

eBook

Achieving strategic goals with interoperability: A guide for business leaders

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Technology is no longer the enabler of strategy – it is the strategy

Technology is deeply embedded in the way your business operates, grows, competes, and succeeds. As a business leader, each strategic decision you make is shaped — or constrained — by your technology landscape. And you must lead with that mindset.

Increasing demand for profitability and growth, combined with reductions in budgets and resources, means that every decision — including technology decisions — has to deliver ROI and value. That can be hard when business and IT leaders operate in silos, speak different languages, and have different goals.

It's imperative for business leaders to join the conversation about technology to ensure it drives value for the business. Pivotal to that conversation is the topic of interoperability. As a term, interoperability might sound technical, but its implications are profoundly strategic.

In this eBook, we'll set out:

- What interoperability means
- Why it matters to you as a business leader
- How you can drive stronger alignment with your technology counterparts to unlock faster growth, greater agility, and better returns from your technology investments.

Definition: Interoperability in digital architecture ensures that different solutions and services can work together smoothly, allowing you to mix and match best-in-class technologies. But it's much more than just a technical consideration. Interoperability is also the lynchpin of a powerful, future-proofed digital strategy that enables you to achieve digital acceleration and unleash business potential.

What's at stake?

The cost of non-interoperability

If you've struggled to get a technology project off the ground — or watched it launch only to see it underperform — you've likely experienced the downside of poor interoperability.

Picture a solution rollout that takes twice as long as expected, with constant challenges along the way. It fails to connect with your other platforms, leaves users frustrated, data disconnected, and adoption stalled. The performance improvements you were promised never materialize. In the end, the new solution is scrapped, causing damage that goes way beyond money.

These scenarios are all too common. And they're not necessarily technical failures — they're strategic ones.

Interoperability is about building a flexible, connected, future-ready technology ecosystem — one where systems work together seamlessly to unify processes and teams, and organizations are free to choose the tools that best meet their needs without being locked into long-term compromises.

Without interoperable solutions, technology implementations can result in:

- Slow, delayed and costly rollouts
- Lack of integration and connectivity across technology solutions
- Solutions that fail to meet critical business needs
- Low rates of user adoption within the business
- Costly replacement or remediation projects causing further delays

That's where the [MACH Principles](#) — composable, connected, open, incremental, and autonomous — come in.

These aren't just technical ideals; they're a blueprint for how modern organizations structure technology decisions. Each principle supports interoperability not as a feature, but as a foundational mindset that gives businesses the freedom to build, adapt, and evolve with confidence.

Brands leading the way with composable strategy

At the MACH Composable Conference, forward-thinking brands came together to share how they're bridging the gap between business priorities and technology investments — and unlocking real value through interoperability.

PRADA Group

"We didn't just slice the tech — we prioritized business outcomes."

Prada

A focus on interoperability helped Prada align its digital architecture with strategic goals — delivering impact where it matters most.

DIAGEO

"Composable isn't a binary choice. Brands need agility. Business needs productivity. Hybrid MACH is the real-world answer at global scale."

Diageo

Diageo embraces Hybrid MACH to balance flexibility and performance across a complex, global footprint.

sommsation[®] THE WINE COMPANY

"Digital transformation isn't one big leap — it's a series of steps built on clear principles, not perfect conditions."

Sommsation

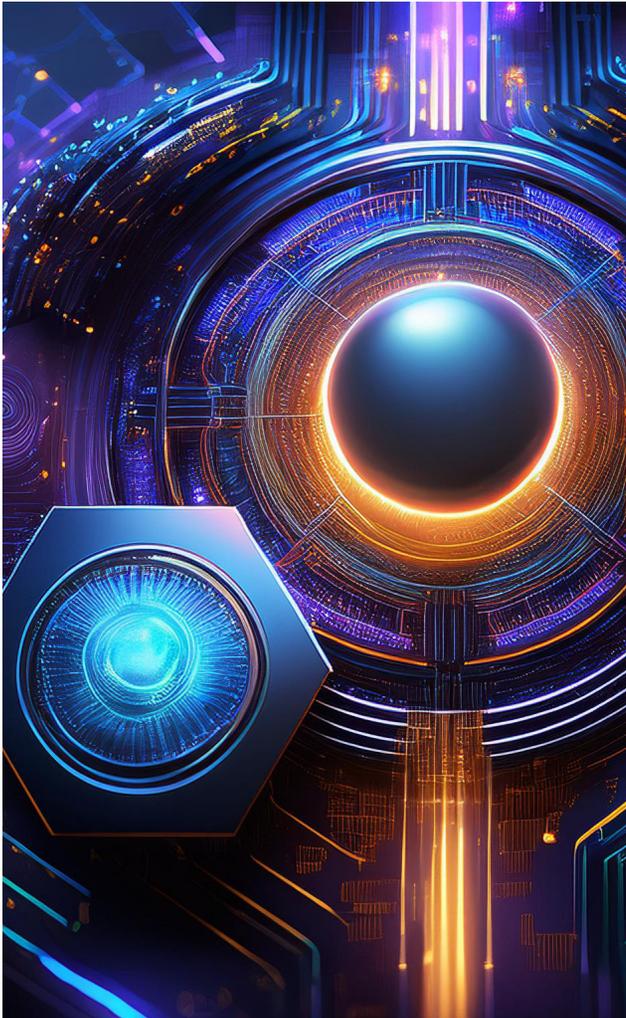
Sommsation is proving that MACH principles empower consistent progress, even in unpredictable environments.

