




WHITE PAPER

Delivering data in an always-on world

Understanding the mission-critical importance
and evolving role of Managed File Transfer



Data makes it possible to do everything from buying groceries to executing billions of dollars in financial transactions. It helps patients take control of their health and empowers doctors to find cures for complex diseases. Because of data, today is profitable and tomorrow is predictable. In short, data makes the world go around.

But with every new day, the old ways of moving data are no longer able to keep pace with demanding customers and hungry competitors. Businesses have higher standards for security, control, and reliability. They also have greater expectations for the power of data and how it can be used to create new business opportunities, improve customer experiences, and provide a competitive advantage in a crowded marketplace.

Many have come to take the everyday movement of data – in the form of managed file transfer (MFT) – for granted. To business and IT leaders, MFT is like running household water: it's largely reliable, does its job without much fuss, and barely elicits a second thought. But today, it's just not that simple. Now, companies must think beyond moving data around and consider whether their MFT solution can deliver the scalability, self-service, and speed required to support real business change. As MFT's role evolves, so should the way you think about it and the technology you use to handle it.

This white paper explores how a modern MFT solution can provide a competitive advantage in today's digital world.

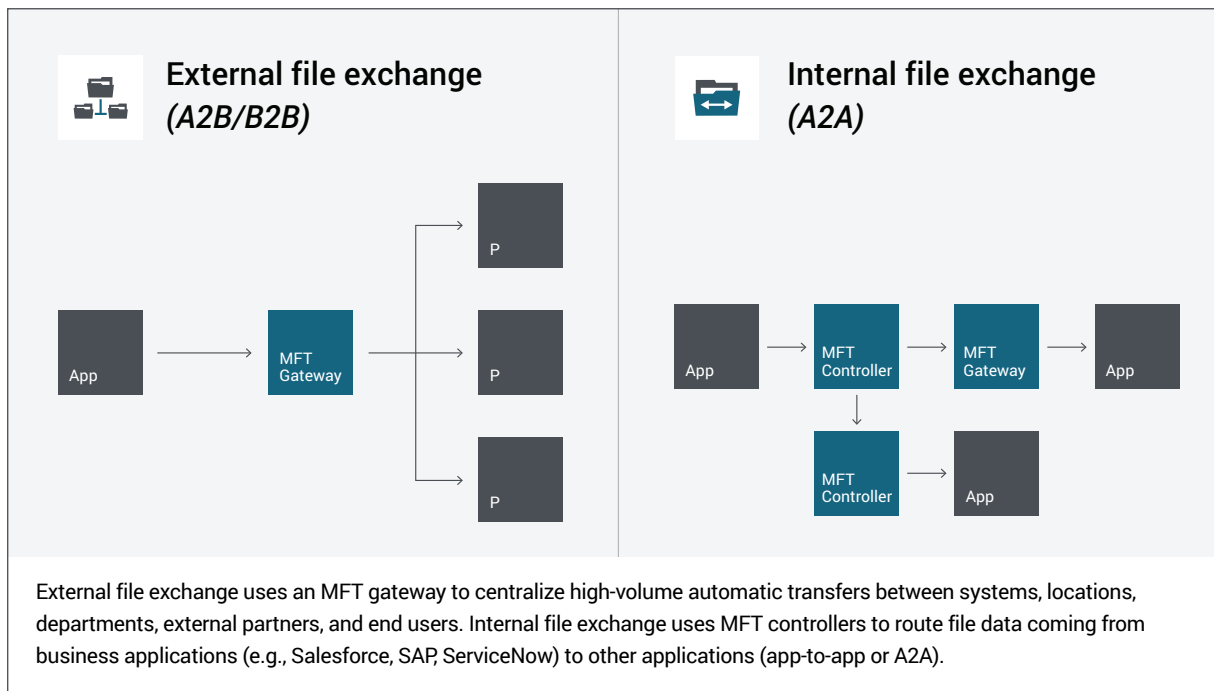
What is MFT?

Managed File Transfer gives you the ability to securely share your high-value, high-volume business data. It takes all the complexity of file sharing off your hands by helping you automatically meet the security, compliance, and performance requirements necessary to send and receive file data such as money transfers, sensitive data containing personal information, or proprietary business files.

Even if you don't currently use MFT, you benefit from the technology in your everyday life. MFT powers everything from global money market exchanges and healthcare file transfers to order processing and transaction tracking. It's what makes business work.

MFT enables all types of file data transfer, including transfers between businesses, people, and apps. These exchanges can be made automatically or on an ad hoc basis both inside and outside of your organization. When a data transfer is initiated, the MFT solution encrypts the data to ensure it stays secure in motion and at rest. It may also compress the data to improve delivery speed. Once the data is prepared for delivery, it's sent to the recipient using your chosen set of security protocols.

MFT pattern overview



How is MFT evolving?

Traditional MFT solutions, along with legacy solutions like FTP and HTTP, emerged at a time when transfer scalability, speed, and control weren't as critical. As a result, these solutions make it complicated and costly to conduct frequent high-value and high-volume data transfers that today's enterprises rely on. What's more, their legacy design makes it difficult, if not impossible, to meet the needs of a digital business, hampering their ability to adapt or create new digital experiences.

