Business

A platform for efficiency

Driving down the costs of post-merger integration

Master the moment
with Evolution Platform

For many of our customers, mergers & acquisitions (M&A) have become a routine part of corporate life. In fact, Goldman Sachs has predicted that 2026 will be a "bumper year" for M&A activity with "pure M&A volume" possibly going as high as $3.8 trillion[1]. According to PwC[2], "a late-2025 surge in megadeals (transactions more than $5 billion in value) and AI thematics have carried into the new year, pointing to a market that is structurally reshaping rather than simply rebounding from a subdued cycle". Much of this is driven by AI, which is accelerating strategic change across industries, pulling forward decisions on scale, capabilities, data, and talent. But with post-merger integration (PMI) costs ranging from 5 – 15% of the total deal cost[3], the pressure is on to complete these deals quickly and efficiently.

In an M&A scenario, the seller will typically provide interim back-office and IT services – at a cost – via a Transition Services Agreement (TSA). This is a binding contract where the seller agrees to provide essential operational support – such as IT, HR, or finance – to the buyer for a set period after the deal closes. This ensures business continuity, allowing the newly acquired company or divested business to keep functioning seamlessly on "Day One". It also provides the buyer with the necessary runway to either build their own operational infrastructure or migrate the target's systems into their own and facilitates deal flow by accelerating the time between signing and closing, as the buyer does not need to be fully independent right at the close of the deal.

The goal is always a rapid, cost-effective transition to the target state – this will not only hasten the realization of merger synergies but also minimize the time over which the TSA applies. Digital infrastructure is a priority to ensure workspaces and applications are available to employees so they can start working with their new colleagues.

Traditionally, digital infrastructure integration involved peering two potentially very different IT organizations and infrastructure: you agreed on a target architecture, shipped hardware to the office locations, and began the integration. If anything went wrong or was delayed, the impact was substantial – this was a complex, time-consuming, and expensive process. Evolution Platform from Orange Business rips up this rulebook entirely.

Changing the game

Evolution Platform is Orange Business's market-leading Network-as-a-Platform offering. Its open, API-driven network and cloud infrastructure allow customers to take a very different approach to M&A-related infrastructure integration. Rather than trying to interconnect two heterogeneous IT estates, they can simply connect the acquired asset to Evolution Platform, completely sidestepping complex, long-term overhauls with no requirement for the shipment of physical hardware.

Evolution Platform uses powerful APIs to rapidly map and translate communication protocols between different network architectures, such as disparate SD-WANs, while enabling cloud-first interconnectivity through seamless user-to-cloud and cloud-to-cloud routing. This allows merging entities to connect legacy environments and public cloud footprints.

IT teams gain unified visibility by managing connectivity, cybersecurity, and cloud policies from a single portal, masking the underlying hardware and software differences between the two organizations. In addition, service chaining dynamically stacks network functions to deliver unified security through SASE and maintain a consistent end-user experience across the newly combined organization.

Ultimately, Evolution Platform serves as an "as-a-Service" bridge between the two environments.

A gift that keeps on giving

Evolution Platform revolutionizes the efficiencies of M&A infrastructure integration in terms of both time and cost.

No time like the present

This cloud-native solution allows customers to spin up infrastructure services in near real time – often in an hour or less. It does this by automating cloud, connectivity, and cybersecurity services between the almost 20 leading vendors on Evolution Platform's ecosystem. Evolution Platform offers operational agility and management control via a single pane of glass: IT leaders have full end-to-end visibility and orchestration rights over both legacy infrastructures through one central API or digital console.

It immediately establishes a unified security posture across both entities by standardizing data protection through native security integrations from Orange Cyberdefense. It enables instant policy enforcement with consistent virtual firewalls and Zero Trust access rules across both legacy networks simultaneously. It also provides DDoS and threat protection to shield newly exposed network perimeters from vulnerabilities that typically spike during the high-risk integration phase.

By deploying on-demand virtualized services, all the integration is handled through the console. There's no hardware to be delivered and services are created – and changed – on the fly, in hours. As a result, any location, whether a production facility, a warehouse, a sales office, or a cloud location, can start using the services on Evolution Platform as soon as it is connected - reducing the standard 6-to-12-month IT integration lifecycle down to days or weeks.

