

**Publication date:**

01 Apr 2021

**Author:**

Hansa Iyengar

Principal Analyst, Digital Enterprise Services

# Enterprise Case Study: Infosys and Syngenta — Creating the Agile SAP- AMS Organization

# Table of Contents :

Summary .....	2
Recommendations .....	3
Using Agile methodologies to optimize SAP AMS .....	4
Lessons learned .....	9
Appendix .....	9

# Table of Figures :

1. Figure 1: The Spotify model for scaling Agile across large organizations .....	5
2. Figure 2: Infosys designed the FIT-FAST-FRESH framework for delivering Syngenta’s next-gen AMS .....	6
3. Figure 3: The new operating model provides faster problem resolution .....	7
4. Figure 4: Outcomes delivered as part of the engagement .....	8

# Summary

---

## Catalyst

SAP platforms form the backbone of many large corporations that run heavily customized, multiple copies of the software across their global operations. Often considered legacy systems, these platforms require a dedicated application management service (AMS) function to support troubleshooting, upgrades, customization, and other similar requests from the business. Transforming a traditional AMS into an agile organization requires a clear vision of the desired result. However, once the change has been effected, it has the potential to breathe new life into legacy SAP environments as can be seen in this case study where Syngenta and Infosys worked together to deliver such a transformation.

## Omdia view

In most cases, the AMS follows traditional processes involving tickets going through L1, L2, and L3 support based on complexity. Syngenta had a similar mechanism, but the business and IT organizations were unhappy with the time taken to address tickets and the cumbersome processes that had to be adhered to. A decision was taken to adopt iterative practices across the AMS organization in conjunction with Infosys, Syngenta's strategic partner, to improve the speed and efficiency with which business issues were resolved. This project was the largest agile transformation within Syngenta and one of the first large-scale SAP AMS transformations globally, which made it a high-visibility engagement.

This engagement is a great example of how taking a well-thought-out and collaborative approach to scaling Agile/DevOps is essential to success. Despite the pandemic, the project did not overshoot time and budget limits, and delivered against goals as there was clarity around what needed to be accomplished and a "one team" spirit that kept everyone motivated. The engagement is also a testament to the importance of working with a partner that emphasizes client needs and can bring in the right set of people, tools, and global expertise to support a complex Agile/DevOps transformation. Credit must also be given to the Syngenta AMS leadership for its involvement throughout the process and the role that key stakeholders played in the creation of a clear roadmap for the program and in identifying and developing action plans.

## Key messages

- This engagement was one of the first endeavors to transform a large, distributed, and complex SAP AMS organization into an Agile/DevOps model.
- The clear top-down vision from Syngenta leadership and a collaborative approach to designing and implementing the strategy were critical success factors.
- An ongoing communication plan and change management initiatives played important roles in bringing people together, especially as the pandemic continued to affect the ability to return to the office.

# Recommendations

---

## Recommendations for enterprises

- Fear that Agile will destabilize complex ERP systems is one of the major reasons why most of them continue to exist as clunky, on-premises solutions. On the contrary, Agile/DevOps can greatly improve the performance of and business satisfaction with these systems. The rationale that “if it isn’t broken, there’s no need to fix it” is no longer valid as businesses continue to demand speed and agility.
- Get creative with pricing for Agile projects to bring flexibility into the budget. Certain parts of the program can continue to follow the tested fixed-price or time and materials (T&M) models, but building in a flex component that allows the business to decide where to use available funds will help to control shadow spending and enable the IT organization to maintain control and alignment with overall goals and strategy.
- Using iterative methodologies to develop an app is very different from implementing Agile as part of a large-scale transformation. Make sure this distinction is understood by everyone from IT/business leaders to Agile coaches, product owners, and individual team members as it improves strategizing, implementing, and managing the programs.
- Solicit C-suite sponsorship as this plays an important role in promoting discussions and interest in the program and influences all parts of the business (finance, marketing, R&D, production floor, etc.).

## Recommendations for vendors

- Bring in expertise from other accounts to cross-pollinate best practices. Enabling and rewarding collaboration, sharing knowledge and expertise, and allowing employees to take initiatives and develop solutions for common challenges are becoming common demands from enterprises.
- Create offerings that address business outcomes but have people at their core. It is essential to create a well-articulated and cohesive set of offerings that not only address a technology or business process problem but also focus on the people at the heart of that process.
- Innovation at scale and speed will be a key requirement. Focus on building a robust and well-articulated portfolio of offerings that bring together various elements of process reengineering, automation, analytics, and intelligence to deliver successfully.