For IT teams and line of business workers, the struggle is real. The burden falls on IT teams to make sure security, governance, and compliance are well taken care of – all while keeping up with the constantly changing needs of the business.

On the other hand, their counterparts on the business side can't get what they need when they need it because they're relying on an overstretched IT department. Business suffers as a result. Companies using traditional MFT and other legacy solutions face other obstacles as well, including:

- **A lack of security.** Many legacy or ad-hoc systems are unable to secure data at rest or in transit. In addition, they don't provide audit trails or the ability to ensure compliance every step of the way.
- **A lack of compliance.** Even if the data is secured, you have to verify and prove it. However, legacy solutions cannot adequately ensure compliance to security regulations like HIPAA that can expose your organization to regulatory scrutiny and penalties.

- **A lack of control.** Data spread far and wide across multiple systems is difficult to track. This makes it hard to manage data as it transfers between thousands of apps and partners.
- **A lack of scale.** As data volumes grow and new apps or departments require secure data transfer capabilities, legacy solutions may require IT to manage the process, creating a point of friction for business users who want to move quickly on their own.
- **A lack of availability.** File transfer errors prevent people and processes from leveraging the data, potentially damaging customer relationships and impacting your revenue. In addition, errors require IT to spend time and resources tracking down and fixing the issue, impacting their ability to focus on strategic initiatives.

A modern MFT solution is designed to overcome all these obstacles while giving both IT and business teams the tools they need to thrive.

The business benefits of a modern MFT solution

Sticking with the utility metaphor, when you flip a light switch, you don't think about how electricity gets from the switch to the bulb. You expect it to work – and you only notice a disconnect when it doesn't. MFT hasn't always had a direct correlation to the bottom line, but it's critical to preventing the kind of catastrophic disruption that can do serious damage to it.

Yet in the last year, there's been a massive data boom as processes that have always been handled on paper or in-person were digitized in the wake of the pandemic. Companies across the industry spectrum were compelled to modernize. Now, being able to share data and files at scale and at the speed of business has real effects on the success of an enterprise. It's no wonder that 91% of decision makers expect file transfers to become even more important in the future.¹

A modern MFT solution can empower your business to do more than just share data. It can help you meet the demands of a data-driven world by enabling you to create innovative new products, services, and use cases quickly and at scale. With a modern solution, you can:

- Increase business agility by making it simple to create and integrate file transfer-dependent services into new business applications and services
- Improve security and governance with centralized control of the entire MFT ecosystem via a single administration console so you can ensure your service level agreements and PCI DSS compliance requirements are met
- Empower users with self-service capabilities that can be used to create file transfer services, subscribe partners, and manage file transfers
- Centralize administration to reduce complexity and standardize all administration tasks for the entire MFT ecosystem

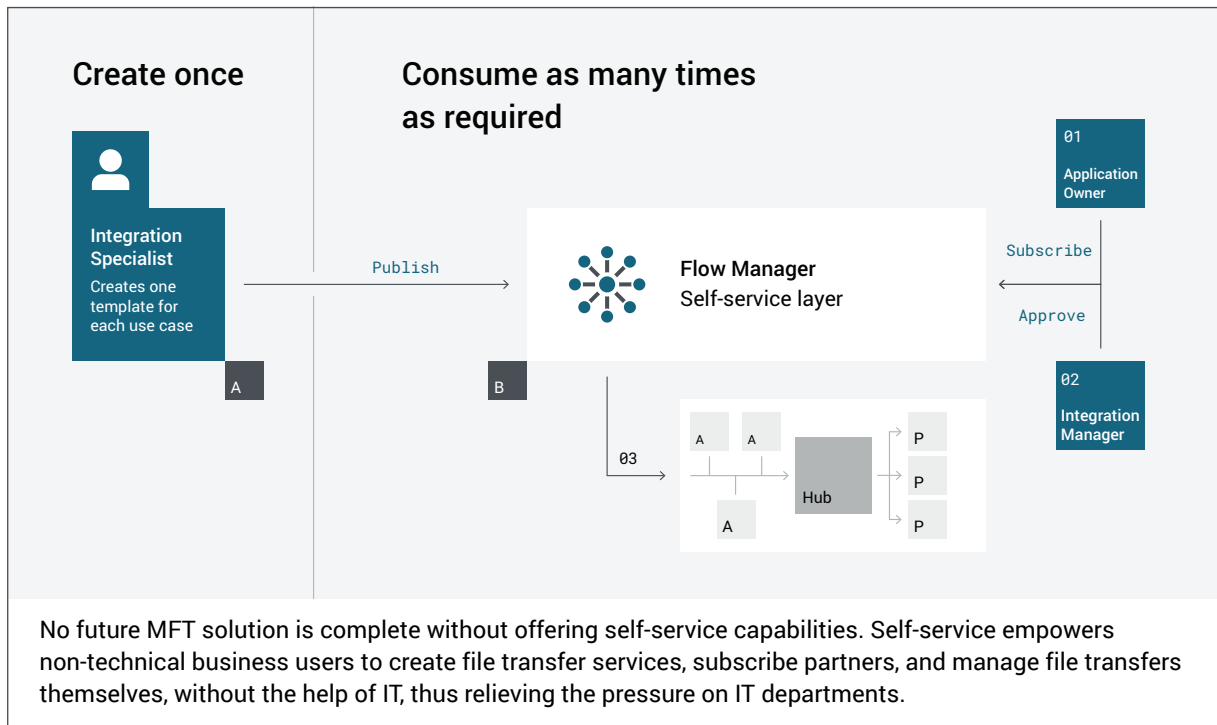
¹ Internal Axway global survey of 500 IT decision makers, 2019-2020

