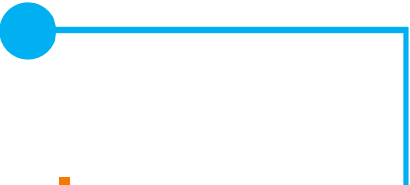


ULTIMATE BUYER'S GUIDE

Managed File Transfer Thru.

Version 1.2

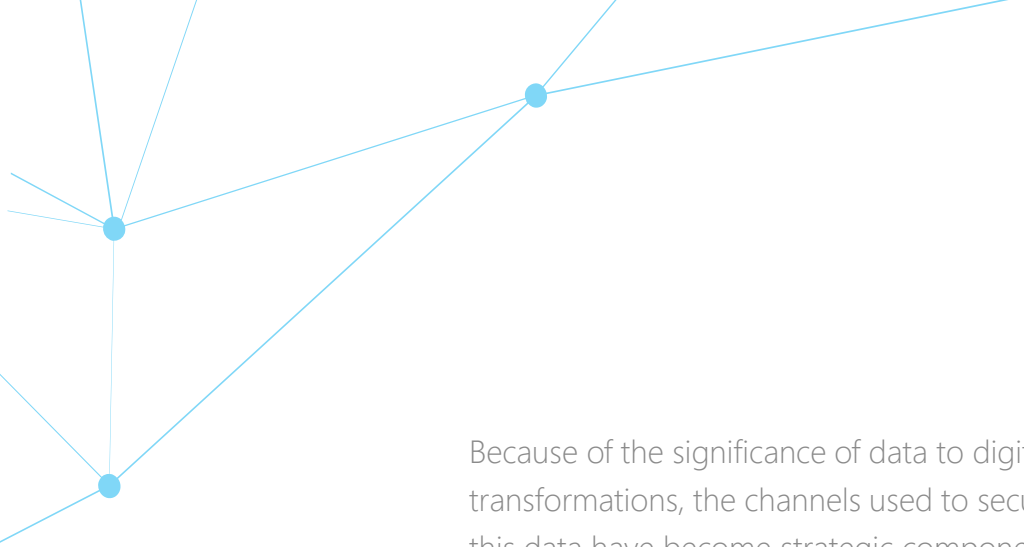




“Data is the lifeblood of digital transformation, flowing between internal processes and external ecosystems at the speed of business.”

Data Exchange in the Era of Digital Transformation, IDC





Because of the significance of data to digital transformations, the channels used to securely flow this data have become strategic components of many modern enterprise architectures. One of the most important channels data in the form of files passes through is the managed file transfer system.

Nearly all business processes involving internal lines of business and external partners require a file transfer component to manage the exchange of file data generated by applications and devices or needed by them in return. As the volume of file transfers rise and more systems move to the cloud, it becomes more challenging to configure, secure, integrate and track file transfer processes across multiple endpoints.

A **managed file transfer (MFT) platform** can help companies solve these challenges by providing a solution for automating secure file transfers and improving controls and visibility.

When using a cloud-first strategy to modernize your B2B infrastructure, include a cloud-native MFT platform that will support your business growth and your digital innovations. This document highlights the essential MFT solution elements you should consider as you evaluate options to modernize your B2B architecture for optimized business outcomes

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WHAT IS

Managed File Transfer?

Managed file transfer (MFT) is software that automates system-to-system file transfers over multiple protocols. Standalone MFT software first surfaced in the early 2000s as a solution to centrally schedule and manage file transfer activities across file transfer endpoints.