# Using Agile methodologies to optimize SAP AMS

---

## Setting the business context

### Clunky AMS processes slow down the business

Most large enterprises have many instances of SAP systems running across their global operations, and thousands of business users who rely on them for day-to-day operations. The dedicated AMS organization is in charge of supporting these users. AMS generally includes development, implementation, integration, testing, maintenance, and support (functional and technical), and help-desk services. The AMS organization often deals with hundreds, if not thousands, of tickets daily, ranging from simple access requests to complex issues that require the development and integration of code.

A traditional support function escalates tickets from L1 through L3 based on the complexity of the issue. This often leads to extended lead times for ticket resolution, causing delays that affect business efficiency, time-to-market, and costs. However, AMS transformation has not been undertaken by many organizations because of the perceived notion that such a move can cause major disruption.

### Syngenta wanted its AMS organization to offer greater agility to the business

Headquartered in Basel, Switzerland, Syngenta Group is one of the world's largest manufacturers of seeds and crop protection solutions. The company reported revenues of \$23bn in 2019 and employs over 48,000 people across operations in 100+ countries.

Syngenta's internal users were unhappy with the time taken to resolve tickets and issues, and the AMS teams were dissatisfied with the processes that hindered them from optimizing their function. Syngenta wanted to transform the SAP AMS support function to:

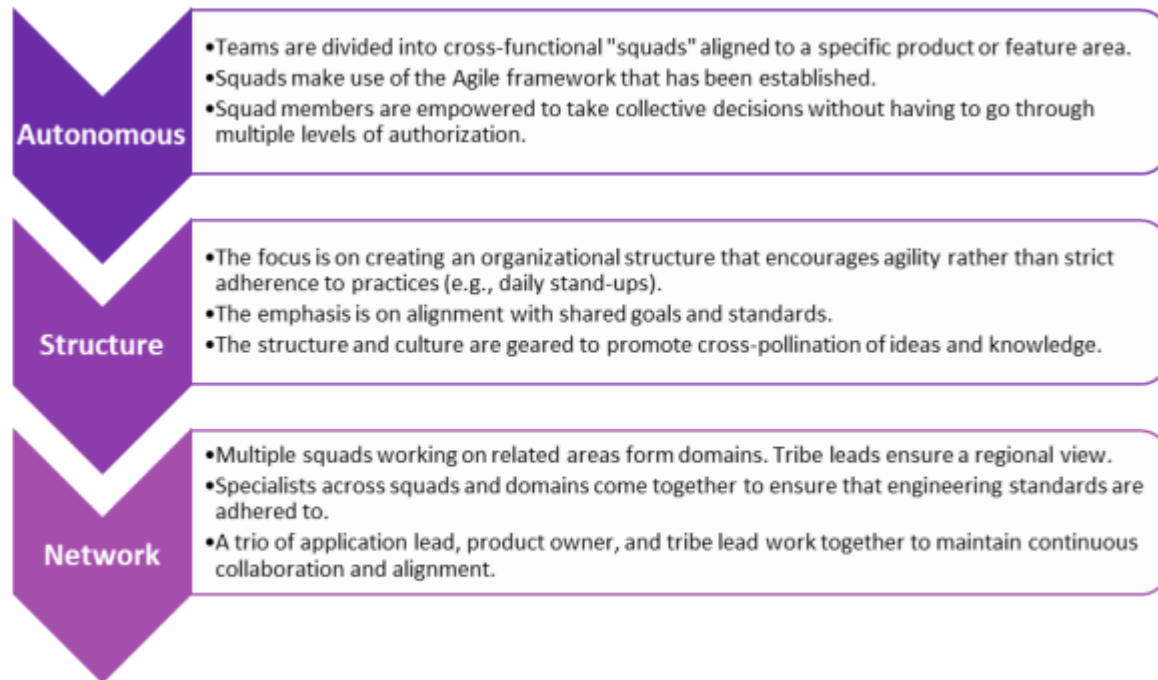
- **Reduce costs** – Most of the AMS functions had been outsourced to Infosys over the years and Syngenta wanted to improve efficiency and effectiveness while bringing down the overall cost.
- **Simplify the operating model and reduce time-to-market** – The traditional hierarchy of the AMS organization was creating bottlenecks that needed to be resolved to provide the agility the business demanded.
- **Reduce disruption and improve service perception** – The AMS organization wanted to greatly improve its performance and turnaround times and reduce business disruption. This would, in turn, highlight the AMS organization's positive impact on the business.
- **Increase control and transparency** – Syngenta's IT leaders wanted to have greater control and transparency inside the AMS function, with clearer governance guidelines and a more robust relationship with Infosys.

