DigitalHive.

PLATFORM MIGRATIONS & MODERNIZATION | POSITION PAPER

You're Modernizing Your BI Stack, But Your Users Can't Tell

Modern BI platform selected. Migration underway. But the old platform still holds months of content your teams depend on - and now users are stuck managing two systems at once.

THE POSITION

BI modernization fails at the user layer - not the platform layer

The selection process took a year. The business case was approved. The new BI platform has been licensed, the migration team has been staffed, and the project plan has been shared with leadership. From an IT perspective, modernization is underway.

From a user perspective, nothing has changed - except that there is now a second system to navigate.

This is the modernization gap. The platform transition happens on an IT timeline. The user experience transition is assumed to follow automatically - and it doesn't. Business users continue relying on the old platform because that is where the content, they depend on still lives. The new platform accumulates technically migrated reports that nobody uses because the governance, context, and familiarity of the old environment hasn't transferred with the data.

Migration programs routinely underestimate the user experience challenge. Moving content from one platform to another is a technical problem with a defined solution. Making users comfortable enough with the new environment to abandon the old one is a behavior change problem - and it requires a different approach.

> *A completed migration and a successful modernization are not the same thing. One moves content. The other moves users.*

This paper documents the seven patterns that prevent BI modernization from delivering its intended value, examines why migration programs consistently underestimate the user transition challenge, and proposes an approach that bridges the gap between platform modernization and user adoption.

THE FAILURE PATTERNS

Seven reasons BI modernization stalls at the user layer

These patterns appear consistently across enterprise BI modernization programs. The platform transition may complete on schedule while the user transition never happens.

1. Users stay on the old platform because that is where their content still is

Migrated content arrives in the new platform without the organizational context, folder structure, or navigation patterns users relied on in the old system. Users return to the old platform - not out of resistance, but because it still works and the new one doesn't feel ready.

60%+ of migrated BI reports require significant rework post-migration to restore business context. - Dresner Advisory Services, 2025

2. The old platform is maintained indefinitely

As long as users depend on the old platform, IT cannot decommission it. The modernization program achieves its platform goal - a new system is deployed - but fails its economic goal. Two platforms run in parallel, often for years.

Average BI migration programs run 12–24 months past initial decommission deadlines due to persistent old-platform dependency. - Gartner, 2025

3. Governance is rebuilt from scratch in the new environment

The certifications, ownership records, and governance metadata accumulated in the old platform are not transferred - they are rebuilt. This extends migration timelines, introduces gaps, and means users in the new environment encounter ungoverned content during the transition.

Governance reconstruction accounts for 30–40% of total migration effort in complex BI environments. - Forrester, 2024

4. Training addresses the new platform but not the content gap

Users are trained on how to navigate the new BI tool. They are not given a clear map from the content they relied on in the old environment to the equivalent content in the new one. Adoption stalls not because users can't operate the new tool, but because they can't find what they need.

Platform navigation training does not materially improve content discovery rates in migrated environments. - Deloitte, 2025

5. Power users resist migration because it disrupts their workflows

Power users and analysts have built sophisticated workflows in the old environment - saved filters, custom views, report sequences. Migration breaks these without providing equivalent replacements. The users most critical to driving adoption are the ones most disrupted by the transition.

Power user resistance is the leading cause of modernization program timeline extensions. - McKinsey, 2024

6. Business context is lost when reports are rebuilt

Reports migrated technically correct but rebuilt without the institutional knowledge of their original authors lose the embedded logic - exception rules, filter defaults, calculation decisions made for specific business reasons. Users notice within weeks. Trust in migrated content drops.

Institutional knowledge loss during migration is cited by 67% of BI leaders as their primary migration risk. - Dresner Advisory Services, 2025

7. The modernization ROI cannot be demonstrated

If users are not adopting the new platform, the financial case for modernization cannot be closed. Licenses are paid on both platforms. The efficiency gains projected in the business case do not materialize. Leadership asks why the investment was made.

