PLATFORM VS PORTFOLIO

The benefits of a modern supply chain architecture

Manhattan Associates®

Integrated Legacy Portfolio Architectures

Even today in a typical 'best of breed' portfolio architecture, critical functions like orders, payments, shipments, customer history and scheduling must be duplicated again and again.

Additionally, these applications have stringent and usually proprietary ways to integrate and customize, all of which vary across vendors and software architectures which are upgraded at varying times.

This approach ultimately requires the addition of integration buses and visibility tools just to see what's happening, further increasing duplication complexity and creating a convoluted entanglement where even a small change could require months of regression testing to ensure something completely unrelated doesn't break.

Unified Modern Platform Architectures

Cloud-native platform architectures offer a solution to the multiple and overlapping systems of record, lack of common data models and process inconsistencies that portfolio solutions have burdened the industry with for so long.
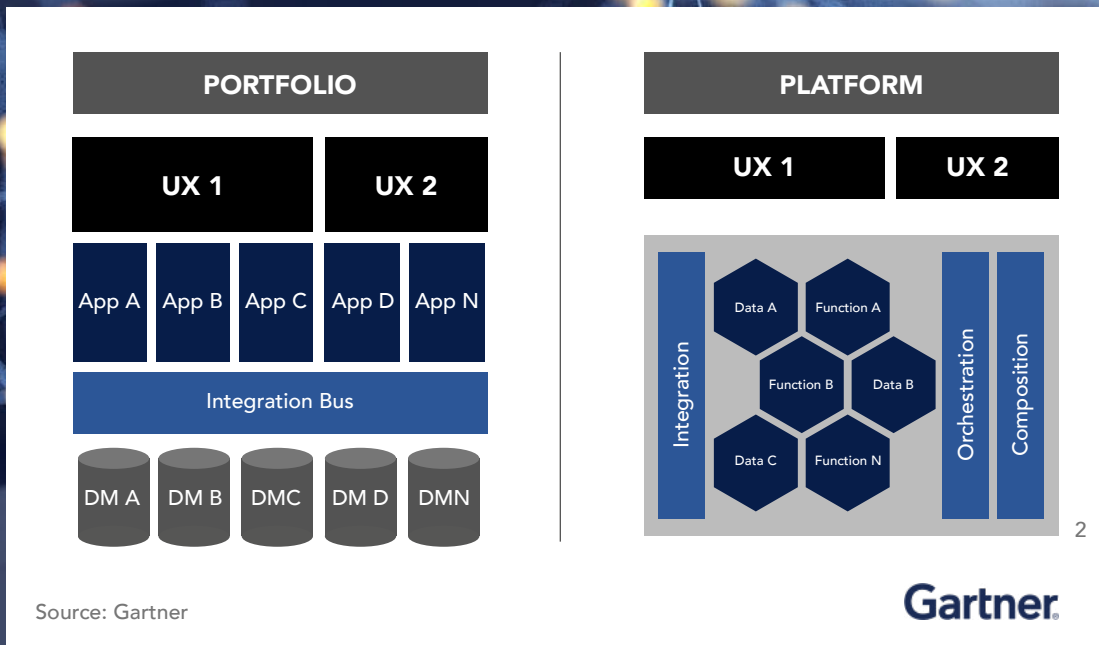
In a recent report[1], Gartner found that maturing supply chain organizations are moving away from a heterogenous collection of applications with differing architectures, data models and user interfaces. However, they often struggle to differentiate between a vendor of loosely coupled solutions behind a single brand and a vendor with a truly seamless common platform because of the similar and sometimes confusing language used, so they identified areas of differentiation to consider:

Platform

– Cloud-native with composable micro-service APIs
– Extensible and autonomously adaptive
– Process orchestration/optimization
– Continuous updates with no downtime
– Eliminate redundancies, functional overlaps, syntax issues and integration
– Better for mature supply chain organizations

Portfolio

– Loosely coupled portfolio of solutions
– Mishmash of applications with different technology due to years of acquisitions
– Siloed experiences with multiple UIs
– Lack of strategic organic product development
– Pricing is complex and costs can be higher

Figure 1: Application Architecture – Portfolio Versus Platform

PORTFOLIO

UX 1   UX 2

App A   App B   App C   App D   App N

Integration Bus

DM A   DM B   DMC   DM D   DMN

Source: Gartner

PLATFORM

UX 1   UX 2

Integration   Data A   Function A   Function B   Data B   Data C   Function N   Orchestration   Composition

2

Gartner.

"Manhattan is differentiated in both the depth and breadth of its core supply chain execution products … and is the ONLY supply chain execution platform vendor.

– 2022 Gartner WMS Magic Quadrant Report

Manhattan Active® Platform

Even with a 'suite' of solutions from a single vendor, especially those who have grown their portfolio via acquisition, all the same problems still exist. They are just hiding them under the umbrella of a visibility layer or a control tower. But the same time, cost, duplication and integration issues will continue to limit their innovation, scalability, extensibility, reliability and flexibility.

So, at Manhattan, we decided to start over. Letting go of legacy allowed us to fix it all.

We broke supply chain commerce down into the smallest capability components possible, creating hundreds of individual microservices within the Manhattan Active® Platform. This gives us the freedom to assemble new application experiences and outcomes faster than ever before by finally unifying distribution, transportation, fleet, yard, labor and automation on a single cloud-native platform.

