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The IT World is Like a Strategy Game

How AI and MCP are rewriting the rules of Enterprise IT.

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It is like a strategy game. Who will win?

TLDR: The giants are slow. The small ones are fast.
But not working in accordance with compliance and security can be costly!

Redefining Business IT

Every company today is an IT company — whether it builds insurance products, runs a bank, manufactures cars, or delivers public services. Additionally, smaller

manufacturing or service delivery companies are now transitioning into IT companies. IT isn't something "on the side." It's the nervous system that either lets the organization move quickly or forces it to stumble under its own weight.

IT is not only the nervous system of the business. It is the business.

Castles vs Racing Boats: Why Big IT Moves Slowly

What we're seeing now is a fundamental divide:

- **Large organizations** are like castles with walls and moats, facing challenges due to immobility caused by legacy integration, regulations, and security demands. Software or service solutions need a cumbersome procurement approval process. It can take a year to implement a new API. Most are stuck with what Microsoft can offer.
- **Smaller organizations** are like ships or racing boats that move quickly and network efficiently. They build faster, leveraging the new AI ecosystem to create IT environments directly aligned with their dynamic business needs.

Some of these large and small organizations are themselves businesses providing IS/IT solutions, but most are not. This is not about "tech firms" versus "non-tech firms." It's about every company that uses IT as the foundation of its business processes.

Will the smaller organizations leave for new adventures elsewhere, while the giants remain nostalgic about old good times, until all their customers are gone? Or will they sink, failing to comply with ethical, privacy, or security standards?

From Screens to Agents: The AI Fabric Era

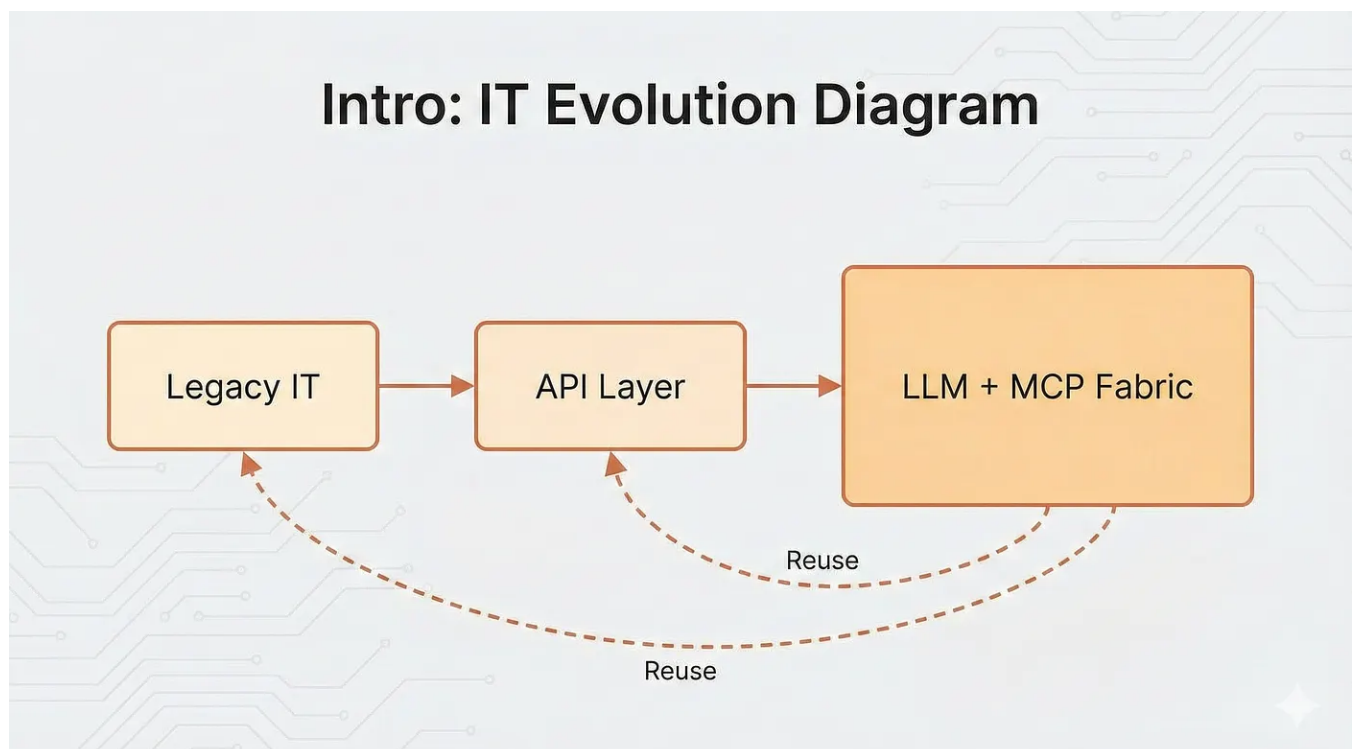
For decades, IT has supported business processes through information systems that encompass large functional applications. The systems have evolved from monoliths to more modular, service-based systems with APIs for integration. Each came with its own screens and menus, training materials, and endless integration projects. It worked, but it made IT a heavy layer, always one step behind the business.

