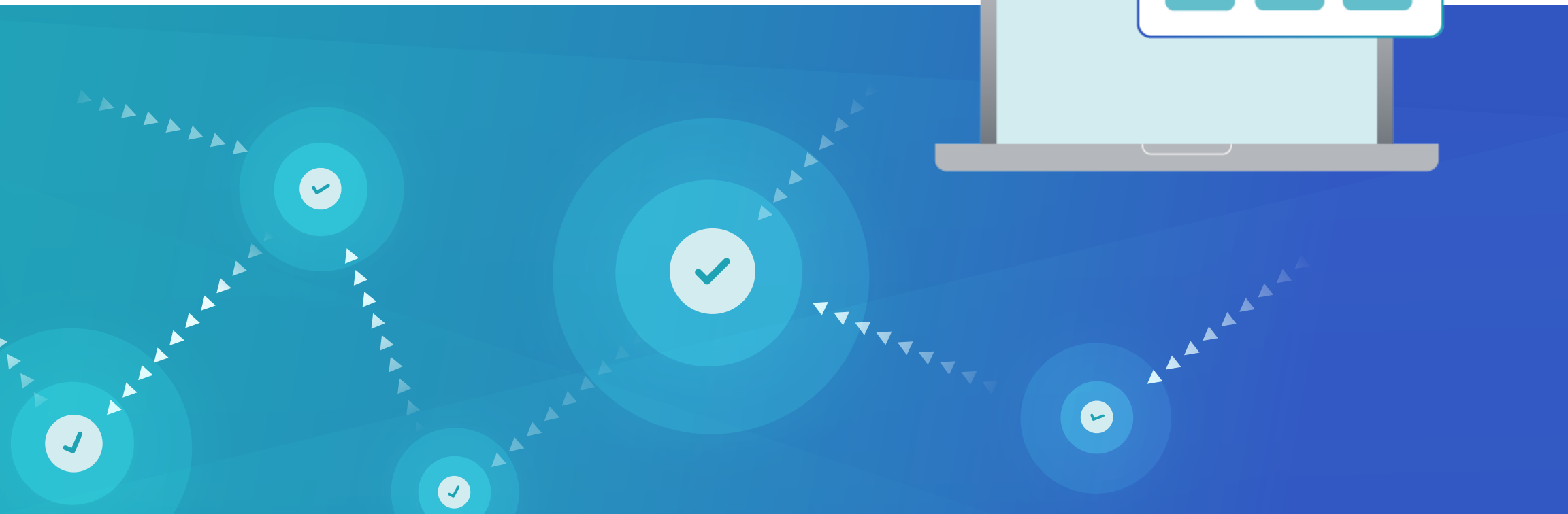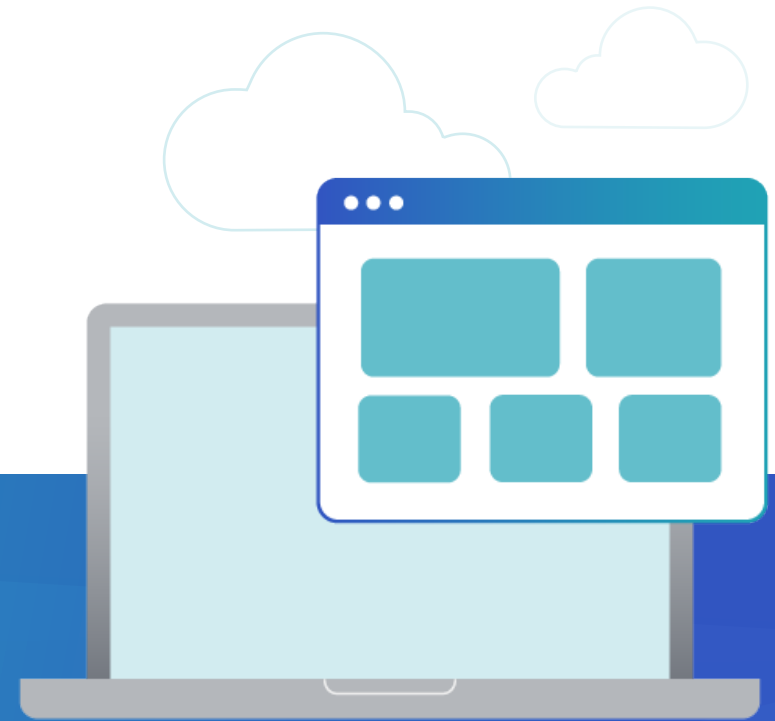coenterprise

5 Ways B2B Managed Services will Drive ROI

And What to Look for in a Managed Services Provider

Maximize Your ROI Instead of Managing Your B2B

Here's the thing. Creating, maintaining, and updating a robust, efficient back-office technology infrastructure is hard—really hard. Most companies struggle finding the balance and confidence to take a several decades old B2B integration in-house application, that is always evolving, to a managed services model.

