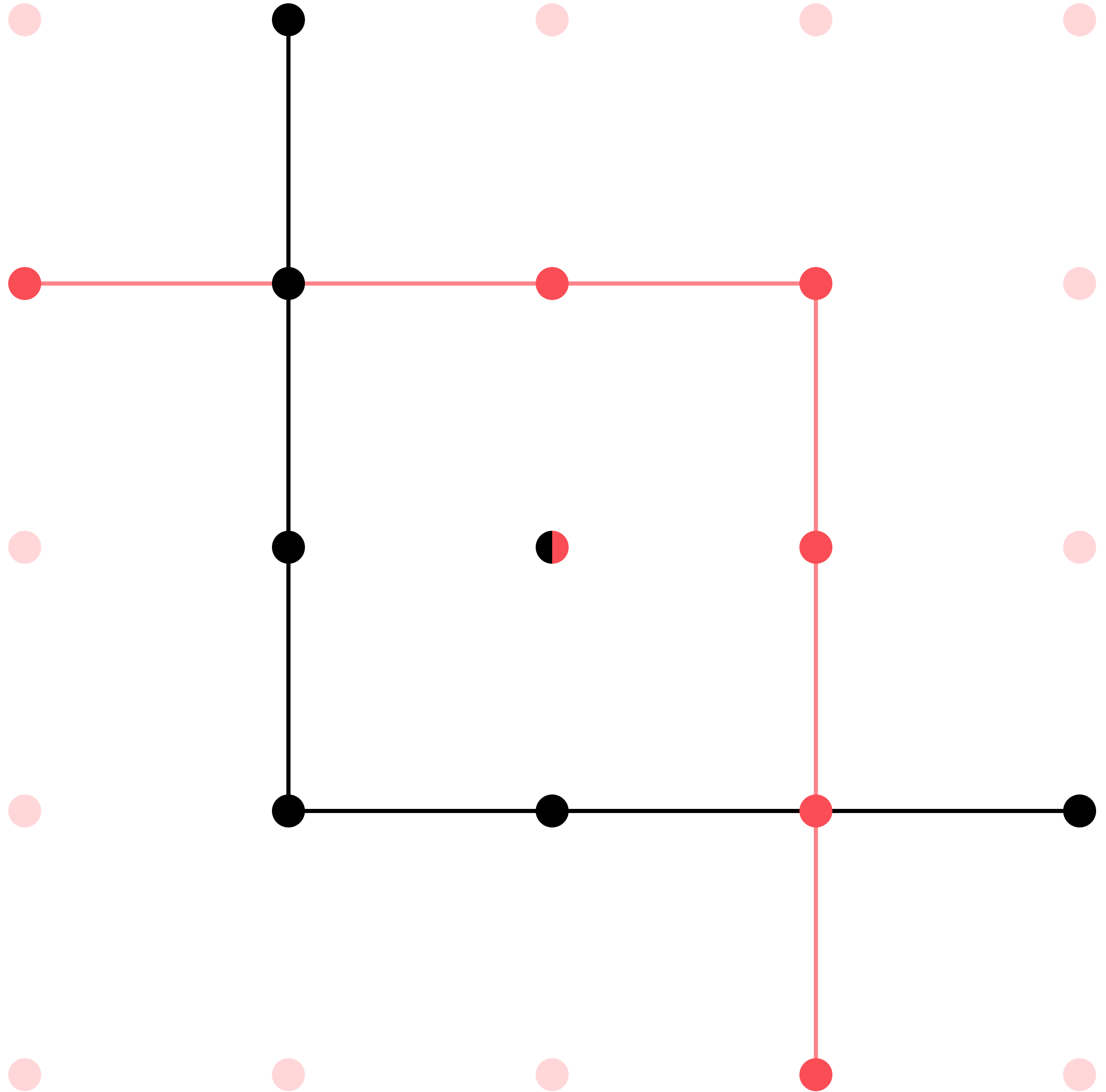
Assessment →

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Assessing your enterprise

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In this initial phase, it is essential to consider how you can move away from your legacy infrastructure, evaluate product and solution options, and ultimately determine whether to embark on your cloud journey. This is the time for critical evaluation of the efficiency and profitability of current operations. During this phase, you should assess the company's present environment and determine how you will move to a modern cloud-based environment.

Ask yourself where the company is headed and what the current and future objectives should be to achieve growth. Realistically assess your organization's appetite for change from the top down, from senior leadership down to your end users. The assessment phase is also where you establish your goals for the transition and the changes needed to achieve those goals while identifying how you will avoid potential and costly pitfalls.

