GOING THE DISTANCE

Arraya Solutions Guide to Running (and Finishing) the M&A Marathon

THE ROAD TO A SUCCESSFUL MERGER & ACQUISITION

WHAT WAS I THINKING?

It's a question that has crossed the minds of countless marathon runners at some point during those 26.2-mile tests of willpower and endurance. When confronted with the sheer magnitude of what they've undertaken, even the most committed runners can't help but momentarily question their need to prove something or to check an item off their bucket lists.

Mergers and acquisitions have a way of inspiring that exact same question. Many businesses have gone into an M&A with the highest of expectations only to see it hit snag after snag or even stall out entirely. Just like that, those benefits that once seemed so clear are lost in the complexities and challenges presented by the process itself.

Arraya Solutions has spent years helping organizations overcome obstacles and realize the goals that led them to pursue M&As in the first place. Arraya has honed this experience into an award-winning, repeatable approach that can work for organizations of all sizes and industries. This approach can unify communication and collaboration technologies, consolidate data center solutions, blend environments under one security umbrella, and complete all of the other steps vital to laying the foundation for a new corporate identity.

What does this methodology entail? Lace up those running shoes and let's find out.

GET A LAY OF THE LAND

Long before race day, it's important to learn as much as possible about the course itself. Is it flat or hilly? What kind of conditions can be expected? Collecting this information beforehand will help determine the best way to approach training for the course in order to reach a goal – whether that goal involves achieving a personal best time or just finishing the race.

The same level of careful investigation is needed to ensure a successful M&A. This motivates the Discovery phase, a stage that can either stand alone or serve as the beginning of a larger initiative. During Discovery, Arraya's team members immerse themselves in a company's IT environment to discuss the business goals and balance them against consolidation methodologies.

Once Discovery wraps, companies receive a comprehensive **Migration Readiness Assessment**. This document includes a high-level plan designed to take an organization from where it stands to where it wants to be. Also identified in the assessment are possible risks that may be encountered along the way. The idea is to provide all sides with enough information at the start so there are few, if any, surprises later on.

We focus on your **business goals** and balance them against consolidation methodologies.

PLAN FOR WHAT COMES NEXT

It's possible to show up on race day with no training and complete a marathon – although it is definitely not a best practice. A more likely outcome is an injury, making the money and time invested in the marathon all for naught. Instead, runners should devise a training schedule that gradually builds up their stamina and pace while reducing the risk of injury.

