



# Business Operating System (BOS)

**Building a great company is hard work, but the right tools make it much easier and, most importantly, attainable. A universally applied Business Operating System (BOS) represents everything from an organization's structure to how its projects are managed and its people are led.**

From their start, most organizations use some kind of operating system to manage daily operations, budgeting, orders, payroll, etc. These early systems, however, are typically ad hoc, limited in scope, and lack sufficient integration capabilities.

Once organizations realize this approach won't suffice, they can move away from the "accidental system" they may have initially backed into and adopt an intentional BOS instead. As we'll explain below, this will be the beginning of a beautiful friendship.



**Types of BOS**

## Context

A Business Operating System is designed to efficiently and successfully manage daily, weekly, and quarterly operations. Some use fully integrated cloud-based platforms like Ninety.

To understand the value of a more advanced BOS, let's take a look at three major problems of early-stage systems:

1. Accidental — The system evolved through reactive, disorganized processes.
2. Overly complicated — Components are continuously added to the system in reaction to an immediate need.
3. Ineffective — The system doesn't produce the needed results.

What may have been fine initially isn't sustainable as an organization grows. As an organization progresses through Stages of Development, it's crucial to understand what kind of BOS is most appropriate — and when it should evolve.

### ACCIDENTAL BOS

Leaders who launch a business typically follow their own practices at the outset, resulting in an Accidental BOS. As people come on board, they also follow their own practices. Soon, there are a lot of people doing the same kind of work (e.g., managing agreements) using a lot of different tools.

### INTENTIONAL BOS

As the company sustains growth and adds team members, the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) might assemble an Intentional BOS using collectively agreed-on tools and disciplines drawn from their personal or collective experience.

### DESIGNED BOS

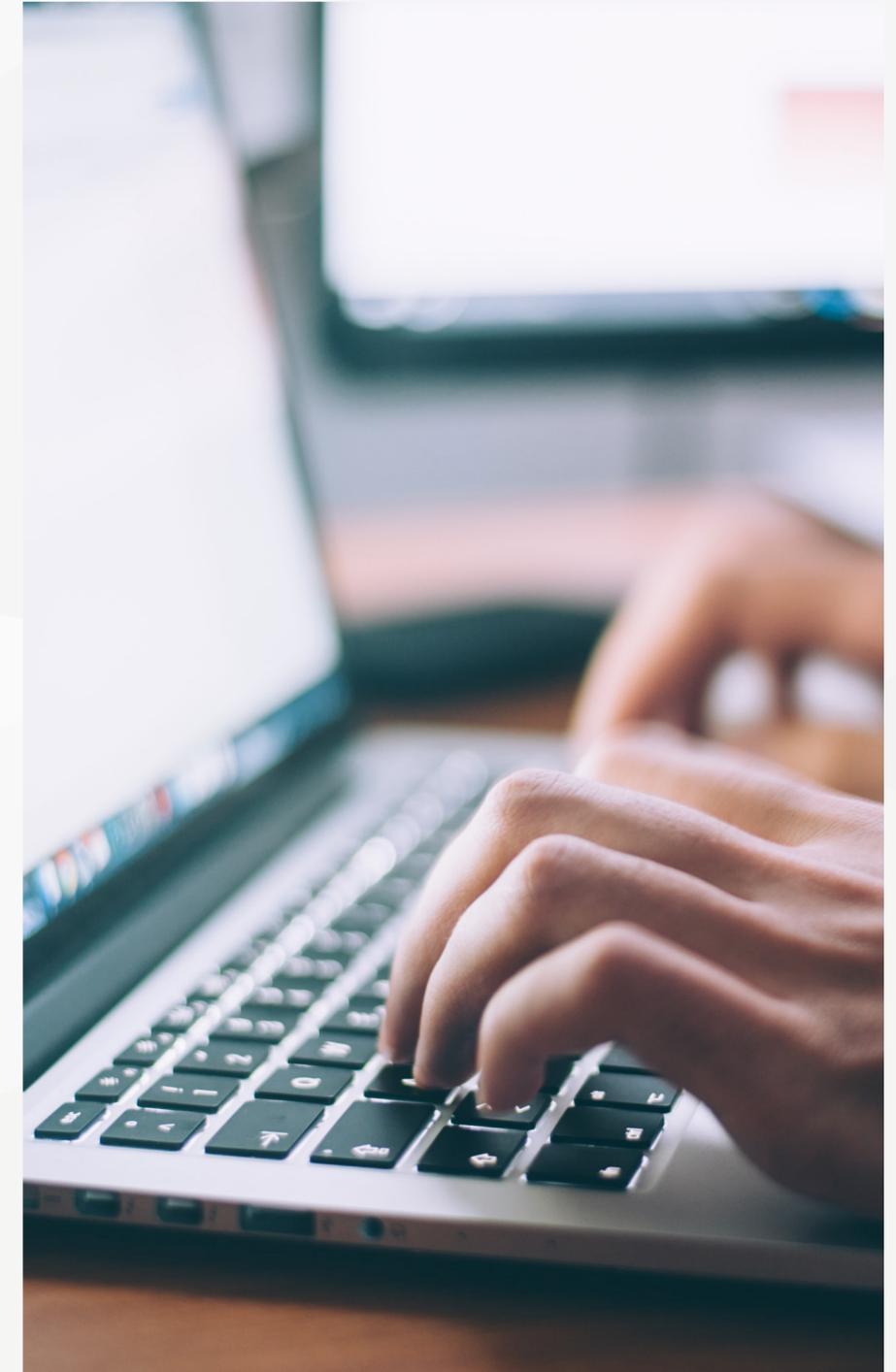
As the organization continues to scale, the SLT might adopt a Designed BOS that has been configured by an expert in the field based on their experience with tens or even hundreds of businesses. A Designed BOS consists of interrelated concepts, tools, and disciplines that work best when used together.

