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Operational Decisioning:

A New Model for Margin, Growth, and Risk Performance in an Age of Uncertainty

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Executive Summary: The Leadership Mandate in an Age of Relentless Complexity

We are living in an era where traditional growth levers no longer deliver. Operational leaders in the industries that feed, fuel, and protect the world—agriculture, energy, and weather-impacted sectors—are facing a decisive inflection point. External shocks are no longer anomalies—they are the norm. The margin for error is razor thin. And the cost of indecision has never been higher.

Today's environment demands a new kind of leadership. Not just visionary, but action-oriented. Not just data-driven, but decision-empowered. To navigate the turbulence, operational executives must make better decisions—faster, with greater precision, and grounded in real-world context. This eBook introduces a new model for doing exactly that: **Operational Decisioning**.

Through this guide, we'll explore:
- Why the traditional operating model is failing
- What's driving the competitive divide
- The five new requirements for operational excellence
- How to build a modern, decision-ready operation
- Sector-specific examples from energy, agriculture, and weather-driven enterprises

And finally, how DTN is enabling industry leaders to transform decisioning into a strategic advantage—driving margin expansion, growth acceleration, and risk-proofing in a world of constant change.

A New Operating Reality: The Rise of Relentless Complexity

For decades, industrial sectors formed the foundation of global GDP. These industries—high-volume, high-stakes, highly regulated—delivered value through asset scale, operational discipline, and supply chain control. But the rules of the game have changed.

We've entered a structurally different era. One defined not by cyclical turbulence, but by enduring volatility:

- Extreme weather events
- Volatile commodity markets
- Shifting geopolitical alliances
- Tighter environmental and compliance demands
- Demand signals that change faster than production cycles

According to PwC, 42% of CEOs now believe their companies may not survive the next 10 years without radical transformation.

In this new era, the companies that thrive won't be the ones with the biggest assets—but those with the sharpest operational decisioning capabilities. This has created a new kind of performance gap—**the competitive divide**.

What's Changed—and Why It Matters

A snapshot of the shift from the old operating model to today's structural reality:

Legacy Model	New Reality
Periodic disruption	Constant disruption
Asset investment = advantage	Decision speed = advantage
Siloed planning cycles	Integrated, real-time action
Historical benchmarking	Predictive, AI-driven modeling
Regional forecasts	Hyper-local, multi-variable intel

Takeaway: Operations designed for stability can't deliver under volatility.

The Competitive Divide: Why Some Companies Are Leaping Ahead

In the new era of uncertainty, not all companies are struggling equally. A growing gap is emerging between those who adapt and those who stall. DTN calls this the **competitive divide**—the widening chasm between traditional operators and a new class of decision-ready leaders.

On one side are companies clinging to outdated models: static planning, siloed data, and reactive investment in more assets. These organizations are increasingly vulnerable to supply disruptions, regulatory shocks, and missed opportunities.

On the other side are companies that are transforming their operating models around faster, more intelligent decisioning. These leaders don't just survive complexity—they convert it into advantage.

The biggest differentiator? **Decision outcomes.** It's not about who owns the most assets—it's about who can align data, insight, and action to out-decide the competition.

Era of few constraints
Assets at scale

Competitive Divide

Era of multiplicity of constraints
Decisioning at scale

The New Leadership Question

"How do I improve decision outcomes to reach a new frontier of performance—in a world of more complexity, higher uncertainty, and structural economic change?"

This question is replacing traditional metrics like scale and cycle-time efficiency. It's about turning data into advantage, and complexity into confidence.

A New Playbook: Five Requirements for Operational Decisioning

To leap ahead, operational executives need more than dashboards and data lakes—they need a new operating playbook. Based on DTN's work across energy, agriculture, and weather-sensitive sectors, five core requirements are separating the leaders from the laggards.

Each imperative is designed to solve a specific friction point in the modern decision cycle:

1 Verticalization

Fit-for-purpose platforms built for your sector.

Off-the-shelf tools don't reflect the real-world complexity of energy logistics, agricultural markets, or weather-peril forecasting. Leaders are building operational systems with embedded industry logic, so insights translate directly into actions that matter.

2 Data Superiority

Unify, normalize, and activate Decision-Grade Data.

