The Future of Applications
Three Strategies for the High-velocity, Software-driven Business
An Accenture Technology Point of View
Welcome to the high-velocity, software-driven world
Today’s business world is increasingly high velocity and software driven. Sooner or later, these two realities will push every company to rethink its potential and reinvent itself. In this point of view, we urge companies to begin that reinvention today, starting with a fundamentally new approach to the business of applications.

While some aspects of technology are moving with incredible speed—social, mobile, analytics and cloud as well as wearables, crowdsourcing and the Internet of Things—business processes and applications lag behind. In a recent Forrester survey, just 17 percent of information technology (IT) executives said they deliver fast enough for the pace of business.1

IT is not alone in its struggles with these new realities. Business is also challenged to cope with the speed of change. Now, more than ever, software strategy must be part of your business strategy. This is not just a matter of sustaining competitive advantage; it’s a matter of survival. It should prompt every business leader to ask some important questions: Is software playing a strategic role in my company? Are we using it to proactively drive disruption, to create new markets, customers and opportunities?

“The Future of Applications” defines three powerful strategies that can help companies address the velocity of technology change and become successful, software-driven businesses. By mastering these strategies, companies can accelerate applications—including custom, ERP and SaaS—to the pace of business.

We take it a step further by defining a new operating model that takes technology “out of the box.” In today’s business environment, technology can no longer be a specialty function. It must be a competency that every business leader embraces.

We hope you find the possibilities as intriguing as we do. It’s time to stake out a new competitive frontier with applications.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

New technologies are accelerating the pace of business, but existing business and IT approaches lag behind. Companies need to fundamentally redefine the business of applications.

The velocity and volume of technology change today are rocking companies, industries and entire societies to their core. One recent research report found that two-thirds of business executives believe their organization is currently being disrupted by information technology and 72 percent agree that they will be disrupted over the next 12 months.²

At the same time, software is now a key driver of differentiation and innovation. It’s a gateway to new services and revenue streams, seamless customer experiences and expansion into new markets. It’s redefining every industry.³

Think about it: Bill Ford, executive chairman of Ford Motor Company, envisions radically new business models for the auto industry in the age of connected vehicles. Ford is working to ensure it is not simply a hardware manufacturer in the future, with “all the value elsewhere,” but also a provider of software-driven services that improve customer safety and increase transportation efficiency.³

To succeed amidst this disruption, companies must respond by changing the way they design, build and use software.
What stands in the way of such fundamental change? First, IT is showing its age. The fact is, many companies are trying to compete in the world of social, mobile, analytics and cloud with applications that were designed for another era. Monolithic applications are often built from the ground up—slow to implement and slow to change. About 70 percent of today’s business transactions are still processed in COBOL. IT organizations typically spend more than 60 percent of their budgets just maintaining existing systems, leaving precious little time for innovation.

The pace of change and rising complexity are also daunting to many IT organizations, which have to track more technologies and types of solutions than ever before. Some estimates predict that more than 50 billion “things” will be connected to the Internet by 2020, and the number of partners and providers a company must interact with continues to expand. Microsoft alone already has more than 640,000 partners in its business ecosystem.

In contrast to today’s monolithic applications, future applications need to be more nimble. Companies that begin their reinvention now will benefit from applications that can adapt to the pace of business, manage rising complexity and open doors to more interconnected business environments.

Weight of legacy

- **70%** of business transactions are still processed in COBOL

Rising application complexity

- **50 billion “things”** will be connected to the Internet by 2020

Expanding array of partners

Microsoft has **640,000 partners** in its ecosystem
New application strategies to shape your future

Three new application strategies—**liquid, intelligent and connected**—can help you shape your future and lead your industry.