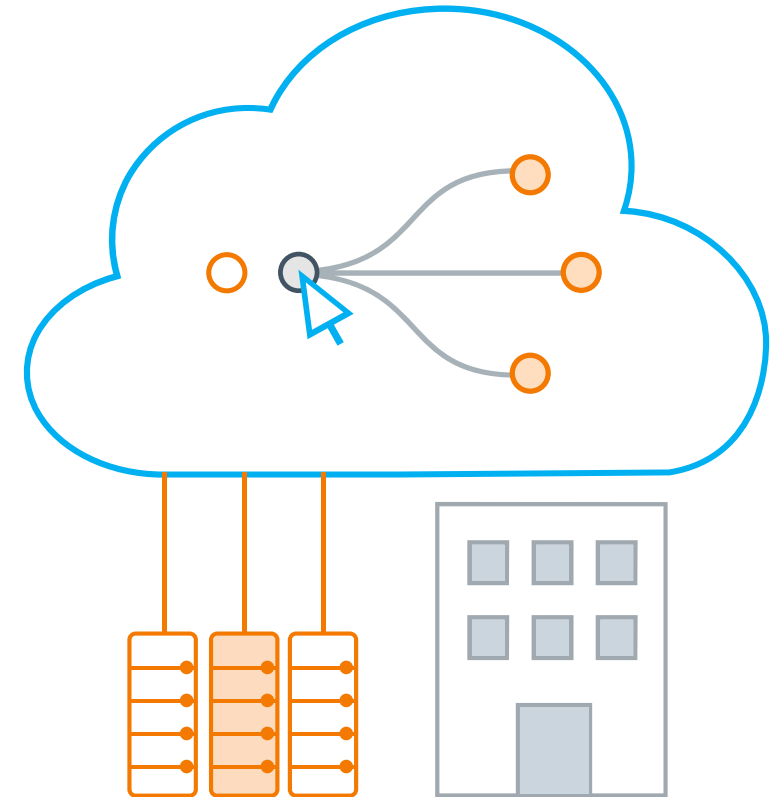
Today's MFT automates file transfers between systems or between companies in a reliable and auditable manner. Common features include high-throughput data transfer, the ability to resume file transfers after a connection has been interrupted and security features such as encryption. Initiation of file transfers are usually based on a schedule, API-driven events or via file watchers that monitor a file system.

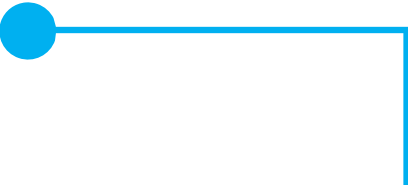
Companies use an MFT solution when there is a need to efficiently manage several thousand (or millions) of file transfers a month. For example, a large consumer goods organization can easily have hundreds of partners that require high volumes of file exchanges to do business together. An MFT solution could be used to centrally manage file exchanges over multiple protocols with each of these partners and secure and track the transactions.

WHERE MFT FITS INTO A Modern Enterprise Architecture

B2B systems have evolved drastically since the early 2000s. Best-of-breed cloud applications are now the norm and companies are moving integrations away from on-premises enterprise service buses (ESBs) to cloud-based integration platforms as a service (iPaaS) based on reusable APIs. This innovative technology environment presents new challenges as IT must now satisfy hybrid managed file transfer use cases involving both on-premises and cloud systems.

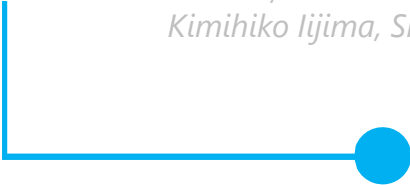
To meet these new hybrid MFT challenges, companies are now deploying MFT in the cloud alongside an integration solution such as an iPaaS. This push to the cloud is largely motivated by the advantages of on-demand scale, pay-as-you-go pricing and the desire to reduce on-premises maintenance costs.





“Cloud service offerings in the MFT market continue to grow, with most new offerings addressing scheduled, triggered and ad hoc file transfers.”

Gartner, 'Market Snapshot: Managed File Transfer, Worldwide, 2020', Mark O'Neill, Kimihiko Iijima, Shameen Pillai, Keith Guttridge, Bindi Bhullar, January 21, 2021.