The struggle is real as B2B is the integration mesh point between your always changing external trading partners and your enterprise business applications.

Most organizations find that it's not only more cost-effective to offload their B2B platform, but it also allows them to grow their business by freeing up time and resources to focus on their core competencies. Lower cost and fewer headaches sounds like a win to us.
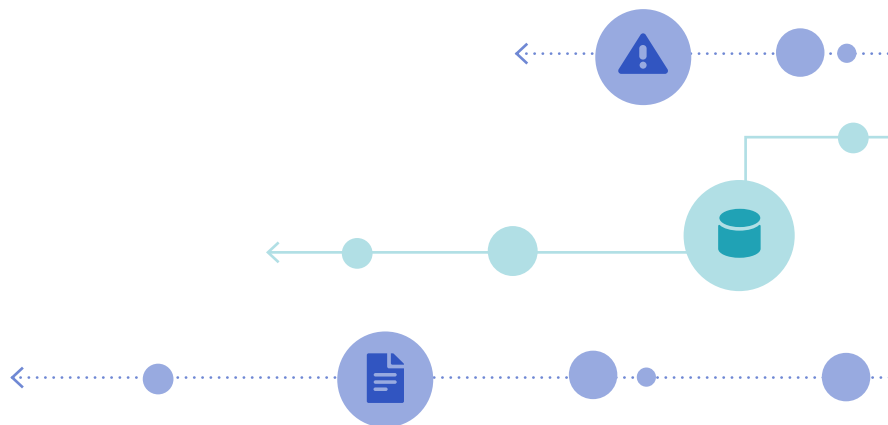
But with so many providers out there, it's important to do your research. The last thing you want is to make matters worse by going with an inadequate vendor who is unable, or unwilling to meet your needs. Or worse, incapable of providing you with full business visibility.

Here's what to look out for and how to select the best solution for your business...
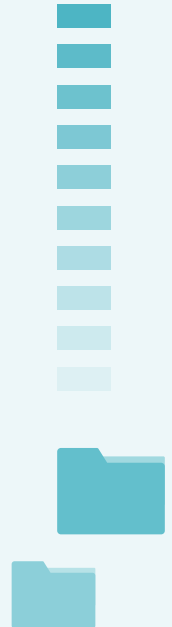
Benefits of a B2B Managed Services Approach

You've invested and likely proven that you can maintain your current B2B environment, but strategically leveraging B2B to facilitate business execution is where you desire to invest and focus. Here's why.

Reduced costs & predictable budgeting

An in-house B2B application means requisitioning computing power, writing or purchasing software, and integrating with partners who may all use different technology stacks.

Then there's the burden of ongoing costs to maintain your own infrastructure—a large portion of which will go towards resources for day-to-day operations, ongoing development, disaster recovery, and system upgrades to remain current with the latest technologies and integration methodologies.

By offloading your B2B application management, you not only save yourself the overhead of implementing and managing these services, but you leverage your vendor's

economies of scale and benefit from their ability to offer an all-inclusive infrastructure at a fraction of the cost of an in-house solution.

And if it's the right vendor, costs will be flexible based on usage so you can expand and contract as needed, and you won't have to worry about being blindsided by sudden market fluctuations. You can dedicate the time, money, and resources you once allocated for in-house B2B management toward growth and day-to-day business efforts.

Increased efficiency

Sure, you could hire and train the right in-house team members to manage your B2B environment and they might even do a good job for a while. But over time you will likely encounter issues.

How efficient will they be in onboarding trading partners? Will they be available 24/7 for ongoing maintenance and support, and will they know how to go about applying all the necessary updates automatically and proactively? Who will manage them? Will they have the knowledge and foresight to remain abreast of the latest technological developments?