**LIQUID APPLICATIONS:** To compete with agility and speed, companies can no longer afford complex, lengthy and expensive coding of applications, or massive, multi-year system implementations. What’s needed is a new way to build software—faster, flexible and more liquid—with reusable components that allow for rapid assembly of applications in support of dynamic business needs. This approach requires modular architectures, next-generation integration techniques and a cloud-first, mobile-first mindset. Application programming interface (API) architectures underpin liquid applications, opening them up to flexibly and efficiently access internal or external software components and services. Engineering innovations such as Agile and DevOps further accelerate development and deployment.

**INTELLIGENT APPLICATIONS:** Companies need to embed software intelligence everywhere in their applications and processes to manage growing volume, velocity and complexity, and to maximize the business value of internal and external data—including that from the physical world. Software intelligence is made possible by an influx of data, processing power and advances in data science such as natural language processing, machine learning and cognitive computing. Thanks to these advancements, applications can automate routine tasks, improve business processes through integrated analytics and ultimately govern themselves.

**CONNECTED APPLICATIONS:** To grow revenue and defend their market position, companies will need to create new competitive frontiers using software. Doing so requires opening multiple dimensions of application connectivity—with business partner and customer ecosystems, as well as with the rapidly growing Internet of Things that is essential to delivering new services. Connected applications will run everywhere—not just on phones, tablets and PCs, but also in manufacturing, pipelines, industrial equipment, cars, wearables and more—to convert products into product-service hybrids.

These three new application strategies also depend on embracing an entirely new operating model for software development. In too many companies, technology is “in a box.” It is considered to be contained within IT as a specialty function rather than a competency that every business leader must embrace. Siloed business and IT functions hinder organizational agility.

A new, more cooperative approach is essential. IT must help shape business strategy and the business must help IT shape how software is being used to enter new markets, reach new customers and drive competitive differentiation.
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<td>To compete with agility and speed, companies can no longer afford massive, multi-year system implementations.</td>
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<td>To manage growing volume, velocity and complexity, and to maximize the business value of internal and external data, companies need to harness software intelligence.</td>
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<td>To grow revenue and defend their market position, companies must open new dimensions of application connectivity—creating new competitive frontiers with software.</td>
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<th><strong>WHAT</strong></th>
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<td>Liquid applications are assembled leveraging modular architectures, next-generation integration techniques and a cloud-first, mobile-first mindset.</td>
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<td>Intelligent applications offer three critical capabilities—intelligent automation, integrated analytics and self-governance.</td>
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<td>Connected applications provide companies with the technical means to interface with business partner and customer ecosystems, and with the Internet of Things.</td>
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<td>Adopt new development approaches that incorporate smaller, reusable components to continuously deliver software.</td>
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<td>Embed intelligence everywhere to automate routine tasks, improve business processes through integrated analytics and teach applications to act.</td>
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<td>Rewire for the borderless business by introducing new ecosystem strategies, designing applications for resiliency, and integrating information and operational technologies.</td>
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**THE FUTURE OF APPLICATIONS: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**
WHY: Competing with agility and speed
To compete with agility and speed, companies can no longer afford complex, lengthy and expensive coding of applications, or massive, multi-year system implementations.

WHAT: Architecting for change
What’s needed is a new way to build software—one that is faster, flexible and more liquid. No longer can applications be "built" as one distinct activity and "maintained" as another. Liquid applications will be assembled leveraging modular architectures, next-generation integration techniques and a cloud-first, mobile-first mindset. These elements, combined with engineering innovations such as Agile and DevOps, mean that software can be continuously delivered and evolve as business needs change.

This approach represents a shift away from monolithic applications to a world of smaller components and service modules, which can either be built or bought. In the future, liquid is the way companies will develop every application, including custom, ERP and SaaS.

Modular architectures
Liquid applications require enterprises to create application architectures that are modular, featuring reusable components sourced internally or externally. One of the key components is emerging software platforms, including platforms as a service, which provide well-defined technical architectures along with standards, governance and reusable code. Platforms facilitate more rapid creation and assembly of liquid business solutions, as applications are increasingly assembled from pre-built components.