These brands aren't just adopting new technologies — they're building smarter strategies, powered by interoperable, composable ecosystems.

Ready to learn more?

Join the MACH community and get access to more insights.

[Session Recap →](#)



Key takeaway:

Interoperability means faster time to value. Smarter investments. And a business that's ready for whatever comes next.

“Above all, the working relationship between business and IT teams needs to be aligned at the highest levels of the organization across strategy, approach, budget holding, ownership, and responsibility.”

Program Director, Digital, Boots UK

Interoperability: Strengthen every layer of your business

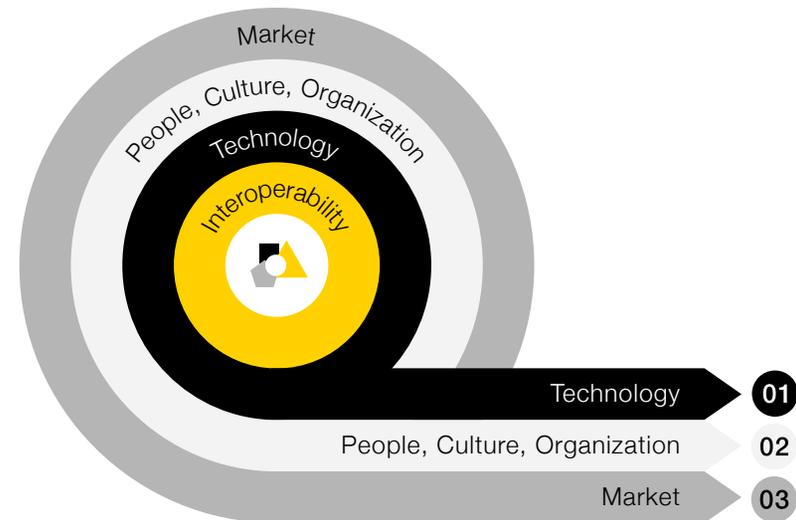
Interoperability has a wide-reaching impact on business success. It removes barriers to productivity, freeing up the whole organization to build powerful momentum, both internally and in the market.

Interoperability gives you the ability to act quickly, pivot fast, and continuously improve. And it impacts every layer of your business:

- ▶ **Technology:**
Achieve desired outcomes faster with a flexible architecture.
- ▶ **Organization:**
Unlock innovation, cultivate collaboration, and empower teams.
- ▶ **Market:**
Realize agility and speed to strengthen your competitive edge.

When systems are interoperable, you're not stuck with underperforming platforms resulting in an underperforming business. Your teams don't waste time working around limitations. You can innovate with confidence, knowing your tech stack can evolve with you and the market.

Let's explore what that looks like.



