GBS Rewired
by Hypatos

The GBS Innovators *of 2026*

Part 1

10 leaders redefining what GBS can be.

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Introduction

Global Business Services has spent the better part of two decades proving it can do more with less. Now it is being asked to prove something harder: that it can lead. Across every conversation in this collection, a common story emerges, one where GBS is no longer measured only by transactions processed or costs removed, but by its ability to see across the enterprise, connect what others cannot, and turn that vantage point into growth and competitive advantage.

This report brings together the perspectives of GBS leaders from Cardinal Health, Tesco, Warner Bros, Asklepios Business Services, Kärcher, Schindler, Masco, and beyond, alongside independent voices shaping the standards the industry measures itself against. What they share is not a single playbook, but a set of convictions that recur again and again. Transformation succeeds when it starts with the business problem, not the technology. Governance, trust, and stakeholder alignment matter as much as any system implementation. And the organizations creating the most value are the ones willing to redesign how work happens, rather than simply automating what already exists.

That last conviction is inseparable from the conversation about artificial intelligence. GBS is transforming in the age of AI, and the leaders featured here are candid about what that shift requires: moving beyond tools that merely assist individual tasks toward Agentic AI where AI agents participate directly in workflows, coordinate activity across systems, and execute routine decisions within defined governance frameworks. The organizations profiled here are not waiting for that shift to arrive. They are building the standardized processes, trusted data, and governance structures needed to make agentic AI a source of advantage rather than risk. The consensus is clear: the differentiator ahead will not be whether an organization has access to AI, but whether GBS can translate that capability into outcomes the enterprise can see, measure, and trust.

Showcasing this kind of innovation matters because GBS transformation rarely happens in the spotlight. It happens in the redesign of a broken process, the redefinition of a metric, the quiet decision to build governance before technology. The pages that follow offer a rare, direct look at how that work actually gets done, and what it will take to lead GBS into its next chapter.

Sally Fletcher

Head of Thought Leadership & Community
at Hypatos

CardinalHealth

Shane Abeyratne

SVP GBS

"We're not just executing processes, we're identifying improvements, connecting dots across functions, and partnering with the business on priorities that impact revenue, customer experience, and speed."

In brief, tell me about a transformation you have led which has made an impact.

The deployment of Cardinal Health's Agent Co-Pilot (ACP), an AI-enabled platform designed to improve customer service colleagues and simplify complex interactions. Our customer service teams were working across multiple systems, conducting manual research, and managing complex transactions while striving to deliver a seamless experience.

ACP brings those systems together into a single, integrated experience and provides real-time guidance to support faster, more accurate decisions. It reduces administrative burden, automates routine work, and helps agents focus on the customer. The impact has been clear—better accuracy, fewer misrouted cases, faster handling times, and improved customer outcomes.

What was the biggest lesson you learned?

The biggest lesson is that transformation starts with the business problem, not the technology.

It's easy to be drawn to the latest tools, but lasting impact comes from clearly defining the problem and the outcome you're trying to achieve. Technology, whether AI, automation, or analytics, is an enabler, not the goal.

With ACP, taking the time to understand the challenges facing our frontline teams and customers upfront made all the difference. It led to better design decisions, stronger adoption, and faster realization of value because the solution addressed real pain points. In the end, the most important measure is not what you deploy, but the value you create.

How is your GBS model evolving beyond traditional shared services?

GBS is evolving from a cost and efficiency model to an enterprise capability that drives insight and outcomes. Because we sit across end-to-end processes, we see where work breaks down, where friction exists, and where value is lost. That allows us to move beyond transaction delivery to shaping how work flows across the enterprise.

Increasingly, we're not just executing processes, we're identifying improvements, connecting dots across functions, and partnering with the business on priorities that impact revenue, customer experience, and speed.

How does GBS contribute to enterprise growth, innovation, and competitiveness?

GBS is creating capacity and clarity for the business to transform sustainably.

We touch a broad cross-section of enterprise activities, which gives GBS organizations visibility that few other support organizations have. We often see process breakdowns, customer pain points, productivity opportunities, and operational inefficiencies before they become visible elsewhere.

That allows us to surface inefficiencies and redesign processes, scale best practices across the enterprise, accelerate automation and AI adoption, improve customer and employee experience and enable better decision-making.

GBS helps the enterprise operate more effectively by connecting work across boundaries and driving solutions that create measurable business value.

Name one trend you think will define next-generation GBS over the next 5 years.

