

Legacy tech is the enemy of progress

— so what's the solution?

The executive guide to legacy modernisation

Nearform_



i n d

Contents

Outdated systems are killing customer experience	02
All legacy systems fail — it's just a matter of time	04
Keeping legacy systems on life support is a losing game	06
How to know it's time to modernise	08
What's stopping you from modernising?	10
Modernisation doesn't have to be disruptive or high-risk	12
Nearform case study: A major insurance provider	15
Nearform's experience-led modernisation is your growth engine	16
A proven strategy for rapid impact	19
Aligning business and tech leadership for success	22
From Ignite to impact	24
Nearform case study: PUMA	27
Ready to explore experience-led modernisation?	28



INTRODUCTION

Outdated
systems
are killing
customer
experience



o

u

t

Customer experience (CX) is the key to engagement, loyalty and growth. Companies prioritising CX see 41% faster revenue growth, 49% faster profit growth and 51% higher customer retention ([Forrester, 2024](#)).

Today's customers expect seamless, personalised interactions. But for businesses stuck with legacy systems, meeting these demands is nearly impossible.

Modernisation doesn't have to be an expensive, years-long ordeal. It can be a manageable, impact-driven process. Here's how you make it work.

d a t e d

All legacy
systems fail
— it's just a
matter of time



5

5

t



When legacy systems collapse, the damage can be catastrophic:

- **2015:** Orly Airport's weather system, running on 23-year-old Windows 3.1, failed, grounding flights.
- **2018:** A leading UK retail bank's infrastructure failure disrupted its services for months, costing the company over £80 million in fines and compensation. And the CIO paid a five-figure fine.

Even well-maintained legacy systems get harder to manage, more expensive to run and less reliable over time. When something breaks, it's harder to diagnose and fix. The cost? Lost data, lost money, lost reputation.

e r r o r

Keeping
legacy
systems on
life support is
a losing game

> g a m e

Sticking with outdated tech means missing out on growth opportunities. Here's why:

- **No room for innovation:** Spaghetti code and outdated tools make it impossible to build new experiences or launch fresh services.

- **Your competition is winning:** Customers expect smooth, personalised interactions. Competitors with modern infrastructure deliver them.

- **Security risks multiply:** Unsupported systems are prime targets for breaches. Outdated tech also silos data, blocking interoperability.

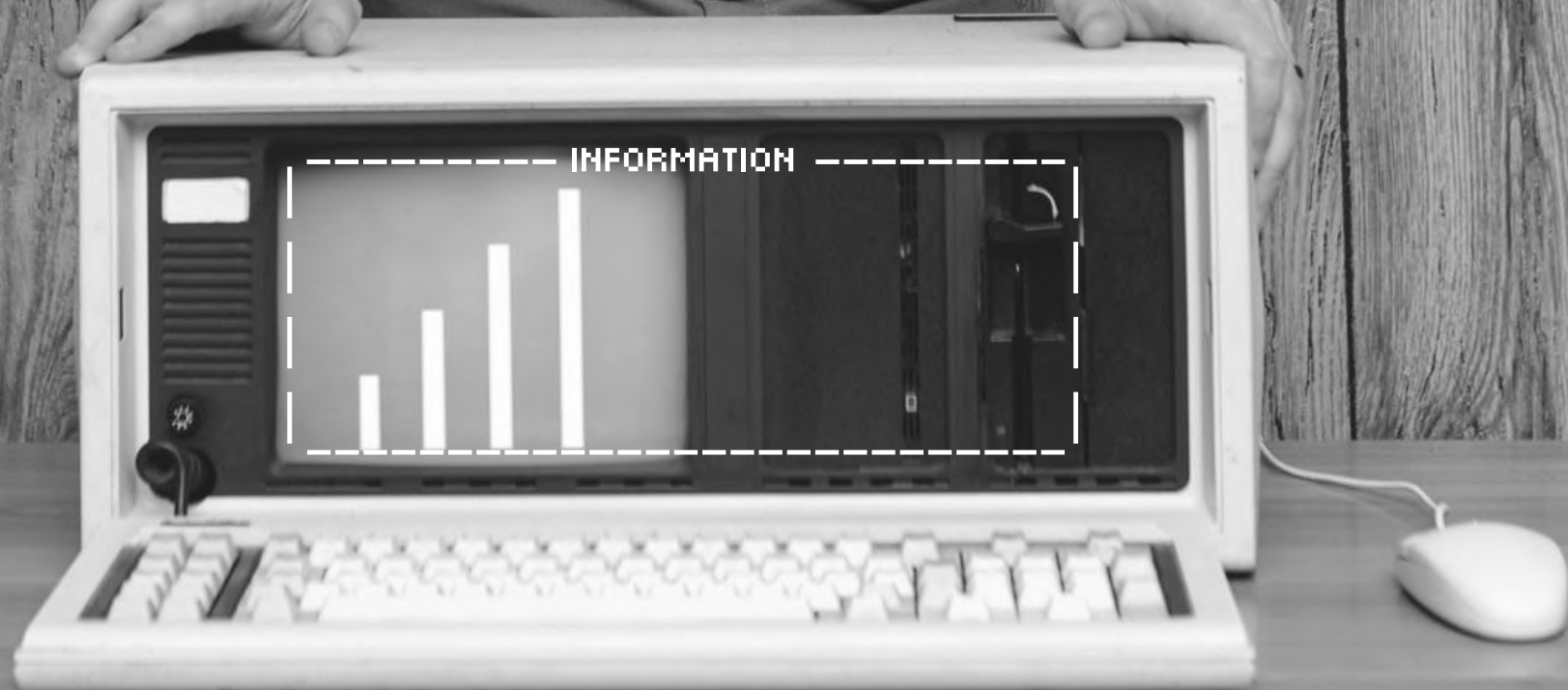
- **Knowledge silos are a liability:** When key employees leave, they take critical system knowledge with them.

