

Integration Platform as a Service (iPaaS)



Contents

<u>Introduction</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>iPaaS vs PaaS</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>Why use an iPaaS system?</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>Which vendor should I use?</u>	<u>6</u>



Introduction

We've all heard of Platform as a Service (PaaS), but what about Integration Platform as a Service (iPaaS)? When should we use it? And what makes it better?

While transforming and expanding, many organizations are faced with the increasingly complex task of integrating their growing number of systems. IT managers have to keep track of the entire IT landscape and developers have the time-consuming challenge of creating connections between countless interfaces. Luckily, there are tools and methods which can make the process quicker and easier.

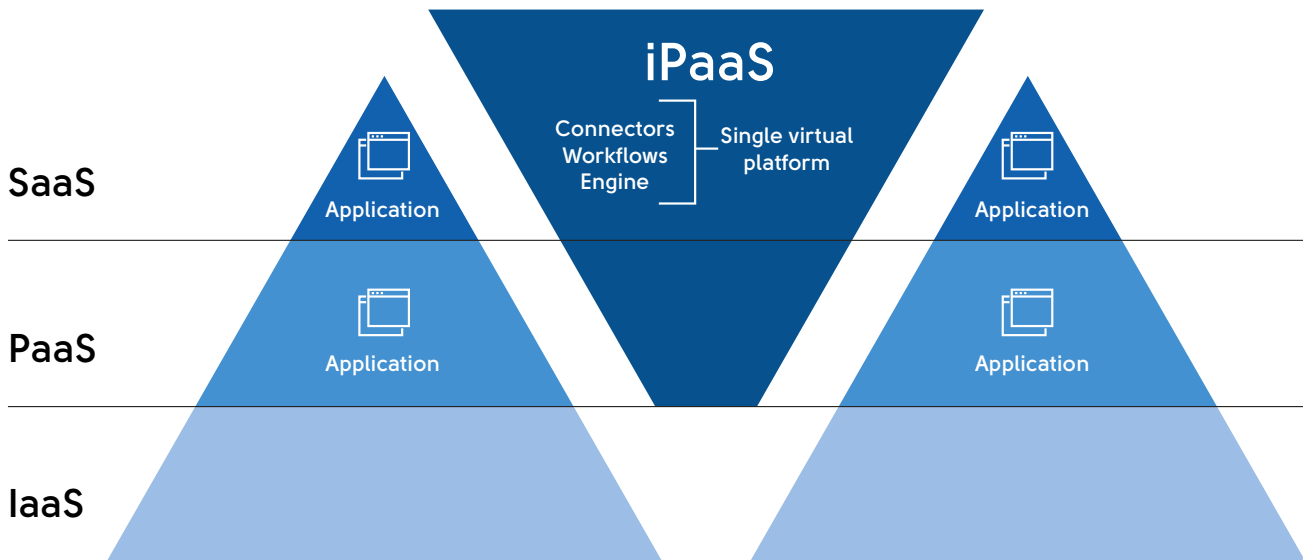
iPaaS vs PaaS

Before we deep dive into iPaaS, let's align on what AaS and PaaS are:

- **AaS** or "As-a-service" is an IT service provided by a third-party company, delivered remotely. It can be scaled to meet your requirements and as it's hosted remotely by the third-party company, it requires low capital expenditure
- **PaaS** is a cloud-based toolset that allows developers and architects to manage their services. The toolset typically includes operating systems, application execution environments, web servers and databases, etc. enabling developers to focus purely on developing applications to meet your business needs

So what is iPaaS?

Integration PaaS is a cloud-based platform designed to connect multiple on-premise or cloud applications and services to each other. Its main aim is to simplify integration, whilst supplying a single platform where applications can be built and deployed, and services and data can be managed. The integration is possible with custom-made or out-of-the-box interfaces while the platform is live.



Why use an iPaaS system?

