



Future of enterprise integrations and iPaaS (Integration Platform as a Service) adoption.

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Abstract

In the rapidly evolving digital landscape, enterprises are increasingly reliant on diverse applications and systems to drive operations, enhance customer experiences, and maintain competitive advantage. Effective integration of these disparate systems is paramount to ensuring seamless data flow, operational efficiency, and agility. Integration Platform as a Service (iPaaS) has emerged as a pivotal solution, offering cloud-based platforms that facilitate the integration of applications, data, and processes across on-premises and cloud environments. This research article explores the future of enterprise integrations, emphasizing the role and adoption trends of iPaaS. It delves into the driving factors behind iPaaS adoption, the challenges enterprises face, and the emerging technologies shaping the future of integrations. Through an analysis of current trends, case studies, and expert insights, the paper highlights how iPaaS is poised to transform enterprise integration strategies, fostering innovation, scalability, and resilience in an increasingly interconnected world.

Keywords: Enterprise Integration, iPaaS, Cloud Integration, Digital Transformation, Operational Efficiency.

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1. Introduction

In today's digital era, enterprises operate within a complex ecosystem of applications, data sources, and services that span on-premises infrastructures and diverse cloud environments. The necessity to integrate these varied components seamlessly has become a critical factor in achieving operational efficiency, enhancing customer experiences, and fostering innovation. Traditional integration methods, often characterized by on-premises middleware and point-to-point connections, are proving inadequate in addressing the dynamic and scalable needs of modern enterprises.

Integration Platform as a Service (iPaaS) has emerged as a transformative solution, offering cloud-native platforms that simplify and accelerate the integration process. By providing a unified environment for connecting applications, data, and processes, iPaaS enables enterprises to respond swiftly to market changes, integrate emerging

technologies, and maintain robust and scalable operations. This research article examines the future trajectory of enterprise integrations, focusing on the adoption and evolution of iPaaS. It aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how iPaaS is reshaping integration strategies, the benefits it offers, the challenges it presents, and the trends that will influence its future development.

Enterprise integration refers to the process of linking various IT systems, applications, and data sources to function cohesively as a unified system. Effective integration ensures that information flows seamlessly across different departments, applications, and services, enabling synchronized operations and informed decision-making.

Problem Statement:

In today's digital era, enterprises face significant challenges in integrating diverse applications, data sources, and systems across



cloud and on-premises environments. Traditional integration methods are no longer sufficient to meet the demands of scalability, agility, and operational efficiency. Integration Platform as a Service (iPaaS) has emerged as a transformative solution by providing a cloud-based environment for seamless integration. However, many enterprises struggle with adopting iPaaS due to concerns over vendor lock-in, integration complexity, and security. Addressing these challenges is crucial for enabling businesses to leverage iPaaS effectively for innovation, cost savings, and operational optimization.

2. Methodology

This study utilizes a qualitative research approach, combining case studies, expert interviews, and literature review to explore the future of enterprise integrations and the adoption of Integration Platform as a Service (iPaaS). Case studies of companies leveraging iPaaS are analyzed to understand the real-world benefits and challenges associated with integrating diverse systems. Expert interviews provide insights into current trends and emerging technologies shaping iPaaS adoption. Additionally, a literature review of industry reports and academic studies is conducted to identify key drivers, such as scalability and operational efficiency, and the

obstacles enterprises face in implementing iPaaS solutions.

- **Application Integration**
Connecting disparate software applications to enable them to communicate and share data, ensuring that business processes operate smoothly across different platforms.
- **Data Integration**
Consolidating data from multiple sources to provide a unified view, enhancing data accuracy, accessibility, and reliability for analytics and decision-making.
- **Process Integration**
Streamlining business processes by integrating workflows across various systems, ensuring that tasks are executed efficiently and consistently.
- **Cloud and On-Premises Integration**
Bridging the gap between cloud-based services and on-premises systems to create a hybrid environment that leverages the strengths of both infrastructures.
- **API Management**
Developing, deploying, and managing APIs (Application Programming Interfaces) to facilitate secure and scalable interactions between applications and services.