We're moving from a more analog, manual focus to digital, AI-powered outcomes. The organizations that create the most value will be those that move beyond the hype and embed AI into solving real business problems.

The most successful GBS organizations will be those that combine AI, data, and automation with human expertise to improve speed, quality, and experience in a way that delivers measurable impact. The differentiator will be who can most effectively translate capability into business outcomes the enterprise can see and feel.

TESCO

András Kohl

Head of Finance Business Services - CE

"The most successful GBS organisations and solutions will be value-led, AI-enabled and still human-led."

In brief, tell me about a transformation you have led which has made an impact.

One of the most impactful transformations I have led was the evolution of the Order to Cash function from a traditional, internally focused transactional operation into a genuine business value driver. This involved redefining process ownership, introducing new performance measures, redesigning the organizational structure, and transforming reporting to focus on business outcomes rather than operational activity. The result was a function that not only executed processes efficiently but also actively contributed to improving cash, customer experience and commercial decision-making.

What was the biggest lesson you learned?

Start with the end state firmly in mind. Before focusing on plans, milestones or implementation activities, it is essential to have a clear vision of the desired outcome and the value the transformation should create. From there, you can work backwards to design the right roadmap.

Throughout the journey, it is vital to keep your stakeholders and the business outcomes at the center of every decision. Processes and organizational structures are important, but they are enablers rather than objectives. When the desired outcomes are clearly defined, it becomes much easier to build the right processes and establish the right organisation with clear people focus to deliver them.

How is your GBS model evolving beyond traditional shared services?

Today, we no longer think of ourselves as a traditional shared services organization; we operate as a Global Business Services organization. At Tesco, Tesco Business Solutions (TBS) is the backbone of the business and plays a critical role in creating sustainable competitive advantage.

Beyond delivering core GBS services, TBS is responsible for a wide range of critical business activities, including store design and maintenance support, energy management, supplier lifecycle management, payroll processing, customer contact management, and enterprise analytics. Through these capabilities, we not only support the business but actively help shape business decisions and strategic outcomes. This evolution has been recognized both internally and externally.

How does GBS contribute to enterprise growth, innovation, and competitiveness?

GBS is uniquely positioned to drive innovation because it sits close enough to the business to understand its challenges, but far enough away from day-to-day operations to experiment and innovate with lower risk.

At Tesco, GBS often acts as an incubation environment for new ideas and technologies. For example, AI solutions are frequently piloted within GBS before being scaled across the wider business. Similarly, our Decision Science and Analytics teams develop insights and capabilities that help the business optimize revenue, improve margins, and strengthen cash performance.

Our ambition is to ensure that no major business decision is made without the support of data, insights or capabilities coming from GBS. By doing so, we help create a sustainable competitive advantage that differentiates Tesco in the marketplace as a retailer.

Name one trend you think will define next-generation GBS over the next 5 years.

AI will undoubtedly be one of the defining trends, but I believe the bigger transformation will be how organisations are structured around it.

Future GBS organizations will move away from rigid organizational hierarchies towards more flexible, capability-based models. Skills, expertise and adaptability will become more important than fixed roles and structures. Teams will be assembled dynamically around business priorities, enabling organisations to respond faster to changing demands.

The most successful GBS organisations and solutions will be value-led, AI-enabled and still human-led. AI will automate routine activities and enhance decision-making, but people will remain responsible for judgement, leadership, innovation, and stakeholder relationships.

Graeme Hastings

SVP, GBS Strategy & Transformation & Mexico Capability Center Leader

"Transformation does not succeed just because the operating model is right on paper."

In brief, tell me about a transformation you have led which has made an impact.

I have been closely involved in the evolution of our GBS from a primarily execution-focused service model into a more strategic enterprise partner. For me, the biggest impact has come from connecting operational excellence with business proximity. It is not just about centralizing work or finding efficiencies, but about building a model that understands the business, anticipates future needs and can scale solutions across markets.

As part of our broader GBS strategy, we have continued to strengthen our Mexico Capability Center, creating a structure that brings together process discipline, talent, technology and closer alignment with the business. That means improving how teams operate day to day, but also making sure they are visible, connected and recognized as part of the broader business agenda. The real impact has been cultural as much as operational: moving teams from being seen as support functions to being seen as enablers of growth, resilience, and transformation.

What was the biggest lesson you learned?

The biggest lesson is that transformation does not succeed just because the operating model is right on paper. It succeeds when people understand why it matters, how it affects them, and where they fit in. If teams do not feel ownership and accountability or if leaders are not aligned, the transformation will lose momentum. Communication, sponsorship and trust are just as important as governance and metrics.

