

# OneStream for the Public Sector: Settling the GOTS vs COTS Debate

[This article first appeared on the OneStream blog by Steve Mebius](#)

For finance leaders in the public sector, the discussion around government off-the-shelf (GOTS) and commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) software has been around for a long time. And like many of the great debates in government, odds are this debate isn't going away anytime soon. Why? Well, with all the buzz on digital transformation taking place in comptroller and budget offices, finance leaders are taking matters into their own hands. How? They're taking control of their future by choosing the right corporate performance management (CPM) solution to address the planning, programming and budgeting execution (PPBE) and financial close and reporting processes.

Here are some of the key differences between GOTS and COTS software:

- GOTS – Requires internal and external contractors (vendors) to go through a lengthy development cycle for custom-built solutions to solve a specific business challenge.
- COTS – Consists of software vendors with prepackaged, functional solutions that solve one or more business challenges (e.g., CPM software for the Office of the CFO).

## GOTS Software – What You Need to Know

What's the argument in favor of GOTS software? In short, GOTS solutions are designed and customized to meet 100% of agency requirements. Sounds great, right? It sure does—if your agency has the time and resources to dedicate to the effort. Here are just a few examples of the types of investments that are needed when evaluating GOTS software:

- Research and development (R&D)
- Program management office (PMO)
- Testing, and operations and maintenance (O&M)

GOTS software also requires ongoing investment to keep up with advancements in technology and business trends. The same is true when upgrading COTS solutions, where agencies may require additional funding, R&D, PMO and testing to deploy their solutions.

With so many specific needs and unique investment requirements, GOTS software may seem like a natural choice for longstanding public sector stakeholders. Many may even argue, "How could purpose-built software for the commercial sector possibly meet the needs of the government?"

For leaders in comptroller and budget offices, however, modern CPM solutions are disrupting legacy arguments.

## COTS and CPM – A Perfect Recipe

It turns out that the financial close processes and the PPBE process in the public sector are very similar to corporate financial processes. How so? Here are a few examples:

- [Financial consolidation](#) – Both commercial and public sector organizations must consolidate results at the end of each fiscal period.
- [Budgeting, planning and forecasting](#) – Every mid-size to large organization creates budgets, plans for resources and makes capital management decisions.
- [Reporting](#) – Once the books are closed and budgets are completed, finance teams in all sectors create and disseminate various reports to a wide range of stakeholders.
- [Visualizations](#) – Both public sector and commercial finance teams leverage visualizations,



share insights and collaborate.

While some of the terminology and processes are slightly different, core finance processes have a lot in common – similarities that represent the DNA of CPM solutions.

### Eliminate Fragmented Legacy COTS Software

OneStream is a prime example for why COTS CPM software is the right answer for the [public sector](#). Why? OneStream (see Figure 1) is purpose-built to support all finance processes for the Office of the CFO. And importantly, OneStream's mission of delivering 100% customer success means it is continually investing to help users get the most from their investments by making it as easy as possible to gather data, transform it, apply calculations and efficiently execute their financial close, budgeting, planning, reporting and analytic processes.

Sure, many COTS solutions in the CPM space can answer one or more of the challenges of the Office of Finance for the public sector. But usually, those business challenges are solved using a suite of siloed solutions that are bolted together, requiring separate ETL (Data Integration), reporting, consolidation, and budgeting tools.

And making matters worse, all of the integrations between these siloes add additional risks and costs to the solution – creating a highly fragmented approach to solving business challenges (e.g., CPM

1.0). Add in a smattering of cloud and on-premise solutions, and the fragmented suite becomes more of a “spaghetti” mess (see Figure 2) of an architecture.

There has to be a better way, right? There sure does. And this is precisely what makes OneStream’s solution unique.

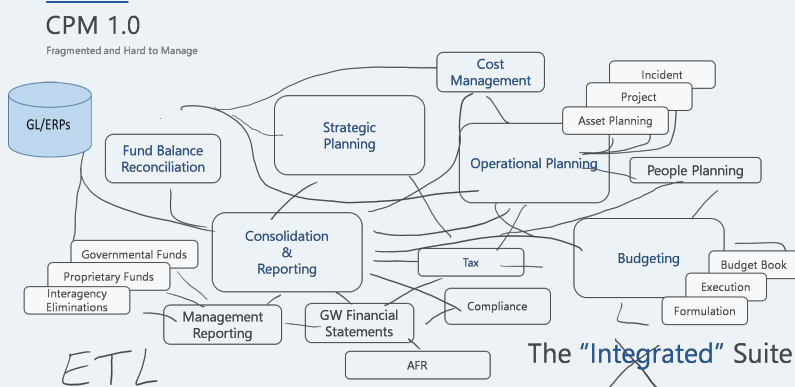


Figure 2: CPM 1.0 Solutions

### Unify Financial Processes with OneStream

OneStream solves for the fragmented architecture approach with a completely unified platform for the Office of Finance. What does that mean? It means that, within a single solution, OneStream addresses a range of business processes, including the financial close & reporting, budget formulation and execution, and financial data quality.

That means finance leaders and their functional partners don’t have to navigate through fragmented applications on different technologies that all require different training for users. Instead, they can leverage one solution to address a wide range of requirements (see Figure 3). That, in turn, increases



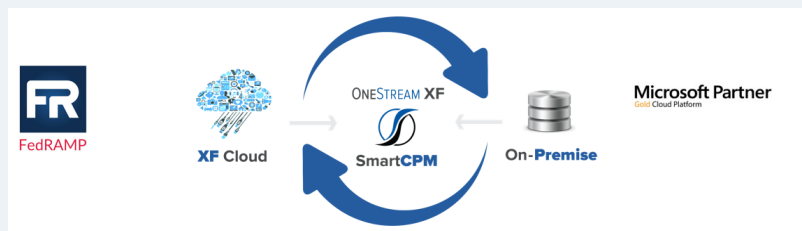
adoption and ROI.

Figure 3: Address Multiple Business Challenges with OneStream

### Cloud Ready with FedRAMP Moderate Rating

To support public sector deployments, OneStream is available [on-premise or in the cloud](#), offering the exact same solution, user interface and functionality in both environments. And with the first and only FedRAMP Moderate-rated CPM solution, OneStream has achieved the Authority to Operate (ATO)

for cabinet-level agencies in the federal government for both cloud and on-premise deployments.



## Increase ROI with the XF MarketPlace

No matter the deployment method, OneStream's unified platform provides public sector finance teams with a foundation to modernize core processes, increase agility and drive productivity. Furthermore, [OneStream's XF MarketPlace](#) addresses the evolving needs of finance without the need to purchase and maintain additional software. And with over 50 business and [productivity](#) solutions available – such as [Predictive Analytics](#), Capital Planning, [Account Reconciliations](#) and Task Manager – public sector finance teams can easily [access and deploy](#) additional solutions without the complexity required for GOTS software.

## Extensible COTS Software for Public Sector Finance

OneStream adds a new dimension to the GOTS vs. COTS software discussion. And for longstanding believers in GOTS software, OneStream is disrupting the debate. For the first time ever, finance teams can deploy a single, extensible CPM solution to address both core finance needs and rapidly changing requirements, without the customization and investment of GOTS software.

## Learn More

To learn more about OneStream's solution for public sector finance, visit our website [here](#), or contact us directly [here](#).