



# A Maturity Model Brings Insight and Predictability to the Managed File Transfer Marketplace

A White Paper

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## Purpose of this paper:

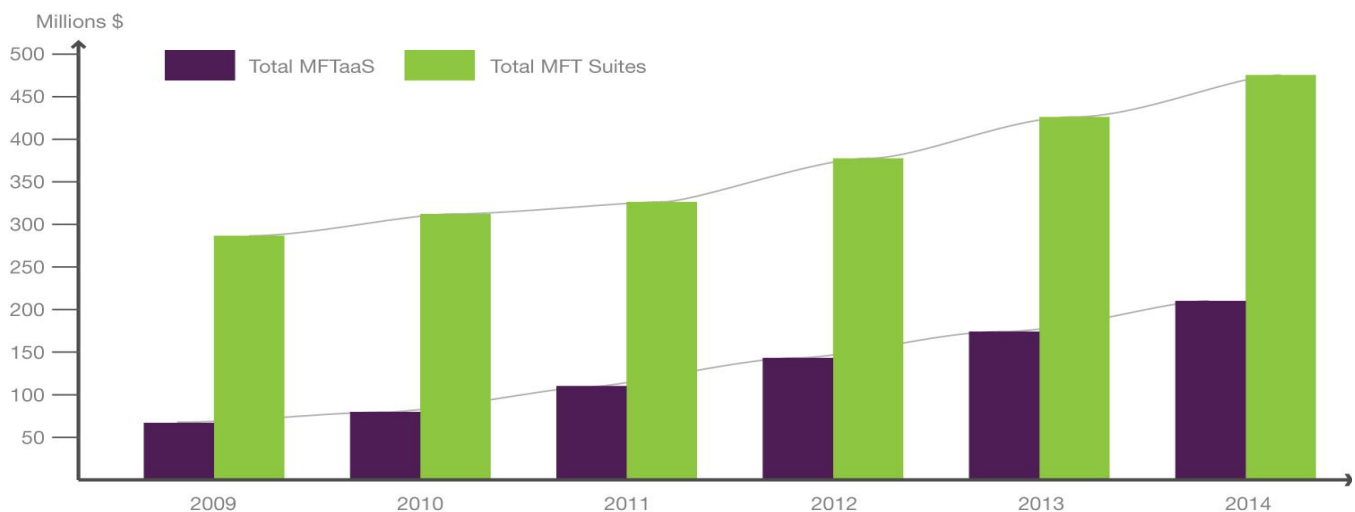
To introduce an innovative tool that is designed to streamline the complex MFT solution selection process by providing IT professionals with a single, reliable source they can use to drill down through a series of requirements to help them:

- Evaluate their current file transfer environment by examining FT frequency, challenges and future needs
- Define technology needs by understanding their project's compliance, security and visibility requirements and overall sophistication
- Select technology solutions that meet the predetermined requirements

As IT organizations attempt to meet the needs of the enterprise to effectively secure, automate, and manage processes and workflows, exchanging critical data can become a daunting task. Today more than 80% of multi-enterprise collaboration (B2B) is conducted by electronic file exchange and deciding upon the right mix of tools and services to support the transfer of files is critical. Application integration across multiple companies creates yet an additional challenge for IT managers.

Selecting the right managed file transfer (MFT) solution is critical, but an apples-to-apples comparison of the tools available in the marketplace is made increasingly difficult as existing products introduce additional capabilities, new products are released, and the industry sees continued acquisition activity.

## Managed File Transfer Software Forecast, 2009-2014\*



\*Based on industry estimates

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“I’ve been researching this space for over 10 years and have never seen a definitive tool to help organizations understand their project’s definition and requirements, as well as the myriad of MFT solutions available,” said Frank Kenney, VP of Global Strategy at Ipswitch File Transfer. “This becomes especially challenging as the market continues to grow exponentially. When used in conjunction with research from leading analyst firms, Ipswitch’s maturity model provides insight for companies looking to understand their buying criteria, technology solutions and vendors.”