Proper planning is no less important during an M&A scenario. There's no better source to turn to for insight into an organization's practices than the people who work with them day in and day out. As such, Arraya's team works closely with a business's staff to build upon the information turned up during the Discovery phase to craft strategies for integration, migration, and, if necessary, decommissioning. Those events are placed into a timeframe that will cause the least business disruption.
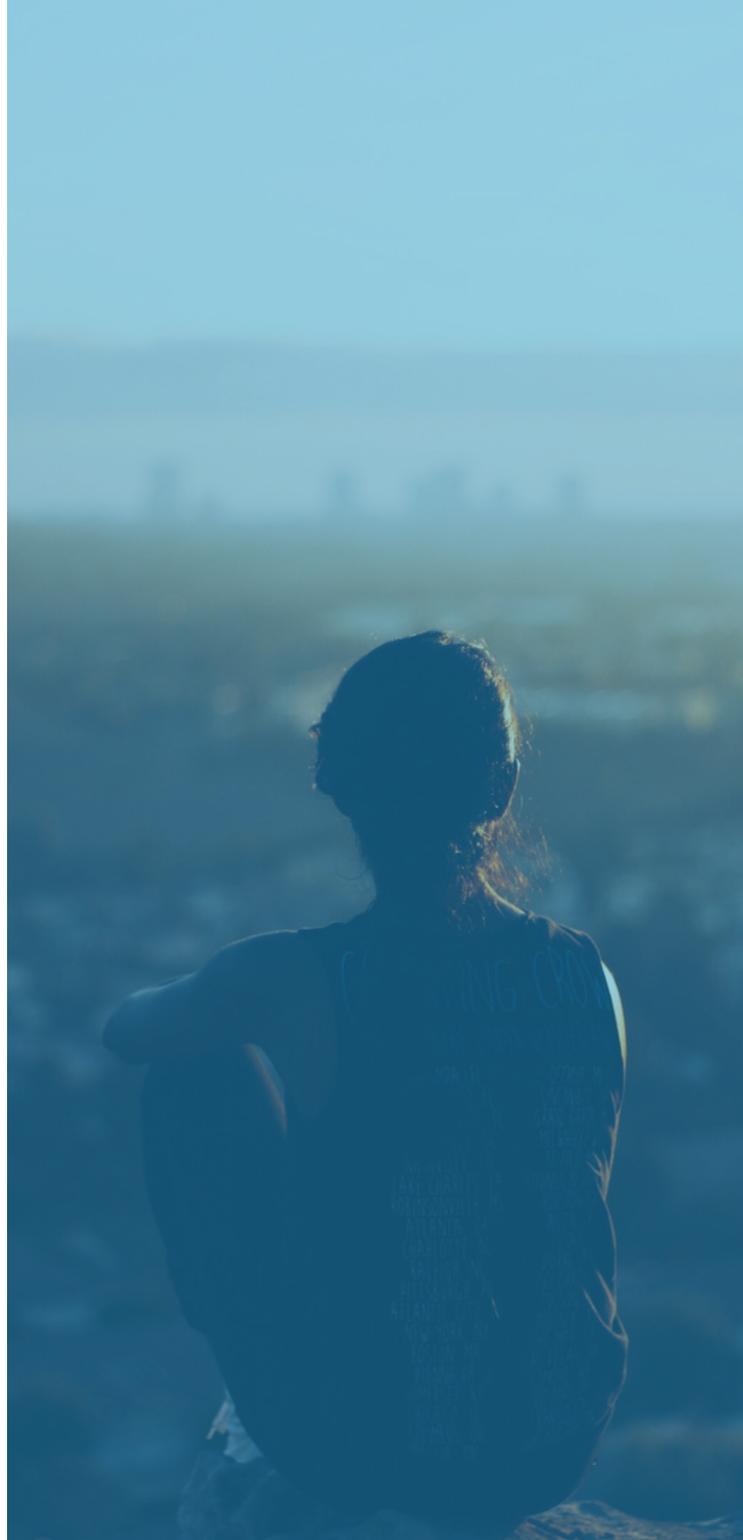
PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

Planning is one thing; however, doing is a completely different story. The best training plan ever devised will make little difference come marathon day if runners don't make the time to actually follow it. The early mornings and weekends spent running the neighborhood, those are where risks are discovered, adjustments are put into place, and ultimately, progress is made.

Practice is just as important to successfully complete an M&A. Before migrations are launched, organizations need to understand where potential obstacles lie and what needs to be done to minimize them. Arraya's team does this by testing everything from the solutions to be deployed to end user reactions, all to ensure possible hurdles have been accounted for before Day One arrives.

RACE DAY

All of the miles and blisters have led to this. The time has come to put the lessons learned during training into action. Still, no matter how much work goes into getting to the starting line, what comes after will never be easy. There may even be an unexpected stumble or broken shoelace to contend with along the way. However, the long hours spent training will be worth it once the finish line comes into view.

Whether the finish line is Day One or consolidating Post Day One, Arraya's team can perform the necessary cutovers and migrations. They follow the playbook devised and perfected during the previous stages and, should a surprise occur, they can use their knowledge of an organization's environment and their own experience to course correct. In addition, end users are polled to ensure a smooth transition. Most importantly, Arraya's team can be counted on not to quit until all of an organization's objectives are reached.

PERFORM A POST-RACE AUDIT

Once the euphoria of conquering 26.2 long and grueling miles begins to fade, it's time to perform a self-audit. If this was the first marathon of many, it's wise to review what worked and what didn't in terms of training and tweak as needed. If once was more than enough, it may be time to go through something of a decommissioning process. Spare running shoes can be donated to charity, leftover energy beans passed along to another prospective long distance runner.

