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Infographic
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The Complexity Tax: Why Your Infrastructure Strategy Needs an AI-Era Reset

Is your current infrastructure holding back your AI ambitions?

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The "complexity tax"

The reality:

Most organizations' IT environments are complex and distributed across hybrid and multicloud infrastructures, edge environments, sovereign cloud instances, Kubernetes and cloud-native architectures, various applications and databases, and now even AI workloads and agents. **IDC estimates that by the end of 2026, 40% of organizations will miss AI goals due** to implementation complexity, fragmented tools, and poor lifecycle integration, prompting CIOs to increase investment in unified platforms and workflows.

The problem:

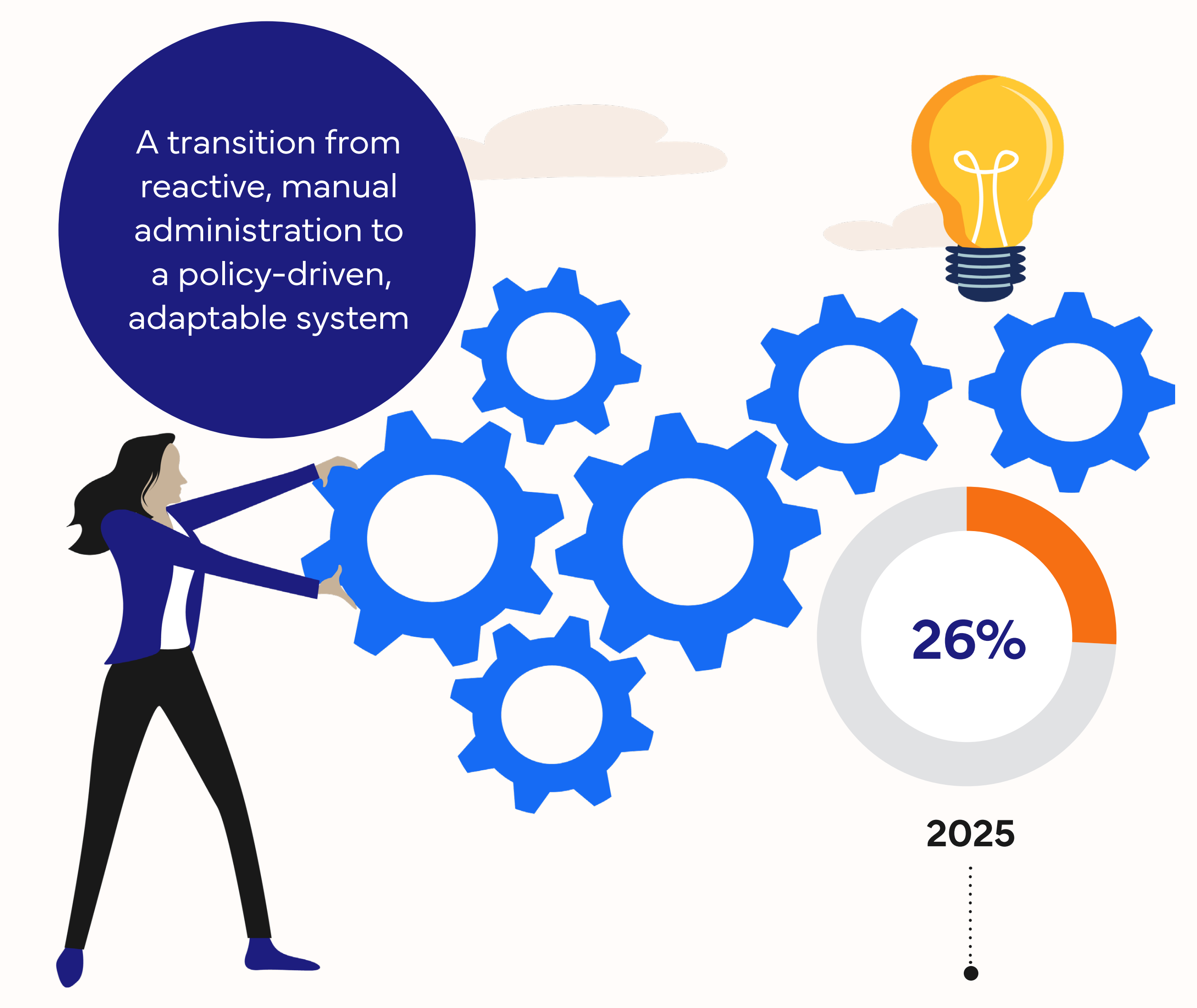
The complexity of interdependencies and tactical integrations are laden with operational risks and management overhead. Manual, siloed, device-centric management cannot keep pace with the exponential growth of distributed digital estates.

The question:

Are you confident that you can navigate through the complex IT reality and deliver expected business outcomes with siloed, manual approaches and tools?

Source: IDC's *FutureScape: Worldwide CIO Agenda 2026 Predictions* (IDC *#US53865325, published* Oct 28, 2025)

The vision



A transition from reactive, manual administration to a policy-driven, adaptable system

2025

Only a quarter of organizations (26%) cited having proactive, highly autonomous and self-governed IT management.