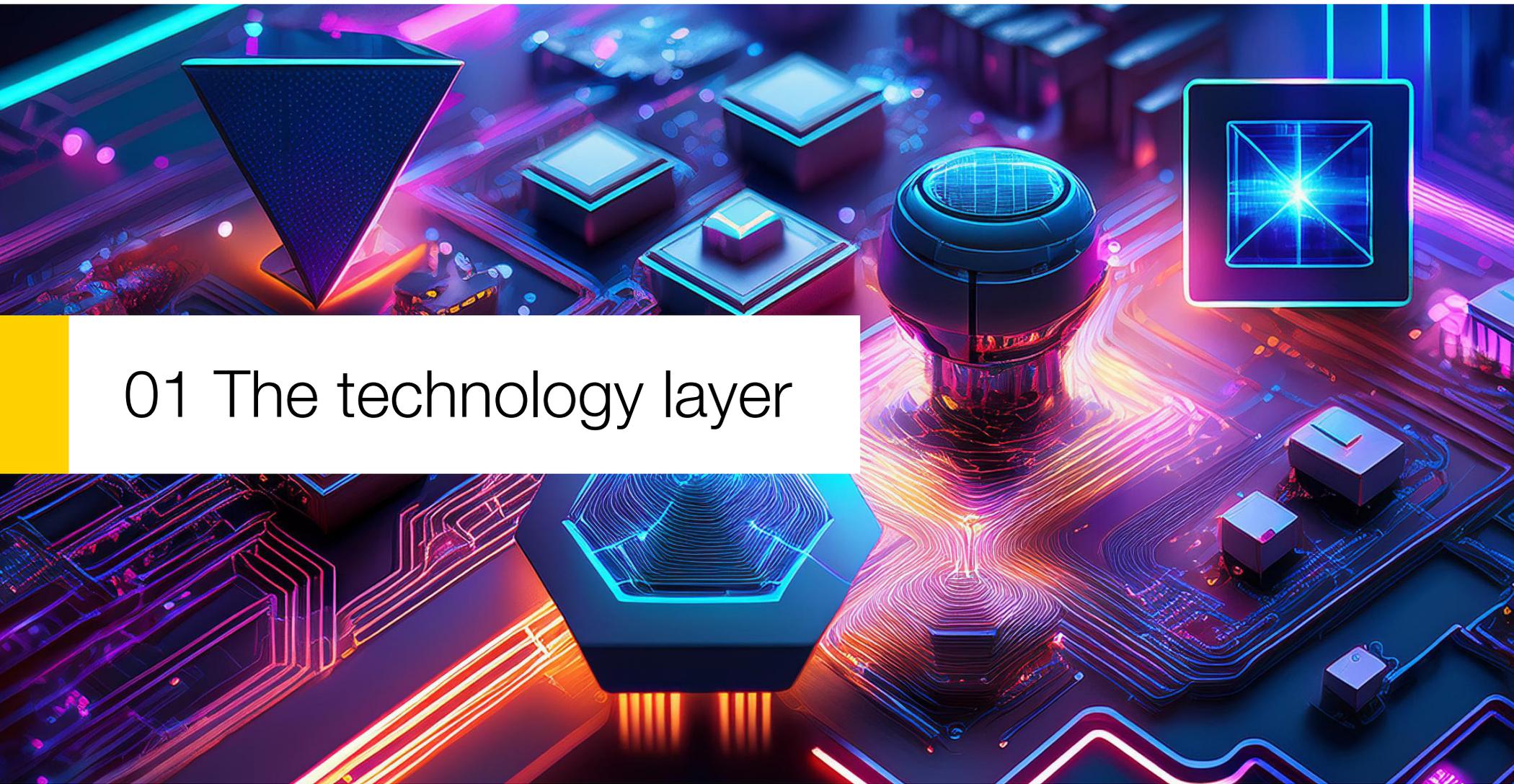


Key takeaway:

Interoperability strengthens every layer of your business — enabling flexible technology, empowering collaborative teams, and driving market agility.

“To deliver impact, all stakeholders from business to technology must be part the solution from the get-go. Avoid building and creating silos whether it is in business, technology, or people. Instead, make all stakeholders part of the solution.”

Gus Fune, CTO, BAERSkin



01 The technology layer

Technical freedom ensures business value

Investing in technology is essential for growth — but if a solution is slow to implement, fails to meet expectations, and doesn't drive real impact, it can become a real liability.

Without interoperability:

With traditional legacy platforms, a single change often necessitates a chain of costly and resource intensive reconfigurations. That rigidity slows down transformation and limits your ability to respond quickly to shifts in the market. The fallout is more than just technical.

Stalled projects, budget burn out, wasted time, and frustrated employees drag the business down. Non-interoperable investments often undermine the very transformation they're meant to deliver.

With interoperability:

You are not locked into a single vendor or platform designed as a 'one size fits all'. Instead, you can maintain a tech stack that fits your organization's needs and goals without risk to the wider infrastructure.

Retire tools, introduce new best-of-breed capabilities, and scale systems with the confidence that you are strengthening the business.

The problem often isn't the tech itself — it's the lack of interoperability.



Key takeaway:

Interoperability gives you options. Those options fuel business agility, enabling you to adopt new solutions faster and stay aligned with evolving goals.

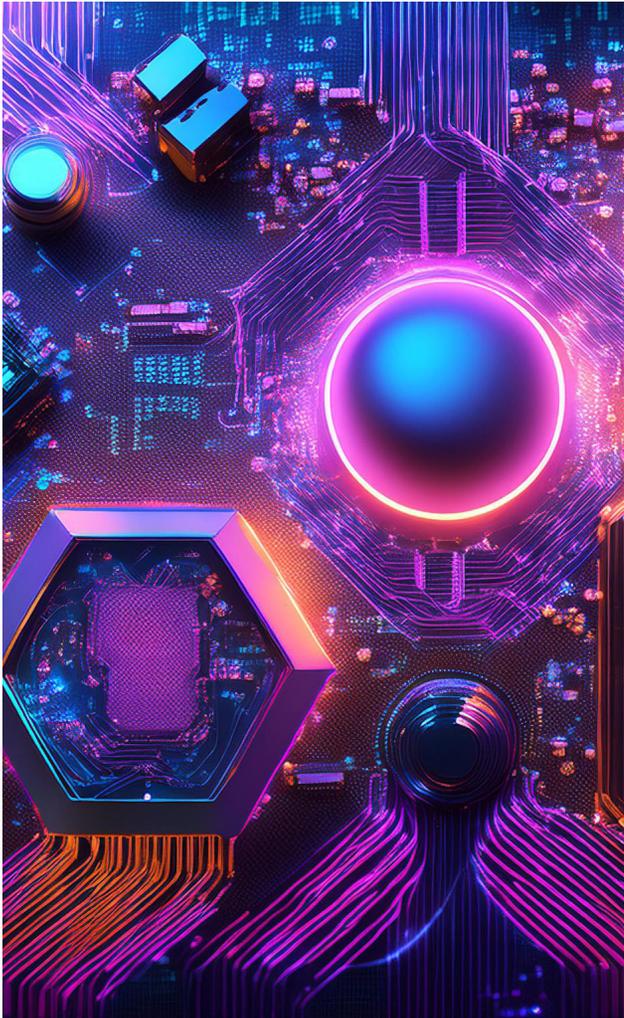
“As technologists, we need to understand the business inside out. We work across all layers of the organization and must have open conversations with all functions to stay aligned. And we must bake data into our process and systems to be able to prove impact to the business.”

Senior technology leader

What technical freedom looks like for your business

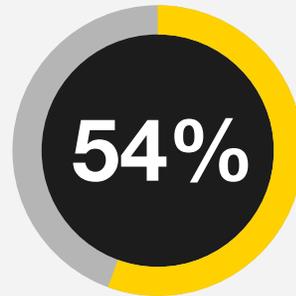
Let's see what interoperability looks like in the technology layer — and what happens when it's missing.