Managing change with confidence

Be honest in your evaluation of team members, business processes and the functionality of your existing applications. It is critical to accept up front that necessary changes will create challenges that need to be addressed as you move through your journey. Next, you will determine which partners you are going to use as you make the transition.

Choosing a cloud solution differs from selecting an on-premises solution in which you would craft a request for proposals (RFP) with a list of functionalities. Instead, the last step of the assessment phase is to evaluate the solution you choose by understanding these factors:

– Flexibility in configuration
– Extensibility through bolt-ons
– Potential limitations when it comes to customization

These are the keys to a successful cloud implementation. Together, these three factors work strengthen the cloud solution, enabling it to help companies adapt and grow.

The last step of the assessment phase is to evaluate the solution you choose by understanding these factors: flexibility in configuration, extensibility through bolt-ons and potential limitations when it comes to customization.

Choosing the right transformation partner
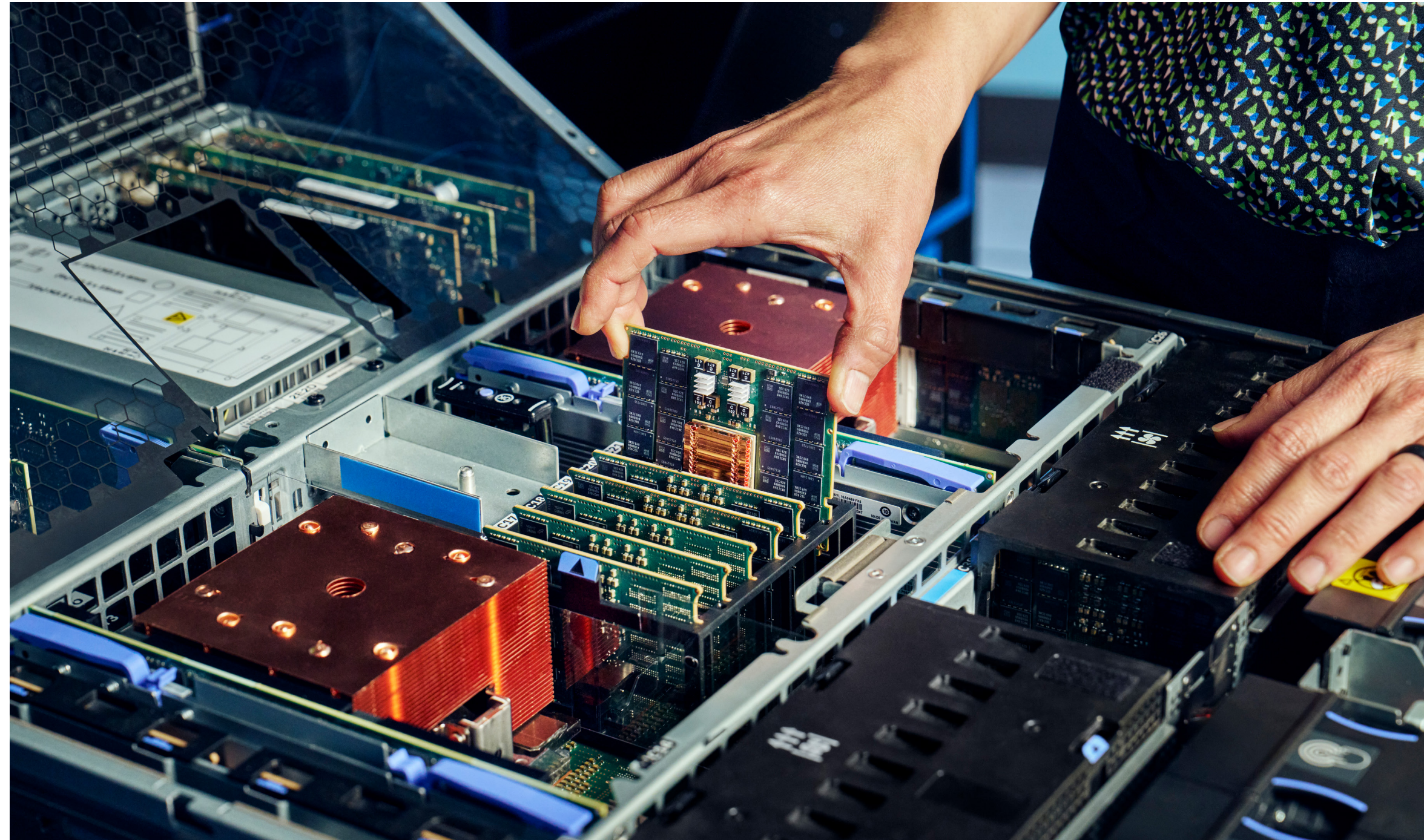
Don't just focus on a data sheet when looking at a solution. Instead, look at the capabilities and your partner's capacity to optimize them to drive the success of your organization while controlling and reducing costs.