Data is no longer just an asset—it's an operational weapon. But most organizations are stuck with fragmented, stale, or unusable data. Gaining Decision-Grade Data means having granular, clean, real-time inputs that are continuously updated, governed, and AI-ready.

3 AI-Driven Insight

Move from lagging indicators to predictive foresight.

Reporting tells you what happened. What you need is foresight—AI that can learn from historical signals and current context to project what's likely to happen next, and recommend action. Precision-tuned operational AI is no longer optional—it's a multiplier.

4 Decision Velocity

Collapse the time between insight and action.

The next disruption won't wait for your next planning cycle. In fast-moving markets, delayed decisions are lost opportunities—or worse. Leading organizations are engineering closed-loop decisioning processes where teams see, decide, and act in real time.

5 Trust & Neutrality

Power decisions with governance and transparency.

As data flows across partners, regulators, and ecosystems, the trustworthiness of the intelligence layer becomes paramount. Leaders are choosing neutral, transparent intermediaries to govern shared data use, enforce compliance, and protect business integrity.

From Data-Driven to Decision-Dominant

Most companies say they want to be "data-driven." But leaders don't just drive with data—they own the decision outcome.

The best operators are building the muscle to answer:

- What is happening?
- What could happen next?
- What should we do—and who needs to act now?

How to Operationalize the New Model

The five requirements for operational decisioning aren't theoretical—they're prescriptive. To close the competitive divide, organizations must rewire how they approach decisions across the business. That means integrating data, insight, and action into a unified, outcome-focused model.

Below is a step-by-step guide to help leaders move from strategy to execution:

Step 1

Diagnose Decision Bottlenecks

Where do decisions break down today?
Start by identifying high-stakes decisions that are slowed by data latency, organizational silos, or forecasting gaps. Whether it's pricing, supply, compliance, or risk mitigation, these are the moments where faster, smarter decisions can create disproportionate value.

Step 2

Identify Value Drivers

Where will better decisioning create margin, growth, or risk reduction?
Assess operational areas—like planning, logistics, procurement, or customer engagement—where enhanced foresight or automation could unlock measurable outcomes. Anchor your transformation to these business levers.

Step 3

Build a Unified Intelligence Layer

What does it take to turn your data into action?
Start with Decision-Grade Data—clean, dynamic, and actionable. Then integrate that data into a real-time intelligence layer, aligned to the way your business runs. Don't bolt on tools—build insight around your operational context.

Step 4

Activate Closed-Loop Decisioning

How do you reduce the latency between awareness and action?
Design workflows where recommendations automatically feed into business systems and teams can take action instantly. Whether that means dynamic pricing or weather-driven asset reallocation, the key is automation without black-box opacity.

Step 5

Govern for Trust and Scale

Can your model handle cross-functional, multi-party decisions?
Trust is now an architecture. Ensure shared data flows are governed, auditable, and unbiased. Partner with neutral platforms that offer transparency and interoperability across your internal teams and external partners.

Operational Maturity Milestones

Stage	Focus	Characteristics
Crawl	Visibility	Fragmented systems, manual reporting
Walk	Insight	Centralized dashboards, some forecasting
Run	Decisioning	Predictive models, AI-assisted recommendations
Fly	Closed-loop	Autonomous workflows, governed ecosystems

Your goal: Accelerate from insight to impact with operational decisioning at scale.

Sector Deep Dives: How Industry Leaders Are Driving Decision Outcomes

Operational decisioning is not one-size-fits-all. Below are snapshots of how DTN is helping leading organizations apply this model across energy, agriculture, and weather-driven sectors.