A managed services approach takes care of all this for you so, in turn, you can focus on what matters—your business. Leave the maintenance, support, and updates to them, and minimize your staff and partner onboarding time.

Improve Business Operations With These Managed Services Offerings

- ✔ Trading Partner Community Support
- ✔ Support 24/7/365
- ✔ Development and Mapping
- ✔ B2B Application Configuration and Maintenance
- ✔ Database Configuration and Maintenance
- ✔ Environment Hosting
- ✔ Rapid Trading Partner Onboarding and Migrations

Maximum flexibility

What happens when there's a sudden surge in demand and you have to quickly level up your capacity? Or if volume drops and you're left holding and paying for an infrastructure that is beyond your needs?

No matter how good you are, you can't predict the future. Natural disasters, pandemics, economic shocks, market swings, and consumer trends can shift demand without notice, so you need a back-office stack that can adapt in real-time—without the overhead of adding or scaling down infrastructure and personnel.

With the right cloud-based managed services provider this is a non-issue because they will be designed from the ground up to scale transparently and leverage both traditional and modern B2B standards to suit your diverse client and supplier base.

When an inevitable shake-up does eventually occur, at least B2B won't be something you have to worry about in a moment when there will surely be many other demands on your mind from other areas of the business.
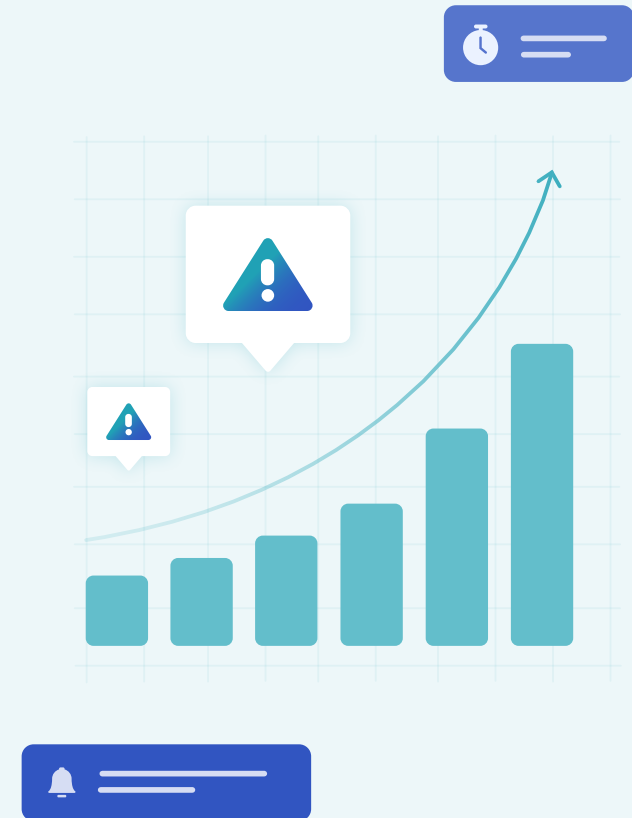
Advanced technology (and more than just B2B)

Even if you purchase the latest, greatest B2B software, something better and faster will come along. And as technology changes, so too will your partner requirements.

Experienced integration vendors are in the business of keeping up with trends, standards, and regulations to ensure their clients are taking advantage of best-in-class technology and that systems remain up to date at all times.

A cloud-based B2B management solution minimizes costs and overhead while maximizing efficiency and ensuring that you are always leveraging the most current methodologies, with little to no effort on your part.

Modern B2B isn't just about fulfillment, inventory tracking, and end-to-end B2B communication. It also means efficient processes, exceptional customer service, informative reporting and visibility, and up-to-the-minute real-time analytics.

