

# SMB Action Plan - Identifying and Segmenting the SMB Base

## IBM i SMB Modernization Pathways: A Practical Engagement Model

### Axes

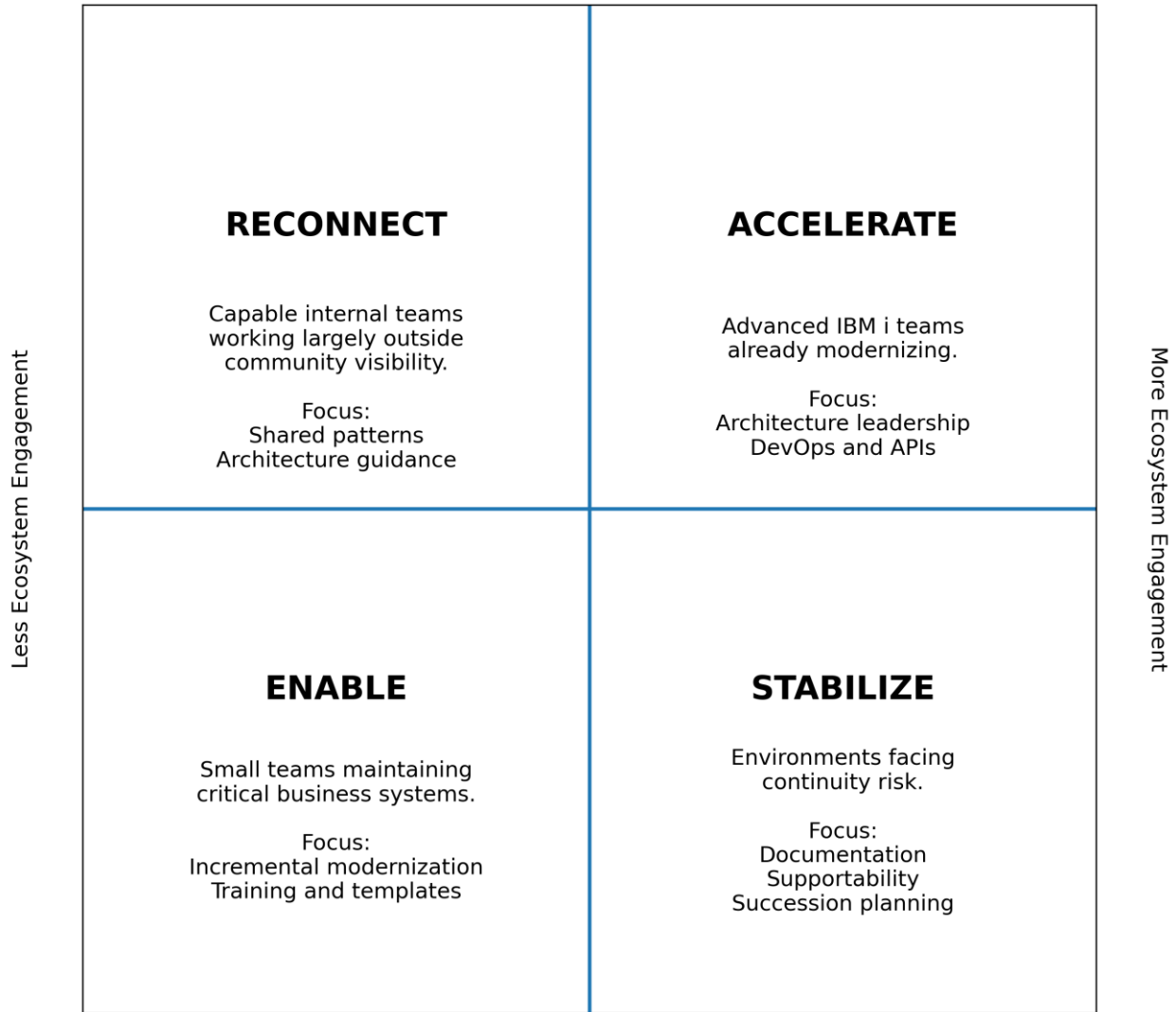
- **Horizontal:** Ecosystem Connection (Low → High)
- **Vertical:** Internal Technical Capability (Low → High)

### Quadrants

- **Accelerate (High capability / High connection)**  
Focus: architecture leadership, DevOps, APIs, advanced modernization.
- **Reconnect (High capability / Low connection)**  
Focus: shared patterns, peer collaboration, architecture blueprints.
- **Enable (Low capability / Low connection)**  
Focus: incremental modernization, training, templates, practical roadmaps.
- **Stabilize (Low capability / High connection)**  
Focus: continuity planning, documentation, succession risk reduction, security/supportability.

# IBM i SMB Modernization Pathways

Higher Internal Technical Capability



Lower Internal Technical Capability

## Segment 1: Accelerate

### **Strong capability / Strong ecosystem engagement**

These organizations already participate in the IBM i community and are actively improving their environments.

### **Their priority**

Move from incremental improvement to architectural modernization.

### **What helps them most**

- modernization architecture frameworks
- development standards and governance models
- DevOps patterns for IBM i
- API and integration strategies
- peer collaboration with other advanced teams

### **Strategic outcome**

These organizations become examples and reference implementations that demonstrate what modern IBM i development can look like.

## Segment 2: Reconnect

### **Strong capability / Low ecosystem engagement**

These teams are often very capable but operate largely outside the visible community.

### **Their priority**

Gain access to shared knowledge and proven patterns.

### **What helps them most**

- architecture blueprints
- practical modernization examples
- peer networks and collaboration
- curated learning resources
- reference implementations

### **Strategic outcome**

Reconnect experienced teams with the broader ecosystem so they can accelerate modernization without reinventing solutions.

## Segment 3: Enable

### **Limited capacity / Low ecosystem engagement**

This is one of the largest groups in the IBM i SMB world.

Small teams are maintaining critical systems but often lack time and guidance for modernization.

### **Their priority**

Adopt incremental modernization practices that fit small teams.

### **What helps them most**

- step-by-step modernization roadmaps
- small-team training programs
- working code examples and templates
- modernization approaches that do not disrupt production

### **Strategic outcome**

Enable small teams to gradually modernize systems while continuing daily operations.

## Segment 4: Stabilize

### **Limited capacity / High awareness of risk**

These environments often face the most immediate continuity risks.

### **Their priority**

Ensure system continuity and knowledge transfer.

### **What helps them most**

- documentation and system knowledge capture
- succession planning for technical staff
- platform supportability reviews
- security and operational risk assessments

### **Strategic outcome**

Stabilize the environment so organizations can safely begin modernization later.

## Why This Model Helps

This framework shifts the conversation from:

“Who is behind?” to “What is the next practical step for each type of SMB environment?”

Different IBM i shops require different support strategies:

<b>Segment</b>	<b>What the ecosystem should provide</b>
Accelerate	architecture leadership and innovation
Reconnect	community access and shared patterns
Enable	practical modernization guidance
Stabilize	continuity and risk management

## **The Key Strategic Insight**

The IBM i SMB community does not need a single modernization message.

It needs four engagement pathways; each aligned with the realities of the organization.

If the ecosystem focuses on helping organizations move one step forward from their current position, modernization becomes far more achievable.