- **Talent won't stay:** Employees want to work with modern tools. Legacy tech stifles learning and growth.

O v e r



How to know it's time to modernise



u n k n o w n

If you...

- Fall behind competitors in speed to market

- Struggle to pivot quickly

- See retention rates drop

- Have IT teams firefighting instead of innovating

- Invest in tech but don't see results

...your legacy systems are holding you back. It's time to modernise before you become another cautionary tale.

r e q u e s t <

What's stopping you from modernising?

> t e c h n o l o g y

Despite the clear benefits, many organisations hesitate. Here's why:

- **Fear of change:** Uncertainty around timelines and ROI stalls projects.
- **Disruption worries:** Business-critical systems need modernisation, but downtime is a concern.
- **Trying to fix everything at once:** Overambitious initiatives often fail. Targeted modernisation works better.
- **Budget constraints:** Without a clear cost-benefit picture, getting buy-in is hard.
- **Siloed decision-making:** Misalignment between teams leads to stalled projects.
- **Vendor lock-in:** Long-standing dependencies make it difficult to switch.
- **Reputation risk:** No one wants to oversee a failed project.

c o n s t r a i n t s <

Modernisation
doesn't have
to be disruptive
or high-risk



incremental

The old way (“big bang,” rip-and-replace) is expensive, risky and ineffective. Successful modernisation uses thin slicing — transforming small, manageable parts of infrastructure that drive real impact.

By prioritising user experience, thin slicing delivers rapid, visible improvements. You’ll gain business-wide buy-in while systematically upgrading your tech stack.

i m p r o v e m e n t s <



Nearform case study_

A major insurance provider

Challenge: A key absence management platform was losing vendor support in nine months.

Solution: Nearform used a dual-track approach — scoping and de-risking while engineering a replacement.

Impact: The team delivered an initial use case fast, then scaled to 12 use cases, launching ahead of schedule.



Nearform combines thin slicing with a customer-first approach, ensuring targeted, impactful change at speed. We modernise only what's necessary, improving key experiences without overhauling everything at once.

How it works:

Align business and tech goals: A collaborative workshop identifies high-impact areas.

Define project scope: Keeping it focused controls cost and complexity.

Choose the first use case: A flagship project tests and proves the process.

Build a roadmap: Expanding methodically ensures smooth scaling.

Deliver the first milestone: Quick wins drive momentum and engagement.

g r o w t h 

Three questions to kickstart modernisation

- What are our biggest challenges?
- How should we prioritise them?
- Which parts of our infrastructure support each use case?

A proven strategy for rapid impact

Experience-led modernisation moves companies away from legacy systems and eliminates organisational silos.

n g f o r w a r d >

A modernised system is:

- **Flexible:** Adapting to evolving needs.
- **Scalable:** Handling increasing workloads.
- **Resilient:** Maintaining stability under pressure.
- **Secure:** Protecting data and systems.

Moving to composable, cloud-based architecture frees you from on-premises limitations. It speeds up development, integrates cutting-edge tech and optimises workflows.

Nearform's experts work as part of your team to build modular services that enhance the frontend while ensuring seamless backend integration through APIs.

Modernised infrastructure also improves observability, giving you real-time insights into performance and CX.

This allows you to prevent outages, optimise systems and uncover innovation opportunities.

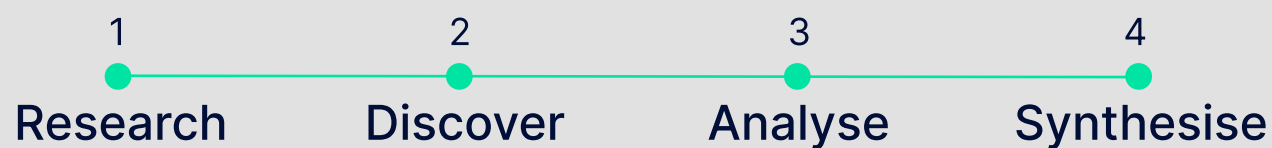
Aligning business and tech leadership for success



p r o b l e m - s o l

At the heart of our approach is Ignite, our lightning-speed discovery methodology. It aligns business and technical leaders to accelerate innovation and de-risk delivery.

Ignite's four-week accelerated workflow brings key stakeholders together to co-create modern solutions tailored to your customers.



solving workshops

From Ignite to impact: Nearform's approach



k e y



Research: Understand the current system and business challenges.

Discover: Map user journeys, identify pain points and problem-solve.

Analyse: Prototype solutions, validate feasibility and refine.

Synthesise: Present refined prototypes and prep for launch.

t a k e a w a y s



Nearform case study_ PUMA

Challenge: PUMA needed a global e-commerce platform that allowed regional customisation.

Solution: A new composable architecture created a unified but flexible codebase.

Impact: Updates now push globally while maintaining local adaptability, cutting time-to-market by over 99%.

[Find out more](#)



Ready to explore experience-led modernisation?

0 1
0 0
1 1
1 1
1 0
0 1
1 1
1 1

Nearform's expert engineers, designers and strategists deliver rapid, high-impact modernisation. Let's discuss how an Ignite session can align your teams and kickstart your transformation.

Talk to a Nearform expert today.

[Get in touch](#)



nearform.com

Nearform_