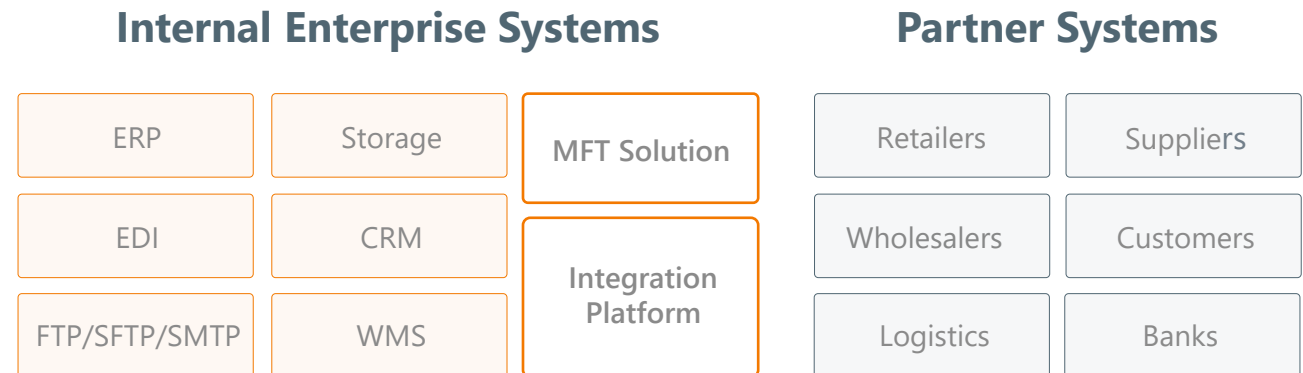


EXAMPLE:

MFT In A Modern Enterprise Architecture

In the diagram to the right, an MFT solution and an integration platform are used together to connect a company's internal systems, such as enterprise resource planning (ERP), customer resource management (CRM), etc., with its external partner systems.

The ideal MFT solution will be able to easily integrate out-of-the-box with a variety of integration platforms to be able to meet these new use cases. Not all MFT systems can integrate with iPaaS out-of-the-box, so this is one of the top pre-selection requirements to consider if your company is using an integration platform.



Benefits of Modern MFT

Protect Business Data

Protect against data breaches and meet compliance requirements with the ability to encrypt files in transit and at rest.

Scale On-Demand

Replace on-premises software with cloud subscription license model that is pay-as-you-go, saving on maintenance, hardware and scaling expenses.

Simplify Integration

Streamline integrations and partner onboarding with out-of-the-box connectors to third-party applications that greatly reduce time spent writing custom-coded scripts.

Increase Efficiency of Business Processes

Automate file transfers to increase efficiency for business processes by replacing manual file transfers with scheduled workflows.

Governance & Visibility

Keep detailed record of file movements and govern user access with auditing and authentication controls.

Meet SLAs

Help meet strict SLAs with MFT features that stores data until delivery and auto-retries transfers if connections break.

File Transfer Patterns

Before searching for an MFT solution, it is important to understand the basic file transfer use cases / patterns your company requires so you know what to look for in an MFT provider.

Companies using MFT solutions often are automating the same file exchange types between multiple lines of business and partners. MFT should provide file transfer workflows that reduce the number of point-to-point connections, resulting in reduction of the number of workflows.

For example, a company with 200 wholesalers should not have to create a workflow for each wholesaler for the same file transfer type (e.g., standard EDI purchase orders and invoicing). The company should be able to create a single workflow process to which multiple organizations can be added or subscribe. The MFT solution also should support sending files to specific workflow participants based on custom file parameters.

