



# **AI-Ready Data Access for Modern Systems Integrators and Outsourcers:**

How VirtualZ Enables Faster Outcomes, Scalable  
Delivery, and New Revenue in 2026



THOUGHT LEADERSHIP PAPER

# Executive Summary

In 2026, digital transformation is no longer cloud-first.

It is **data-first**.

Enterprises are investing aggressively in AI platforms, hybrid cloud modernization, analytics, and storage optimization — yet their biggest constraint remains unchanged:

**Business-critical operational data is locked inside core systems.**

Systems integrators and outsourcers are being asked to deliver:

- AI pipelines powered by operational data
- Real-time analytics across hybrid environments
- Storage modernization without disruption
- Faster modernization with lower risk
- Measurable outcomes — not multi-year roadmaps

Success now depends on how quickly integrators can unlock data without destabilizing core systems.

VirtualZ provides the execution layer.

Our AI-ready data access platform — [PropelZ™](#), [FlowZ™](#), [Lozen™](#), and [Zaac™](#) — enables modernization outcomes in hours instead of months. No fragile ETL. No application rewrites. No big-bang migrations.

The result: faster delivery, higher margins, and expanded customer footprint.

# 2026 Market Reality: What Integrators Are Facing

## AI Requires Operational Data

AI initiatives fail when models are trained on stale datasets. Enterprises need live access to:

- Mainframe transaction systems
- Historical archives and tape
- Log and governance data
- Batch and operational outputs

AI readiness is now a **data access problem**, not an infrastructure problem.

## Hybrid Is Permanent

Enterprises are not abandoning core platforms — they are extending them.

Integrators must bridge:

- Mainframe + cloud
- Operational systems + AI platforms
- Core storage + object storage
- On-prem + hybrid analytics

This requires interoperability — not forklift migration.

## Modernization Must Be Incremental

Enterprises demand transformation without:

- Big-bang risk
- Downtime
- Multi-year rewrites
- Compliance exposure

Winning integrators deliver **parallel modernization**.

## Speed Is the New Differentiator

Customers reward working outcomes — not architecture decks.

Deploy in days → win.

Deploy in quarters → lose.

## How VirtualZ Solves These Challenges

VirtualZ delivers AI-ready data access through four purpose-built products — each aligned to a specific modernization pattern.

No coding. No fragile pipelines. No replatforming.

# PropelZ™

## Structured Data Delivery for AI, Analytics, and Integration

PropelZ is the fastest path to making operational data usable in modern platforms.

It extracts and delivers structured data — including VSAM, Db2, IMS, SMF, and sequential data — directly into:

- Snowflake
- Databricks
- Watsonx
- Vertex AI
- SQL databases
- Integration platforms

It replaces brittle ETL with a no-code engine that installs in hours.

### Use cases

- AI and ML data pipelines
- Analytics modernization
- Report migration
- Integration platform feeds
- Governance & observability

**“PropelZ is a very straightforward install... just a couple of hours to get the product laid down.”**

— Jerry Edgington, Pelleria

### Integrator value

- Faster project delivery
- Reduced MIPS overhead
- Repeatable deployment
- Higher margin services

## FlowZ™

### File-Based Data Movement for Cloud Storage and AI Pipelines

FlowZ moves and shares mainframe-generated files directly to cloud or on-prem storage.

No device emulation. No ETL complexity.

#### Use cases

- Tape-to-cloud modernization
- Backup and archive
- File-based analytics pipelines
- Cross-platform sharing
- Storage cost reduction

#### Integrator value

- Fast modernization wins
- Clear ROI projects
- Low risk deployment
- Expansion into AI pipelines

## Lozen™

### Real-Time Access to Live Operational Data

Lozen enables applications outside the mainframe to read and write live data — without moving it.

This is the foundation of phased modernization.

Cloud applications behave as if they run on the mainframe.

**“Lozen integrated smoothly, ensuring secure, real-time data access.”**

— Gilberto Biondo Jr., AWS

**“Lozen will be a total game-changer in z/OS to cloud native migration.”**

— Barry Wordell, Microsoft

**“Lozen enables partial and incremental replatform projects...”**

— Neil Fowler, Rocket Software

### Use cases

- Incremental modernization
- SaaS integration
- Hybrid AI workloads
- Shared operational data

### Integrator value

- Zero-risk modernization paths
- Reduced dependency mapping
- Faster timelines
- High-value architecture engagements

## Zaac™

### Storage Virtualization for Disk and Tape Modernization

Zaac virtualizes mainframe disk and tape so cloud or SAN storage behaves like native DASD.

Applications don't change. Storage does.

**“Perhaps most challenging to conventional thinking is Zaac...”**

— Dale Vile, Freeform Dynamics

#### Use cases

- Instant mainframe storage
- Tape replacement
- DR strategy
- Storage cost optimization

#### Integrator value

- Infrastructure modernization
- Storage refresh displacement
- Long-term managed services
- Hybrid DR offerings

## Industry Validation

VirtualZ's platform and market momentum continue to earn recognition from industry analysts, partners, and customers alike.

VirtualZ has been named a *Contender* in the **ISG Provider Lens® Mainframes – Services and Solutions 2026** study across application modernization and mainframe consulting categories. For systems integrators and outsourcers, this recognition provides independent validation of VirtualZ's growing market presence, solution strength, and measurable customer impact in hybrid enterprise modernization. ISG Provider Lens is widely used by enterprises, financial institutions, and government organizations to evaluate strategic technology partners — reinforcing VirtualZ's credibility as a platform built for modern integrator-led transformation.

CRN also named VirtualZ one of the **50 Coolest Storage Vendors**, recognizing the company's role in redefining how enterprise data moves between mainframe and cloud environments without custom coding or disruptive migration.

*“VirtualZ develops technology that moves data between IBM Z and cloud applications without needing custom coding for each instance.”*

— CRN

Together, VirtualZ and its ecosystem partners are enabling integrators to deliver modernization that is faster, safer, and immediately measurable.

## Why Integrators Partner with VirtualZ

**“Our partnership with VirtualZ strengthens our ability to deliver advanced modernization without disruption.”**

— Jeff Rusk, Mainline

VirtualZ enables integrators to:

- Accelerate outcomes
- Expand service offerings
- Grow account footprint

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- Simplify execution
  - Reduce customer risk

## Trusted Ecosystem

VirtualZ partners include IBM, AWS, Google Cloud, Kyndryl, Peller, and Global Sis.

*“Together with Ocient, VirtualZ powers hyperscale AI analytics across hybrid environments.”*

— Shantan Kethireddy, Ocient

## Conclusion: 2026 Belongs to Integrators Who Deliver Data

The next wave of enterprise transformation is data-first.

AI, analytics, modernization, and storage strategy all depend on unlocking operational data safely and quickly.

VirtualZ gives integrators the execution platform to deliver:

- AI-ready data pipelines
- Hybrid modernization
- Storage transformation
- Scalable service growth

Your customers already have the data.

Now you can deliver it.



# VirtualZ Computing

Your AI Needs Data.  
We Deliver All of It. Instantly.