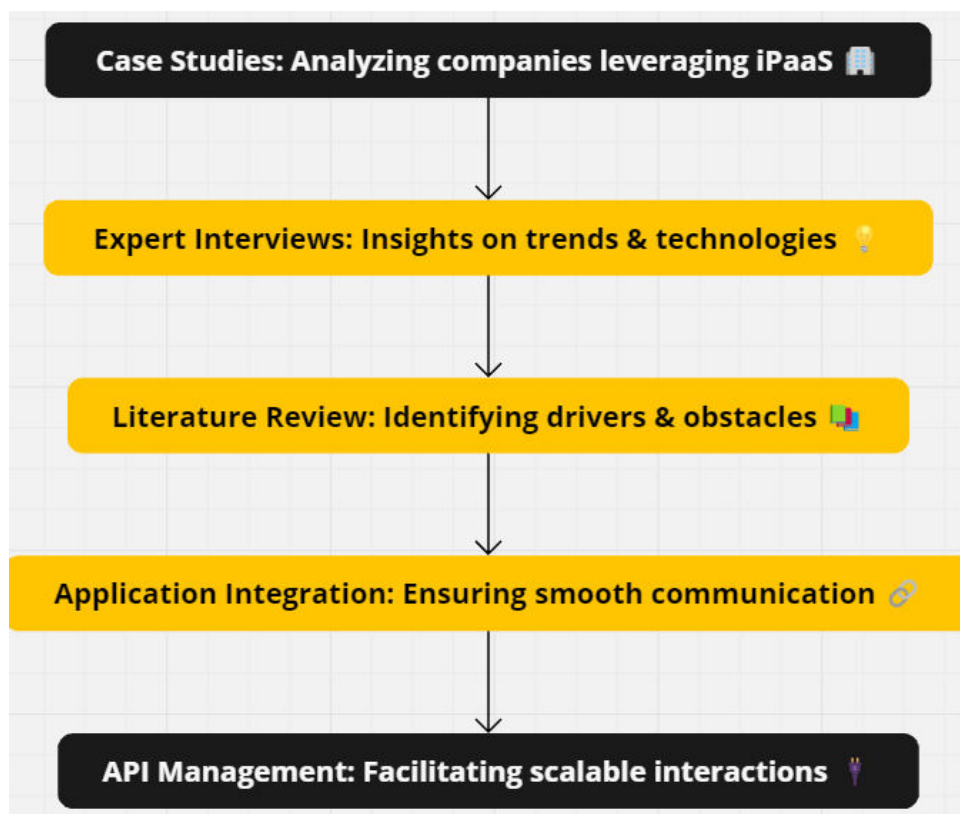


Figure 1: Flowchart for methodology

2.1 iPaaS (Integration Platform as a Service)

Integration Platform as a Service (iPaaS) is a cloud-based suite of services that provides a comprehensive environment for integrating applications, data, and processes across diverse IT landscapes. iPaaS platforms offer a range of tools and functionalities that simplify the creation, management, and monitoring of integrations, eliminating the need for extensive on-premises infrastructure and specialized integration middleware.

Core Components of iPaaS

1. Pre-Built Connectors and APIs:

- Facilitates rapid integration by providing ready-made connectors for popular applications and services.

2. Data Transformation and Mapping:

- Tools for converting data formats and mapping data fields between different systems to ensure compatibility and consistency.

3. Workflow Automation:

- Capabilities to design and automate complex workflows, enabling seamless data and process flows across integrated systems.

4. Monitoring and Analytics:

- Real-time monitoring tools and analytics dashboards to track integration performance, identify issues, and optimize operations.

5. Security and Compliance:

- Built-in security features such as encryption, access controls, and compliance management to protect data and ensure adherence to regulatory standards.

6. Scalability and Flexibility:

- Cloud-native architecture that allows for elastic scaling and adaptability to changing business needs and integration complexities.

2.2 Advantages of iPaaS

iPaaS offers a multitude of benefits that address the evolving integration needs of modern enterprises. These advantages include:

2.2.1. Scalability and Flexibility

iPaaS platforms are inherently scalable, allowing businesses to handle increasing volumes of data and expanding integration requirements without significant infrastructure investments. The cloud-native nature of iPaaS ensures that resources can be dynamically allocated based on demand, providing the flexibility to adapt to changing business needs.

Key Points:

- **Elastic Scaling:** Automatically adjusts resources to accommodate varying workloads.
- **Modular Architecture:** Supports the addition or removal of integration components as needed.