4 Standard Patterns to Meet Modern MFT Requirements

A

**One-to-Many and
Many-to-One**

B

**Set File Prefixes for
Private File Exchanges**

C

**Connect MFT Workflows
with iPaaS Systems**

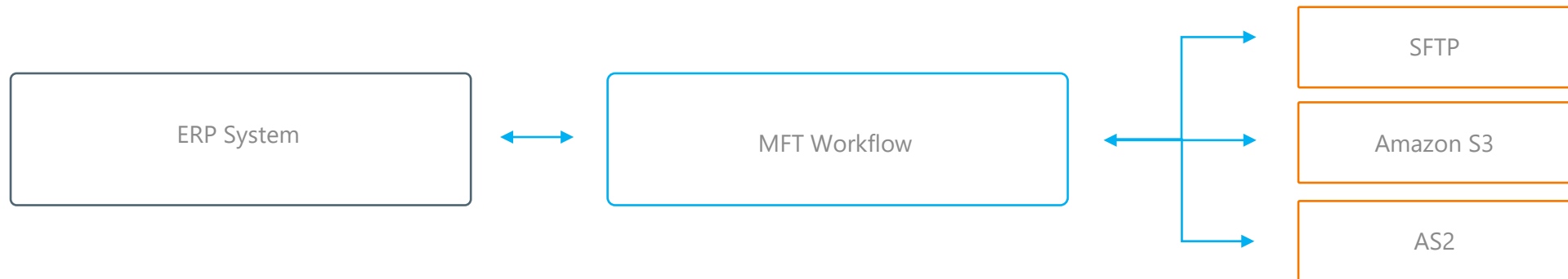
D

**Manual Uploading and
Downloading of Files by Users**

FILE TRANSFER PATTERN A:

One-to-Many & Many-to-One

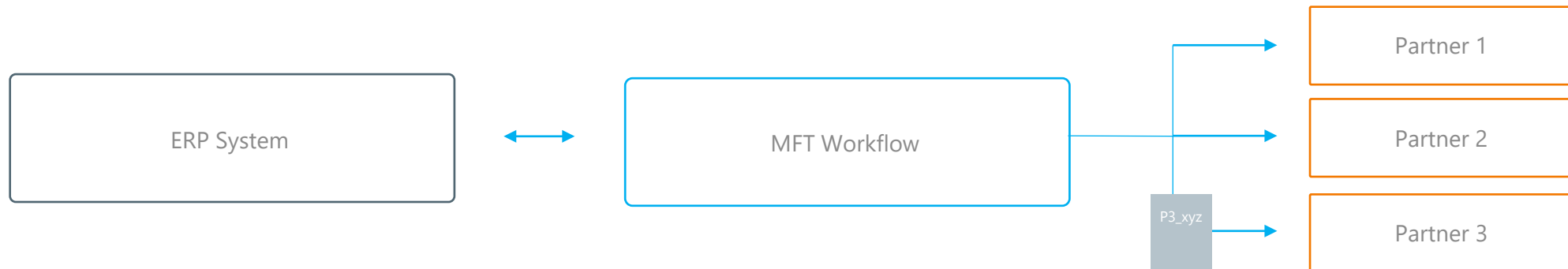
Companies with multiple partners should be able to create an MFT workflow that can distribute a single file sent by the company to multiple partners and likewise be able to receive files from many partners and send to a single enterprise system.



FILE TRANSFER PATTERN B:

Set File Prefixes For Private File Exchanges

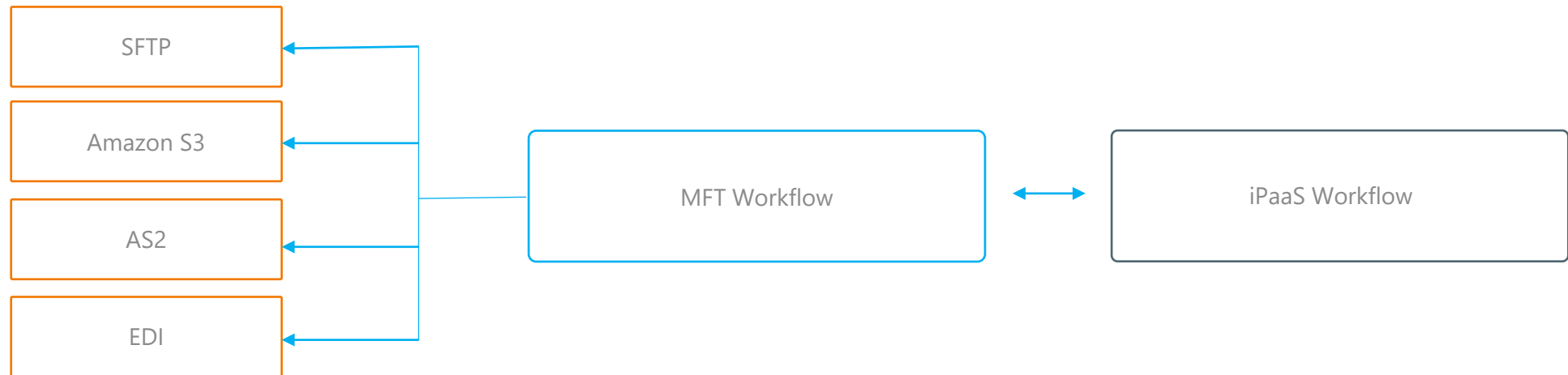
Companies should be able to send files to specific partners when needed based on custom file prefixes. In the diagram below, a company has added a rule to an MFT workflow where files with the prefix "P3_" are sent only to Partner 3 systems.