## The MFT Platform Grows Up: Why a Maturity Model Makes Sense

Simply put, a maturity model provides an organized way of looking at the MFT market. It allows decision makers to examine the underlying activities, reporting structure, and deliverables of MFT packages and make a determination about where those features fall in terms of robustness of solution and the extent to which those packages are able to solve their issues today as well their potential for supporting tomorrow’s needs.

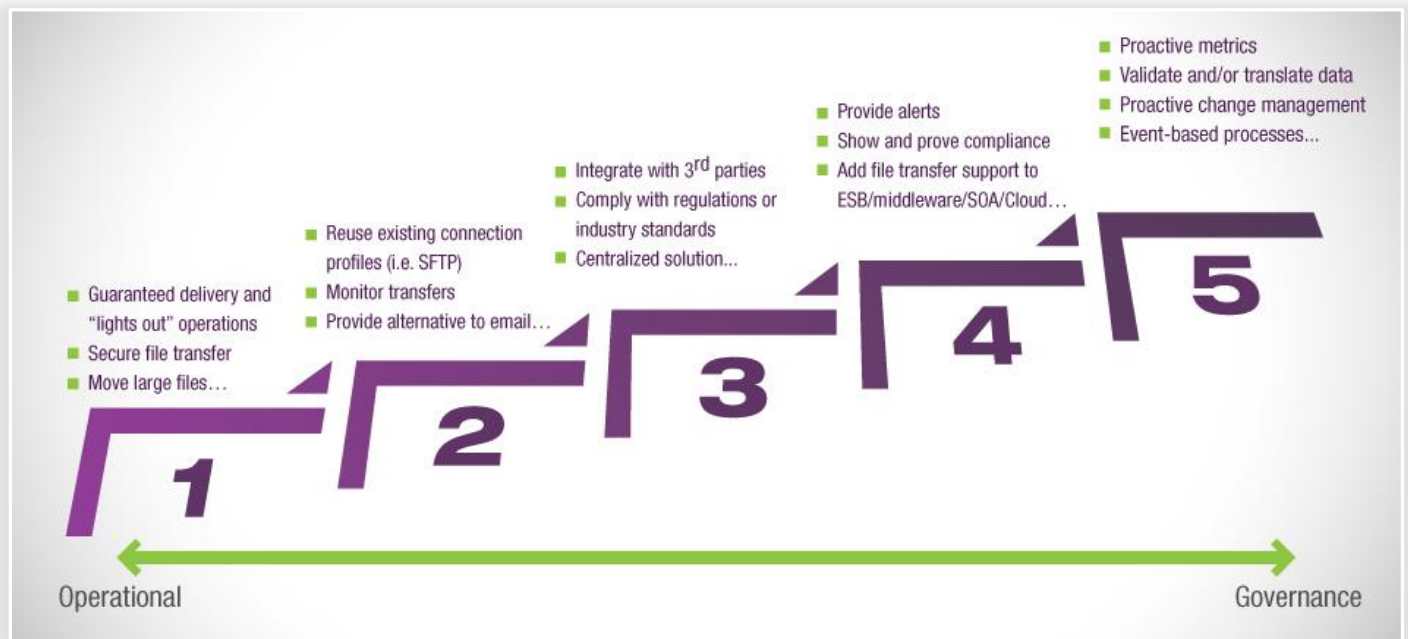
While examining how your organization transmits large files today is a sensible starting point, the need to strike a balance between planning for the future needs of the business and making an investment in features that may not be necessary in the short term becomes evident. The maturity model guides this decision by making the distinctions between the available products more transparent. Using the typical requirements by level listed in the appendix at the end of this paper, you will be able to clearly and concisely evaluate vendor offerings that meet your specific criteria.

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Frank Kenney,  
VP of Global Strategy,  
Ipswitch File Transfer

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## The MFT Maturity Model



## Levels of Maturity

Beginning at the less sophisticated end of the MFT maturity model with Level 1, we note that basic file transfer with guaranteed delivery and a minimum of security (SSH, SSL) is available from many different vendors at relatively low price points – in fact, depending on your specific requirements, there are products that can be downloaded for free that handle the needs of customers intending to be 100% self-reliant who conduct a minimum of infrequent small file transfers.