The shift:

Organizations that can view and manage infrastructure as a unified, cohesive, programmable asset, rather than a collection of disparate units, are gaining a significant competitive edge in AI deployment.

n = 509; Source: IDC's *CloudOps and Governance Survey,* December 2025

What's inside the report

In this IDC Spotlight, you will discover:

The strategic blueprint:

The enterprise goal is to reduce the operational burden of managing heterogeneous environments while preserving the agility to adapt infrastructure across data centers, hybrid cloud, and edge locations. Explore how to design for continuous evolution rather than periodic, ad hoc, and disruptive replacement

The "stateless" framework:

Understanding the core principles of a modern, modular, and adaptable infrastructure

The modular advantage:

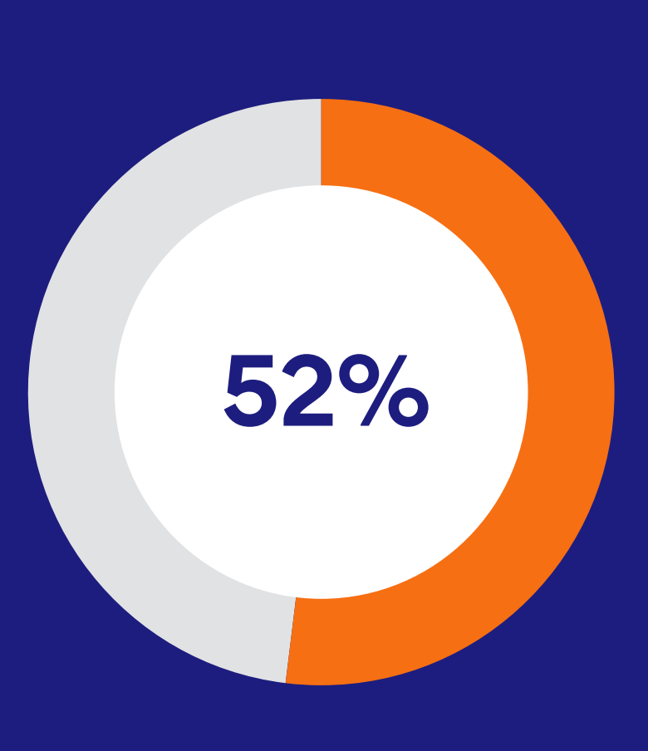
Why decoupling configuration from hardware is the key to supporting AI workloads without "rip and replace" cycles

Operational scaling:

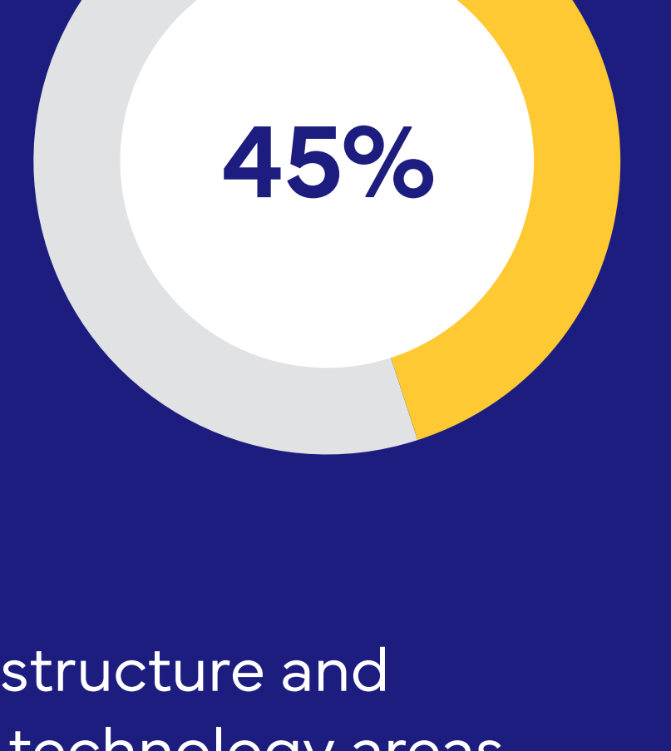
Both traditional enterprise workloads and emerging AI architectures need to be supported simultaneously. Accommodating this with new capabilities introduced incrementally without disrupting existing operations or introducing new risks. Expanding your capacity without adding overhead to costs or operations teams

Don't let infrastructure trap your AI in a "proof of concept prison"

About 52% of AI projects in the last two years have delivered measurable business outcomes. In addition, for 45% of organizations, infrastructure is among the top 3 AI-adoption priorities for 2026.



AI projects delivering measurable outcomes



Infrastructure as a top 3 AI priority

The era of manual, fragmented management is ending. Infrastructure and IT operations optimization projects are among the top three technology areas "immune to budget cuts" in the next 12 months. To get maximum returns on their investments, enterprises, especially digital natives, are moving beyond defensive spending and are beginning to redesign architectures to deliver business outcomes.

n = 1,009; Source: IDC's *Future Enterprise Resiliency and Spending Survey (Wave 2),* March 2026
n = 903; Source: IDC's *Future Enterprise Resiliency and Spending Survey (Wave 1),* February 2026

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