FILE TRANSFER PATTERN C:

Connect MFT Workflows with iPaaS Systems

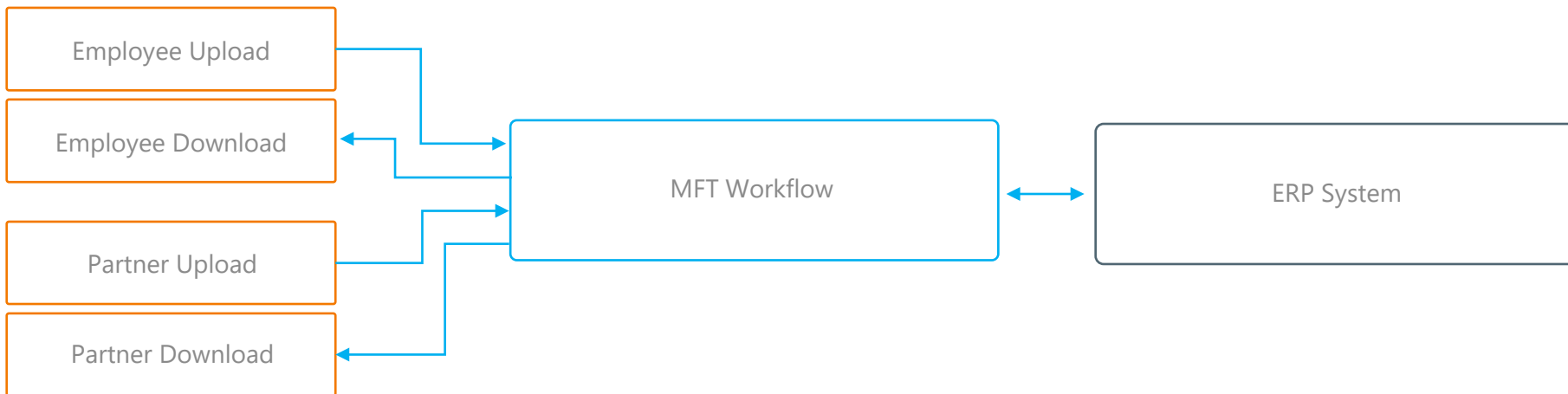
If a company needs to connect an MFT solution with an iPaaS solution, the MFT should have settings within its system to connect MFT workflows to iPaaS workflows instead of requiring extensive coding. Connecting MFT to iPaaS should be done via an out-of-the-box connector within the iPaaS or using APIs of the MFT.



FILE TRANSFER PATTERN D:

Manual Uploading & Downloading Files

While MFT typically consists of system-to-system file transfers, there are use cases that require users to manually upload or download files directly from the MFT interface rather than a third-party interface such as an SFTP folder. An MFT system should provide the ability for users to log in to a web interface to simply drop off or pick up files from different MFT workflows.



Top Features Priority Checklist

Category-Feature	Critical	Medium	Low
Security & Authentication			
Encryption (in transit & at rest)			
Antivirus Scanning			
Auditing of Activity			
Multi-Factor Authentication			
Single Sign On (SSO)			
Integration			
iPaaS Connectors			
Support for Various Protocols & Apps (E.g., SFTP, FTPS, AS2, Amazon S3)			
APIs for Custom Integrations			
End-User Features			
No-Code Workflow Creation and Scheduling			
Dashboards with Activity Reporting			
Alerts via Email and Text Message			
Partner Self-Management			
User Upload/Download			

Current State Identification Questionnaire

Technical Questions

How many external partners currently exchange files with your company?

Answer:

Where are the partners and lines of business located that are exchanging files? (Understand their transfer speed requirements.)