MODERN B2B INCLUDES

- Efficient processes
- Exceptional customer service
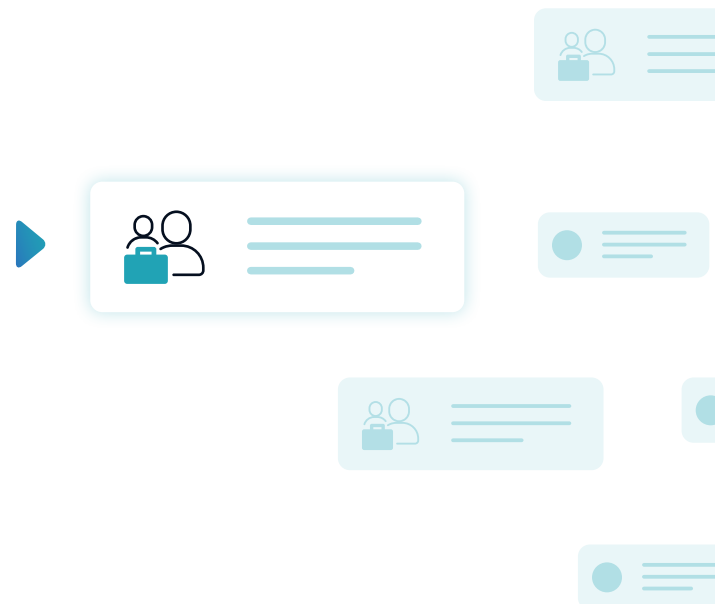- Informative reporting & visibility
- Real-time analytics

Selecting the Best Partner for Your Business

As with any significant operational change, switching to a cloud-based B2B managed services provider can carry significant risk if you don't land with a vendor who is reputable, proven, experienced, flexible, and capable. That's a lot of adjectives, but they're all important.

Providing a complete, reliable, cost-effective solution is the baseline. That's the minimum you should expect, but the right solution will offer much more than just B2B. Providers differ significantly in the breadth of their services and the functionality they offer.

Some factors to look out for...

▶ Platform & Software

You should have access to a comprehensive set of online tools that can handle even the most demanding and complex B2B requirements via an easy-to-use, intuitive interface.

▶ Support

Carefully review a provider's offering and make note of their support and resolution times, as well as overall competency and customer satisfaction. Consider after-hours support and an anything-it-takes approach. Accept nothing less than 24/7, 365-day world-class customer service and issue resolution.

▶ Reporting & Analytics

In today's fast-moving climate, you need full visibility into your entire infrastructure and logistical process chain. Without real-time analytics, you are powerless to adapt quickly, ensure that you are meeting your KPIs and customer expectations, and identify opportunities for improvement.

▶ Experience with B2B

Your provider should have many years of experience hosting and managing B2B solutions and partner connectivity, and a demonstrable track record of industry expertise. It's perfectly legitimate to ask for a client list to ensure they have experience working on a scale that matches yours.

▶ Integration & Technology

You don't know who your next client partner will be, and the last thing you want is to be constrained by technology. Therefore, your B2B platform should offer integration with a full array of B2B standards and communication protocols.

This can easily become a bit of an acronym soup, but the specifics are important here so you will likely want to involve your technology team to ensure the vendor offers integration with and via technologies such as XML, JSON, X12, EDIFACT, HC7, RosettaNet, Tradacoms, AS2, FTP/SFTP, SOAP, and HTML , as well as a modern, extensible API framework.

▶ Scalability & Flexibility

Be sure your provider can scale with your business in real-time and handle sudden bursts of volume, as well as large-sustained increases as your business and service needs grow. And what happens when you sign a new client who uses a technology that the vendor doesn't offer? You'll want to go with someone who remains technology agnostic and is willing and has the capacity to offer custom integrations when necessary.

Some factors to look out for...

▶ **Proactive Exception Management**

Your provider should handle B2B exceptions—from alerts to integration—without your team having to lift a finger. It's inevitable that something will go wrong on occasion, so you should be notified immediately or, better yet, the system should be able to handle routine issues automatically and without input from you.

▶ **Reliability**

Ask your provider about their backup procedures and make sure they offer automatic failover and utilize multiple storage locations so that your data is safe regardless of natural disaster, power outage, or other unforeseen interruption. They should have a documented, in-depth disaster recovery process they follow in the event of catastrophe.

▶ **Flexible Pricing**

All of this is great but not very relevant if it's not something you can afford. So of course, first and foremost, you'll want to find a vendor that offers competitive pricing for the class of service that they offer. Look for pricing that is based on usage so you can avoid paying for something that you don't need yet retain the flexibility to grow and have the pricing adjust to meet your ongoing requirements.

Be sure to fully understand the provider's pricing model and whether they offer a transactional, subscription, or hybrid pricing scheme. Don't forget to find out exactly what is covered and what comes at an extra cost.