### Next-gen AMS and the “Spotify model” of scaled Agile was adopted

The Syngenta team concluded that adopting Agile/DevOps in the AMS organization would help solve most of the challenges that they wanted to address. However, they needed to ensure that they did not

completely disrupt the processes, teams, and functioning of the organization while implementing iterative practices. In consultation with Infosys, it was decided to adopt the “Spotify model” of scaled Agile that emphasizes autonomous teams, culture, and networks rather than adherence to “rituals” (see Figure 1).

**1. Figure 1: The Spotify model for scaling Agile across large organizations**



© 2021 Omdia

Source: Omdia

## The role of Infosys in enabling the AMS transformation

### Existing landscape and solution selection

Syngenta’s operations are spread across 100+ countries. Therefore, the AMS organization was expected to offer 24/5 support while the command center functioned 24/7. The global nature of operations posed challenges such as:

- The system needed to be customized for certain regional operations.
- Some regions, such as Brazil, had more tickets coming in due to a larger number of users.
- The company was also making acquisitions and these systems had to be integrated simultaneously.

**Table 1: Engagement scope**

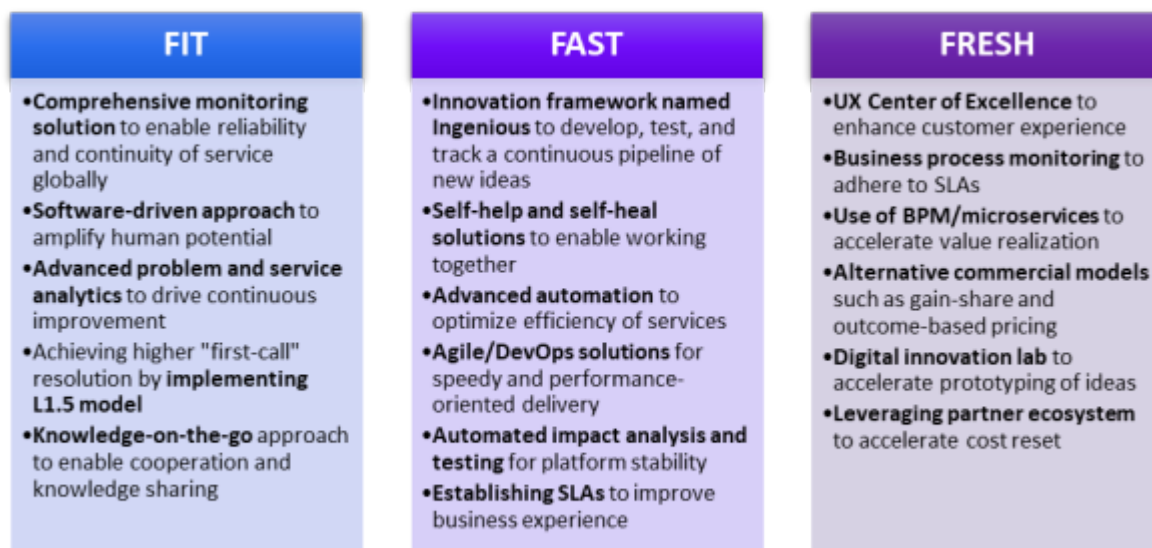
Applications	30+ SAP production environments, 100+ non-SAP applications
User Base	Average named users – 16,000, average concurrent users – 3,500
Regions	EMEA, APAC, LATAM, NA

Services	L1.5, L2, and L3 + small enhancements
Service Window	24x5 with weekend on-call support for critical P1s, 24/7 command center services, 24/5 L1.5 services

Source: Infosys

Infosys was selected as the primary vendor for the AMS transformation as it had a pre-existing relationship with Syngenta going back over 15 years and was already deeply embedded in the AMS organization within Syngenta. Thus, Infosys had an in-depth knowledge of the processes and systems, which was leveraged to design a tailor-made DevOps framework. Infosys also brought together SAP experts from across its business to offer an “outside-in” view that was used to cross-pollinate best practices from other customer journeys. Infosys also implemented its FIT-FAST-FRESH framework, which established the major levers for the transformation (see Figure 2).