Energy

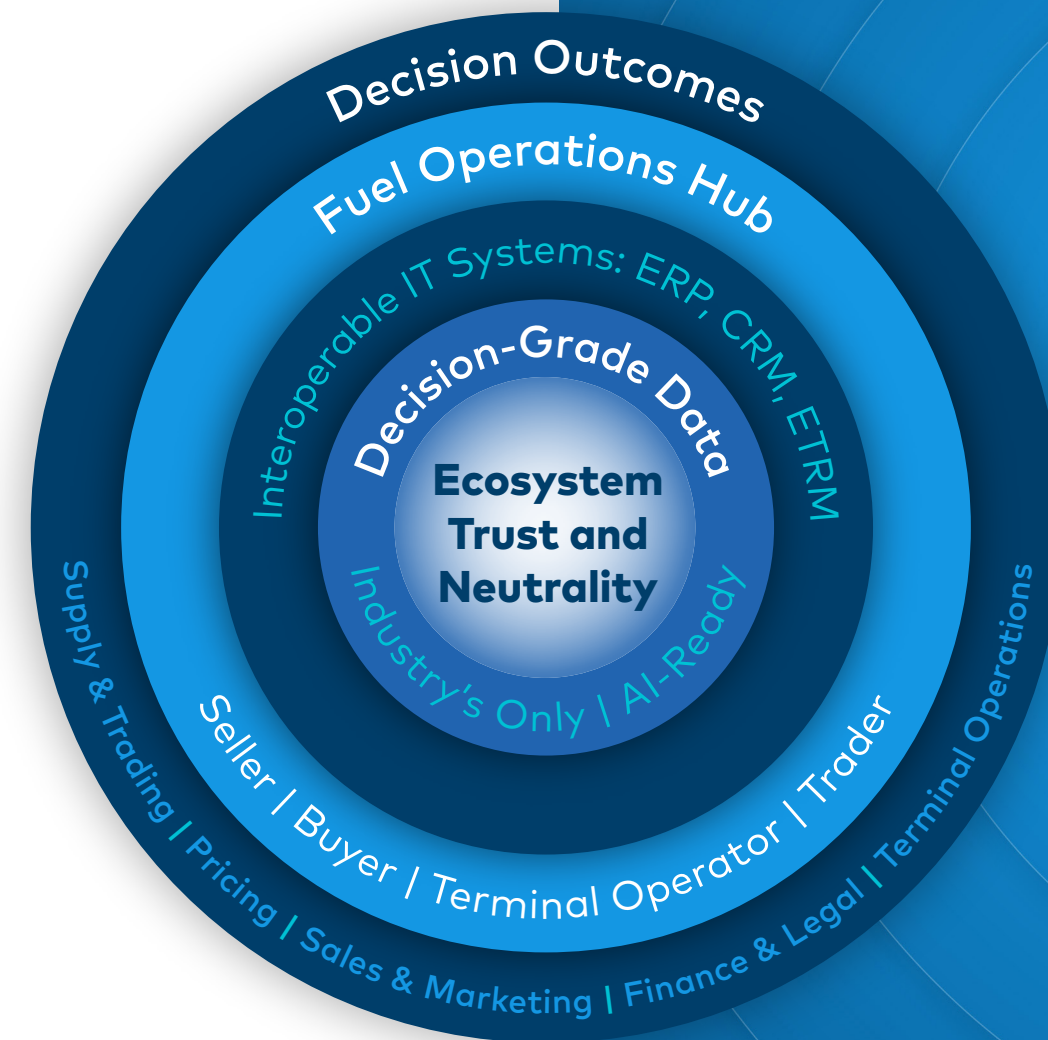### Real-Time Margin Optimization Across the Supply Chain

Challenge:
Terminal owners, traders, and fuel marketers are under relentless pressure to optimize margins while managing volatile pricing, compliance demands, and supply constraints.

Solution:
The DTN Fuel Operations Hub connects every point in the downstream value chain with real-time visibility, AI-optimized forecasting, and bi-directional execution. Energy leaders use it to simulate scenarios, automate pricing, and reconcile transactions across suppliers, terminals, and customers.

Results:
- Capture incremental margin gains across transactions
- Accelerate price publishing and forecasting
- Reduce credit and compliance risk through data transparency

Decision Outcomes

Fuel Operations Hub

Interoperable IT Systems: ERP, CRM, ETRM

Decision-Grade Data

Ecosystem Trust and Neutrality

Industry's Only | AI-Ready

Supply & Trading | Pricing | Sales & Marketing | Finance & Legal | Terminal Operations