Additionally, transformation is not a one-time project. It is a muscle. You need to keep listening, adjusting and improving. The most effective GBS models are not rigid; they evolve with the business. That requires discipline, but also humility. You have to be willing to challenge your own assumptions and change direction when the business needs something different.

How is your GBS model evolving beyond traditional shared services?

Traditional GBS were built around efficiency, standardization and cost. Those things still matter, but they are no longer enough. We are building deeper expertise in areas such as analytics, automation, process improvement, employee experience, and business enablement. We're also trying to get closer to the business units and not operating in isolation. The goal is not simply to deliver a service at scale, but to help the enterprise solve problems faster and more consistently.

We are also seeing a shift in the type of talent GBS needs. Technical skills are important, but so are curiosity, business judgment, communication and the ability to work across cultures and functions. The next stage of GBS is much more integrated. It is less about transaction processing and more about becoming a strategic partner that can help the organization move with more speed and discipline.

How does GBS contribute to enterprise growth, innovation, and competitiveness?

GBS drives growth by creating capacity e.g. better-designed processes, better-connected teams, and more consistent delivery, freeing the business to focus on customers, products, and innovation. It also drives competitiveness. A strong GBS model gives organizations scalable talent and capabilities, letting them move faster, cut duplication, and apply best practices enterprise-wide.

Innovation, meanwhile, rarely comes from one big idea. It comes from teams who understand a process deeply enough to spot where work can be simplified, automated, or improved. GBS sees patterns across the enterprise and sits on vast amounts of data, turning that insight into real business value, not just operational support.

Name one trend you think will define next-generation GBS over the next 5 years.

The next evolution of GBS will be the shift from automation to intelligent orchestration. Over the past several years, organizations have focused on automating individual tasks and processes. While that will continue, the bigger opportunity lies in connecting processes, data, people and technology across the enterprise in a more integrated way.

AI will be a key enabler, but I do not believe the opportunity is simply to replace work. The real value comes from redesigning work flows across the organization. Successful GBS teams will understand where AI can accelerate decision-making, improve productivity and enhance employee and customer experiences, while recognizing where human judgment and oversight remain essential. As AI and automation take on more transactional work, GBS organizations must upskill and reskill their teams in areas such as data literacy, process excellence, AI fluency, problem solving and change leadership.

The organizations that succeed will combine strong governance, quality data, advanced technology and future-ready talent. Ultimately, next-generation GBS will be defined less by scale and labor arbitrage and more by intelligence, agility, capability and enterprise-wide impact.

Anna-Maria Pricker

General Manager, Asklepios Business Services GmbH

"Technology accelerates change, but governance, culture, and people ultimately determine success."

In brief, tell me about a transformation you have led which has made an impact.

One of the most impactful transformations I have led was the evolution of Asklepios Business Services from a traditional shared services organization into a process-driven and increasingly data-enabled business partner for the enterprise. Before introducing automation technologies, we deliberately established a Business Improvement Center – our internal Center of Excellence for transformation and process excellence. Its role was to create transparency, standardize processes, identify improvement opportunities, and ensure consistent governance across the organization. This foundation proved critical.

Building on this framework, we modernized our incoming-invoices-process and introduced AI-driven automation within invoice processing. Rather than simply digitizing existing activities, we redesigned the end-to-end process, eliminated inefficiencies, and established clear ownership structures.

The most significant outcome was not the technology itself, but the shift in mindset and operating model. Our organization is moving from processing transactions to actively shaping business outcomes. Today, we deliver greater efficiency, transparency, and scalability while creating the foundation for continuous innovation and future growth.

What was the biggest lesson you learned?

The biggest lesson was that successful transformation starts with process excellence and organizational readiness, not technology.

There is often a temptation to begin with the implementation of new systems or AI solutions. Our experience showed that sustainable results only emerge when organizations first understand, simplify, and standardize their processes. Establishing our Business Improvement Center enabled us to create that foundation and align business, operations, and technology around a common vision.

Equally important was the human side of transformation. Technology changes workflows, but people determine whether transformation creates lasting value. Early stakeholder engagement, transparent communication, and clear accountability were essential factors in building trust and achieving adoption. My key takeaway is that transformation is fundamentally a leadership challenge. Technology accelerates change, but governance, culture, and people ultimately determine success.

How is your GBS model evolving beyond traditional shared services?