The same process should be undertaken post M&A. Organizations need to take stock of everything that took place. Just as important is determining what the newly-joined company no longer needs. Redundant solutions or identities may need to be scraped so they don't stand in the way of the organization coming together as one and operating in the most efficient, streamlined manner possible.
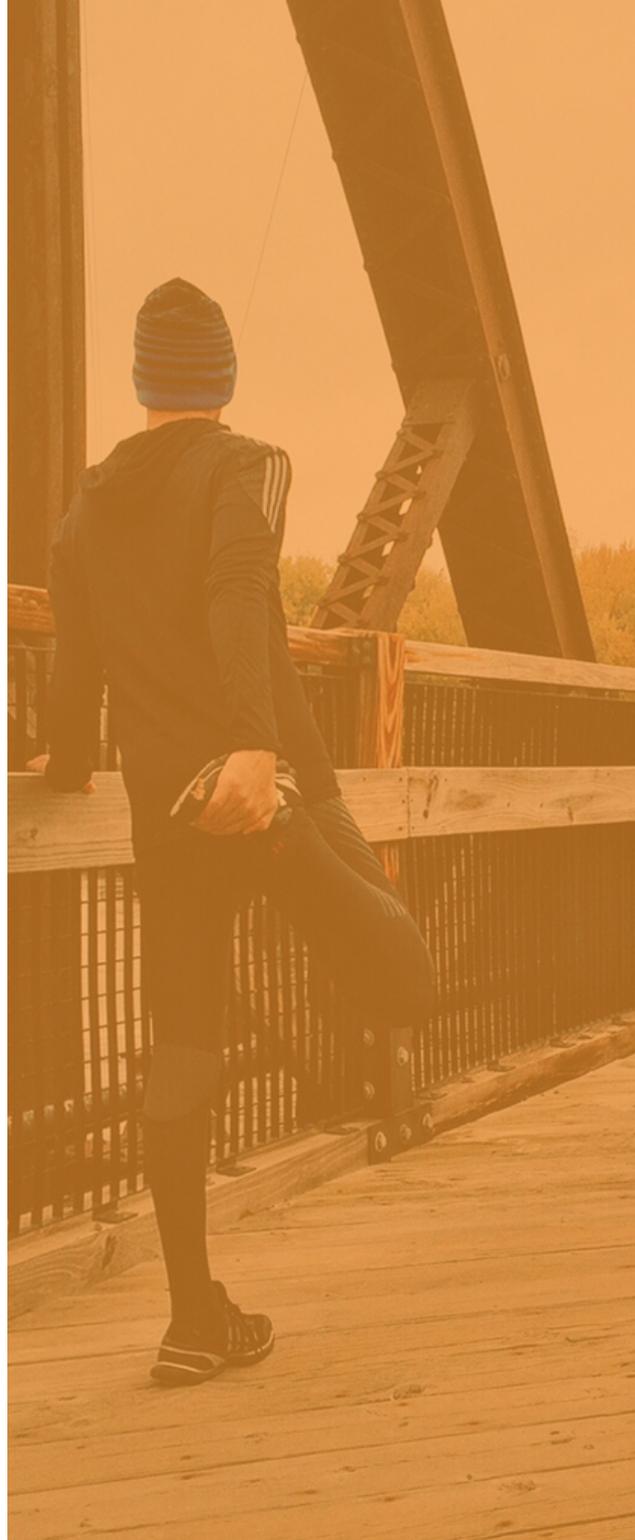
THE **ARRAYA** DIFFERENCE

THE SUPPORT BUSINESSES NEED

Few things can provide the emotional boost needed to reach the finish line quite like having family and friends gather on race day to form a cheering section. Arraya can provide a different kind of support, one that is much more hands-on. M&As are multi-faceted engagements and, as such, the entirety of Arraya's technical expertise – covering everything from the cloud to traditional data centers, Managed Services and more – is there to provide a hand. Additionally, Arraya's Project Managers are available to help shepherd projects to the finish line.

THERE WHEN YOU NEED IT

A training partner who refuses to stray from his or her own schedule isn't going to be much help. Arraya understands this and it's why the team is ready when needed. They're able to jump in wherever things stand with an M&A – whether it's pre-Discovery or well into the project. Also, Arraya partners with business stakeholders to do whatever possible to ensure deadlines and objectives are met.