2.2.2. Cost Efficiency

By eliminating the need for extensive on-premises hardware and dedicated integration middleware, iPaaS reduces capital expenditures (CapEx) and shifts costs to operational expenditures (OpEx). Pay-as-you-go pricing models ensure that businesses only pay for the resources they utilize, leading to significant cost savings.

Key Points:

- **Reduced Infrastructure Costs:** No need for physical servers or specialized integration hardware.
- **Lower Maintenance Expenses:** Managed services reduce the need for in-house IT support and maintenance.

2.2.3. Streamlined Integration Processes

iPaaS provides a unified platform that integrates development, testing, deployment, and monitoring tools, streamlining the entire integration lifecycle. This unified approach accelerates integration projects, reduces time-to-market, and enhances productivity.

Key Points:

- **Rapid Deployment:** Pre-built connectors and templates enable quick setup of integrations.
- **Simplified Management:** Centralized platform for managing all integrations, reducing complexity.

2.2.4. Enhanced Collaboration

iPaaS platforms often include collaborative tools that enable cross-functional teams to work together seamlessly. Features such as shared repositories, version control, and real-time collaboration facilitate effective teamwork and innovation.

Key Points:

- **Global Accessibility:** Teams can access and manage integrations from anywhere with an internet connection.
- **Real-Time Collaboration:** Supports simultaneous editing and updates, enhancing team efficiency.

2.2.5. Simplified Maintenance and Management

With iPaaS, the underlying infrastructure, including servers, storage, and networking, is managed by the service provider. This offloading of maintenance tasks allows IT teams to focus on strategic initiatives and business-critical tasks rather than routine maintenance.

Key Points:

- **Automatic Updates:** iPaaS providers handle software updates and patches, ensuring systems are up-to-date.
- **Reduced Operational Burden:** Less time spent on infrastructure management translates to more time for innovation.

2.2.6. Robust Integration Capabilities

iPaaS platforms offer extensive APIs and integration services that facilitate seamless connectivity with other cloud services, third-party applications, and on-premises systems. This interoperability enhances the functionality and reach of integrated applications.

Key Points:

- **API Management:** Comprehensive tools for creating, deploying, and managing APIs.
- **Extensive Ecosystem:** Access to a wide range of plugins, extensions, and services to extend integration capabilities.

2.2.7. Enhanced Security and Compliance

iPaaS providers implement robust security measures, including data encryption, access

controls, and compliance certifications. These features ensure that integrated systems and data are protected against threats and adhere to regulatory standards.

Key Points:

- **Data Protection:** Advanced encryption techniques safeguard sensitive information.
- **Regulatory Compliance:** Built-in compliance features help businesses meet industry-specific regulations such as GDPR, HIPAA, and PCI DSS.

2.3 Adoption of iPaaS

The adoption of iPaaS has been on a significant upward trajectory, driven by several factors that underscore its value proposition for modern enterprises. This section explores the current trends, drivers, and barriers associated with iPaaS adoption.

2.3.1 Current Trends in iPaaS Adoption

❖ Hybrid and Multi-Cloud Environments:

Enterprises are increasingly operating in hybrid and multi-cloud environments, necessitating robust integration solutions that can bridge on-premises systems with various cloud platforms.

❖ Microservices and API-Driven Architectures:

The shift towards microservices and API-driven architectures demands flexible and scalable integration platforms that can handle numerous APIs and service interactions.

❖ Real-Time Data Processing:

The need for real-time data synchronization and processing is driving the adoption of iPaaS solutions that offer low-latency integration capabilities.

❖ Focus on Data-Driven Decision Making:

Businesses are leveraging integrated data from multiple sources to drive analytics and business intelligence initiatives, enhancing the demand for comprehensive integration platforms.

❖ Increased Emphasis on Security and Compliance:

Growing concerns around data security and regulatory compliance are pushing enterprises to adopt iPaaS solutions that offer robust security features and compliance management.

2.3.2 Drivers of iPaaS Adoption

❖ Digital Transformation Initiatives:

As organizations undergo digital transformation, the need for seamless integration of legacy systems with modern applications becomes critical, fostering iPaaS adoption.

❖ Agility and Innovation:

iPaaS enables rapid development and deployment of integrations, allowing businesses to innovate and respond swiftly to market changes.

❖ Cost Optimization:

The cost-efficiency of iPaaS, through reduced infrastructure and maintenance expenses, is a compelling driver for its adoption.