Think about companies like OpenTable, the popular online restaurant reservation system, and Uber, the personal transportation service. When they want to add new application functionality such as messaging customers when their table or car is ready, they don’t build it themselves. Instead, they tap into cloud providers like Twilio, which offer the functionality as part of a prebuilt platform. In turn, Uber is sharing its liquid application components with other developers from companies as varied as Starbucks and TripAdvisor.
Next-generation integration techniques

Liquid applications must be underpinned by a liquid architecture that has important, new characteristics. Investment in flexible, standardized, open integration services provides the ability to efficiently connect applications and information across the company. Orchestration and business process management services allow applications to be configured and continuously tuned to meet the needs of the business. And APIs provide the glue to allow reusable components to be accessed from within a company as well as by external customers and business partners. With the proliferation of applications, technologies, providers and developers, a robust and advanced API management capability is important and is already being widely adopted, as evidenced by solutions such as Apigee, WS02 and Oracle API Management.

Take Swisscom for example, which is on the leading edge of new liquid approaches as it looks to software components, such as industry-compliant payment solutions, as a source of business growth. The company set a goal of externally exposing 120 new APIs by 2015, and jumpstarted these efforts by creating a secure, internal-only “greenfield” platform. Swisscom’s head of enterprise architecture, John de Keijzer, explains: “Corporations often choose to do things in a complex way because that’s how it was historically grown. We knew that having a powerful API program would help us get out of the slow corner.” This accelerated pace of application development would have been impossible just a few years ago.

A mobile-first mindset is also important for liquid applications, recognizing that they must be designed and engineered around how customers and employees interact with software. More and more, these interactions are not on a personal computer or traditional web page, but rather on smartphones, tablets, smart watches, digital dashboards or even on augmented vision displays.

Cloud-first, mobile-first mindset

To enable the shift from frozen legacy to liquid applications, companies need a cloud-first, mobile-first mindset.

A cloud-first mindset requires that applications be engineered to operate and scale in the cloud, even if the initial deployment is on premise. Policy-based architectures will allow organizations to dynamically decide what parts of applications run in the cloud, and how.
HOW: Mobilizing for liquid

Shifting to liquid applications will create a ripple effect throughout your organization. Here are three crucial steps for your liquid roadmap.

Implement new architecture and abstraction strategies
Ensure that your enterprise architecture supports platform integration capabilities, security, monitoring and API lifecycle services to support liquid applications. Update application frameworks to include appropriate abstraction strategies, which enable the isolation of technical complexity into platforms and away from business functionality so that both new and existing applications appear less complex. By breaking an application into smaller components that perform discrete functions, it becomes easier to update, replace, remove or augment.

Shift to a DevOps culture
Liquid applications demand that IT be structured to be more nimble. Agile development coupled with DevOps will enable continuous delivery of software. DevOps, a common industry term, represents both a technology and a culture change. It uses automation techniques for deployment, environment set-up and configuration and monitoring. This streamlines and accelerates the interaction between development teams, which focus on assembling liquid applications, and operations teams, which are accountable for releasing those applications for live service availability. The result: faster, more predictable deployments to market, performed with radically greater efficiency.

Future-proof your applications
Liquid applications are less focused on technology and more focused on business processes, and must enable the digital business. Set the bar high with user experience expectations and engineering standards that are appropriate for the digital world, and embrace cloud-first and mobile-first principles as appropriate. Take advantage of emerging concepts such as containers so that applications can be seamlessly deployed across platforms.
Liquid is more than just a new approach to application development. It's the foundation upon which you will build your business for future growth and competitive advantage. The ability to roll out business capabilities continuously will be the difference between companies that can evolve and ones that stagnate.
WHY: Managing increased volume and velocity
It’s hard for any business to keep up with the exponential growth in data and the pace of change that characterizes our era. As increasing volume and velocity pushes IT organizations to the breaking point, businesses need new approaches to turn runaway complexity into high-performance outcomes.