Phase	Without interoperability	With interoperability
Selection and implementation	You invest in a new solution, only to find it's delayed or lacks necessary functionality, leaving you stuck troubleshooting and wasting time and resources that should be driving results.	You choose a technology solution built for seamless integration, tested and deployed without disrupting your existing stack, and delivers value quickly.
Launch	Your new solution doesn't integrate out-of-the-box, leaving teams tied up for months customizing and troubleshooting, which causes frustration, hinders productivity, and delays launches.	Your tech ecosystem is future-proofed to reduce friction, allowing teams to spend less time on tech issues and more time delivering impact.
Outcome	Once launched, adoption suffers due to a clunky, disconnected experience. The solution underperforms, hindering business growth, and you're stuck with it or face high replacement costs.	As an organization outgrows tools, teams can easily switch out what's no longer needed without disrupting the rest of the stack.

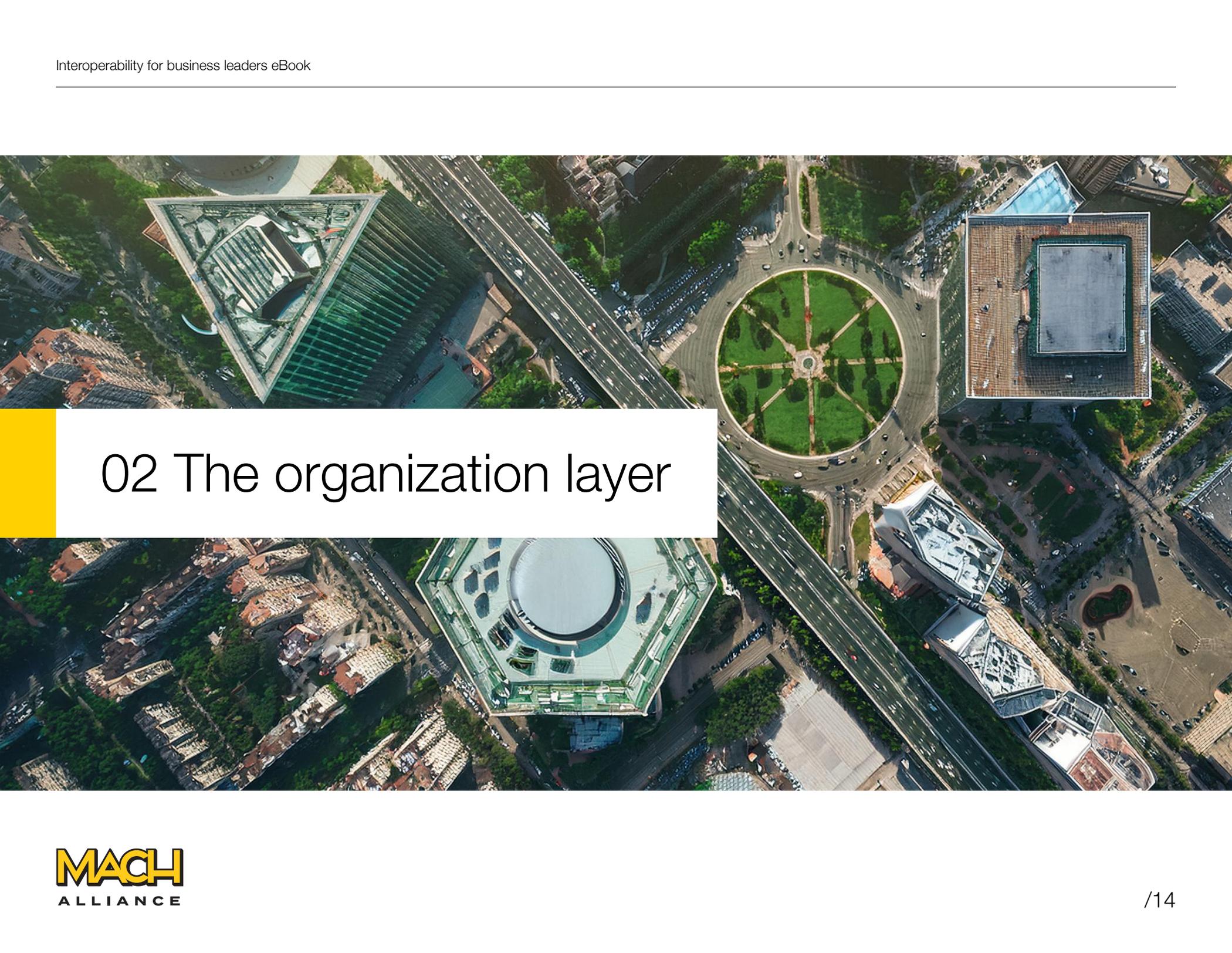


Key takeaway:

Interoperability means you're not locked into yesterday's business reality. It gives you the freedom to move fast and choose tools that fit your organization — rather than forcing your organization to fit the tools.



of organizations using MACH tech report better system and process integration.¹

An aerial photograph of a city center. In the center is a large, circular green park area surrounded by a multi-lane roundabout. To the left is a tall, modern glass skyscraper. To the right is a large, multi-story building with a flat roof. In the foreground, there's another large building with a circular courtyard. The surrounding area is filled with smaller buildings, streets, and greenery.

02 The organization layer

Interoperability inspires a culture of innovation

Establishing a clear business strategy is one thing, but if your teams don't have the right technology and tools to achieve it, nothing moves. Your teams and functions need to be able to experiment with new strategies, processes, and technologies to find what fits your individual business needs. That's why interoperability isn't just a technical concern — it's an organizational one.

