

What It Takes To Build A Centralized Operating System For Competitive And Market Intelligence

The Hidden Depths of a Custom Platform Build

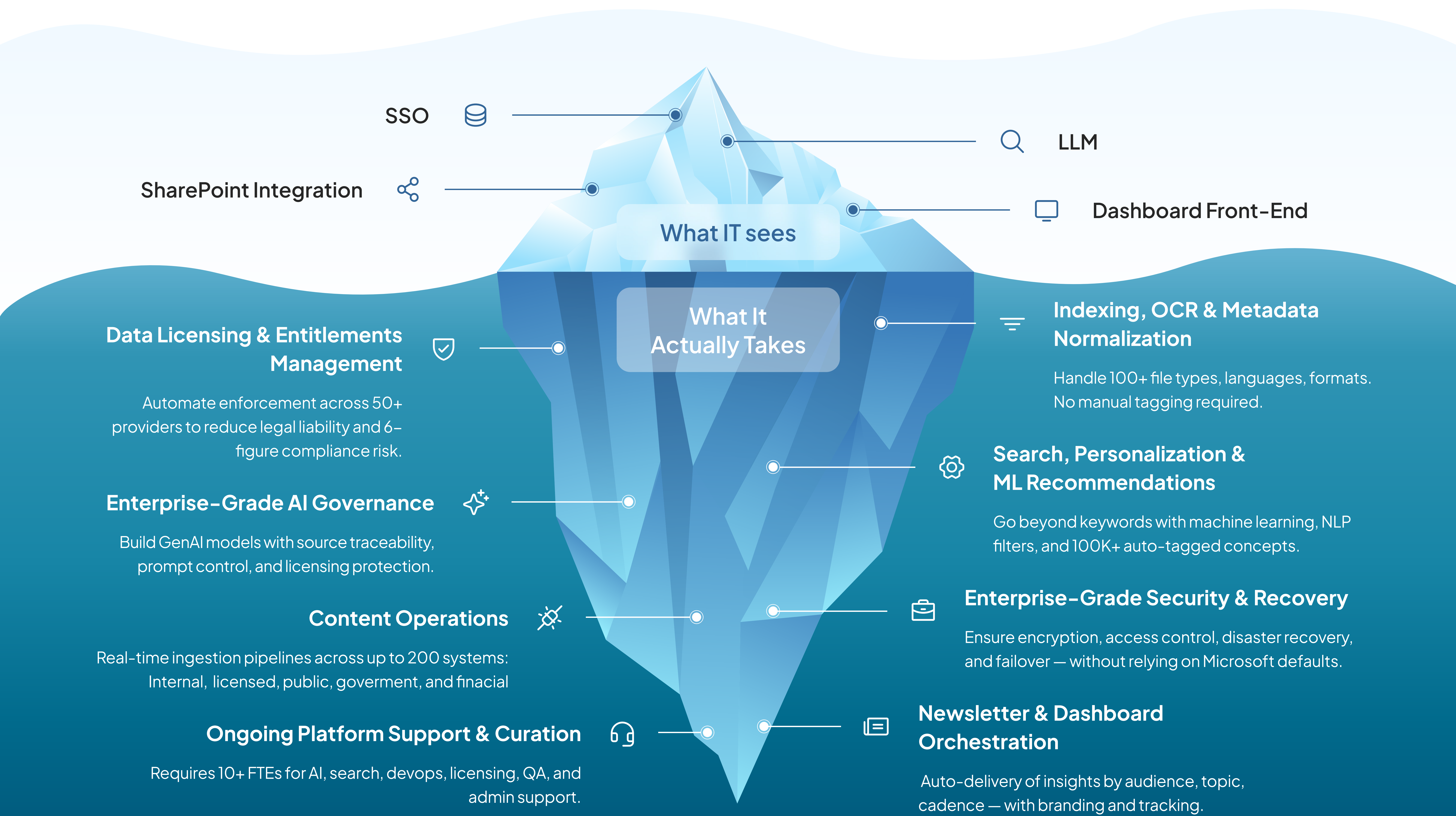
What looks like a “data + UI” problem is actually a full-scale intelligence infrastructure — requiring **10+ dedicated engineers, 20+ integrated systems, and \$2–5M+ annually** to maintain. And even then, you’ll be 18–24 months behind what Northern Light delivers today.

Beneath the surface lies a tangled ecosystem of data licensing, AI governance, content indexing, security, role-based delivery, and ongoing maintenance.

At first glance, it seems like a simple IT project:

- Add a LLM
- Point it at your data
- Surface some dashboards

Most IT teams can wire up the basics, but building an operating system for enterprise-grade intelligence takes years of scale, governance, and refinement.



It's not just hard to build. It's even harder to maintain and keep up.

The Real Cost of a Custom Intelligence Platform

Connecting Copilot to SharePoint means more than pointing an LLM + attaching it to data. What looks simple hides real costs in compliance, governance, upkeep, and unmet expectations.

What looks cheaper upfront can cost **millions** in time, talent, and missed opportunities — for a solution that rarely scales beyond a single use case.

Use this matrix to benchmark what it really takes to match SinglePoint.

Component	What It Requires	Estimated Resource Load	Hidden Costs & Risks
Content Licensing Compliance	Entitlement tracking, vendor negotiation, IP protection.	Legal + 1 FTE	Licensing violations, duplicate spend (\$1.25M+/yr)
Indexing & Metadata Ops	OCR, semantic tagging, video transcription, NLP, multilingual normalization.	2–3 engineers	Poor discoverability, research duplication
Search Ranking & Personalization	Role-aware tuning, NLP-based query logic, taxonomy updates.	2–4 engineers + analyst	User churn, irrelevant results
AI Infrastructure (Compliant)	Secure GenAI tuned to licensed data with audit trail.	\$500K+ annual infra cost + AI/ML team	IP exposure, shadow AI tools, blocked deployment
Content Integration	20+ data sources (internal + external), constant feed monitoring.	4–6 engineers + integrators	Stale data, dashboard errors, downtime
Newsletters & Dashboards	Curated content, audience segmentation, delivery engines.	2–3 analysts or ops staff	Low visibility, missed signals
Sustained Maintenance & Evolution	SLA-level support, UX updates, compliance governance.	15–30 FTEs	\$2–5M/year in hidden costs

SinglePoint isn’t just a product — it’s a platform you don’t have to build, staff, or keep updating.

Request a consultation: northernlight.com/contact-us | 617-674-2074