Seller | Buyer | Terminal Operator | Trader

Agriculture

From Grower Insight to Sustainable Market Advantage
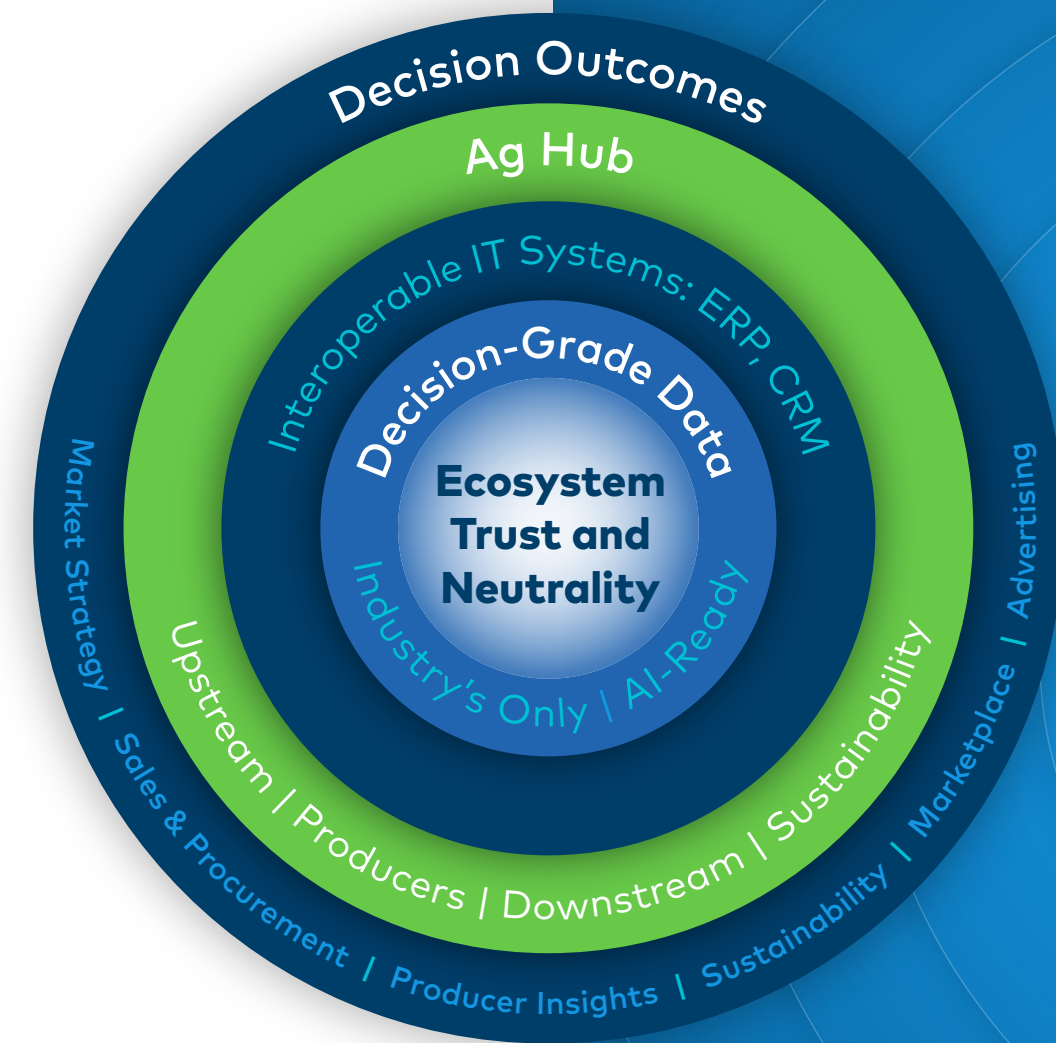
Challenge:
Agribusinesses face market volatility, complex sustainability mandates, and the need to better segment and engage producers.

Solution:
The DTN Ag Hub empowers decisioning from field to market, combining 95% farm coverage with deep market intelligence, Scope 3 modeling, and real-time procurement tools. It helps segment growers, optimize input and grain pricing, and deliver verified sustainability outcomes.

Results:
- Accelerate go-to-market with targeted insights
- Improve sourcing strategies with real-time market signals
- Validate and report on sustainability programs at scale

