

SOLUTION BRIEF

Deliver more value from mergers and acquisitions with Apollo GraphOS



KEY BENEFITS

SINGLE SOURCE OF TRUTH

Enable better consistency with an integrated system of record for the data that is consumed by your applications across different merging brands.

BOOST DEVELOPER EFFICIENCY

Speed up feature delivery and safely migrate away from legacy systems with decoupled frontend and backend development.

TRANSITION AT YOUR OWN PACE

A unified API composition layer that connects APIs across any cloud, orchestrator, platform, or protocol and easily integrates and orchestrates new and legacy services across clients.

Introduction

In today's dynamic business landscape, mergers and acquisitions (M&A) act as catalysts for growth, innovation, and increased competitiveness. In fact, companies that make, on average, more than five deals per year grow at double the rate of companies that only selectively pursue M&A. Successful M&As provide various benefits, including increased market share, access to top talent, entry into new markets, cost reduction, diversification, and expanding customer base. But despite all the benefits M&As provide, many organizations struggle to achieve the intended benefits. It's no secret that an overwhelming majority of these deals— <u>anywhere from 70%-90%</u> aren't just failures, but abysmal failures.

Many mergers and acquisitions don't live up to expectations, because they stumble on the integration of technology and operations and often come with a myriad of legacy systems. Whether you're stitching those systems with existing ones or developing a new system to standardize data, M&A demands considerable time and investment. Until unified systems emerge, data is scattered and insights are limited, leading to disjointed customer experiences (CX) and delays to innovation.



Exploring API strategies

In this complex landscape, Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) emerge as the critical connectivity tissue, playing a vital role in facilitating successful M&A integrations. APIs serve as the standardized means for different software applications to interact, regardless of their underlying technologies or data structures. This interoperability is essential for integrating legacy systems with modern applications, enabling seamless data flow between merged entities, facilitating rapid development of unified solutions, and supporting scalable and flexible IT architectures. While enterprise API programs have matured in terms of stability, security, and discoverability through tools like API gateways, the true value emerges when these APIs are effectively utilized across various frontend applications. This is where the challenge lies: frontend teams often face the daunting task of aggregating, orchestrating, and composing APIs to create a unified user experience across multiple merging brands. Traditional approaches like backends-for-frontends (BFFs) or Experience APIs aim to abstract backend complexity for frontend teams, but they often lead to duplicated effort, inconsistencies across frontends, as well as technical debt, ultimately hindering innovation.



Figure: Disjointed customer experience across brands





Apollo GraphOS: The API platform for the modern stack

Figure: GraphQL platform – an API composition layer

Create a unified data model across disparate teams

Apollo GraphOS enables newly acquired data to realize its value by unifying data across legacy as well as modern data sources and systems across different brands. Rather than delivering APIs as a barrage of new endpoints to manage, a federated GraphQL architecture (Apollo Federation) powered by Apollo GraphOS platform empowers teams to use GraphQL to build an API composition layer. This architecture enables backend teams to connect APIs more efficiently and expose them via a unified data model that is accessible to frontend teams via a single endpoint. This ensures data from each merged entity is seamlessly integrated and exposed across various frontends, facilitating a cohesive user experience that aligns with your key M&A objectives.

Empower teams to work better asynchronously

The modular, federated GraphQL architecture also helps to decouple frontend and backend development. This decoupling is particularly valuable in M&A scenarios, giving disparate engineering organizations the autonomy to maintain their existing systems while also facilitating smoother collaboration and gradual integration of technology stacks. Frontend teams can work independently, designing queries that suit their UI requirements without direct dependencies on backend changes. The decoupled architecture empowers backend teams to safely and predictably migrate away from legacy systems, without impacting clients – ultimately reducing tech debt.

GraphQL mitigates the challenges posed by post-M&A attrition and loss of API documentation with its selfdocumenting nature and type-safe system. By defining types and their relationships, GraphQL creates an inherent documentation structure that serves as a comprehensive knowledge base. This not only aids in onboarding new team members but also helps backend teams identify how they can unify systems efficiently and sustainably, ensuring continuity and productivity in the face of organizational changes.



Case study: Expedia

Expedia Group, a leading travel platform managing over 200 booking sites and 25 brands, faced challenges due to its complex technology stack. The company struggled with the task of delivering a seamless experience for travelers using multiple touchpoints during their planning, shopping, and traveling journeys. Seeking to improve customer experiences and streamline their development process, Expedia embarked on a journey to adopt a unified graph approach with GraphQL and Apollo. This transformation was driven by the realization that their existing architecture, comprising multiple traditional REST services, led to bottlenecks, duplication of effort, and slowed down feature delivery. By transitioning to a federated GraphQL architecture powered by Apollo GraphOS, Expedia aimed to create cohesive customer experiences across various client platforms while reducing complexity and accelerating innovation.

The adoption of Apollo Federation enabled Expedia to centralize their data and services into a single graph, facilitating collaboration between teams and providing a unified interface for accessing data. With a common entry point for clients, teams were freed from the requirement to directly connect to multiple services, resulting in improved efficiency and faster development cycles. The Apollo GraphOS platform enabled developers to seamlessly monitor, detect, and prevent schema breaks, ensuring the reliability and scalability of their graph infrastructure. This enabled developers to focus more on enhancing customer experiences rather than managing APIs, leading to a significant reduction in code complexity and technical debt.

By funneling all their digital capabilities into one central federated architecture powered by Apollo GraphOS, Expedia was able to condense several disparate tech stacks into one, build the trips experience 3x faster than their old approach and create a unified user experience across 25 brands.

Case study: Zillow Group

Zillow Group, a leader in real estate technology, faced the challenge of unifying its diverse offerings, which included home buying and selling, agent services, and home loans. These services, some of which were inherited through acquisitions and others developed in silos, lacked cohesion, complicating efforts to provide a seamless customer experience. To tackle this, Zillow partnered with Apollo to leverage their expertise in GraphQL. Apollo's federated GraphQL platform allowed Zillow to integrate its fragmented services into a single, cohesive data graph—ZG Graph. This unified approach enabled different teams to contribute to the graph while maintaining control over their specific subgraphs. Apollo Studio provided essential tools for schema registry and observability, enhancing data accessibility and developer productivity. As a result, Zillow significantly improved its operational efficiency and customer experience. The federated graph scaled to handle billions of operations per month, achieving 99.99% availability and reducing redundant efforts and operational costs.

Summary

In the rapidly evolving landscape of mergers and acquisitions, the seamless integration of technology and operations is critical for realizing the potential benefits of these deals. Apollo GraphOS, with its federated GraphQL architecture, offers a robust platform for navigating the complexities of M&A integration. By providing a single source of truth, boosting developer efficiency, and allowing for a paced transition, Apollo GraphOS enables organizations to unify data across legacy and modern systems, streamline development processes, and create a seamless customer experience across different merging brands.

Embarking on an M&A journey? Connect with <u>experts at Apollo today</u> to learn how your organization can future-proof its API strategy and unlock the full potential of your M&A deals.

Apollo GraphQL is the maker of Apollo GraphOS, a platform that enables API platform teams to connect their APIs and deliver a self-service graph that can power any number of applications. Apollo is backed by Insight Partners, Andreessen Horowitz, Matrix Partners, and Trinity Ventures and based in San Francisco.

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