Our GBS model is evolving from a transactional service provider into an enterprise-wide transformation and value creation partner. We are strengthening end-to-end process accountability and leveraging data-driven decision-making to continuously optimize performance. At the same time, automation and AI enable our teams to focus less on repetitive activities and more on analysis, advisory services, and business improvement.

The Business Improvement Center plays a central role in this evolution by ensuring that process excellence, governance, and continuous improvement remain embedded across the organization.

How does GBS contribute to enterprise growth, innovation, and competitiveness?

Modern GBS organizations play a far more strategic role than they did in the past. They provide the operational backbone that allows enterprises to scale efficiently while maintaining quality, transparency, and control.

By standardizing and continuously improving processes, GBS creates the capacity required for growth. It enables organizations to handle increasing transaction volumes and complexity without proportional increases in cost or headcount.

At the same time, GBS serves as a catalyst for innovation. Because it sits at the intersection of multiple business functions, it is uniquely positioned to identify opportunities for automation, process redesign, and data-driven decision-making. In that sense, GBS contributes directly to competitiveness by increasing agility, accelerating change, and ensuring that resources can be focused on activities that create value for patients, customers, and the organization.

Name one trend you think will define next-generation GBS over the next 5 years.

The defining trend will be the emergence of Agentic AI within enterprise operations.

We are moving beyond a model where AI merely assists employees with individual tasks. The next generation of AI will actively participate in workflows, make decisions within defined governance frameworks, and coordinate activities across end-to-end business processes.

This shift will fundamentally change the role of GBS. The most successful organizations will not simply automate existing work; they will redesign their operating models around the intelligent collaboration of people, processes, and AI agents.

As a result, GBS will become increasingly autonomous, scalable, and insight-driven. The future competitive advantage will not come from having AI available, but from effectively integrating AI into business operations while maintaining trust, governance, and accountability.

CSL Behring

Claudia Petrocchi

Former VP Employee Services & Experience

"GBS isn't a fixed operating model; it's a flexible transformation catalyst that can either absorb operations or release them, depending on what creates the most enterprise value."

In brief, tell me about a transformation you have led which has made an impact.

A couple of years ago, we completed a multi-year initiative to build a legally sound, data-driven and centralized ER function within HR Operations, standardizing practices across all geographies, deploying digital case management, and creating a single source of compliance visibility and trend reporting. The work was already diligently done, but without process standardization and case management enablement, cases were managed locally, and there wasn’t a dashboard able to provide real-time data and the opportunity to analyze trends, leadership capabilities and educational opportunities.

This transformation showed how Shared Services can create value far beyond traditional administrative work. By combining process standardization, technology enablement, and centralized capabilities with specialized expertise, we transformed an area that is not typically centralized into a true Center of Excellence. While transformation is a continuous journey and there needs to be an expectation of further year-over-year improvements, the benefits have already been tangible, including greater consistency, scalability, enhanced service quality, stronger collaboration, and available data sets.

What was the biggest lesson you learned?

One of the biggest lessons learned was the importance of establishing a reliable baseline before making operational and staffing decisions. In functions that lack consistent case management system or tracking mechanisms and must accommodate meaningful differences across business units or entities, it is easy to under- or overestimate volumes, complexity, and ultimately resource requirements. While assumptions are inevitable during a transformation, it is critical to recognize this limitation upfront, build appropriate contingencies into the business case, and implement robust tracking as early as possible. Doing so enables faster calibration during the first months of operation, minimizes surprises, and ensures staffing and service levels can be adjusted based on real demand rather than estimates.

How is your GBS model evolving beyond traditional shared services?

At this time, although there is still a functional shared services setup and not a GBS one, the evolution continues at a functional level. The evolution sits specifically with creating opportunities for specialized expertise, rather than simply shifting work from one team to another, by redesigning how the work is performed.

How does GBS contribute to enterprise growth, innovation, and competitiveness?

I'll start by saying what everyone probably expects me to say, that technology and AI will play an absolutely critical role; not just across the enterprise, but specifically within GBS for GBS, and within GBS for the enterprise. I take that as a given, not a differentiator. Every serious player will have it.

Where I believe GBS actually makes the difference — if it's leveraged and grown correctly — is transformation itself. And I mean that in two distinct ways.

The first is GBS transforming to operate. Here, GBS leads, supports, and progresses transformation initiatives, and then picks up the delivery once the transformation is complete. It's not just a passenger in the enterprise's transformation agenda it's often the engine driving it, and then it becomes the permanent home for the new, transformed operating model.