## 2. Figure 2: Infosys designed the FIT-FAST-FRESH framework for delivering Syngenta’s next-gen AMS



© 2021 Omdia

Source: Infosys

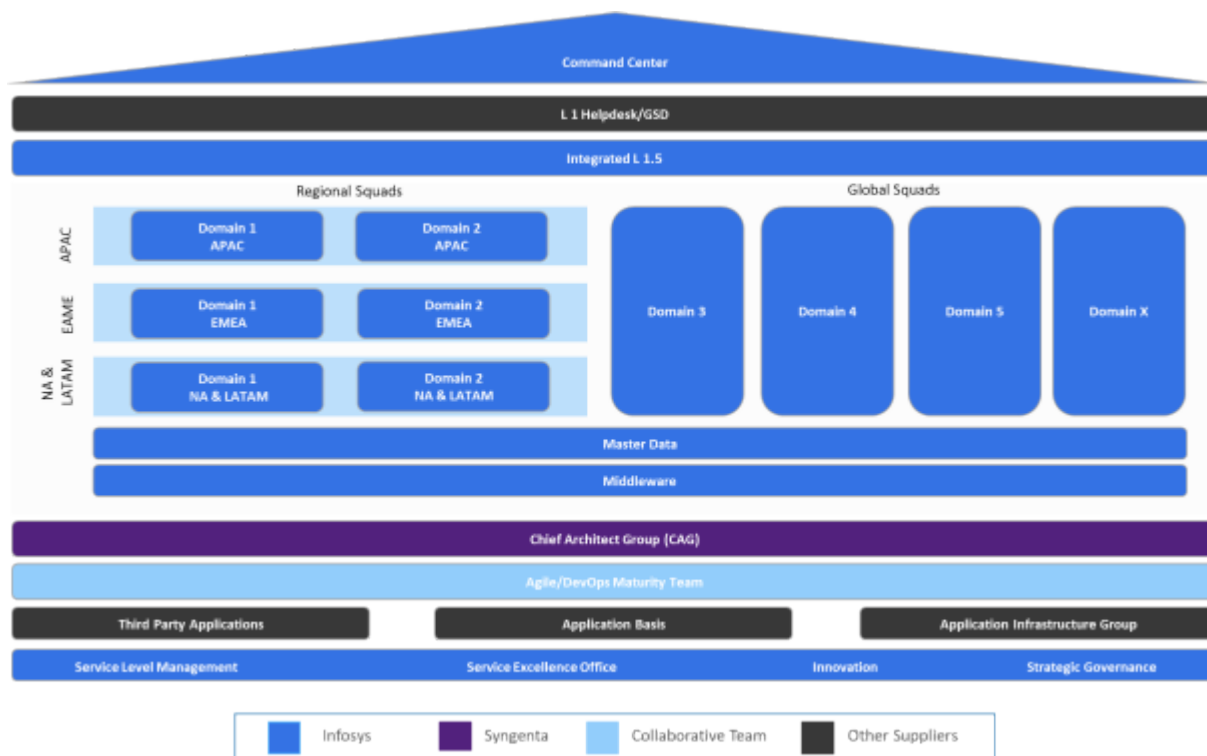
The FIT-FAST-FRESH framework focused on improving the efficiency of existing processes, accelerating innovation and providing self-help solutions, and introducing new elements that emphasize user experience. This required reorganizing people into self-sufficient teams to enable agility and flexibility. The Spotify model of scaled Agile was selected as a way to organize the large and distributed team comprising Syngenta and Infosys employees, and Scrum was chosen as the ideal methodology. Self-sufficient, manageable groups (domains) were built by considering factors such as:

- Ticket volume
- Nature of SAP application/solution (global vs. regional)
- Number of applications involved with skills set

- Client hierarchy
- Business processes involved
- Optimized for efficient operations

Infosys also deployed proprietary tools such as Problem Management Analytics (PMA) and Infosys Service Management Suite (ISMS) to augment the scaled adoption of iterative processes. The operating model was changed to include an L1.5 layer of support to ensure first call resolution and handle tickets too complex for L1 but not suitable for L2 — and these comprised a significant number of the tickets that AMS had to manage. Syngenta created an architecture group under a chief architect to provide guidance and ensure alignment with business goals and the wider IT environment within the company (see Figure 3).