❖ Enhanced Operational Efficiency:

Streamlined integration processes and centralized management improve operational efficiency, making iPaaS an attractive option for enterprises.

❖ Scalability Needs:

The ability to scale integrations seamlessly in response to business growth and changing demands is a significant motivator for adopting iPaaS.

2.3.3 Barriers to iPaaS Adoption

➤ Vendor Lock-In Concerns:

Dependence on a single iPaaS provider can lead to challenges in migrating integrations to other platforms, creating hesitancy in adoption.

➤ Integration Complexity:

Complex integration scenarios, especially in hybrid environments, may require specialized expertise and sophisticated iPaaS features.

➤ Security and Compliance Fears:

Concerns about data security and regulatory compliance in cloud-based platforms can impede iPaaS adoption,

particularly in highly regulated industries.

➤ **Cost Management:**

While iPaaS can be cost-effective, improper resource management and scaling can lead to unexpected expenses, deterring adoption.

➤ **Skill Gaps:**

The lack of skilled personnel with expertise in iPaaS platforms and integration strategies can be a barrier to effective adoption and utilization.

3. Future of Enterprise Integrations

The future of enterprise integrations is poised to be shaped by several emerging technologies and evolving business needs. This section explores the key trends and technological advancements that will influence the landscape of enterprise integrations.

3.1 Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning

AI and ML are set to revolutionize enterprise integrations by automating complex integration tasks, enhancing data mapping and transformation, and providing intelligent insights for optimization.

Key Developments:

- **Predictive Integration:** AI-driven predictive analytics to anticipate integration needs and automate workflows.
- **Intelligent Data Mapping:** Machine learning algorithms to improve data mapping accuracy and reduce manual intervention.

3.2 Blockchain Integration

Blockchain technology offers enhanced security, transparency, and immutability for integrations, particularly in sectors such as finance, supply chain, and healthcare.

Key Developments:

- **Decentralized Integrations:** Utilizing blockchain for secure and decentralized integration processes.
- **Smart Contracts:** Automating integration workflows through smart contracts to ensure trust and compliance.

3.3 Edge Computing

Edge computing brings data processing closer to the data source, reducing latency and improving real-time integration capabilities for IoT and other edge-based applications.

Key Developments:

- **Real-Time Integrations:** Facilitating real-time data processing and integration at the edge.
- **Optimized Performance:** Enhancing the performance and reliability of integrations in distributed environments.

3.4 Low-Code and No-Code Integration Platforms

The rise of low-code and no-code platforms democratizes integration development, enabling non-technical users to create and manage integrations without extensive coding knowledge.

Key Developments:

- **User-Friendly Interfaces:** Intuitive drag-and-drop interfaces for building integrations.
- **Rapid Prototyping:** Accelerating the development and deployment of integrations through simplified tools.

3.5 API Economy and Microservices

The proliferation of APIs and microservices architectures demands flexible and scalable integration platforms that can manage numerous API interactions and service integrations efficiently.

Key Developments:

- **API Management Enhancements:** Advanced tools for API creation, deployment, and management within integration platforms.
- **Microservices Integration:** Seamless connectivity and orchestration of microservices-based applications.

3.6 Enhanced Security Measures

As cyber threats evolve, integration platforms will incorporate more sophisticated security measures to protect data and ensure secure integrations.

Key Developments:

- **Zero Trust Security Models:** Implementing zero trust principles within integration platforms to enhance security.

- **Advanced Encryption:** Utilizing stronger encryption techniques for data in transit and at rest.

4. iPaaS Adoption in the Future

As enterprise integration needs become more complex and dynamic, the adoption of iPaaS is expected to accelerate. This section explores the anticipated trends and the impact of iPaaS adoption on businesses in the future.

4.1 Predictions for iPaaS Adoption

1. **Increased Market Penetration:**
 - iPaaS adoption will continue to grow across various industries, driven by digital transformation initiatives and the need for scalable integration solutions.
2. **Consolidation and Specialization:**
 - The iPaaS market may witness consolidation, with major players acquiring niche providers to enhance their offerings. Additionally, specialized iPaaS solutions tailored to specific industries or use cases will emerge.
3. **Integration of Emerging Technologies:**
 - iPaaS platforms will integrate emerging technologies such as AI, blockchain, and IoT, enhancing their capabilities and expanding their use cases.
4. **Enhanced User Experience:**
 - Focus on improving the user experience through more intuitive interfaces, better documentation, and comprehensive support to facilitate easier adoption and utilization.
5. **Hybrid and Multi-Cloud Support:**
 - iPaaS solutions will increasingly support hybrid and multi-cloud environments, offering greater flexibility and interoperability for enterprises leveraging multiple cloud platforms.