Most companies have amassed a multitude of applications over the years, many as standalone systems, and each with its own distinct interface, workflow and remote location. As the number of applications grow, the overall IT landscape complexity grows with it; integrating a new system into the enterprise becomes a difficult and costly task. On top of that, users tend to want immediate delivery of solutions (to ensure competitive advantage), so the thirst for quick integration has never been higher. This is where iPaaS stands out: A platform that unifies the entire IT landscape, effectively creating a single virtual enterprise system.

How does an iPaaS system work?

Typically, iPaaS vendors supply a ready-to-use platform which includes service engines, data storage capabilities and middleware. This platform connects all your systems to each other, allowing you to define the business rules which will govern the business and data flows between systems.

Depending on the vendor, the platform may include several out-of-the-box adaptors for connecting to well-known software systems or include the tools to create customized adaptors/interfaces.

Do I need one?

There are many reasons to want an iPaaS. It may be that you want easier, faster access to the data in your siloed systems, or that you want to enrich one system with the data sitting in another. To try to achieve this, enterprises often leverage the advantages of PaaS by pulling all their services into a single platform.

However, this approach requires a large number of developers, is time consuming, complex and expensive. Using iPaaS instead allows you to connect and control systems and data inside a single virtual platform, leveraging all the available tools within the iPaaS solution.

Where do I start?

There are several iPaaS platforms in the market and they all suit different requirements; some are best at automating workflows between systems, others specialize in the management of system interfaces. The need for a specific one depends on the complexity of the systems involved in the integration. Before taking on an iPaaS solution, it is crucial to ask yourself a few questions:

- **What data do you want to integrate?**
- **Where can it be sourced?**
- **How should the data flow from one system to another?**
- **What are the target systems?**
- **What do the interfaces look like?**

Once you've answered these questions, you'll be ready to choose a vendor.

Which vendor should I use?

There are a few things to keep in mind when researching which vendor best suits your needs:

- **Are most of your source system's applications common in the marketplace?** If so, look for a **vendor that has already implemented these interfaces.** Connecting these systems together will be an easier process and will be out-of-the-box
- **Are most of your source system's application interfaces custom-made or relatively unknown?** If so, many out-of-the-box interfaces from iPaaS solutions will not be suitable. Look for **solutions which make the creation of the interface an easy task.** Often these can be configured by your own IT developers using visualization tools, making the task easier to manage
- **If the primary need for iPaaS is to manage the many workflows between the source systems, then focus on vendors where this is their specialty.** This will give you flexibility in managing when, where and how data moves across the platform

- **Cost is always a consideration.** There are many different cost structures provided by each vendor; ranging from open-sourced software solutions with professional services support, to subscription-based solutions which charge per interface, workflow or over time
- iPaaS platforms that are housed in the cloud may introduce vendor lock-in where it is not possible to port to other cloud providers
- Finally, your business is growing in size and complexity. **It is important to choose the right solution not only for your current or near-term needs, but also for the future**

As data continues to be generated at exponential rates, your number of systems will continue to grow, too. An iPaaS solution will help you take full advantage of your data, by unifying your IT landscape and creating a single virtual enterprise system. Look at your needs when choosing a vendor and ensure your chosen solution is scalable in a way that will benefit you now and in the future.

Author



Darren Baldwin

Darren is a senior director and solution architect at DXC Luxoft. He has over 20 years' experience in building and optimizing Financial IT systems, including trading and risk applications. Darren is technically hands-on in the analysis, design and implementation of systems on premise or in the cloud and is often involved with integrating many real-time and event driven architectures.

Luxoft, a DXC Technology Company (NYSE: DXC), is a digital strategy and software engineering firm providing bespoke technology solutions that drive business change for customers worldwide. Luxoft uses technology to enable business transformation, enhance customer experiences, and boost operational efficiency through its strategy, consulting, and engineering services. Luxoft combines a unique blend of engineering excellence and deep industry expertise, specializing in automotive, financial services, travel and hospitality, healthcare, life sciences, media and telecommunications.

www.luxoft.com

Luxoft
A DXC Technology Company