The second is GBS transforming to give back. In this case, GBS transforms a function or process, provides the transformation as a service, and then hands operations back to the business functions themselves. GBS isn't trying to own everything forever; sometimes its highest value is in building the capability, modernizing the process, and then stepping back so the function can run it.

That duality is, to me, the real source of growth, innovation, and competitiveness: GBS isn't a fixed operating model, it's a flexible transformation catalyst that can either absorb operations or release them, depending on what creates the most enterprise value. Most conversations about GBS focus on scale, cost, or efficiency. Few focus on this, the fact that GBS's greatest strategic asset is its ability to transform and choose what to do with that transformation afterward.

KÄRCHER

Sebastian Frey

Managing Director

"The biggest lesson was that structural transformation fails without a strong, unified governance framework."

In brief, tell me about a transformation you have led which has made an impact.

We successfully evolved Kärcher Global Service (KGS) from a traditional Financial SSC into an integrated GBS.

Today, we serve more than 100 legal entities across 8 global functions. Via a hybrid captive/BPO footprint, we broke functional silos and industrialized service delivery on a truly global scale.

What was the biggest lesson you learned?

The biggest lesson was that a structural transformation relies on a strong, unified governance framework - without it, it simply fails. Aligning our value proposition with our stakeholders requires complete transparency. We achieved this through a rigid steering model driven by our KGS Balanced Scorecard, turning strong stakeholder management into a competitive advantage and one of our greatest strengths.

How is your GBS model evolving beyond traditional shared services?

Our evolution means moving beyond transactional processing to becoming a proactive value driver. By embedding automation directly into our core scope, we systematically remove repetitive manual tasks across the company.

Guided by our vision, "KGS – We realize values," we have shifted our culture from being a reactive service executor to a proactive co-entrepreneur.

How does GBS contribute to enterprise growth, innovation, and competitiveness?

KGS serves as a scalable platform for Kärcher's global growth by standardizing processes across more than 100 entities. Through our KGS Balanced Scorecard, we ensure continuous process optimization while simultaneously maximizing client and employee satisfaction - delivering clean data, less friction, and higher overall productivity.

Name one trend you think will define next-generation GBS over the next 5 years?

While AI is the main topic everywhere right now, the real key for GBS is knowing how to implement, maintain, and scale it effectively to realize true efficiency gains. We already know how to manage systems at scale and design technology that fits the entire enterprise workflow, not just one functional silo. GBS needs to become the ultimate orchestration layer.

Schindler

Arpitha Shetty

VP Business Service Centre

My guiding principle is simple: what you cannot measure, you cannot deliver."

In brief, tell me about a transformation you have led which has made an impact.

While I have been involved in several transformation initiatives, one that remains especially close to my heart is from my earlier years with a client who had grown through multiple acquisitions. We were their service provider through that growth journey, and at one stage, our own processing errors had led to duplicate vendor payments. To address this, we first built an Excel file with logic-based formulas to identify potential duplicate payments every evening. As the client acquired more organizations, we began seeing duplicate payments caused by systems not speaking to each other, so we progressed from formulas to a macro-based solution.

It may sound like a basic step today, but at that time, it was a meaningful transformation, and the impact started moving toward USD 1 million annually. Eventually, the company grew, leaving us with five different entities and disconnected systems. We then built a business case for RPA, secured investment, and went on to deliver savings of USD 6.5 million in 18 months, which also earned external recognition and awards.

What was the biggest lesson you learned?

The biggest lesson I learned is that transformation is not a one-time milestone; it is a continuous journey. What feels transformed today may need to evolve again tomorrow as business needs, industry expectations, and technology continue to change. It requires a growth mindset. I also believe transformation can sometimes feel like a heavy word, especially for young professionals who may wonder how they can contribute. In reality, transformation does not always have to mean AI, bots, or large-scale technology programs. It can begin with small changes in day-to-day operations.

Those small improvements can eventually lead to something substantial and valuable. Transformation may not always be immediately measurable, but it often creates the path toward outcomes that can be measured and scaled.

How is your GBS model evolving beyond traditional shared services?

For me, the evolution of GBS is about becoming a trusted business partner. GBS earns recognition only by delivering visible value to the business—our customer, stakeholder, and ultimately our investor. While the terminology around GBS and GCC continues to evolve, the expectation remains the same: we must be seen as more than a delivery organization. We should be recognized as professionals with an innovative, analytical mindset who can step back from daily operations, analyze data, and identify opportunities that solve business pain points.