4.2 Impact on Businesses

1. **Operational Agility:**
 - iPaaS enables businesses to quickly adapt to changing market conditions by facilitating rapid integration of new applications and services.
2. **Innovation Enablement:**
 - By simplifying integration processes, iPaaS allows businesses to experiment with new technologies and innovate without being hindered by integration complexities.
3. **Cost Optimization:**
 - Continued cost efficiencies through scalable, pay-as-you-go models, and reduced need for in-house integration expertise.
4. **Enhanced Customer Experiences:**
 - Seamless integrations lead to more consistent and personalized customer experiences, driving customer satisfaction and loyalty.
5. **Data-Driven Decision Making:**
 - Integrated data sources provide comprehensive insights, enabling informed and strategic decision-making.

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5. Case Studies

5.1 Case Study 1: Siemens

Background: Siemens, a global powerhouse in engineering and manufacturing, faced challenges in integrating its diverse range of enterprise applications spread across different geographies and departments.

iPaaS Implementation: Siemens adopted an iPaaS solution to unify its applications, streamline data flows, and enhance collaboration across its global operations.

Impact:

- **Improved Efficiency:** Reduced integration times and streamlined workflows.
- **Enhanced Collaboration:** Enabled real-time data sharing and collaboration across departments.

- **Cost Savings:** Lowered operational costs by eliminating the need for extensive on-premises middleware.

5.2 Case Study 2: Unilever

Background: Unilever, a leading consumer goods company, sought to integrate its supply chain, marketing, and sales applications to gain a unified view of its operations and customer interactions.

iPaaS Implementation: Unilever deployed an iPaaS platform to connect its ERP, CRM, and other critical systems, enabling seamless data synchronization and process automation.

Impact:

- **Unified Data View:** Achieved a consolidated view of operations and customer data.
- **Enhanced Decision Making:** Leveraged integrated data for better strategic planning and execution.
- **Scalability:** Facilitated easy integration of new applications as the business expanded.

6. Challenges and Considerations

While iPaaS offers numerous benefits, enterprises must navigate certain challenges to maximize its potential.

6.1 Vendor Lock-In

Challenge: Relying heavily on a single iPaaS provider can lead to vendor lock-in, limiting flexibility and increasing dependency on the provider.

Mitigation Strategies:

- **Standardization:** Utilize standardized technologies and open APIs to facilitate easier migration.
- **Multi-Cloud Strategies:** Distribute integrations across multiple iPaaS providers to reduce dependency on a single vendor.

6.2 Security and Compliance

Challenge: Ensuring data security and compliance with regulatory standards is paramount, especially when integrating sensitive and critical systems.

Mitigation Strategies:

- **Robust Security Measures:** Implement advanced security protocols, including encryption, access controls, and continuous monitoring.

- **Compliance Management:** Choose iPaaS providers that offer comprehensive compliance features and certifications relevant to the industry.

6.3 Integration Complexity

Challenge: Complex integration scenarios, particularly in hybrid environments, can be resource-intensive and may require specialized expertise.

Mitigation Strategies:

- **Comprehensive API Management:** Leverage comprehensive API management tools provided by iPaaS platforms.
- **Professional Services:** Engage with iPaaS providers' professional services or third-party integrators for seamless integration.

6.4 Performance and Latency

Challenge: Integration performance can be affected by factors such as data center locations, network bandwidth, and the inherent limitations of shared environments.

Mitigation Strategies:

- **Edge Computing Solutions:** Utilize edge computing to reduce latency and enhance real-time integration capabilities.
- **Performance Optimization:** Optimize integration workflows and utilize performance monitoring tools to identify and address bottlenecks.

6.5 Cost Management

Challenge: While iPaaS can lead to cost savings, improper resource management and scaling can result in unexpected expenses.

Mitigation Strategies:

- **Resource Monitoring:** Implement monitoring tools to track resource usage and optimize costs.
- **Budget Controls:** Set budget limits and alerts to prevent overspending.