WHAT: Building applications that intelligently automate, analyze and govern
To manage growing volume, velocity and complexity, and to maximize the business value of internal and external data, companies need to embed software intelligence everywhere. Software intelligence is made possible by increased processing power, advances in data science, and innovations in natural language processing, machine learning and cognitive computing. Thanks to these advancements, software can be taught to automate decision making through rule-based algorithms, and evolve and innovate on its own through advanced learning techniques.

Intelligent applications offer three critical capabilities: intelligent automation, integrated analytics and self-governance.

Intelligent automation
By automating routine tasks, intelligent applications offload complexity and supplement human effort through technologies such as auto-correction and robotics. Intelligent automation improves productivity by doing more work in a fraction of the time with more accuracy. Financial institutions such as Credit Suisse and Goldman Sachs are using intelligent automation to analyze traffic on their networks and identify rogue traders, market manipulators and policy violators, dramatically reducing legal, business and compliance risk.9

Integrated analytics
Integrated analytics create systems that can analyze and comprehend independently, embedding intelligence in the processes themselves and radically improving both business and IT performance. Netflix, for example, is able to understand what customers are watching and when they are starting and stopping programs, and then use predictive analytics to optimize content recommendations based on usage.

Self-governance
Beyond that, intelligent applications can be taught to act as digital agents and to learn and govern themselves—revolutionizing customer service, IT management and business innovation. Forward-thinking companies are already using digital agents to govern interactions with customers.
Meet Amelia, a cognitive knowledge worker from artificial intelligence company IPsoft. Amelia can function as an effective help desk employee—understanding human speech in 10 languages, searching knowledge repositories and databases of similar cases and then returning answers in seconds. Most important, Amelia’s self-learning function enables the application’s governance capabilities to grow over time. As software intelligence increases in sophistication, most applications will learn to evolve and adapt, altering their behavior and extending their capabilities based on experience. Consider the Nest thermostat that learns a homeowner’s habits and preferences to eventually program itself. These kinds of advances will help businesses adapt quickly to specific customer needs and preferences and help IT adapt to dynamic business needs, by applying intelligence to data feeds from both the physical and digital worlds.

**HOW: Embedding intelligence everywhere**

Intelligence must be embedded throughout the business—to improve what applications are built, as well as how they are built.

**Apply intelligent automation to application lifecycle practices**

Companies can use software intelligence across application development, testing, deployment and maintenance to manage increasing volume, velocity and complexity. Look for automation opportunities across the application lifecycle where routine tasks can be reduced or eliminated. By applying accumulated knowledge and experience, automation can significantly improve productivity through effort reduction and leaner processes. For example, test automation tools can use cognitive computing and robotics to take plain text functional requirements and automatically generate test artifacts including test scenarios, test conditions and expected results.

Post deployment, intelligent tools for service operations can continuously accelerate problem resolution by curating specialized application knowledge and then accurately applying it using descriptive analytics and natural language processing. This kind of knowledge-based, self-learning solution helped one large insurer reduce tickets in its critical claims processing application by more than 85 percent over a three-month period, leading to substantial productivity improvement and cost savings.
Integrate analytics with business processes

With the rise of smartphones, social media, wearables and the Internet of Things, consumers and businesses now leave a trail of usable, useful data behind them wherever they go. That data can be harnessed and embedded in business processes in a variety of ways. DHL's Resilience 360 solution, for example, offers customers near real-time supply chain monitoring. The tool links data related to natural disasters, theft, geopolitical and other risks with a customer's global manufacturing and distribution footprint, to visualize and assess critical supply chain hot spots and take steps to mitigate risks.  