One factor that makes an Oracle solution so attractive is that you can balance utility, supportability and access to new functionality that is released every quarter. A feature that is not yet available will likely come soon, and your Oracle solution will scale as you grow.

Examine your potential solution from different angles, such as the CEO's perspective and the end user's view, to evaluate the potential impact on your operation. Bringing in experts who can make the implementation successful will help you manage challenges and instill your team with the knowledge they need to maintain the new solutions and grow.
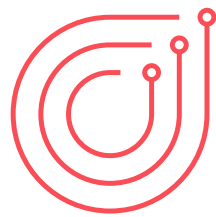
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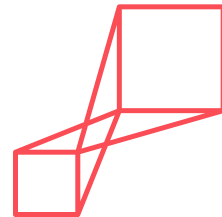# Planning the transformation roadmap
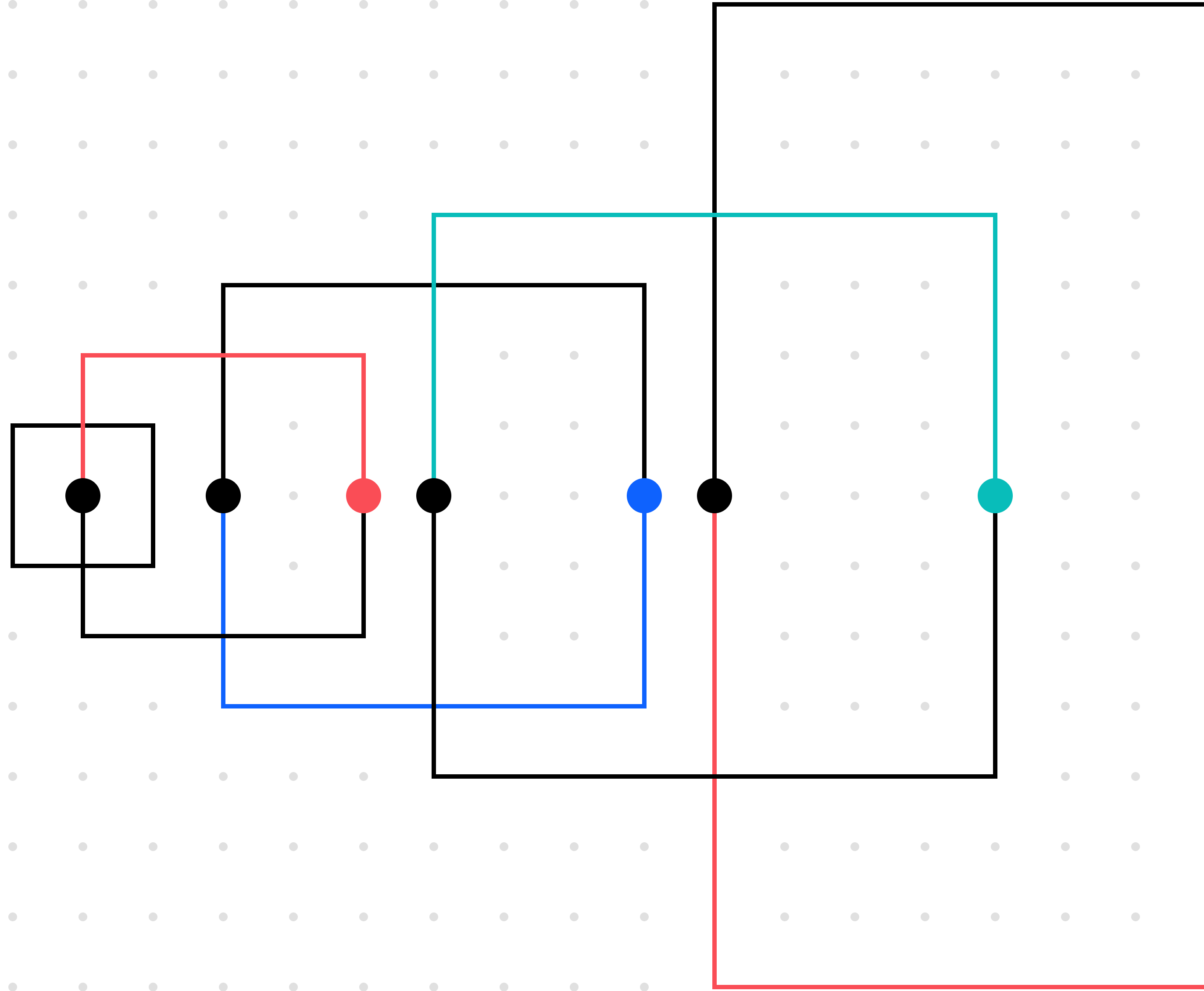
In a world with so many variables, you can never plan too much. The more you plan for your cloud transition, the greater the chances you will discover cost-saving opportunities early in the process.