Delivering dramatic cost savings

The cost savings are just as impressive as the time savings. In a merger or acquisition, one of the biggest cost drivers is the need to connect and harmonize networks, cloud environments, and security services across the combined organization. Evolution Platform lowers these costs by providing a single, unified platform for connectivity, cloud, and security services, rather than relying on multiple disconnected providers and manual integration work.

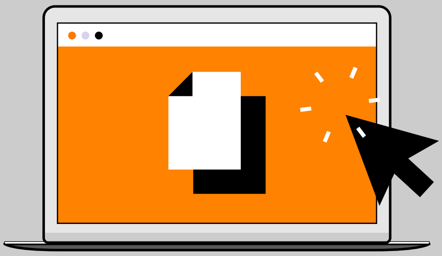
Because Evolution Platform relies on virtual network functionality, it reduces dependence on physical hardware, which can lower the cost of integrating inherited on-premise infrastructure. Its consumption-based, pro-rata daily pricing model also helps shift spending from upfront capital investment to more flexible operational expenditure. Evolution Platform is therefore not only inherently less expensive than hardware-based services but is available instantly. This shortens the length of the TSA and its associated costs.

As significant as these savings are, the platform also cuts costs across almost every part of the IT infrastructure integration process.

Evolution Platform's automated provisioning and service chaining reduce the time and labor needed to connect newly acquired sites, users, and applications. Instead of lengthy redesign and deployment cycles, infrastructure services can be configured and updated in near real time through one portal, which helps organizations integrate operations faster and with fewer specialist resources.

An M&A scenario often requires interim solutions – such as firewalls, routers and gateways – because infrastructure demand often changes rapidly as systems are consolidated, duplicated services are removed, or workloads are migrated. By definition, these solutions very quickly become redundant, and the associated costs have to be written off. With Evolution Platform, these can be spun up and decommissioned on demand, with customers only paying for what they use. This allows the business to avoid overcommitting to long-term contracts or excess capacity while the new organization stabilizes.

Evolution Platform also enables customers to tackle spiraling cloud costs, which 89% of CFOs have said are squeezing their profit margins[4]: it does so through bandwidth-based (rather than volume-based) pricing for cloud connectivity and backbone capacity – minimizing expensive data egress charges and giving completely new levels of control. The platform also enables real-time cost visibility with built-in FinOps controls, including transparency across third-party cloud charges and best-practice optimization checks. In an M&A context, this helps identify duplicated spend, underused resources, and hidden cost drivers early, improving control over integration budgets.



Overall, Evolution Platform achieves dramatic savings in the costs of M&As or carve-outs, not by streamlining an existing process, but by completely reimaging the integration of digital infrastructures. So, as amazing as this sounds, our customers are typically seeing savings of 20 – 40%.

And there’s more…

As if that were not enough, Orange Business is entirely agnostic about the engagement model it provides to customers

Those with extensive in-house resources can choose to implement Evolution Platform on a DIY basis; those with few internal resources can opt for a fully managed solution; for those in the middle, a hybrid engagement model is also available. So, merging IT departments can optimize the use of in-house talent by choosing to self-manage, co-manage, or have Orange Business fully orchestrate the integration.

Finally, Evolution Platform is delivered over our Tier One global network backbone that maintains the user experience by minimizing latency, ensuring that employees face no operational disruptions or access friction during day-one transitions.

Coming into its own

Evolution Platform wasn’t created specifically to facilitate post-merger infrastructure integration – but the M&A use case is one where our Network-as-a-Service solution delivers unprecedented value (and divestments are just as straightforward).

Evolution Platform not only ticks the boxes of reducing the time and cost of the integration, but instantly adds its core benefits of speed, agility, security, and control to the acquired company.

So, no matter what form your merger and acquisition challenges take, Evolution Platform enables you to move at the speed the world and your business demand and truly master the moment.

[1] https://www.bloomberg.com/news/newsletters/2025-09-03/goldman-sachs-forecasts-record-m-a-in-2026
[2] https://www.pwc.com/gx/en/services/deals/trends.html
[3] https://fifthchrome.com/ma-costs-integration-budgeting/
[4] https://www.digit.fyi/runaway-cloud-spend-is-squeezing-margins-warn-89-of-cfos/#:~:text=Rising%20cloud%20costs%20have%20eaten,to%20build%20into%20forecasting%20models.