Extracting the greatest value from Big Data and analytics requires the right structure, processes and configuration of components in your data supply chain. Companies need to evaluate how to embed Big Data architectures in their applications—not just build them on the side. By integrating Big Data and analytics in business processes and applications, companies can move away from having a separate analytics function whose reports then need to be interpreted and acted on. Integrated analytics are already helping IT organizations become more business-centric. Industry domain knowledge and business performance data—including inventory levels, late shipments, revenue and regulatory compliance—can be incorporated into data supply chains enabling IT organizations to influence business performance, not just IT performance. Consider one pharmaceutical company, whose IT organization was able to accelerate clinical trials by reducing recurring critical application incidents by 50 percent, thereby eliminating delays in the submission of trial outcomes to regulatory agencies.

Teach applications to act

As companies integrate continuous streams of data and analytics capabilities into their business and IT processes, they can empower digital agents to act on their behalf. Consider how Disney customers can "program" their all-in-one MagicBands—through the My Disney Experience online portal—to set vacation choices in advance and effortlessly manage their experience once at the resort. To put digital agents to work, companies should start by evaluating how automated decision-making can be embedded into the normal flow of both business processes and application lifecycle practices for better outcomes. Outcomes must be clearly defined in advance and then programmatically represented as self-governing, automated, analytics-enabled applications that make business processes intelligent. Such advancements hold promise for IT organizations too as they look to delegate the monitoring, management and governance of software development to digital agents. Analytics leveraging current and historical IT delivery data is already helping IT run more efficiently by automatically triggering corrective and preventive actions in areas such as scope and requirements management—a critical capability as the pace of application change accelerates.
How you interact with your customers, how you buy and sell your products or services, how you find your next product insights—these decisions and actions will increasingly be accomplished with the help of intelligent applications. Embed intelligence everywhere.
WHY: Creating new competitive frontiers

Connectivity in the age of the software-driven business is about more than application integration. It’s about creating new competitive frontiers using software. To grow revenue and defend their market position, companies must open new dimensions of application connectivity—with business partner and customer ecosystems, as well as with the rapidly growing Internet of Things—that are essential to delivering new services.

WHAT: Building software that runs everywhere

Connected applications offer companies the technical means to dynamically interface with the Internet of Things and with business partner and customer ecosystems.

As the Internet of Things matures, connected applications will run everywhere—not just on traditional hardware such as phones, tablets and PCs, but also in manufacturing, pipelines, industrial equipment, cars, wearables and more—to convert products into connected product-service hybrids. These applications change the way companies operate by opening up their manufacturing operations, production facilities, products and services to new technologies. For example, the OMNETRIC Group, a Siemens and Accenture company, is helping utility companies combine vast volumes of data from smart meters, as well as grid-sensing devices such as sensors and transformers, with enterprise and operational data to improve asset management, grid operations and customer service. This capability provides utilities with an integrated view of their systems and data to support advanced analysis and decision making.

Connected applications are also required to dynamically interface with business partner and customer ecosystems in today’s highly networked, digital business environment. When properly designed and managed, an ecosystem multiplies the power of all the participants, leading to combinations of functionality—and revenue opportunities—that would previously have been difficult to achieve.

Think about John Deere, a company that understands the power of software as well as business ecosystems. This 175-year-old manufacturer of tractors and other industrial equipment introduced MyJohnDeere in 2012.
It is a centralized, open, online platform to help agricultural producers manage all the data related to their equipment and operations in the field.

MyJohnDeere allows farmers, dealers and other organizations to access and share information that helps them run their businesses more effectively. For example, DuPont Pioneer is collaborating with John Deere to deliver near real-time, field-level data via the MyJohnDeere platform. This data helps farmers and dealers make important revenue-generating decisions about seed, fertilizer and purchasing. And, the MyJohnDeere platform has enabled John Deere to expand from being a provider of agricultural equipment to a provider of data-based agricultural services. The community forming around the platform is strong enough and extensive enough that, in 2013, John Deere hosted its first API Integrator Conference that drew representatives from 50 companies across eight countries.13

HOW: Building and nurturing ecosystems

How do software-driven companies create and manage new dimensions of application connectivity to grow revenue and defend their market position? Here are three components of a successful overall strategy.