Answer:

What are the endpoints and protocols used? (e.g., SFTP, Amazon S3, FTPS, email, on-premises Windows or Linux servers)

Answer:

What is the estimated volume of transactions of all endpoints per year?

Answer:

How do partners currently connect with the company for file exchanges?

Answer:

What are the top business use cases? (e.g., sending POs to suppliers, receiving POs from customers)

Answer:

What solution is used today for file transfer? (e.g., legacy MFT, homegrown SFTP network, custom file transfer software, FTP servers)

Answer:

Challenges & Business Impact

What are the top challenges with the current file transfer solution?

Answer:

What are the main impacts of these challenges to business?

Answer:

Future State Requirements Checklist (PART 1)

Requirements	Vendor 1	Vendor 2	Vendor 3
Security, Authentication & Compliance			
Provides single sign on (SSO) integration.			
Encrypts files in transit and at rest.			
Scans files for malware in transit and at rest.			
Data kept in specific geographies as required by partners or LOBs.			
Meets current and upcoming compliance requirements.			
System audits all file and user activity metadata.			
Integration			
Supports required file transfer patterns. (E.g., many-to-one, one-to-many and many-to-many, on-premises to on-premises, external to internal).			
Integrates with iPaaS vendors.			
Fully managed cloud service with no on-premises deployment.			
Supports all required file transfer protocols and endpoints. (E.g., SFTP, Amazon S3, FTPS, AS2).			
Exposes APIs for custom integrations and reporting activity metadata.			

Future State Requirements Checklist (PART 2)

Requirements	Vendor 1	Vendor 2	Vendor 3
Administrator & User Features			
Provides an interface for partners and internal lines of business to self-manage endpoints and file pickup and drop-off schedules.			
File transfer workflows and activity centrally governed and managed.			
Does not require manual scripting to create MFT workflows.			
Offers the ability to edit or turn off file transfer endpoints without breaking MFT workflows.			
Can manually retry a file transfer with a "retry button."			
System automatically retries file transfers if connection errors occur.			
System automatically alerts users via email or SMS of errors.			
Renders dashboards to monitor and report file and user transfer activities.			
Web interface to manually upload or download files without a third-party FTP client.			
Retention policies for admins to choose what files to archive, retain and purge.			

Calculate ROI of MFT Solution

A powerful way to see the value of an MFT solution versus your current solution is to determine its return on investment (ROI). Since the nature of MFT is in optimizing file transfer processes with automation, this is a great opportunity to see how an MFT solution reduces costs associated with IT overhead, support and integration.

The following sections highlight expenses incurred with current file transfer solutions to reach a better understanding of actual costs.

Be sure to include these categories of costs when calculating the ROI of each MFT vendor / solution:

- 1 Automated File Transfers**
- 2 Manual File Transfers**
- 3 File Transfer Failure & Remediation**
- 4 Security & Compliance**

CALCULATE ROI OF MFT SOLUTION

Current File Transfer Expenses

1. Automated File Transfers

Current expenses incurred when creating or modifying file transfer flows, connections or processes

Number of Automated File Transfers	Per Week
Number of File Transfer Scripts / Applications Modified	Per Week
Hours Required to Modify Script / Application	Per Week
Number of Scripted / Coded File Transfers Built	Per Week
Hours Required to Build a File Transfer Script / Application	Per Week
IT Resource Hourly Rate	Per Week

1

Automated File Transfers

2

Manual File Transfers

3

File Transfer Failure & Remediation

4

Security & Compliance

CALCULATE ROI OF MFT SOLUTION

Current File Transfer Expenses

2. Manual File Transfers

Current expenses incurred when spending time manually transferring files

Number of Manual File Transfers Executed	Per Week
Hours Required to Manually Transfer Each File	Per Week
Hours IT Resource Hourly Rate	Per Week

1

Automated File Transfers

2

Manual File Transfers

3

File Transfer Failure & Remediation

4

Security & Compliance

CALCULATE ROI OF MFT SOLUTION

Current File Transfer Expenses

3. File Transfer Failure & Remediation

Current expenses incurred when spending time troubleshooting file transfer failures

Percent of Failed File Transfers (3% Industry Average)	Per Week
Hours Required to Troubleshoot and Remediate	Per Week
IT Resource Hourly Rate	Per Week