LLM (Large Language Model) interfaces like ChatGPT now act as the front-end for enterprise systems, while MCP (Model Context Protocol) links them safely and flexibly behind the scenes. MCP is an emerging open standard that enables AI agents to communicate safely with enterprise systems via existing APIs.

The paradigm shift today looks like this:

- **LLM as the user interface** — The system learns the user, not the other way around. Employees state their intent in natural language and have actions executed directly, without navigating menus or screens. The system learns about the user (personality, knowledge, skills, work style, and everyday tasks) and adapts more effectively over time.
- **MCP (Model Context Protocol) as the integration plane** — Instead of massive integration projects, we expose existing APIs and services through MCP servers. They can be built quickly, are safer by design, and make existing IT assets callable by modern agents.
- **Custom MCP servers for logic** — Organizations can build their own MCPs for business-critical calculations or process rules, where deterministic and explainable results are required.

Together, this creates a fabric of capabilities, not a jungle of applications.



Business users interact with a single intelligent interface, while the company leverages its IT assets more effectively and faster.

Why small players move first — and win

Smaller companies and start-ups have fewer rules, less legacy, and more room to experiment. For them, standing up an orchestration layer with LLM-UI and MCP servers can take days, not years. They build a new quoting process, an order exception flow, and a reporting tool — and ship them to users within weeks. The primary environment is the internet, which relies on the ethics, security, and privacy provided by the service provider. They don't have to own compliance; they rely on their providers for it.

This speed is not about recklessness. It's about **having fewer gates to pass before trying**.

Why giants struggle to move

Banks, insurers, manufacturers, government agencies — they all face the same constraints:

- **Strict information security requirements**
- **Heavy compliance regimes**
- **Deeply integrated legacy systems**

For them, the new agent-based paradigm is attractive but hard to adopt wholesale. They are more dependent on what Microsoft, AWS, or other approved enterprise vendors provide because only those that pass procurement, security, and compliance filters are considered. The primary environment is their own intranet, and they are responsible for ethics, information security, privacy, and compliance with laws and regulatory rules.

That doesn't mean they're excluded. It means they have to build carefully, often starting with small sandboxes or limited use cases, while ensuring governance and

auditability.

In this new landscape, size no longer guarantees advantage. Agility does.

The new playbook for Business IT

1. **Think in capabilities, not systems.** Each MCP server or API is a reusable capability that can be leveraged across workflows.
2. **Use LLM-UI for interaction, not for everything.** Keep critical calculations deterministic.
3. **Build custom MCPs with clear rules.** Pricing, compliance, personal risk assessment, and accounting stay explainable.
4. **Reuse first.** Don't rebuild what already works — expose it.
5. **Govern with code.** Security, compliance, and data policies need to be codified, not left in policy binders.

What this means for business leaders

The role of IT is shifting from “delivering applications” to “exposing business capabilities through agents.”