Before you dig into the planning stage, start by preparing in three key areas:
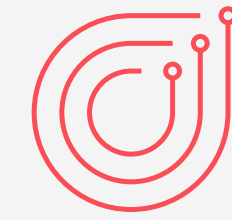
Define a process that works for you

Build your transformation team

Prepare data

Define a process that works for you

While it can be tempting to jump right into implementation without laying the groundwork first, you can avoid failures or costly mistakes by following a well-defined process tailored to your organization.

Do you understand the current process flow from start to finish? You must understand this first to determine how you can improve your processes with new Oracle Cloud applications. During this part of the planning stage, you will find performance gaps as you work to better understand what your current system does or doesn't do. Take time to review the process and course-correct based on feedback before moving forward.

Implementation phasing is another area that must be addressed during the planning phase. This is key to the project's success, and it's where you define project goals and any challenges and obstacles that stand in the way of those goals. Your implementation plan should summarize the goals, timeline and strategy for each step of the digital transformation in advance.

Build your transformation team
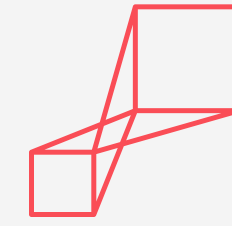
Change isn't easy, and not everyone will be on board with adapting to new technologies or processes. That is why evaluating and choosing the best people for the project, regardless of their business unit, is vital for implementation success and enables you to select your team members more quickly.

Team structure within the project is critical, so the sooner you define the different levels and individuals involved, the more smoothly things will go. Once your team has been assembled, establish your supporting applications and the tool set you will use during the project.

Make sure any partner tools align with your in-house tools, that your team is comfortable using them and that your team members have easy access to them. Additionally, one of the critical items to address during the planning phase is determining and socializing the escalation path. There will always be some problems during a project, and knowing where to go, who's going to address the problem and how they will report back is crucial.

Data readiness and migration planning

The third stage of the planning phase is data preparation. Not only is this the stage where data is gathered, arranged and merged, but it's where you must assess data availability and quality as well as acknowledge existing problems that need to be solved. Start collecting critical master data from throughout the organization so you can begin loading test data, particularly representative transaction data.

This stage often begins with identifying a problem or need before even looking at the data. Understanding how a particular set of data impacts the company's resources, distribution and business operations is essential. Data visibility is critical, but cleaning the data will drive success, cut costs, improve efficiency, and avoid duplicate data entry.

The data preparation phase is where you review manual processes that need to be automated. Look at interconnected solutions or systems within your environment. Make sure you will appropriately turn off old systems, or you'll have to build integrations to these legacy applications. Also identify noncritical applications that could be managed later in the project in case you need to move them in the timeline to keep implementation on track.

Setting up for success

Digital transformation in the modern age is critical to remaining relevant and profitable. But to ensure you achieve a healthy return on investment from your Oracle solution implementation, it is essential to complete each stage along the implementation journey.

This preparation requires time and effort, but there's a reason why so many companies pursue digital transformations using Oracle solutions. The benefits of automating processes and adopting new cloud applications outweigh the work you must complete on the front end. The boost in efficiency, increased profits and inevitable business growth allow for future scalability, which is why more companies are pursuing integrated solutions—they simply can't afford to pass up the opportunity.