Develop and implement an ecosystem strategy

Enterprises need multiphase strategies to build and nurture an ecosystem. Start—and learn—with your internal developers and business functions, and then create a broader ecosystem that includes external entities such as business partners and customers. Drugstore retailer Walgreens has developed a health ecosystem around its Prescription Refill API that companies like CloudMetRx use to offer mobile refill capabilities within their solutions. As a result of its health ecosystem strategy, Walgreens now refills a prescription every second on average.14 Software-driven businesses will need new skills and approaches in ecosystem management—not only in the leadership ranks but also deeper into the organization. Both business and IT staff should be tasked with identifying new strategic partnership opportunities for the company.
Prepare for resiliency

As applications become increasingly connected, companies need to design for resiliency and proactively manage security across the extended business ecosystem and the physical world. Companies, customers and other stakeholders will have to work together to mitigate the risks of connected applications. Resiliency capabilities, including security, need to be designed into applications, embedded into platforms, cloud services and APIs, and incorporated into connected physical assets. Design applications so that an attack won’t take down the whole system. A well-thought-out architecture is required to augment existing risk management practices and avoid the economic impact of attacks and failures. For example, obsolete and legacy software must be tightly managed since it likely has limited or no security built in. When compromised software is detected, companies must be ready with a strategy for immediate remediation. Services that continuously test applications across all parts of their lifecycle, including those in production, will also help maintain the resiliency of the overall architecture.

Integrate Information Technology (IT) and Operational Technology (OT)

To grow revenue from new product-service hybrids, companies need a way to combine physical assets with software and third-party services. To date, IT, such as resource planning, customer relationship management and decision support systems, and OT, such as equipment monitoring and management and industrial process support systems, have been managed separately. Now, companies must weave together previously unavailable, or inaccessible, enterprise and machine-generated data—binding together IT and OT. Sensors, communications and other operational technologies will work together with IT, most likely meshing in the cloud, to create new connected products and services. The merger of IT and OT offers an opportunity to integrate different business functions that operate under different technical standards and are served by different vendors.
The high-velocity world demands that companies rewire themselves to become borderless businesses. Building an extended external ecosystem and managing the Internet of Things is now an imperative for companies in every industry—providing the strategic and technological means to enter and succeed in new markets.
Embracing a new operating model and new roles in the software-driven world

Many companies’ existing operating model for software development is not fit for purpose in today’s high-velocity business environment. Effectively driving business strategy through software will require a new business and IT operating model.

The IT organization must be prepared to define and execute business strategy through software that is liquid, intelligent and connected. For its part, the business must strive to gain more technology savvy as it assumes a bigger role in building software.

Innovations must be driven jointly, tied to new strategic planning processes that span both business and technology. In this operating model, software becomes a revenue-generating product of the company. Business needs IT to ensure the company’s software products are market relevant, and IT needs business to identify new markets where they can introduce these software products.
Four new roles to leap ahead of the competition

Within this new operating model, companies must embrace four new roles—platform directors, intelligence architects, ecosystems builders and citizen developers—to deliver liquid, intelligent and connected applications.

**PLATFORM DIRECTORS**
As software platforms become a product of the enterprise, both business and IT become involved in a new form of product management. Platform directors take responsibility for architecting and executing the abstraction strategies that enable evolution to liquid applications. As with product managers, platform directors need to have an eye on innovation to proactively identify the “next big thing.” In addition, an orientation to serving the customer—the developer—is essential. Platform directors need to continuously filter and rapidly respond to business change and then translate user needs back to the engineering team. They also need to make sure that all essential software components are architected with proper resiliency to maintain an “always on” developer experience. Finally, platform directors will need to establish and manage governance models that strike a balance between enabling open innovation, and setting and enforcing standards for software development.