▶ **Proactive Exception Management**

National, regional, and international regulations are constantly in flux and it's important that your provider adhere to absolute best practices so that your business is not exposed to potential liability. Be sure to review applicable guidelines and regulations with your vendor to ensure they are in compliance.
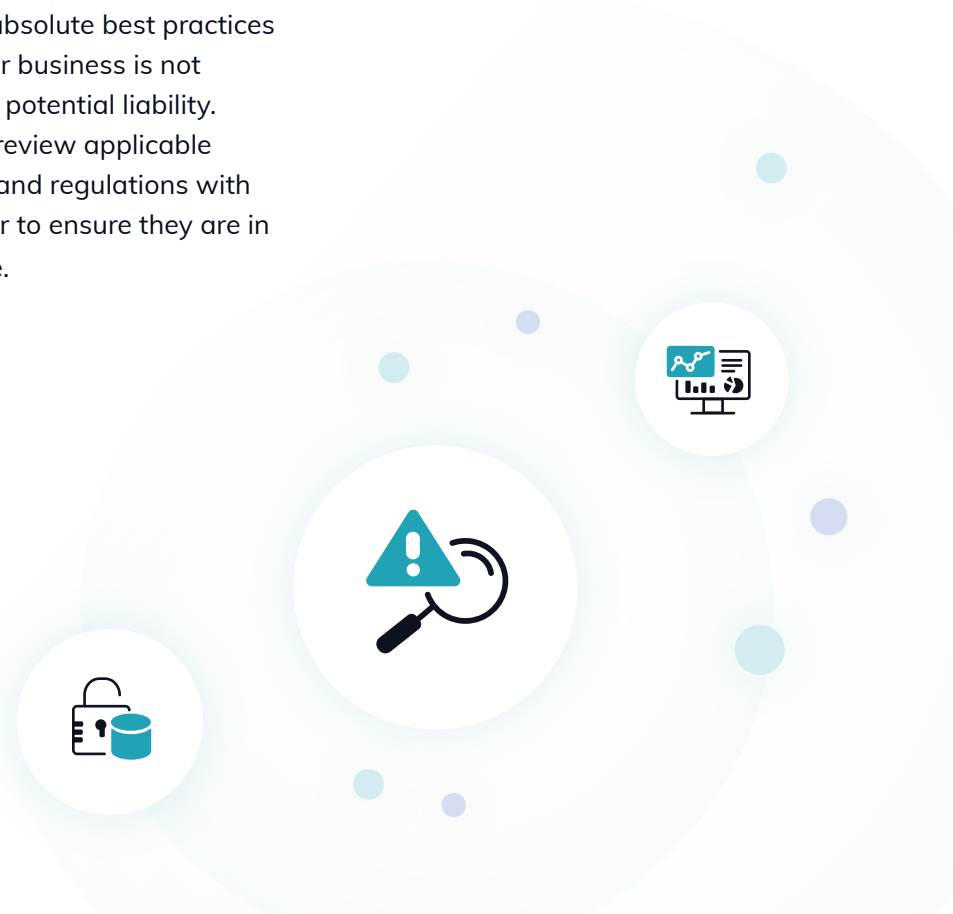
For Fast Results, Consider Syncrofy Integration Cloud from CoEnterprise

Syncrofy Integration Cloud (SIC) was created based upon the decades of proficiency and project expertise boasted by our innovative and dedicated team. It was built from the ground up—on the cloud in containers—to handle any B2B connectivity, data type, and enterprise integration at scale across all industries.

With SIC, you'll get access to experts with deep industry expertise, award-winning customer service, 24/7 support, and cost-effective solutions with minimal disruption to your business.

SIC utilizes industry-leading technology to enable a proactive, collaborative approach to your B2B relationships—freeing up your in-house resources to get back to doing what they do best. And with cutting-edge business visibility tools, real-time analytics, and advanced reporting capabilities, SIC empowers you to measure your progress and identify improvement areas to meet KPIs and exceed your business goals.

SIC USERS EXPERIENCED

30%
Reduction in trading partner onboarding time

65%
Increase in partner collaboration

50%
Reduction in new mapping requests turnaround time

78%
Improvement in customer satisfaction

▲ Syncrofy's dashboards allow you to report on your B2B transactions in real time.

IBM Platinum Partner | Red Hat Advanced Business Partner | Syncrofy BY COENTERPRISE

Ready to take the next step?

Reach out to schedule a free consultation to discuss your B2B environment and the benefits of moving to managed services.

Learn More ⟶

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