03
Execution
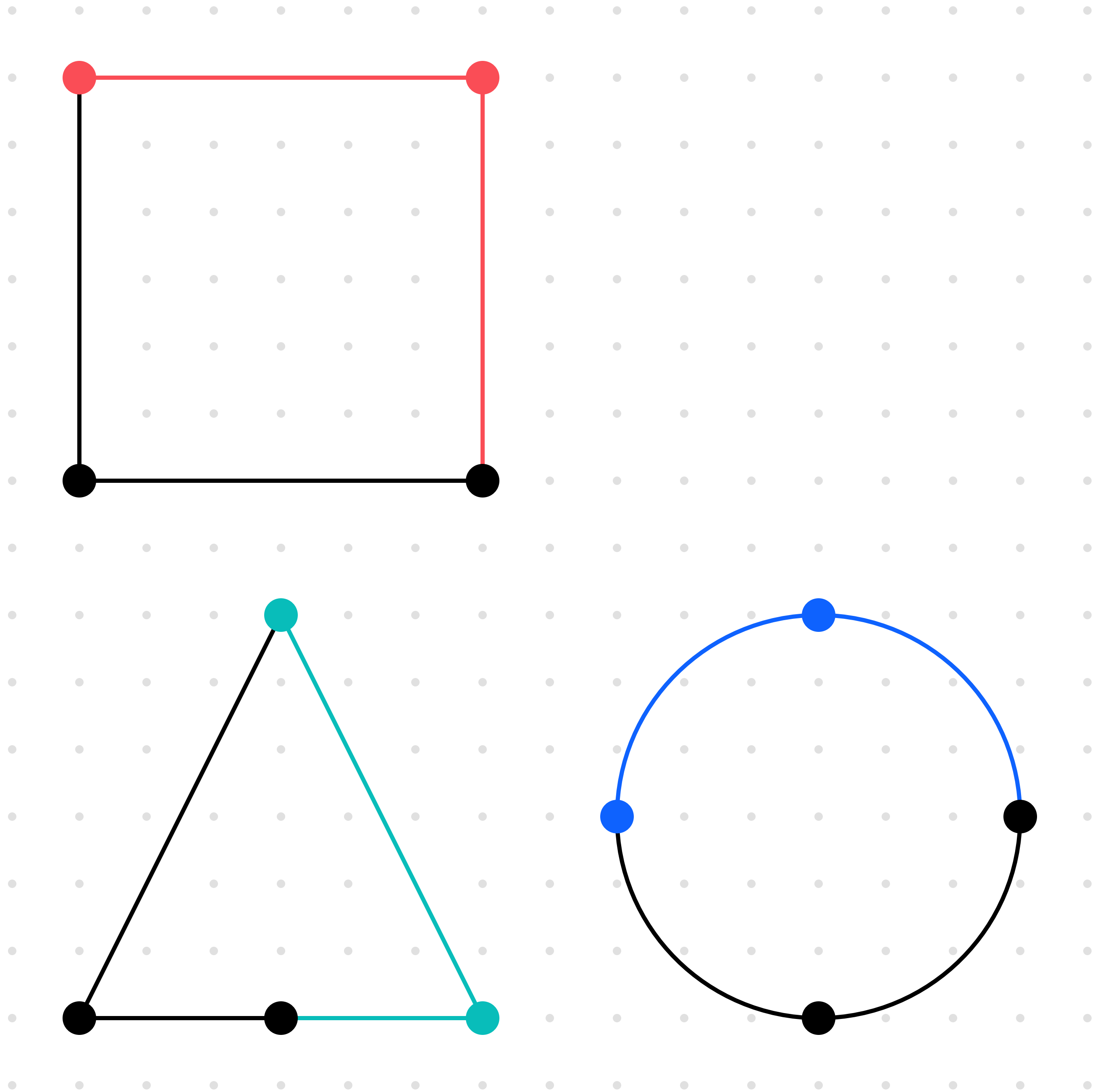
The success of your digital transformation is mainly dependent on how well this execution stage goes. A high level of commitment and clear visibility are the keys to achieving significant cost savings with your implementation. Change isn't easy, but the rewards, savings and improvements you'll gain from your hard work and planning will make this transition worthwhile.

Drive alignment through communication
To make this process a success, daily meetings are essential and will ensure that the core project team is engaged and everyone knows what needs to be done. We also advise weekly leadership status meetings to address challenges as they arise. Keeping the entire team actively participating and communicating within these meetings will go a long way in overcoming any obstacles that might come up, ultimately leading to significant cost savings.

Define reasonable and achievable expectations
It can be tempting to enable every single feature and solution at the start of the project, but doing so can complicate the implementation and create unstable processes. We recommend that you work closely with your IBM consultant to devise a solution implementation plan that meets your needs in a way that will optimize the functionality that you can build from.

Include an active feedback loop where you step away from a "heads-down" configuration and review the implementation project with everyone in your organization. At IBM Accelalpha, we meet this goal by holding workshops that address specific challenges and encourage two-way communication. We also prioritize training for the core team on managing and making software changes after implementation.