**INTELLIGENCE ARCHITECTS**
The promise of intelligent applications is systems that can interpret data or conditions, apply codified knowledge or logic, and make decisions—all with minimal human intervention. But first, someone has to teach the applications how. Enter intelligence architects. Developing intelligent applications is different from developing traditional systems. Instead of following the usual phases of plan, design, test and deploy, development focuses on identifying and curating data sources, and designing intelligent capabilities into applications. Such an approach requires different skills and mindsets, as well as different methodologies—something to be managed by intelligence architects. In addition, these architects ensure that applications with embedded intelligence, including digital agents, are trained in a particular business domain—similar to how we train new employees—to make the software useful.

**ECOSYSTEM BUILDERS**
The job of ecosystem builders is to establish an environment where partners and developers are empowered to generate new sources of revenue and growth. Ecosystem builders begin internally and then shift externally, to successfully execute business strategy. By adopting a borderless business mindset, ecosystem builders enable the company to collaborate with new partners, suppliers and even competitors in the delivery of new products and services to the market. Instead of focusing on the question of who our customers are, ecosystem builders adopt an outside-in view and ask, “Who should our customers be?” And, while the various members of the ecosystem will jointly nurture these new products and services, each is also able to market its core products and services independently throughout the expanded ecosystem.

**CITIZEN DEVELOPERS**
As liquid applications and expanded ecosystems are introduced, developers no longer reside exclusively within IT organizations. Instead, they emerge from the lines of business or even from outside the company. Citizen developers support the new reality of increasing speed and complexity by assembling functional solutions or liquid applications as the business needs them. Then, they release the software to production at any point in time. Customer-facing digital and mobile applications, for example, require quick changes to respond to very short feedback cycles from customers without compromising quality. Existing applications, too, call for more efficient and automated development and deployment approaches to keep pace with business. Citizen developers are able to address such needs with agility at the point of need.
Today, the business of applications is changing how companies operate and grow. No longer a supporting capability, applications are a driver of strategy and competitive differentiation. They can enable entirely new services for new and existing markets. The future of applications is an exciting one for companies that are willing to develop a new operating model for software development and then fundamentally change the way they design, build and use software.

The velocity of change—in technology, in the marketplace and in entire industries—is unprecedented. Success requires responding proactively to those changes and to the disruptive effects of software on your industry.

Architecting liquid applications, for example, requires changes to how IT operates, how IT and the business collaborate and how companies train leaders and manage culture change. Building intelligent applications not only requires leveraging the latest advances in data science for automation and integrated analytics, but also involves teaching applications to govern and evolve on their own. Creating connected applications requires entirely new methods for managing the Internet of Things and establishing business partner and customer ecosystems to enable the borderless business. And underneath it all is your operating model. Do you have the right technology know-how and planning processes in place to drive business strategy with software?

Both IT and business leaders must understand what it means to be a software-driven business. They need to understand how software can spur growth, shape new markets and reach new customers. And, they must work together closely to orchestrate new business solutions. When long-term competitive advantage depends on software, being a “fast follower” may not be fast enough. Are you ready to take the lead?
About the methodology

"The Future of Applications" is the result of a comprehensive research program at Accenture throughout 2014. It involved interviews with dozens of Accenture executives, input from clients and industry analysts, and extensive secondary research, as well as our experience working on advanced information technology solutions with thousands of clients globally.

Notes


About Accenture

Accenture is a global management consulting, technology services and outsourcing company, with approximately 319,000 people serving clients in more than 120 countries. Combining unparalleled experience, comprehensive capabilities across all industries and business functions, and extensive research on the world’s most successful companies, Accenture collaborates with clients to help them become high-performance businesses and governments. The company generated net revenues of US$30.0 billion for the fiscal year ended Aug. 31, 2014. Its home page is www.accenture.com.