Excerpt
IDC FutureScape
Worldwide IT/OT Convergence 2020 Predictions
Prediction:
To Sustain a Competitive Positioning, 45% of Operation-Intensive Enterprises Will Digitize All Critical Operations Assets by 2023, Resulting in 5% Average Market Share Gains Within Their Markets

Digital innovation enablers such as the Internet of Things, edge computing, artificial intelligence, robotics, and smart automation or intelligent operational systems are embedding more capabilities, which is driving a new range of applicability and portability across functional use cases. Operation-intensive organizations such as the ones in manufacturing, logistics, utilities, mining, and oil and gas generally understand the purpose of the enterprise digital transformation. Consequently, digital-driven initiatives are commonplace throughout most organizations. For business and technology leaders, envisioning the adoption of these innovation enablers is already relatively generalized. Besides, common barriers to technology usage at scale are gradually disappearing as archetypes become increasingly affordable and contextually intelligent. Yet several interpretations of what “digitizing critical operational assets” still coexists across functions and levels. What is new is the growing scale at which such situations keep thriving.

Because of this, the operationally intelligent organization should shift the common understanding of what defines a critical operational asset: the core function it performs remains a strategic component of the definition, but it is complemented by digital-driven elements. For example, the real-time digitized measure of its performance is the availability of this curated information across organizational groups to allow consistency over the entire operational value delivery or the possible creation of new digitally based functionalities for physical assets.

As digital-ready technology on the OT and IT sides proliferates and continues to evolve, we believe that the mere convergence of IT and OT should not solely be viewed as a goal by itself. Instead, merging the two technology classes should be a necessary but only a midterm strategy helping with streamlining digital asset criticality.

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Business impact
- New operational assets will all be evaluated on how quickly they can be digitally integrated into the operation.
- All legacy assets will be evaluated for the cost and return for digitizing them for inclusion into the overall digital framework.

Guidance for Technology Buyers
- All new acquisition assets and devices must be evaluated by both IT and operations to determine whether they fit into the overall digital framework.
- A governance model must be in place to manage non-digitized assets and how they become cost-effectively digitized to become integrated into the asset framework.

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