Remain agile
Stay flexible during implementation so you can adapt activities to meet different team members' learning styles. This involves effectively balancing the time when the team is doing their job versus when they are learning the new way to do their job. Remember to re-evaluate team-member workloads so they can complete their work while still having the energy and capacity to learn the new solution. Striking the right balance and keeping the team focused on the project will reduce burnout or frustration and keep overall project costs down.

Maintain strategic focus through implementation
Your digital transformation will enable your organization to pivot as market conditions shift. It will make your operations more efficient and allow you to create a better customer experience.

Avoid taking shortcuts during your implementation journey. While the process takes time and requires considerable resources, keep in mind that your digital transformation will enable your business to grow faster than before. Automating processes and digitizing all documentation will allow all critical data to be accessible on one convenient platform, reducing manual tasks and increasing your staff productivity in surprising ways.
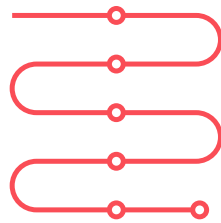
Evolution
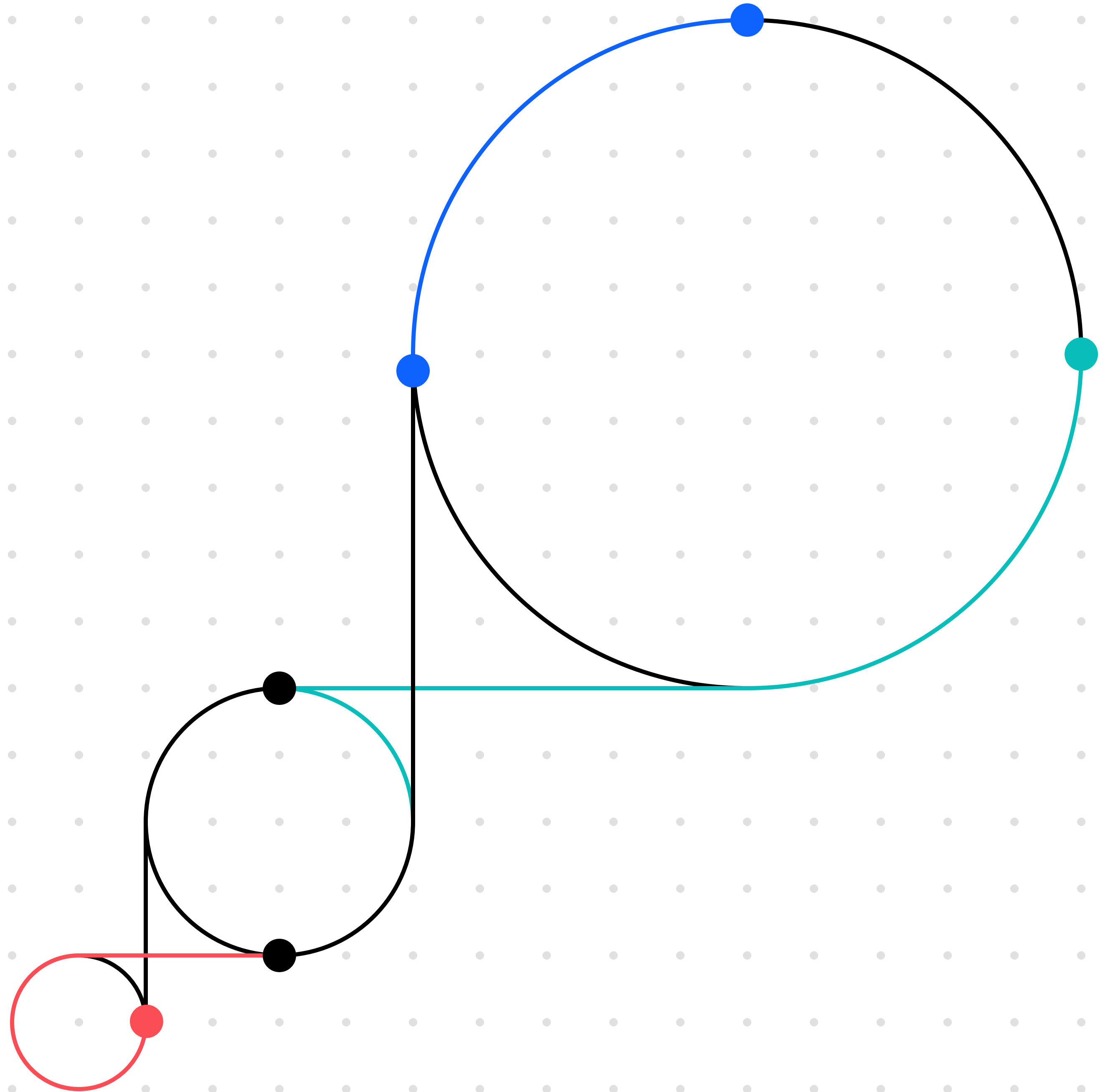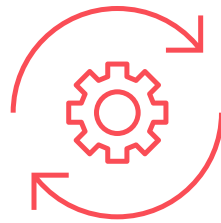
Once you've made it through your digital transformation implementation, you might be surprised at how quickly your organization will start seeing benefits. However, the transition doesn't end on the go-live date.