Without interoperability:

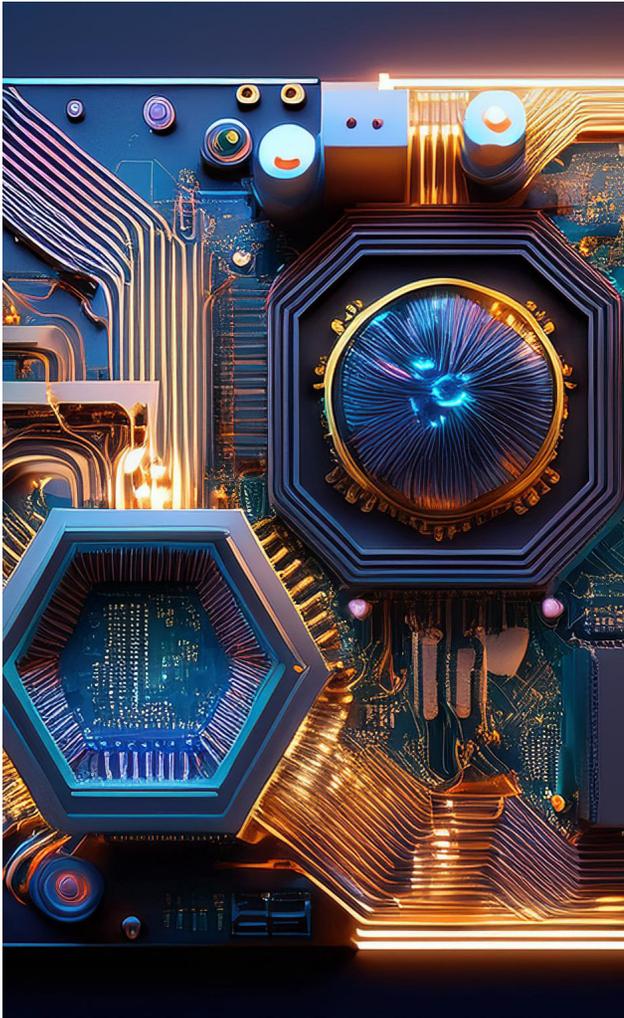
When systems are siloed or rigid, teams waste time battling with the technology instead of benefiting from it. Experimentation stalls because failure is costly and change is disruptive. Over time, this erodes innovation, lowers morale, and makes it harder to attract or retain top talent.

With interoperability:

Connected technology solutions nurture a culture of innovation in the business, allowing teams and functions to change the rules of the game. They are empowered to think bigger, move faster, and unlock more value.

They can safely experiment — whether by trialing AI tools to streamline workflows or pivoting quickly when a new opportunity arises.

Interoperability puts the organization — and your people — back in control.



Key takeaway:

Interoperable solutions remove restrictions to experimentation and innovation, so teams can confidently adopt what works and discard what doesn't. This makes technology an enabler, not a hindrance.

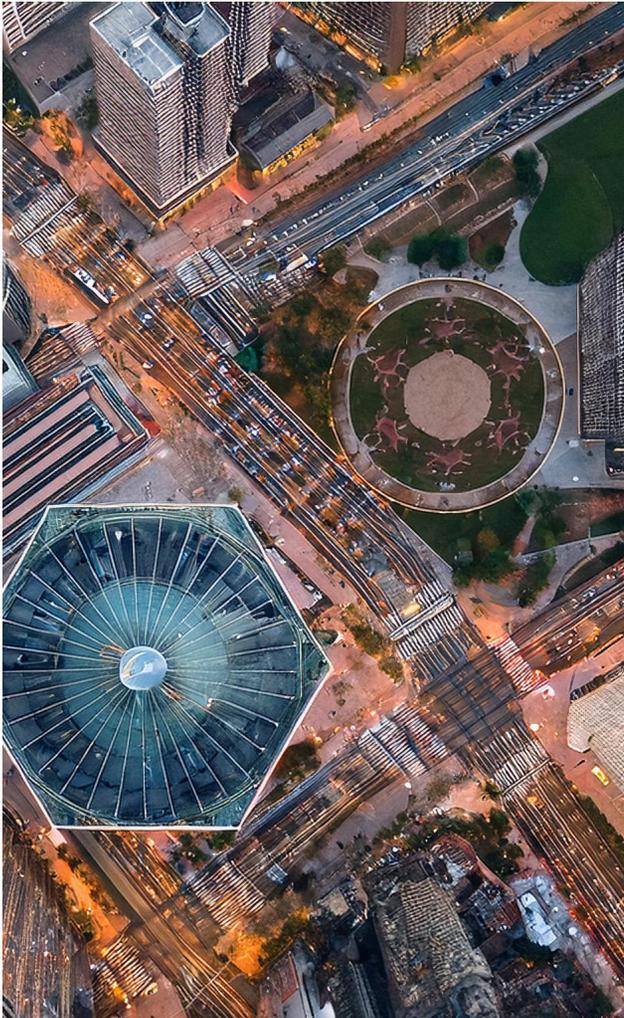


MACH adopters report improved employee experience, thanks to better systems and integration. A similar proportion also benefit from improved systems and process integration, greater agility, and better privacy and security.²

What a culture of innovation looks like for your business

Let's look at how interoperability plays out inside the organization.