My philosophy is to centralize, standardize, and simplify before investing in innovation. I consider myself successful when business leaders approach me not just to execute, but to recommend solutions. Drawing on my background in sales and solutions, I approach every opportunity like a business proposal. I see business leaders as investors in our future, so every initiative should demonstrate clear value and ROI.

Too many organizations remain focused on firefighting instead of consulting-led thinking. Rather than waiting for greater ownership, we should earn it by consistently demonstrating measurable business impact. My guiding principle is simple: what you cannot measure, you cannot deliver.

How does GBS contribute to enterprise growth, innovation, and competitiveness?

GBS contributes to enterprise growth, innovation, and competitiveness when it becomes the place the business turns to for help in solving process or business challenges. That, to me, is a clear sign that GBS is well integrated into the business and is being seen as a contributor to growth rather than only as an execution engine.

I have had the opportunity to work across different industries and organizational models, and that diversity has given me exposure to different leadership styles, business priorities, and operating models.

I believe my journey of working for many years in a third-party service provider environment and then moving into captive organizations has been extremely valuable. It gave me the discipline, resilience, and commercial mindset that come from being thoroughly tested, while also helping me understand the broader enterprise perspective. That combination has shaped how I view the role of GBS today: not only to deliver efficiently, but to influence outcomes, challenge existing ways of working, and create measurable business value.

Name one trend you think will define next-generation GBS over the next 5 years.

Next-generation GBS will not be judged only by the number of transactions it processes, but by the number of business decisions it influences.

The future will belong to GBS organizations that combine human expertise, AI, and data intelligence to become strategic advisors to the business. We need to move from being seen as service providers to becoming core contributors to enterprise decision-making.

MASCO

Carla Sarti

VP GBS

"The biggest lesson I learned is that successful transformation is far more about people and process than technology."

In brief, tell me about a transformation you have led which has made an impact.

One of the most impactful transformations I led was the redesign of an indirect procurement organization supporting 189 locations. At the time, procurement was largely transactional, policies were inconsistently followed, there were control concerns, spend visibility was limited, and the function was not viewed as a strategic business partner.

I led a comprehensive transformation across people, process, and technology. We redesigned the organization to better support business needs, standardized procurement processes across all locations, strengthened governance and controls, and implemented Coupa globally in approximately 18 months. This created enterprise-wide visibility into spend, improved compliance, reduced risk, and established a foundation for data-driven decision making.

From a GBS perspective, the key achievement was shifting from decentralized transactional execution to a scalable enterprise service model. By standardizing processes and creating transparency, we were able to move procurement from an administrative function to a strategic capability that delivered business value, improved supplier management, and enabled more effective sourcing decisions.

What was the biggest lesson you learned?

The biggest lesson I learned is that successful transformation is far more about people and process than technology. The most challenging aspect was aligning leaders across 189 locations around a common process model and governance framework while balancing local business needs.

Technology can accelerate value, but it will not fix unclear ownership, poor process design, or lack of stakeholder alignment. The organizations that realize the greatest benefits are those that establish a clear vision, build trust, simplify and standardize processes, and engage stakeholders early before implementing new technologies.

How is your GBS model evolving beyond traditional shared services?

Traditional shared services were often designed primarily around labor arbitrage and cost reduction.

My vision for GBS is to serve as the enterprise operating backbone—leveraging scale, standardizing processes, strengthening governance, improving business outcomes, and accelerating digital transformation. Rather than simply centralizing work, GBS should simplify common activities, embed automation and AI, improve transparency through data, and allow business leaders to focus more time on customers, growth, and innovation.

Over time, I see GBS evolving toward an increasingly digital and agent-enabled operating model where routine work becomes more automated, decisions become more data-driven, and human effort is concentrated on exceptions and higher-value activities.

How does GBS contribute to enterprise growth, innovation, and competitiveness?

GBS contributes to growth by removing administrative complexity and enabling business leaders to focus on value-creating activities.

It contributes to innovation by creating common processes, data, and technology foundations that make automation, AI, and continuous improvement possible.

It contributes to competitiveness by reducing duplication, improving productivity, increasing organizational agility, and enabling the enterprise to scale without adding proportional overhead. When designed effectively, GBS becomes a strategic advantage rather than simply a support function.

Name one trend you think will define next-generation GBS over the next 5 years.

Over the next five years, I believe the most significant trend will be the shift from automating tasks to orchestrating end-to-end processes through AI agents.

Historically, organizations focused on workflow automation and RPA. The next generation of GBS will leverage AI agents to coordinate work across systems, manage exceptions, generate insights, support decision-making, and increasingly execute routine activities with limited human intervention.