**3. Figure 3: The new operating model provides faster problem resolution**



Source: Infosys/Syngenta

## Bringing the strategy to life

Syngenta issued the RFP for the project in May 2019. After several meetings and workshops, Infosys was selected as the provider of choice in September of that year. Between September and December 2019, Infosys and Syngenta held multiple workshops to finalize the team structures, organization, tools, desired outcomes, and so on.

Infosys and Syngenta brought in Agile coaches to instill the Agile mindset in the teams and drive the transformation. The coaches also ensured everyone “spoke the same language” and was aligned to the same goals, which helped greatly in the transition. A series of training sessions were planned, and a couple of sessions were conducted at the Infosys Pune campus before the Covid-19 pandemic hit, requiring the remaining sessions to be moved to a virtual model. The ability of Infosys to quickly pivot from an in-person



delivery to a fully virtual model with minimum disruption was highly appreciated by Syngenta leadership, who stated in the interview that Infosys “did not raise any red flags that we can’t do this. The transition went smoothly, and we transitioned faster than anticipated. There were no problems, no issues with governance.”

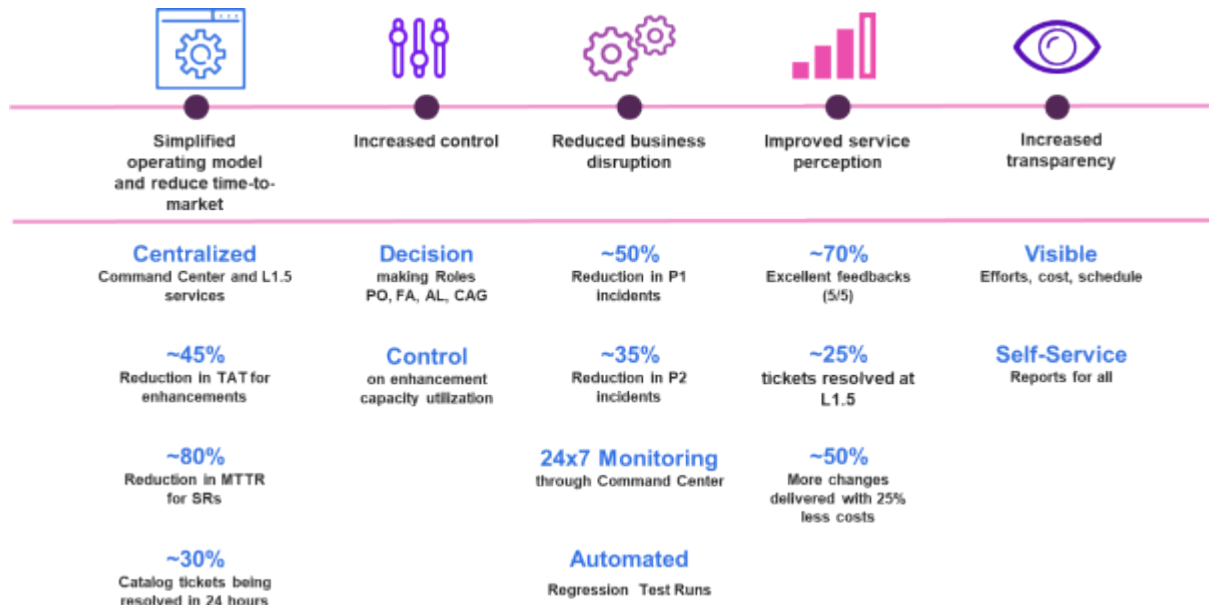
Infosys and Syngenta also designed a continuous branding exercise to promote the initiative internally and effectively communicate progress and achievements. This exercise played an important role in strengthening support for the initiative and enlisting cooperation from the business. The branding and communication exercise also helped in cementing team relationships and collaboration as people across the world transitioned to remote working.

Infosys and Syngenta also conducted “Expert Clinics” – workshops with open sessions that anyone could log into and out of. These clinics became a useful tool to promote the changes that the transformation program brought in, introduce users to the changes and how to navigate them, and provide guidance on how to access and use self-service tools. They also helped Syngenta leaders recognize the need for regular training programs, both as part of employee/user onboarding and as ongoing personnel development.

## Outcome assessment

As part of the engagement, Infosys introduced a “proxy product owner” role to align with Syngenta’s core architecture group and business users and ensure on-time delivery. Infosys also developed an innovation framework called “Ingenious,” which aimed to capture ideas from across Syngenta (including vendor teams) and monitor progress toward implementing approved innovations. In the year since the project began, Syngenta has realized significant benefits — including reduced cost and better user experience — and garnered highly positive feedback from the business (see Figure 4).

