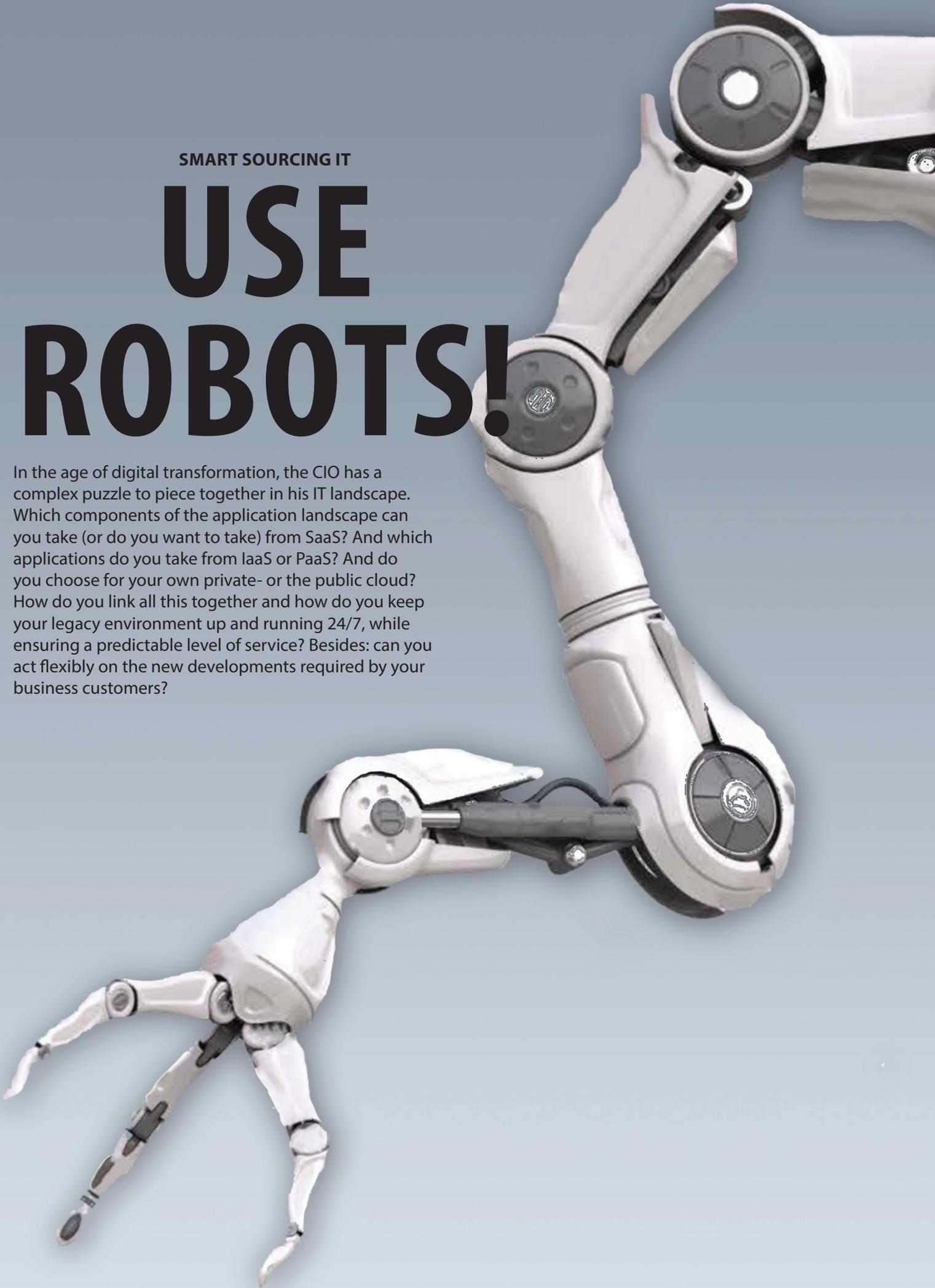


SMART SOURCING IT

# USE ROBOTS!

In the age of digital transformation, the CIO has a complex puzzle to piece together in his IT landscape. Which components of the application landscape can you take (or do you want to take) from SaaS? And which applications do you take from IaaS or PaaS? And do you choose for your own private- or the public cloud? How do you link all this together and how do you keep your legacy environment up and running 24/7, while ensuring a predictable level of service? Besides: can you act flexibly on the new developments required by your business customers?