- For **smaller firms**, this is a growth accelerator: less overhead, faster learning, more experimentation.
- For **larger firms**, it's a modernization challenge: how to introduce the new paradigm while maintaining their existing moats — security, compliance, and stability — intact.

The winners will be

- Those who don't view AI and MCP as separate “innovation projects,” but rather as a natural new layer of IT support for everyday processes.
- The organizations that learn to compose — to let LLM, MCP, deterministic code, and existing APIs become a fabric for work.

The bottom line

This is not a trend for IT departments alone. It's a shift in how **every business process** can be supported by technology, from bank client meetings to pension policy updates, from building permits to supply chains.

LLM-driven user interfaces, combined with MCP-based integration, are not just “better IT.” They offer a more straightforward way to connect human intent with organizational capability. Users stop learning screens and start stating intentions.

The surface area of “the system” gets smaller, but its reach gets larger. IT stops rewriting what already exists and starts exposing it well. Security stops saying “no” and starts saying “this way.”

This isn't just better IT. It's how intent becomes action. Small firms accelerate. Big ones adapt. The direction is the same: reuse smartly, build less, deliver more, and ensure that IT finally keeps pace **with the business**. Speed with safety — that's the new moat.

Let's see how this plays out across industries.

Case: Banking

Few industries illustrate this shift better than banking, where manual data compilation still dominates most client meetings.

The old way: A bank advisor preparing for a customer meeting spends hours pulling data — balances, mortgage details, investment positions — from three different core systems. Reports are exported, adjusted in spreadsheets, and pasted into slides.

The new way: With an LLM-UI on top of MCP servers, the advisor asks:
“Show me a holistic financial view of client X, highlight risks in their portfolio, and simulate the effect of a 1% interest rate increase.”

Behind the scenes, MCP servers securely expose account data, mortgage terms, investment positions, and risk models. A custom MCP runs the simulation. The advisor gets one consolidated view in seconds — all within compliance boundaries.

Result: higher productivity, faster insight, and a more value-focused client meeting.

Case: Life insurance

The old way: Processing a change to a customer’s pension contract means navigating through multiple policy administration screens, checking PDF rules for eligibility, and coordinating with actuarial systems for calculations. Each step is slow, manual, and prone to error.

The new way: An underwriter states:
“Update this customer’s pension contract with the new premium, validate compliance with policy rules, and calculate the updated benefit projection.”

MCP servers expose the contract engine, compliance rules, and actuarial calculations. The LLM-UI orchestrates the flow, presenting the underwriter with a clear summary and a suggested confirmation letter. Deterministic MCP servers ensure that the math and legal checks are 100% correct.

Result: a process that once took days, or at least hours, can be safely completed in minutes.

Case: Government agency

The old way: A citizen applies for a building permit. Several departments, including planning, environment, and fire safety, review the application. Each checks their own systems, rules, and guidelines. Processing can take weeks or months, and the applicant hears little until a decision is finally made.

The new way: A case officer opens an LLM-UI and asks:

“Review this building permit application, check compliance with zoning rules, environmental regulations, and fire safety guidelines, and summarize missing documents.”

MCP servers expose the zoning database, environmental registry, and fire safety regulations. A custom MCP runs rule validations. The system produces a structured checklist that highlights gaps and proposes next steps. The officer confirms and communicates back to the citizen — all in a single interaction.

Result: cycle times shrink dramatically, applicants get transparency, and officers spend more time on judgment and less on manual data hunting.

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Gunnar is an M.Sc. computer engineer with 40 years of experience in **business and IT-driven transformation**. He has worked with global giants like Ericsson and Scania, as well as nimble high-tech firms. Passionate about sound architectural principles and systems thinking, Gunnar writes to expand perspectives and deepen insight. Through his consultancy, Business Clarity, Gunnar helps organizations evolve ideas into sustainable systems and products, transforming their business through structured, principle-based innovation. His focus areas include pragmatic architecture, business modeling, and delivering real impact.

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