EXPERIENCE YOU CAN COUNT ON

What better place to turn for advice and support than someone who's been there before? Arraya's team has run a few marathons but they've worked on many more M&A engagements. They know where the common sticking points are and they know how to coach businesses of all shapes and sizes to avoid them. M&As may be multifaceted and occasionally even frustrating endeavors, however Arraya excels at simplifying the complex in order to consistently bring projects into Day One and beyond on time and on target.
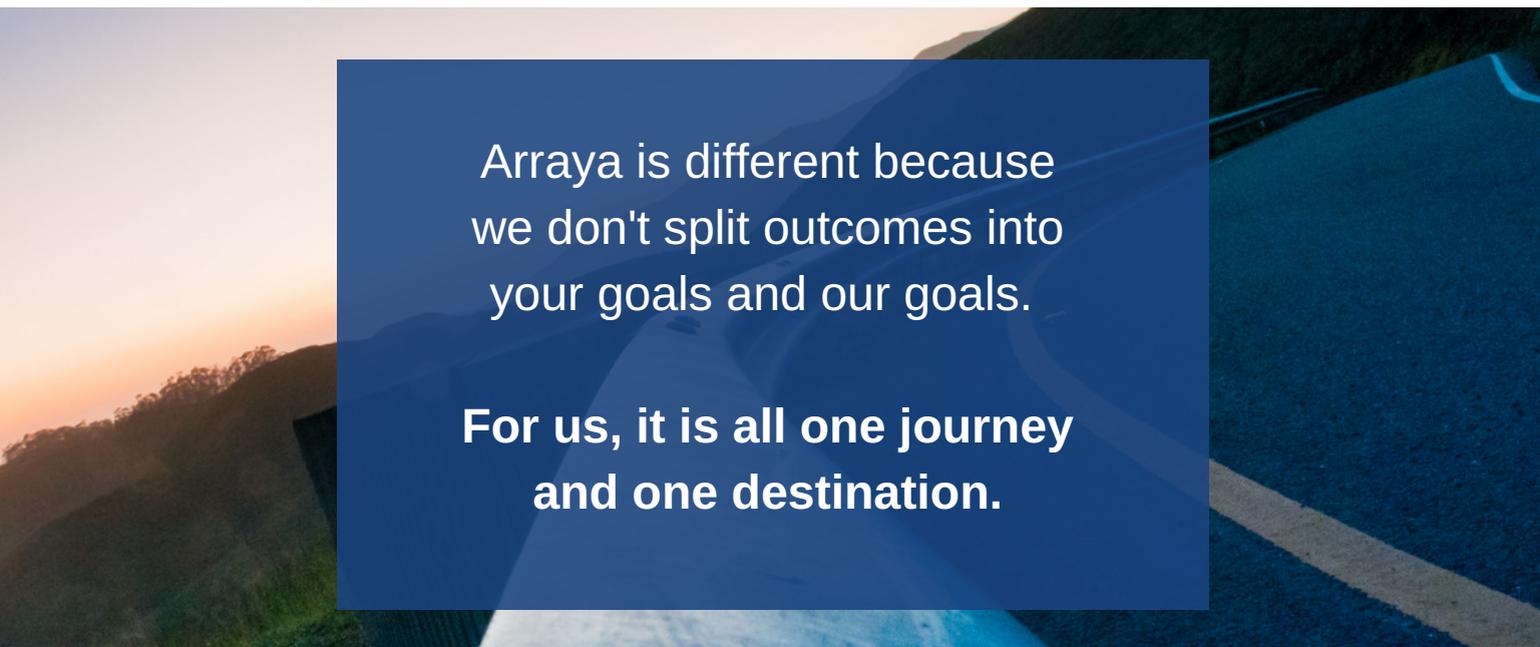
Arraya is different because we don't split outcomes into your goals and our goals.

For us, it is all one journey and one destination.

Arraya

Arraya Solutions provides technology strategies and solutions to propel your business forward. Through an extensive offering of IT solutions, advisory, consulting, staffing and managed services, we empower our customers to achieve impactful outcomes. Arraya delivers the tools, talent, and technological expertise companies need to rise to the top of their field.

Ready to get started? Contact us.

www.arrayasolutions.com