1

Automated File Transfers

2

Manual File Transfers

3

File Transfer Failure & Remediation

4

Security & Compliance

CALCULATE ROI OF MFT SOLUTION

Current File Transfer Expenses

4. Security & Compliance

Current expenses incurred when a data breach occurs

Number of Confidential Unencrypted Files Transferred by FTP	Per Week
Number of Confidential Unencrypted Files Transferred by Email	Per Week
Number of Confidential Unencrypted Files Transferred by Other Unsecure Protocols	Per Week
Average Number of Records in Each Confidential Unencrypted File Transferred by FTP, Email or other Unsecure Protocols	Per Week

1

Automated File Transfers

2

Manual File Transfers

3

File Transfer Failure & Remediation

4

Security & Compliance

THE GOOD NEWS:

“A cloud-native MFT solution can cut file transfer expenses by up to **35%**”

*2019 Cost of a Data Breach Report,
The Ponemon Institute/IBM Security*

\$3.92M

Global average cost
of a data breach

**25,272
Records**

Average breach size

\$150

Per breach record

Thru.

A Modern MFT Solution with iPaaS Integration

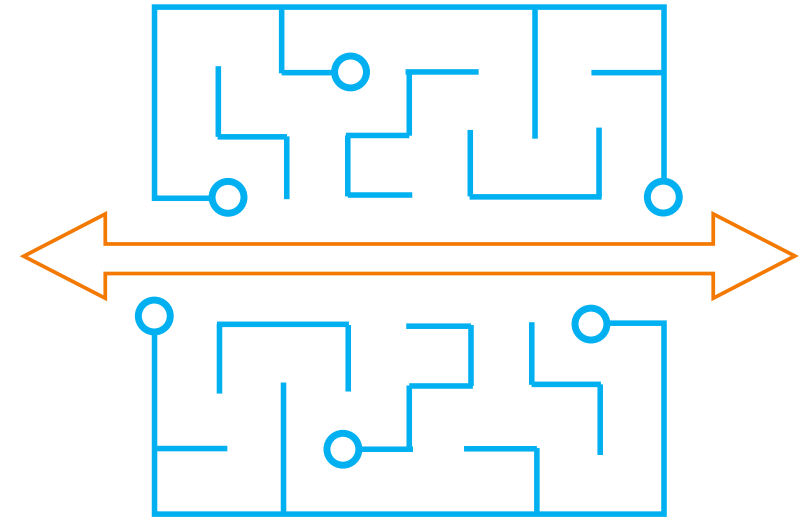
A modern MFT solution to consider during your evaluation is Thru. Companies choose Thru when there is a strong need for instant scale and security of file transfers in the cloud and out-of-the-box integration with iPaaS solutions. Thru provides a centralized platform to manage file transfers between a company and its network of partners and internal lines of business. It stores data until delivery, tracks all metadata of activities and reduces integration time with easy-to-use, no-code workflows.

Top Features & Benefits	Thru	Other
Cloud-Based Deployment	✓	
Antivirus Scanning	✓	
TLS and AES 256-bit Encryption	✓	
Multi-Factor Authentication	✓	
Guaranteed Delivery with Fault Tolerance (E.g., Auto-Retry of Failed Transfers)	✓	
Auditing of Activity	✓	
Customize Integrations with APIs	✓	
No-Code Workflow Creation and Scheduling	✓	
Faster Integration with iPaaS Connectors	✓	
Supports Multiple Workflow Types (E.g., Many-to-One and One-to-Many)	✓	
Dashboards with Activity Reporting	✓	
Alert Users Via Email and Text Message	✓	
Partner Self-Management	✓	
User Upload/Download	✓	

Develop Your MFT Strategy with **Thru.**

At Thru, we believe in partnering with companies to help them realize their MFT strategy – big and small. Thru is a global leader and only provider of cloud-native secure machine-to-machine MFT and person-to-person (ad hoc MFT) file exchange solutions. Since 2002, Thru has offered market-first technologies designed to tackle the most demanding and complex file transfer challenges.

[Continue to our Overview page](#) to learn how Thru works and how it can help you.





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