$28.1B spent on BI software in 2025 - yet most organizations cannot demonstrate utilization gains from modernization programs. - Gartner, 2025

THE HONEST ASSESSMENT

What migration programs miss - and why

#	Conventional Remedy	Why It Doesn't Solve the Root Cause
1	**Technical content migration**	Moving reports from one platform to another is necessary but not sufficient. Users adopt new environments based on experience - not on the fact that content has been technically transferred.
2	**Platform training**	Training addresses navigation - not content discovery. Users who know how to operate the new tool but cannot find the specific content they depend on do not become regular users of the new environment.
3	**Parallel platform operation**	Running both platforms until migration is complete is the default approach - and the most expensive one. It doubles infrastructure cost and removes the urgency that drives user transition.
4	**Forced decommission deadlines**	Removing access to the old platform before users have genuinely transitioned drives productivity loss, not adoption. Users work around the new environment rather than through it.

THE FRAMEWORK

5 conditions for a modernization that users can feel

#	Condition	What to Ask
1	**Content continuity during transition**	*Can users access both old and new platform content through a single-entry point during migration - so they don't have to choose between environments based on where content currently lives?*
2	**Governance transfer, not reconstruction**	*Does the migration approach transfer certifications, ownership, and metadata from the old environment - rather than requiring them to be rebuilt from scratch in the new one?*
3	**Institutional knowledge preservation**	*Is there a mechanism for capturing the business context embedded in existing reports - filter logic, calculation decisions, exception rules - before those reports are rebuilt?*
4	**Power user workflow continuity**	*Does the migration approach preserve the workflows that power users have built in the old environment - or does it require them to rebuild from scratch in the new one?*
5	**Measurable adoption, not assumed completion**	*Is there a mechanism for tracking whether users are actually using the new environment - or is modernization success declared when technical migration completes?*

THE DIGITAL HIVE APPROACH

A single experience across old and new - for the entire transition

Digital Hive bridges the modernization gap by creating a unified access layer across both the legacy and new BI platforms during migration - and a single governed experience in the new environment when migration completes. Users access all analytics content through one entry point, regardless of which platform it currently lives in. Migration proceeds at a pace driven by business need, not operational urgency. Old-platform dependency is eliminated gradually rather than abruptly.

One entry point for both old and new content

Users search once and find content regardless of whether it has been migrated yet. Old-platform content and new-platform content coexist. Users stop choosing between systems.

Governance that transfers, not rebuilds

Certifications, ownership, and metadata are carried forward into the new environment through the unified access layer. Governance continuity is maintained throughout the transition.

Migration sequenced by adoption, not by technical priority

Cross-platform usage analytics show which content is being used - allowing migration sequencing to prioritize the reports users depend on rather than the reports that are easiest to move.

Decommission on a real timeline

Old-platform dependency drops naturally as users find equivalent or better content in the new environment. Decommission becomes a business decision, not a forced cutover.

CLOSING RECOMMENDATION

What to do before your next migration cycle

1. **Audit content usage before migrating anything.** Identify which reports are actively used and which are orphaned. Migrate what matters first. Don't rebuild what nobody uses.
2. **Deploy a unified access layer before migration begins.** Give users one entry point for both old and new content from day one of migration. Remove the incentive to stay on the old platform by making the new one the easier path.
3. **Transfer governance, don't rebuild it.** Capture certification and ownership data from the old platform before migration begins. Carry it forward rather than starting from scratch in the new environment.
4. **Measure adoption, not migration completion.** Define success as active user rates in the new environment - not reports technically transferred. Evaluate at 30, 90, and 180 days post-migration.

Digital Hive is the unification layer.

A centralized analytics hub that gives organizations visibility, trust, and control across their entire BI ecosystem - without changing a single existing tool.

Connects natively with your existing platforms... and more.

Power BI · Tableau · Qlik · Databricks · Snowflake · SAP Analytics Cloud · Looker · IBM Cognos Strategy · ThoughtSpot · Salesforce · SharePoint · Oracle