Phase	Without interoperability	With interoperability
Selection and implementation	You are reluctant to invest in new tools and solutions as it feels risky. As a result, teams aren't empowered to think innovatively or explore new approaches.	Teams can explore and adopt evolving technology, trialing automation, AI, and other tools to boost productivity and accuracy — without major infrastructure changes.
Launch	Strategic business data is scattered and siloed, making decision-making difficult. Teams waste time on manual processes and miss valuable opportunities.	Your tools seamlessly connect, data flows effortlessly, and decisions are faster and more accurate.
Outcome	New technology experiments are avoided due to the high cost of implementation and the difficulty of reversing any changes. As a result, valuable talent becomes frustrated and leaves.	People feel supported and empowered by their tools, not hindered by them, enhancing brand reputation, and improving talent retention.

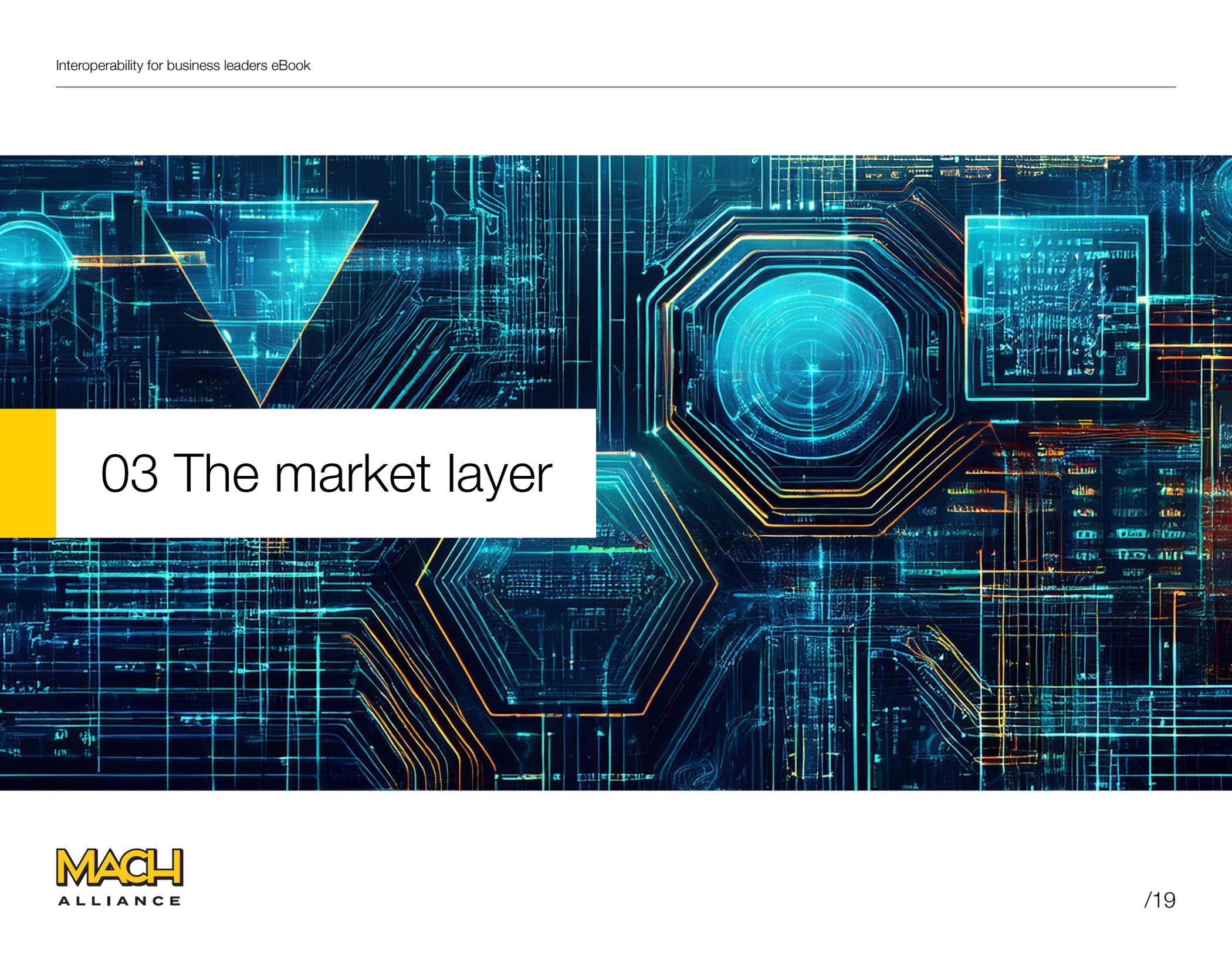


Key takeaway:

Investing in flexible, interoperable systems demonstrates your commitment to modernizing the way your teams work. It sends a clear message: we trust you to drive innovation.

“Over the past five years, digital transformation has been about growth at all costs. Now, the reality is shifting. Technology investments must deliver revenue, resilience, and customer value. CFOs and CMOs are driving these conversations with a focus on cost efficiency and profitability.”

**Rex Bigger, CEO and Composable
Commerce Expert, Cabiri**



03 The market layer

Interoperability offers market agility that's built in

Whether it's new customer expectations, emerging channels, a surprise acquisition, or global instability, to move quickly defines your competitiveness. And that agility starts in your tech stack.