Over time the market will change, and so will your organization. This is why Oracle adds quarterly updates to improve the software you've just implemented. This continuous change and evolution will become just as important as the digital transformation itself.

Defining continuous evolution
When choosing the implementation partner for your initial digital transformation, you were likely aware that this strategic decision would mark the start of a long partnership. For example, as your organization changes, you will be confident that you and your team have your partner by your side to advise and help maintain the health of your applications and the implemented solution's continued functioning.

Establishing a post-evolution roadmap
New business challenges will create a need for new functionality, which can be met with other Oracle applications. There might be specific times when you derive more value from this additional functionality when it comes to cost savings. That's why we will help you build a roadmap for future Oracle software releases.

Once you go live, patch testing becomes a critical application management component. We can help you define and maintain an automated testing process crucial to the system's continued growth.
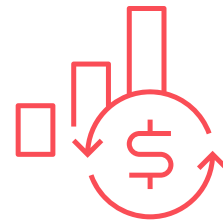
Unlocking long-term business value
Adopting Oracle Cloud solutions allows organizations to tap into vital data and other resources to improve decision-making, planning, finances, supply chains and customer satisfaction.

The beauty of continuous evolution is that organizations can utilize the potential of the cloud to improve existing and future operations without having to start from scratch every time the organization changes. Oracle Cloud gives you the freedom to utilize only the solutions that your company needs.

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Why IBM
Accelalpha

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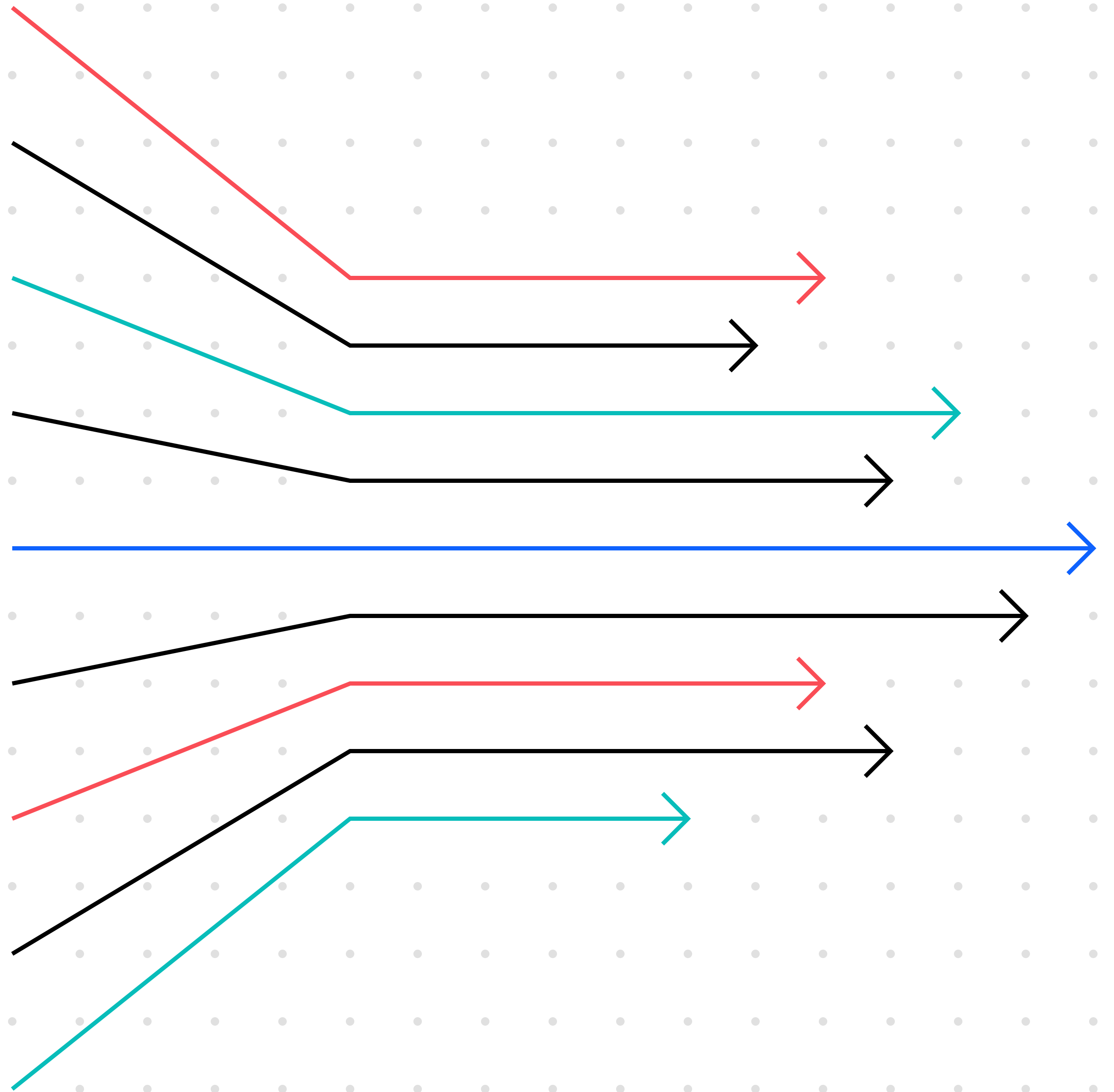
Optimize your ROI for both Oracle cloud applications and on-premises systems using IBM's Business Maturity Index Assessment. We offer:

In-depth analysis
Our experts provide a personalized assessment of your Oracle application landscape, identifying key areas for improvement and optimization. We analyze performance, efficiency and the potential for innovation.

Strategic roadmap and continuous improvement
We develop a tailored roadmap outlining clear steps and timelines for cloud migration and modernization, or for continuous improvement for applications already in the cloud. This includes leveraging the latest cloud technologies and AI to enhance your applications.

Business value
Discover hidden insights and unlock new business value from your Oracle applications. We help you stay ahead of the competition by maximizing your ROI and driving innovation.

Proven expertise
Our team boasts broad expertise, encompassing not only Oracle applications but also a wide array of non-Oracle systems and on-premises solutions. We employ industry-leading methodologies and draw on insights from renowned sources, such as the IBM Institute for Business Value, to guarantee a thorough and efficient evaluation.

Personalized approach
We understand your unique needs and challenges. Our collaborative approach ensures your specific goals are addressed throughout the assessment process.

6 key savings opportunities

There are several ways an effective implementation can save you money:

– Solve problems quickly during implementation.
– Avoid costly customization.
– Leverage best practices to drive improvement.
– Increase efficiency for savings in the long run.
– Make time for user training.
– Buy only what you need and use what you buy.

Unique value enablers

IBM Accelalpha is the ideal partner to help you take advantage of the wide range of Oracle solutions. Our experience in working on end-to-end transformation programs has revealed four key elements that enable success.

Accelerated cloud deployment
Leveraging reusable artifacts like a business assessment framework, master data templates, proprietary tools and pre-defined test scripts enables the IBM Accelalpha team to accelerate project deployment.

Jump-start implementation
Over 30 prebuilt integrations eliminate time-consuming implementation setup.

Hybrid approach
Leveraging hybrid agile and waterfall implementation processes is key to the accelerated implementation framework. The methodology includes self-contained designs that uncover issues early and provide high-level value analysis.

Best practices
We use industry best practices, and reference architectures, including reference process flows, automation workflow, streamlined user interfaces, reports and KPIs.

About IBM Accelalpha

IBM Accelalpha is a longtime strategic partner to Oracle. We provide IT services to implement and manage Oracle Cloud applications, and we work collaboratively with our clients to develop solutions tailored to their needs. Our rigorous focus on the business outcome allows us to deliver tangible results quickly for a rapid return on investment.

To learn more about how IBM Accelalpha can help you make the most of your Oracle solutions in your data transformation, contact your IBM representative or IBM Business Partner, or visit ibm.com/consulting/accelalpha.

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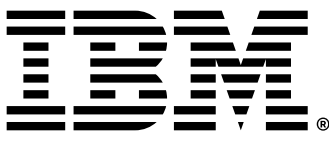
1. Cloud Computing Market Size, Share & Industry Analysis, 2025–2032, Fortune Business Insights, 04 August 2025.