7 key characteristics of a best-in-class MFT solution

While all MFT solutions are more reliable, secure, and easier to manage than protocols like FTP or HTTP, not all MFT solutions are created equal. With the recent data boom, companies that can access, share, and leverage their data most efficiently and effectively have a distinct advantage. When comparing your options, here's what to look for in a best-in-class solution:

- **Scalability.** The more your business grows, the less likely you'll have the people or resources available to manage file data transfers manually. Ensure your MFT solution can leverage automation, self-service, and the ability to provide insights on expected behavior to reduce manual work and quickly identify issues or opportunities.
- **Intelligence.** The best technology is one that can help you not only do your job faster, but also do your job before you even know it needs to be done. Ensure your MFT solution can leverage operational intelligence to recognize patterns so that it can predict and notify you immediately as soon as something out of the ordinary happens.
- **Integrations.** Scalable file data transfers are only as useful as your ability to effectively integrate that data into the systems and processes of your partners. Your MFT solution has to include complete business-level REST APIs so IT and business user capabilities can be easily integrated programmatically into third-party or custom applications.
- **Self-service.** Line of business managers shouldn't have to wait for a busy IT department in order to provide greater business value to their customers. An MFT solution with self-service capabilities not only relieves the burden on IT, but also empowers business users. According to a recent survey, 87% of IT decision makers believe partner self-service onboarding and self-management is key for future success.²
- **Resiliency.** When your bottom line is on the line, you can't wait for your employees or customers to discover a file transfer error. Make sure your MFT solution leverages operational intelligence and predictive analytics to ensure service continuity.
- **Adaptability.** The only thing certain about tomorrow is that there's no knowing what it will require. Look for an MFT solution that can meet your file transfer needs regardless of initiator, recipient, protocol, format, or schema – or whether data is located on-premises or in the cloud.
- **Manageability.** While cloud solutions make it easier to centralize and secure data, they are unable to provide sophisticated control and management capabilities. As your data transfer needs become more complex through the addition of new systems, file type, and compliance requirements, your MFT solution has to be able to manage all your data at the cloud scale.

² Internal Axway global survey of 500 IT decision makers, 2019-2020



The real-world results of cutting-edge MFT

Enterprises around the world rely on MFT to optimize operations, save money, and improve their customer experience. Here are just a few of the organizations that have leveraged MFT to power their operations.

- The **U.S Internal Revenue Service** needed to find a way to comply with legislation mandating reporting of all foreign financial accounts of U.S. taxpayers. This required it to develop within six months a secure data exchange system that would include hundreds of thousands of global partners. Using Axway's Managed Cloud Services for MFT, the IRS was able to collect and consolidate data from offshore financial accounts of U.S. taxpayers, allowing it to recover \$8.7B in lost tax dollars globally.
- To drive its pioneering research into life-threatening illnesses, a top **biopharmaceutical company** needed to be able to exchange sensitive medical data with a wide range of stakeholders. In the past, it relied on multiple systems and processes for data-sharing across the business, making it difficult to ensure that their information security and data governance policies were enforced consistently. Working with Axway, the company can utilize MFT to apply stringent information security and data governance rules to all transactions automatically. All inbound and outbound data is now staged in the Axway managed cloud and deleted after the destination system has acknowledged the file transfer. This approach delivers high levels of availability for MFT while minimizing the amount of time that sensitive data is outside of the firewall.

- As a key player in France's pension system, **AG2R LA MONDIALE** partners with banks, employers, government agencies, and other pension providers to collect contributions from workers and pay out to retirees. After a series of mergers, it needed a single file transfer solution it could use across the extended enterprise to reduce operational costs and ensure greater integration. Thanks to Axway's centralized MFT solution, the organization now has unprecedented visibility and control over internal data flows from all parts of its growing business.

Discover Axway Managed File Transfer

Axway Managed File Transfer can help you accelerate your business, your delivery of new digital projects, and your time to revenue by providing a proven enterprise solution that addresses your mission-critical data transfer requirements.

Our modern MFT solution makes it easy to scale and adapt with powerful self-service capabilities that reduce flow creation times to minutes while removing the need for IT involvement. Our always-on solution is designed at its core to provide robust data security so you can meet the latest regulatory standards without extra effort, reducing your business risks, and improving your customer experience.

**Learn how Axway Managed File Transfer
can prepare your business for future growth** →