In fact, we no longer need to build standalone applications, at least not the way we have always thought of them. Because every component is part of a shared application platform, there is no duplication and no redundancy.
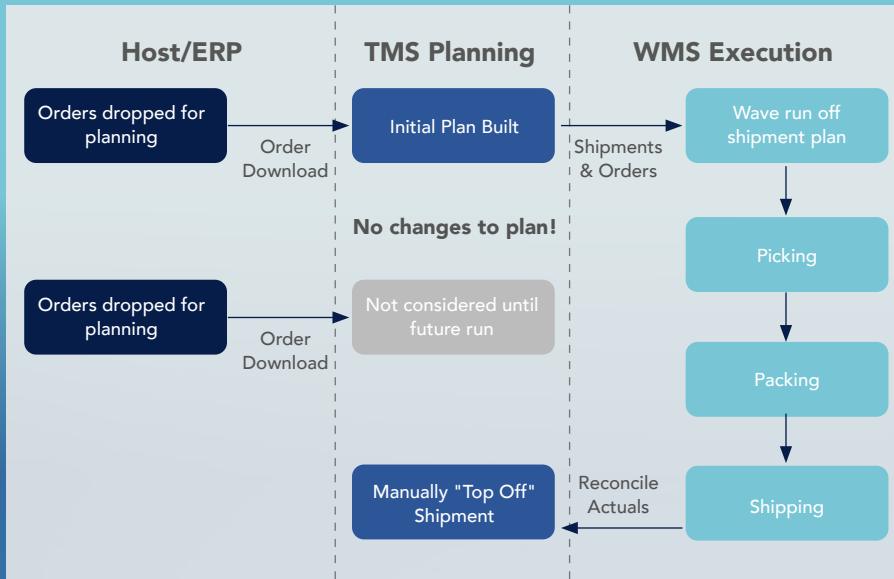
BETTER OUTCOMES & EXPERIENCES
This means that 'shipment planning' in warehouse management is the same 'shipment planning' used in transportation management.

And it means each Manhattan supply chain solution shares the same services for orders, tasks, customers, inventory and more.
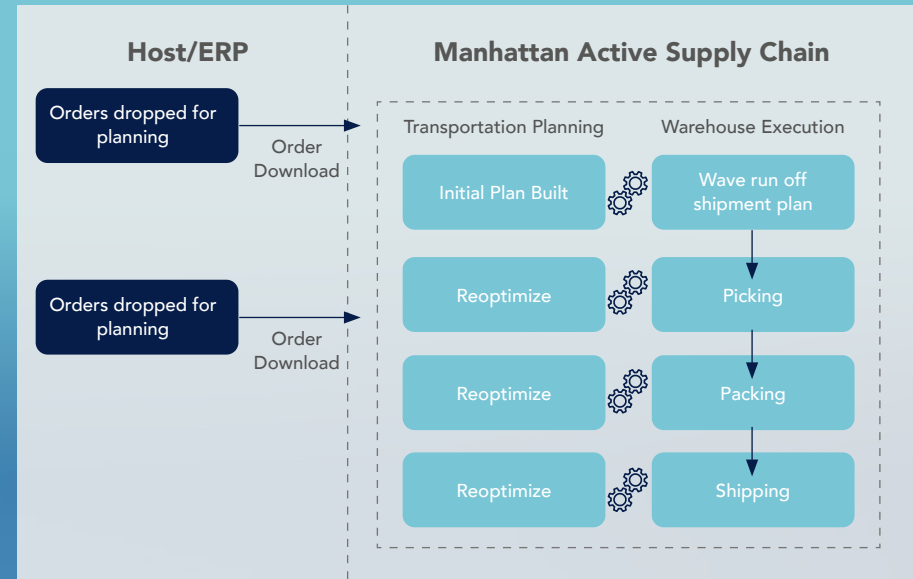
Unification at the platform level is the only way to unlock next level supply chain commerce capabilities like the continuous optimization of transportation and distribution tasks and activities simultaneously to ensure the most optimal outcome, every time.

Integrated Portfolio Process:

Host/ERP	TMS Planning	WMS Execution
Orders dropped for planning	Initial Plan Built	Wave run off shipment plan
Order Download		
	No changes to plan!	Picking
Orders dropped for planning	Not considered until future run	Packing
Order Download		
	Manually "Top Off" Shipment	Shipping

Shipments & Orders

Reconcile Actuals

Unified Platform Process:

Host/ERP	Manhattan Active Supply Chain	
	Transportation Planning	Warehouse Execution
Orders dropped for planning	Initial Plan Built	Wave run off shipment plan
Order Download	Reoptimize	Picking
Orders dropped for planning	Reoptimize	Packing
Order Download	Reoptimize	Shipping

Each business function and configuration capability is accessible through open APIs, removing all rigidity from the system. At this moment, nearly a thousand of the world's most experienced supply chain engineers are developing and extending these components, delivering new capabilities every 90 days.

And Manhattan Active Platform learns too. It auto scales, self-heals and updates new features with zero downtime and no human intervention. At the first indication of an issue with any component, it is automatically corrected within minutes of detection.

Make It Your Own

But we didn't design Manhattan Active Platform technology just so we could easily change it.

We engineered it so that your development team could too. Sometimes you want the peace of mind of knowing Manhattan's incredible services teams are helping every step of the way. Sometimes you have a great Manhattan partner that is helping you configure your solutions – and sometimes you just want to do your own thing.

With Manhattan Active Platform, the philosophy is simple: no code, low code or your code. You pick what works best for your skills and your business.

Manhattan solutions are ready with in-app configuration and design options, offering no code ways to craft experiences and low code options to extend components or even combine components to create composite services. For your code flexibility, thousands of API endpoints are available to incorporate your own secret sauce into your Manhattan experiences. Take your first steps at developer.manh.com.

The Future is Here

Manhattan Active Platform was engineered to handle the most complex supply chain networks in the world and designed to never feel like it, because we believe your customers deserve to be at the center of a unified ecosystem, not at the end of an integrated chain.

To learn more, visit manh.com

Manhattan
Associates®