6.6 Skill Gaps

Challenge: The lack of skilled personnel with expertise in iPaaS platforms and integration strategies can hinder effective adoption and utilization.

Mitigation Strategies:

- **Training and Development:** Invest in training programs to upskill existing staff.
- **Partner with Experts:** Collaborate with iPaaS providers or third-party consultants to bridge skill gaps.

7. Future Directions

The landscape of enterprise integrations and iPaaS is continuously evolving, driven by technological advancements and changing business needs. Future directions include:

7.1 Advanced AI and Machine Learning Integration

AI and ML will play a crucial role in automating integration tasks, enhancing data mapping accuracy, and providing predictive insights for optimizing integrations.

Implications:

- **Automated Workflows:** AI-driven automation will streamline complex integration processes.
- **Intelligent Monitoring:** Machine learning algorithms will enhance monitoring and anomaly detection.

7.2 Blockchain Integration

Integrating blockchain technology with iPaaS can enhance data security, transparency, and traceability, particularly in industries such as finance, supply chain, and healthcare.

Implications:

- **Secure Data Exchange:** Blockchain ensures secure and immutable data transactions.
- **Smart Contracts:** Automate integration workflows through smart contracts, ensuring trust and compliance.

7.3 Edge Computing and Real-Time Integrations

The rise of IoT and edge computing will necessitate real-time integrations that process data at the edge, reducing latency and enhancing responsiveness.

Implications:

- **Real-Time Data Processing:** Enable instantaneous data synchronization and processing.
- **Enhanced Performance:** Improve the performance and reliability of integrations in distributed environments.

7.4 Low-Code and No-Code Integration Platforms

The adoption of low-code and no-code platforms will democratize integration development, enabling non-technical users to create and manage integrations with minimal coding expertise.

Implications:

- **Increased Accessibility:** Broaden the pool of users capable of managing integrations.
- **Faster Deployment:** Accelerate the development and deployment of integrations through simplified tools.

7.5 Enhanced Security and Compliance Features

As cyber threats evolve, iPaaS platforms will incorporate more sophisticated security measures and compliance management features to protect data and ensure regulatory adherence.

Implications:

- **Zero Trust Models:** Implement zero trust security principles within integration platforms.
- **Automated Compliance:** Automate compliance checks and reporting to reduce manual efforts.

7.6 Multi-Cloud and Hybrid Cloud Support

iPaaS platforms will continue to enhance their support for multi-cloud and hybrid cloud environments, providing greater flexibility and interoperability for enterprises leveraging multiple cloud providers.

Implications:

- **Seamless Integration Across Clouds:** Facilitate seamless data and application integrations across diverse cloud platforms.
- **Flexibility and Resilience:** Enhance business resilience and flexibility through diversified cloud strategies.

7.7 Enhanced API Management

Advanced API management capabilities will be integrated into iPaaS platforms, enabling more efficient API creation, deployment, and management.

Implications:

- **Improved API Governance:** Strengthen governance and security of APIs.

- **Scalable API Management:** Support the growing number of APIs and microservices in enterprise environments.

8. Conclusion

Integration Platform as a Service (iPaaS) is poised to play a central role in the future of enterprise integrations, offering scalable, flexible, and cost-effective solutions that address the complex integration needs of modern businesses. As enterprises continue to adopt diverse applications and migrate to hybrid and multi-cloud environments, iPaaS provides the necessary tools and capabilities to ensure seamless data flow, operational efficiency, and agility. The advantages of iPaaS, including scalability, cost efficiency, streamlined integration processes, enhanced collaboration, simplified maintenance, robust integration capabilities, and enhanced security, make it an invaluable asset for organizations striving to maintain a competitive edge in a digital-first world. However, challenges such as vendor lock-in, security and compliance concerns, integration complexity, performance issues, cost management, and skill gaps must be carefully navigated to fully realize the benefits of iPaaS. Looking ahead, the evolution of iPaaS will be driven by advancements in artificial intelligence, blockchain technology, edge computing, low-code development, enhanced security features, multi-cloud support, and improved API management. These developments will further solidify iPaaS as a cornerstone of modern enterprise integration strategies, enabling businesses to innovate rapidly, optimize operations, and deliver superior customer experiences in an increasingly interconnected and dynamic marketplace.

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