4. Figure 4: Outcomes delivered as part of the engagement



Source: Infosys/Syngenta

## The road ahead

On the back of the AMS transformation, Syngenta has laid out a strategic roadmap that emphasizes delivering against multiple milestones to achieve the goal of becoming an agile, AI-driven, customer-centric

business. The AMS transformation is the first step toward building an efficient enterprise and lays a foundation to build on in future programs. The roadmap for the next 18–24 months includes building out hybrid cloud infrastructure and platforms and introducing higher levels of intelligent automation. The longer-term goal is to create a resilient enterprise that leverages technology to deliver excellent customer experiences across the value chain.

## Lessons learned

---

### Communication must be an integral part of any transformation program

Workshops and training sessions conducted by technical architects and subject-matter experts, and interactions between the business and IT, should be encouraged to build support for the initiative. Find people in favor of the transformation program and encourage them to share with the rest of the organization their domain perspective and the impact the changes have had on the domain. Use of internal websites, knowledge portals, discussion boards, and so on to share progress with colleagues and spread awareness about the program will help build a spirit of ownership and camaraderie among teams.

### Training is essential to overcome adoption barriers

Simply implementing changes or introducing new features and tools does not solve problems unless users know when and how to use them. Building a calendar of training workshops or offering walk-in clinics as Syngenta and Infosys did in this case, is important to remove adoption barriers, familiarize users with the changes, and ensure a continuous feedback loop is implemented to maintain an excellent user experience.

### Partnering is the path to success

The client-vendor approach must be replaced by a partnership that goes beyond SLAs and contractual terms. Involving vendor experts, architects, and coaches in this case helped Syngenta gain an outside-in view of their processes. It was also able to leverage best practices learned from Infosys work across other accounts. The collaboration also allowed Infosys to encourage its employees working within Syngenta to take initiative, which in turn sparked innovative solutions for challenges, and promoted a sense of ownership around domains and outcomes.

## Appendix

---

### Methodology

Omdia Case Studies leverage in-depth interviews with key stakeholders as well as a review of any available documentation such as strategic planning, RFP, implementation, and program evaluation documents.

### Further reading

[The New IT Department](#) (March 2021)

[Market Radar – AI Services](#) (February 2021)

[2021 Trends to Watch – Emerging Technology Services](#) (September 2020)

[Omdia Universe: Selecting a Hybrid and Multicloud Management Solution](#) (September 2020)

[Artificial Intelligence Business Models](#) (May 2020)

## Author

Hansa Iyengar, Principal Analyst, Enterprise IT Strategy

[askananalyst@omdia.com](mailto:askananalyst@omdia.com)

## Citation policy

Request external citation and usage of Omdia research and data via [citations@omdia.com](mailto:citations@omdia.com).

## Omdia consulting

We hope that this analysis will help you make informed and imaginative business decisions. If you have further requirements, Omdia's consulting team may be able to help you. For more information about Omdia's consulting capabilities, please contact us directly at [consulting@omdia.com](mailto:consulting@omdia.com).

## Copyright notice and disclaimer

The Omdia research, data and information referenced herein (the "Omdia Materials") are the copyrighted property of Informa Tech and its subsidiaries or affiliates (together "Informa Tech") or its third party data providers and represent data, research, opinions, or viewpoints published by Informa Tech, and are not representations of fact.

The Omdia Materials reflect information and opinions from the original publication date and not from the date of this document. The information and opinions expressed in the Omdia Materials are subject to change without notice and Informa Tech does not have any duty or responsibility to update the Omdia Materials or this publication as a result.

Omdia Materials are delivered on an "as-is" and "as-available" basis. No representation or warranty, express or implied, is made as to the fairness, accuracy, completeness, or correctness of the information, opinions, and conclusions contained in Omdia Materials.

To the maximum extent permitted by law, Informa Tech and its affiliates, officers, directors, employees, agents, and third party data providers disclaim any liability (including, without limitation, any liability arising from fault or negligence) as to the accuracy or completeness or use of the Omdia Materials. Informa Tech will not, under any circumstance whatsoever, be liable for any trading, investment, commercial, or other decisions based on or made in reliance of the Omdia Materials.

## CONTACT US

[omdia.com](https://www.omdia.com)

[askananalyst@omdia.com](mailto:askananalyst@omdia.com)