The organizations that successfully combine standardized processes, trusted data, strong governance, and AI-enabled execution will create a significant competitive advantage in cost, speed, scalability, and service quality.

Tony Saldanha

Co-Founder, Inixia

Co-Author, APEX GBS Industry Standards

"Organizations have the capacity to come together and deliver remarkable outcomes when we're able to line up motivations, goals, and aspirations across the entire enterprise."

In brief, tell me about a transformation you have led which has made an impact.

One that stands out is my role as CIO of the Gillette Company when Procter & Gamble acquired Gillette in 2005. P&G sent me to Boston to be CIO and GBS leader for Gillette, with a mandate to integrate the systems and people of a $10 billion global business into P&G and deliver $1.2 billion in cost synergies within 24 months. As you can imagine, this was a daunting challenge.

We're talking about integrating every layer of supply chain, finance, decision support, and HR, along with all of the underlying IT systems, into P&G's standard systems and processes, and doing it in every country Gillette operated in, within 24 months. There were other constraints layered on top of that. P&G had committed that its combined IT and GBS headcount would stay flat despite the acquisition, so this was never purely a technology problem. It was equally a people problem and a process-standardization problem, across every core work process in the Gillette organization worldwide.

To cut a long story short, we delivered it in 18 months, six months ahead of the original target, and it went on to become a widely published success story. But beyond the outcome itself, it taught me lifelong lessons about how to approach work-process and technology transformation. The scars on my back, so to speak, taught me the importance of driving change in a way that aligns business goals with every individual's personal hopes and motivations, and the importance of eliminating and streamlining work processes wherever possible rather than simply automating what already exists.

What was the biggest lesson you learned?

Organizations have the capacity to come together and deliver remarkable outcomes when we're able to line up motivations, goals, and aspirations across the entire enterprise. This isn't a new lesson. The world has seen it play out during crises like the development of COVID vaccines, and further back, during the Y2K remediation projects that swept every industry at once.

A lot of the effort that went into the Gillette integration went in before we ever touched a system or a role. It went into figuring out how to make this project a genuine top priority for the entire organization, for both P&G and Gillette. We looked closely at bonus and reward systems to make sure that even people who weren't directly working on the project understood that they had a stake in its success, and that alignment on this priority reached every level.

When we treat our employees as adults, share information openly with them, understand their personal goals, and help them become successful in their own futures, we're able to perform what really amounts to miracles.

You wrote in a recent article that many GBS leaders are still measuring value creation by old metrics. How should they be measuring value today?

That was an article I wrote recently comparing the evolution of the metrics countries use to measure gross domestic product, GDP, and how that definition has evolved as economies themselves became more sophisticated and complex. There's a very clear parallel to how GBS metrics need to evolve as the technology and objectives of GBS evolve.

To back up for a moment: a couple of hundred years ago, a country's GDP was essentially the same thing as the agricultural output of its farms. That changed as services became an important part of GDP, and later, as capabilities like software also became capitalized and recognized as assets in their own right. In other words, the measurement of GDP evolved alongside the understanding that a country's capabilities had evolved, from agriculture, to manufacturing, to services, to decision support. That's an incredible parallel for GBS. The value of GBS has also evolved over the past four decades, from being the deliverer of simple transactional work at the lowest possible cost, into becoming the transformation engine of the entire enterprise. If our GBS metrics continue to reflect old priorities like cost reduction alone, we're guilty of setting the wrong goals and measuring the wrong capability outcomes for what GBS actually delivers today.

In short, what do you think is the best and most sustainable strategy for GBS?

For me, this is a simple one. I think of GBS as the strategy inside any company for delivering the one-third share of competitive advantage that comes from operational agility. It's been well established that roughly two-thirds of any given company's competitive advantage comes from its core products or services. If you're a car company, your automobiles and similar products account for about two-thirds of your competitive advantage. The remaining third comes from the internal agility of operations within the company.

This shouldn't be a surprise to anyone who has followed companies like Amazon or Apple. In those cases, it's the efficiency of operations that has acted as a force multiplier in winning in the marketplace. As long as GBS continues to move up the value chain, to assume real responsibility and accountability rather than simply taking orders from the business, and instead becomes the internal equivalent of a Big Four consulting firm, one that also executes the change strategies it recommends, then this is a strategy that will remain relevant for decades to come.

How does GBS contribute to enterprise growth, innovation, and competitiveness?