Without interoperability:

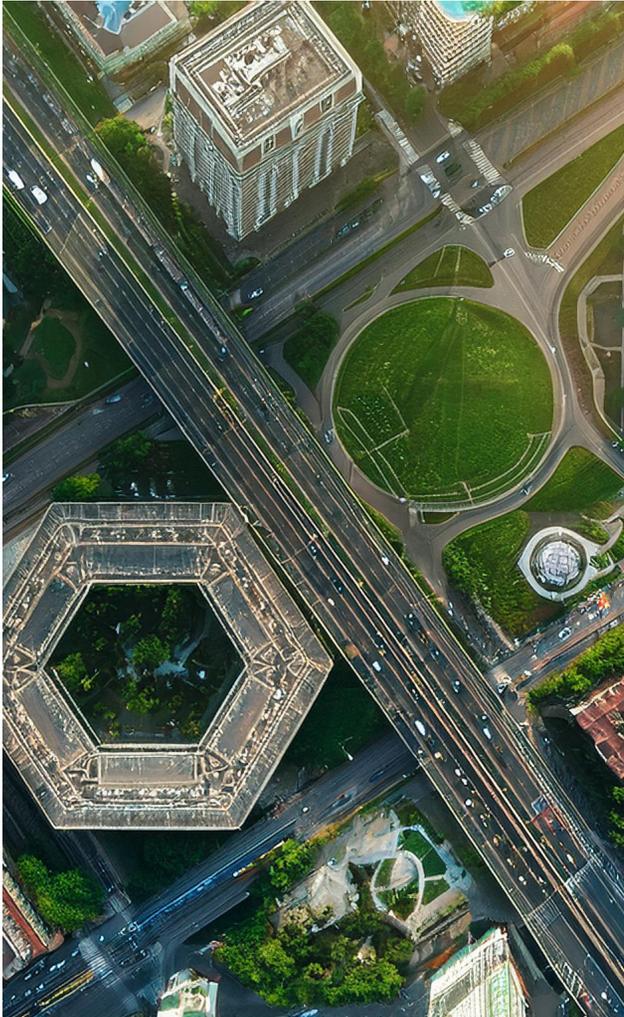
When your business changes its strategy or responds to market shifts, the tech stack may require a complete overhaul or complex customization, draining valuable time and money.

With interoperability:

You can adapt, expand, and integrate at speed in response to customer behavior, market trends, or business pivots, without compromising quality or losing momentum.

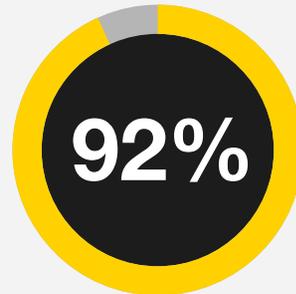
Whether it's integrating a new solution after a merger, launching a digital product, or reaching customers on a new platform, you're always prepared. In a fast-moving market, your tech stack isn't just a set of tools — it's your competitive edge.

Interoperability means you're not starting from scratch every time strategy changes.



Key takeaway:

Market-layer interoperability delivers a flexible, integrated architecture that empowers you to act quickly and with confidence.

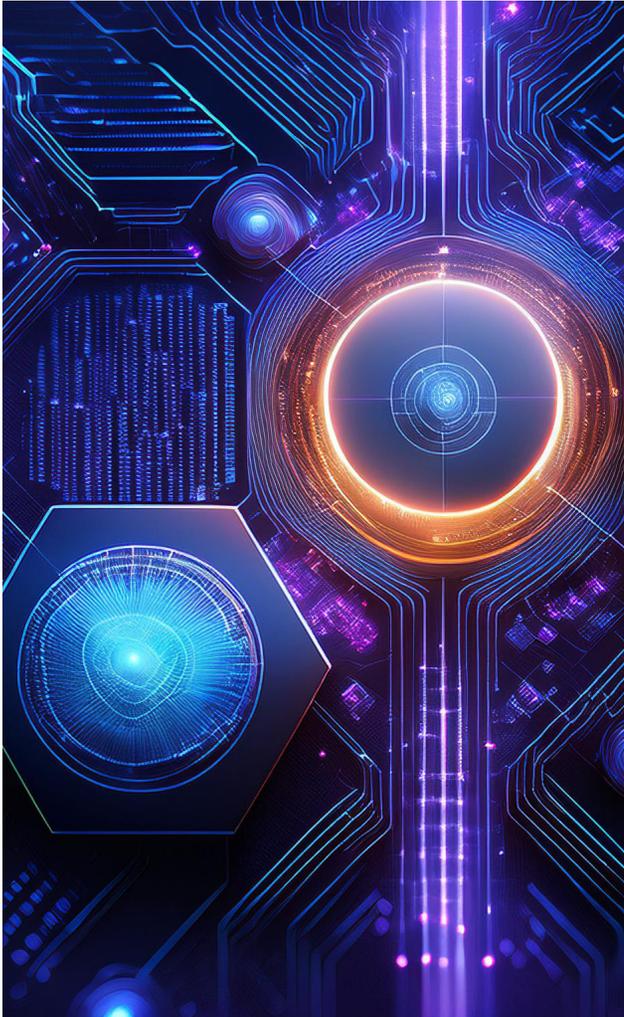


of organizations with MACH maturity say they can deliver customer experience improvements at speed.³

What market agility looks like for your business

Here's what market agility looks like when interoperability is in place — and when it's not.