**A**s a CIO, you need to answer all these questions. We believe you can do so by using automation and analytics – i.e. applying software and data science in your own IT domain, to keep all the pieces of the puzzle in order. This means seeing all the components as sourced, and on top of that automation. By doing so, you will achieve real smart sourcing.

### Starting point

Enterprises are continually battling to keep their IT under control. The problem is that we cannot get a grip on the large numbers of people who change the even larger numbers of configurations. During an operation or project, often deliberately and sometimes not, and within their own organization or outside it. Besides the need for control, there is also the pressure of wanting to introduce innovative changes to the landscape at an ever-increasing pace. We do not actually know what is taking place within our IT environment. The production line runs in fits and starts, and we spend a considerable amount of time monitoring, correcting, and adjusting the technical settings of the IT environment – the configuration. Recording the multitude of settings in the traditional way is a never-ending task; the effect of changes is often unpredictable. Result: low quality and IT factories where many people are predominantly occupied with repairing the machine instead of with innovation.

### Mindset

Based on the functional needs of the end user, we focus on the software and hardware semi-finished products. Semi-finished products are supplied by cloud providers, regular IT service providers or internal departments. We assemble the semi-finished products through configuration. Once in production, however, we let go of the configurations too much. This soon leads to quality issues due to ‘broken’ products as a consequence of changes within the environment and outside it. Why do we let this happen? Why do we think that, especially in our IT world, products do not break down? Wouldn’t it be great if we could keep a tight grip on the whole thing and thus transform all that repair

work into faster innovation within our business?

### Robot-controlled

What sort of platform do we need for this? We need a platform that controls the configurations, across all the IT components and thus defines the end service. A platform whereby the end service is defined and that controls all the accompanying configurations of all the IT components. A platform that provides people with the means to change, stimulate, and improve the IT production line – without directly working ‘low down’ the configuration line themselves. In other words, a platform that provides uniformity and automation for all IT components. A platform that is continually interpreting what happens in the IT landscape, supported by machine learning solutions. An uncluttered and situational view of the landscape, which is

## “THE PLATFORM ALLOWS YOU TO ACHIEVE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IN IT OPERATIONS”

continually learning and predicting how the IT landscape is behaving and how it can be improved in the broad sense of the word. Seen in this light: an IT robot. Such a platform is supported by software and analytics, but also largely by the people operating the platform. People who are continually developing the landscape on the basis of a vision of improving things, rather than people who work from the perspective of repair work. The platform is integrated with the target: the IT environment. But the platform has to operate more broadly – for example, in the context of IoT or any other technology system, with or without hardware, and within your business walls or outside them. With Itility Cloud Control (ICC) we have developed such a platform – with a view to radical simplification of IT operations and continuous innovation. An implementation based on supply chain management, consisting of operators, software, analytics practices, and software services from various traditional and non-

traditional ecosystems. The foundation is as-code, always. We manage the IT systems with code and recipes, just as a factory line is operated by a robot – along with the operator (i.e. software guy), who in turn operates the robot. This set-up is different to the one we are used to in regular IT operations. The robot takes over the traditional maintenance work within the platform.

### Ecosystem

The platform supports the smart sourcing policy of the user. It is based on several principles, with the main focus on continuous and iterative innovation. The focus is also on managing everything through the robot and on accepting that the target system is never ‘finished’, as there are continual changes – also in sourcing. So it is necessary to have a strong modular set-up: software or cloud components have to be easy to replace if they no longer provide sufficient flexibility or become too expensive. These can include traditional components like closed-source software, as well as open-source components or cloud services. Here, too, software lends a helping hand – forming the glue between the components.

### Implementation

The current implementation of the platform consists of various software components: an ‘infra as code’ translation layer, an API layer and the analytics correlator: the brain of the system. And then the most important factor: the people who manage the platform and make it smarter – the analytics expert and the operator. This operator is the new system admin: a DevOps role with a strong software background. This is all necessary in order to be able to manage the configurations of the target IT environments with robots. The platform allows you to achieve digital transformation in IT operations. Smart sourcing based on design is the first step on the road to the end of our traditional, ITIL-based IT operations.

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