### HOLISTIC BOS

Successful companies ascend to a Holistic BOS that includes a complete collection of concepts, tools, and disciplines to address key aspects associated with building an organization. This system offers a time-tested, proven methodology for mastery. All the main business functions are supported, enabling continuous learning as we see what works.

### INTEGRATED BOS

The only step up from a Holistic system is an Integrated BOS, a cloud-based platform that provides complete cross-departmental [view of KPIs](#), goals, [responsibilities](#), and more. With this BOS in place, the founder or entrepreneur has likely stepped away from daily operations, confidently leaving the SLT to steward organizational success.





## Taking the Plunge

Without question, implementing a new BOS can feel a little scary. There's a learning curve, maybe some natural resistance. (Change is hard, after all.) Thankfully, there are many coaches and implementers who can help guide organizations on the path to implementing a new BOS. The entire process, from orientation and familiarity to full comfort and confidence, is greatly enhanced when people with deep BOS experience can help others work ON their business.

This much we know: once the right BOS is in place, there's really no limit to what a company can achieve.

## Hopefully Helpful Hints

Before deciding to upgrade a Business Operating System, especially in those middle stages of development when things are humming along, ask the following questions:

1. Are we willing to invest about 10% of the time, energy, and effort that we normally use to work IN the business to work ON the business?
2. Are we emotionally ready to relinquish the habits, tools, and processes that helped us get where we are today and replace them with the ones that are more likely to get us where we want to go?
3. Are we willing to deal with the learning curve that comes with implementing an upgraded BOS?

**It's a great idea to learn about the many BOSs and their related philosophies, but don't "mix and match" components.** This kills the crucial benefits associated with more sophisticated Business Operating Systems. Part of their power is the simplicity and the common language created within your organization.

## Takeaway

Implementing a new Business Operating System may seem daunting, but it's a wise investment of time and resources to ensure long-term growth and sustainability. As an organization scales, its BOS parallels that ascension, becoming more intentional. A fully integrated BOS becomes the foundation for what we call a great company.

Determine which BOS best matches your organization's philosophy and needs, and then strongly consider partnering with an experienced coach or implementer to help put it in motion. While there is a learning curve, the SLT and team members will soon see how their efforts lead to organizational success.

What's next? Visit the [90u Library](#) or [try Ninety today](#).