Phase	Without interoperability	With interoperability
New opportunities	You identify a new customer trend or channel — but your tech stack lacks flexibility to support and integrate it seamlessly with the business.	You can add a new function or system to enhance customer engagement without a struggle.
Mergers and acquisitions	After acquiring a company, integrating systems becomes a months-long challenge, limiting your ability to deliver quality service, protect retention, and support the business.	You're equipped to seamlessly integrate new systems or replace outdated ones with minimal disruption and no impact on customer satisfaction.
Outcome	Customers grow frustrated. Opportunities are missed. Growth stagnates.	You can pivot quickly, improve customer acquisition and retention rates, expand market share, and strengthen your brand reputation.



Key takeaway:

Interoperable solutions empower you to quickly build brand trust and protect profit margins.

“To deliver impact, all stakeholders must be part of the solution. That includes IT, business, and customer-facing teams. Everyone needs visibility. Everyone needs speed.”

Gus Fune, CTO, BÆRSkin

Interoperability: A strategic driver of performance, innovation, and growth

In today's digital-first world, the success of your business depends on how well your technology supports — and enables you to achieve — your goals.

That's why interoperability isn't just a technical consideration, it's a strategic business imperative.

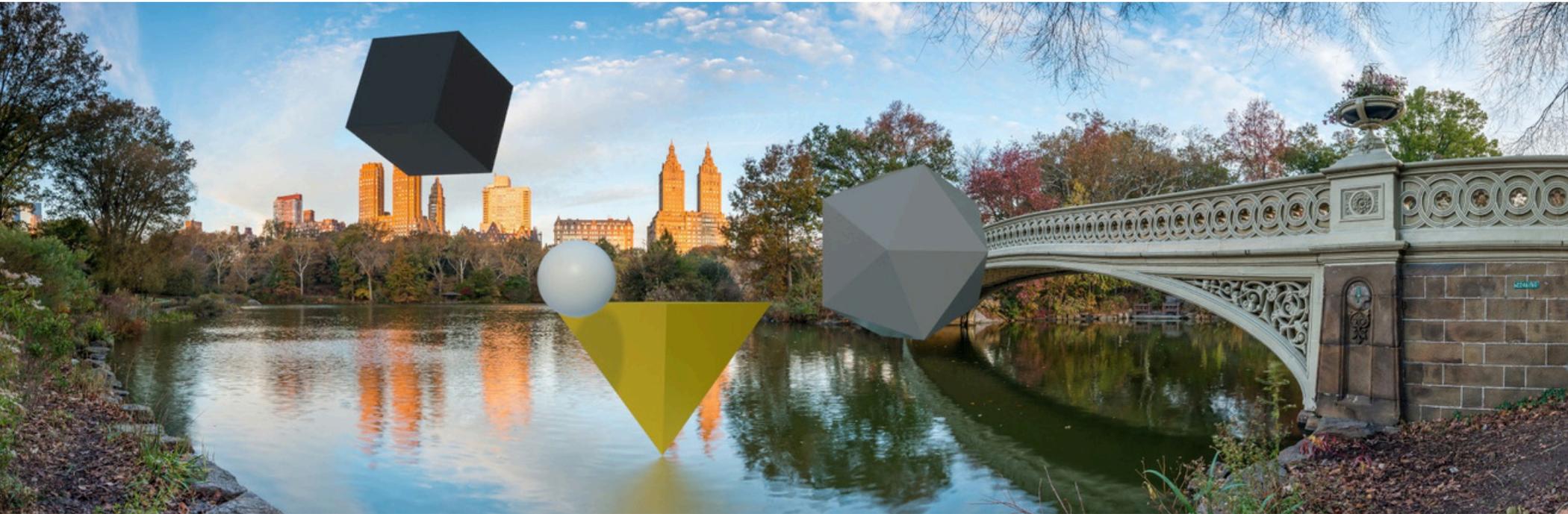
As a business leader, this is not the time to step back and leave these conversations to technology leaders alone. Slower rollouts, stalled innovation, frustrated teams, lost customers all stem from a disconnected, inflexible tech stack.

But when interoperability is the foundation of your digital architecture, everything transforms:

- **You can adopt** the right tools when needed — without fear of lock-in or accumulating technical debt
- **You empower** your teams to innovate, uncovering opportunities to save time, boost productivity, and reduce errors in internal processes
- **You can respond** to market shifts in real time — protecting your customer base, driving profits, and unlocking growth

Reaching that point doesn't require being a technologist — you just need to be engaged and ensure your technology partners prioritize adaptability over rigidity. The businesses that succeed will be the ones who see interoperability not as a buzzword, but as a business-critical advantage.

This eBook was brought to you by the
MACH Alliance Interoperability Taskforce.



About The MACH Alliance

The MACH Alliance is an independent, not-for-profit 501(c)(6) industry body dedicated to advancing composable enterprise architecture. As AI transforms how organizations architect and scale digital experiences, architecture based on MACH principles has become foundational to delivering the agility, innovation, and future adaptability enterprises need to thrive. Guided by the five principles—Composable, Connected, Incremental, Open, and Autonomous—the MACH Alliance defines the framework for the next era of enterprise technology. Through member certification, expert community, and real-world guidance, the MACH Alliance supports organizations in confidently adopting open and transformative technologies to future-proof their business. The MACH Alliance represents over 100 member companies worldwide, including global enterprises, technology vendors, and system integrators. It welcomes enterprise practitioners to the community who share the same vision for the future. Learn more at machalliance.org or [LinkedIn](#).