If features like automated delivery and reuse of the existing connection profiles are deemed necessary, a more mature MFT product is required (Level 2). Qualities such as integration with third party business processes and the ability to view file transfers in real time require yet another level of maturity (Level 3). It is around this level that the nature of your projects moves from more operational and tactical to one of more strategic governance.

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At the Level 4, an organization is looking to be highly proactive. Complex event processing – detailed business processes based on where a project is in the overall lifecycle – is an example of this level of maturity. Functionality such as automated alerts for job completion and/or failure falls into this category, as well as scenario-based cost derivation. If policy enforcement and detailed reporting are deemed necessary, this would also necessitate a more mature product.

At Level 5, the most advanced level of the maturity model, we see cloud-based and software as a service (SaaS) providers enter the picture, where characteristics like the provisioning of proactive metrics to partners and customers and active change management are standard. Expect complete integration with B2B processes and applications, with a dashboard for managing every aspect of file exchange and governance over file process operations.

Matching the requirements of your business with the myriad of MFT products and platforms available is not a simple undertaking, but the maturity model makes the process significantly easier. Once the rationalization activities are complete, your business can expect significant improvements in efficiency, productivity, and ROI.

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## Appendix

### Typical Requirements by Level

**Level 1:** Initial — Individual or team creates a new process every time an activity is performed.

Requirements:

- Securely transfer files from one application to another
- Achieve guaranteed delivery and “lights out” operations
- Move large files
- Focus area: Security, Systems Management, Helpdesk

**Level 2:** Repeatable — Individual teams create processes that aren’t shared or consistent across the organization.

Requirements:

- Reuse the existing connection profiles (i.e. SFTP)
- Provide an alternative to the unapproved/ad hoc services currently being used internally
- Monitor the transfers that are taking place
- Provide an alternative to large files being sent via email
- Focus area: Security, Systems Management, B2B, Email, Collaboration

**Level 3:** Defined — IT defines and consistently uses a shared set of documented processes.

Requirements:

- Integrate with third party business processes
- Comply with regulations (HIPAA, Sarbanes-Oxley, Basel II, ITAR, etc.) or industry standards (PCI DSS, etc.)
- Deliver a centralized solution
- Support a variety of different protocols and security mechanisms
- Customize my file transfer processes
- Show and prove compliance
- Perform X, then move the file, then perform Y
- Focus area: B2B, Partner Management, Risk Management, Portfolio Management, Integration

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**Level 4:** Accountable — Process definitions are extended to produce or identify metrics that indicate effectiveness.

Requirements:

- Provide alerts when X happens
- Deliver the total cost of X
- Provide a dashboard of all my transfer and integration activity
- Show and prove compliance
- Comply with regulations (HIPAA, Sarbanes-Oxley, Basel II, ITAR, etc.) or industry standards (PCI DSS, etc.)
- Add file transfer support to my ESB/middleware/SOA/Cloud
- Deliver MFT as a service or utility
- Focus area: Operations, B2B, Integration and Development, BPM, Risk Management, CRM

**Level 5:** Optimized — Process metrics are routinely reviewed to drive continuous improvement.

Requirements:

- Provide proactive metrics to customers and partners
- Validate and/or translate data (EDI, SWIFT, ETL)
- Provide proactive change management
- Use Business Intelligence to create revenue generating opportunities
- Execute processes based on events
- Focus area: Business Intelligence, Portfolio Management, Scorecarding, BPM

## About Ipswitch File Transfer

Ipswitch File Transfer is a global technology provider that builds solutions to securely move your valuable data. We enable companies and people to better manage their data interactions when visibility, management and enforcement matter. Our managed file transfer solutions deliver the control necessary to enable governance and compliance for our more than 40 million global users – including the majority of Fortune 1000 enterprises and government agencies. These organizations trust Ipswitch File Transfer solutions to secure, manage, automate and streamline their critical and highly sensitive file transfers and data workflows. Learn more at <http://www.ipswitchft.com> or contact us at <http://www.ipswitchft.com/Company/Contact.aspx>, or on [LinkedIn](#) and [Twitter](#).

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