This builds on the previous question about the most sustainable strategy for GBS. I think GBS has a role to play in all three levers of performance in any given enterprise. The first is profit margin, which equates to cost reduction, the traditional home turf for GBS.

The second is revenue growth: how do our internal functional and operational support capabilities lead to increased revenue for the company?

And third is cash, which is the lifeblood of any company. Cash growth in particular can be influenced by the effectiveness of how a company utilizes its assets, whether that's buildings, manufacturing plants, or inventory. GBS can directly influence cash in ways that are often underappreciated.

In other words, GBS has to move beyond simply running these processes at lower cost. It has to expand its role to help the enterprise with new innovations, new ideas, and new change management, relative to all three levers of performance: profit margin, revenue, and cash flow.

Chazey Partners
A QX Global Group Company

Chas Moore

Executive Partner

"To achieve the promises of agentic AI, GBS organizations will need more control and influence over end-to-end processes."

In brief, tell me about a transformation you have led which has made an impact.

Our client operates in over 30 countries worldwide, optimizing the clinical development process for pharmaceutical, biotechnology, medical device, and academic organizations. The HR team was limited by the constraints of process, technology, and organizational structures that were siloed, reliant on generalists, and lacking in strategic capacity.

Chazey Partners helped to develop the HR Transformation Roadmap, supporting implementation of the new operating model with a single shared services center, three centers of expertise, and global business partnering.We also acted as the system integrator for the new Oracle Fusion HCM, realizing the value of integrated operating and digital transformation.

What was the biggest lesson you learned?

Not a new lesson, but the importance of a strong roadmap and financial business case was re-emphasized with this project. We needed to manage the project through three CHROs and overcome the resistance of the IT organization in planning the new HRMS.

If we had moved quickly to implementation based on the strength of the sponsorship of the initial CHRO, we would have quickly stalled with the change in leadership and likely would have been exited as the new leadership acted to put their own stamp on the organization.

The financial business case was a significant driver in obtaining funding and approval for the replacement of the existing SuccessFactors HRMS with Oracle Fusion. The project was very successful and led to sustainable changes and benefits, including over a million USD in annual ongoing savings and 30% process efficiency.

How do you feel GBS models are evolving in the Age of AI?

GBS are evolving slower than many may expect. While there have been many announcements of layoffs enabled by AI, much of this activity is “AI-washing” and masks headcount reductions to address historical overcapacity or revenue loss. AI proponents will champion statements such as 80% touchless processing, but the underlying business case is restricted by scope and the need for governance and oversight. Organizations are realizing that digital agents are not free and concerns about token cost and accuracy are becoming more common.

For organizations with an effective AI strategy, labor arbitrage strategies will be challenged by virtualization of the GBS structure. For many organizations, they will find a model with a smaller in-country team managing digital agents more compelling than moving the work to a near- or offshore location. Organizations that already have significant investments in models that rely on labor arbitrage will be challenged to maintain their relevance. This will provide a key opportunity for smaller, more agile service providers.

How does GBS contribute to enterprise growth, innovation, and competitiveness?

Historically, GBS was established to improve efficiency, quality, and compliance across back-office functions, but its success ultimately depended on delivering a compelling financial business case. Cost savings, more than operational improvements alone, justified investment and enhanced organizational competitiveness.

Today, leading organizations view GBS as a strategic capability rather than just a cost-saving model. By standardizing operations, GBS enables faster expansion into new markets and business areas through a more agile and scalable operating model.

GBS also creates the scale needed to accelerate process improvement, automation, and AI adoption. Rather than relying on fragmented improvement efforts, leading GBS organizations invest in dedicated transformation teams that drive continuous innovation, digital transformation, and the adoption of new operating models.

Name one trend you think will define next-generation GBS over the next 5 years.

GBS operations will become the AI hubs for leading organizations, moving up the value chain with digital operators that can handle the professional and technical tasks that many GBS have been slower to adopt. To achieve the promises of agentic AI, GBS organizations will need more control and influence over end-to-end processes. Organizations that restrict GBS to transactional and administrative processes will not achieve the promise and potential of agentic GBS.

About Hypatos

Hypatos enables The Agentic GBS with AI agents that execute end-to-end processes across P2P, O2C, H2R, and R2R—making decisions within human-set boundaries and scaling operations without headcount growth.

We put process ownership in the hands of business leaders, elevating organizations from support provider to business partner. Results: 90%+ straight-through processing, 6-9 month ROI, and 20x productivity gains.

Trusted by enterprises in Europe and North America, with hubs in Berlin, Miami, and New York, and teams across 15+ countries.

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