Decision Outcomes

Ag Hub

Interoperable IT Systems: ERP, CRM

Decision-Grade Data

Industry's Only | AI-Ready

Ecosystem Trust and Neutrality

Market Strategy | Sales & Procurement

Upstream | Producers | Downstream | Sustainability

Producer Insights | Sustainability | Marketplace | Advertising

Weather-Driven Insights
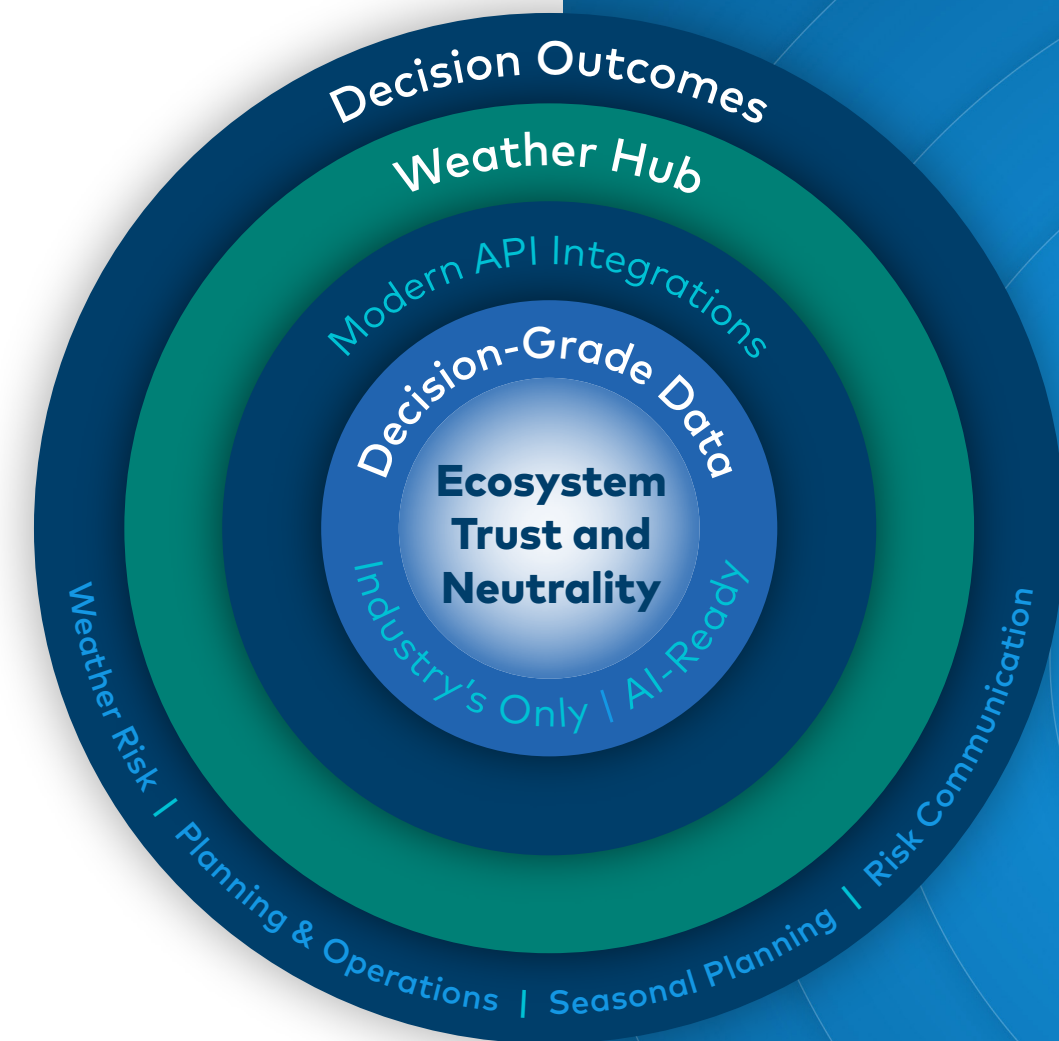
Turning Risk into Resilience

Challenge:
Sectors like aviation, utilities, and logistics must operate through increasing weather extremes, where the cost of delay or misjudgment is rising.

Solution:
The DTN Weather Hub delivers hyper-local forecasts, real-time alerts, and risk scoring tailored to operational rules. With 180+ meteorologists and AI-trained models, the platform enables preemptive action against severe weather—across planning, safety, and compliance workflows.

Results:
- Reduce weather-related disruptions by up to 15%
- Streamline compliance and event safety protocols
- Integrate weather risk into operational decisions in real time

Decision Outcomes
Weather Hub
Modern API Integrations
Decision-Grade Data
Weather Risk | Planning & Operations | Seasonal Planning | Risk Communication
Industry's Only | AI-Ready
Ecosystem Trust and Neutrality
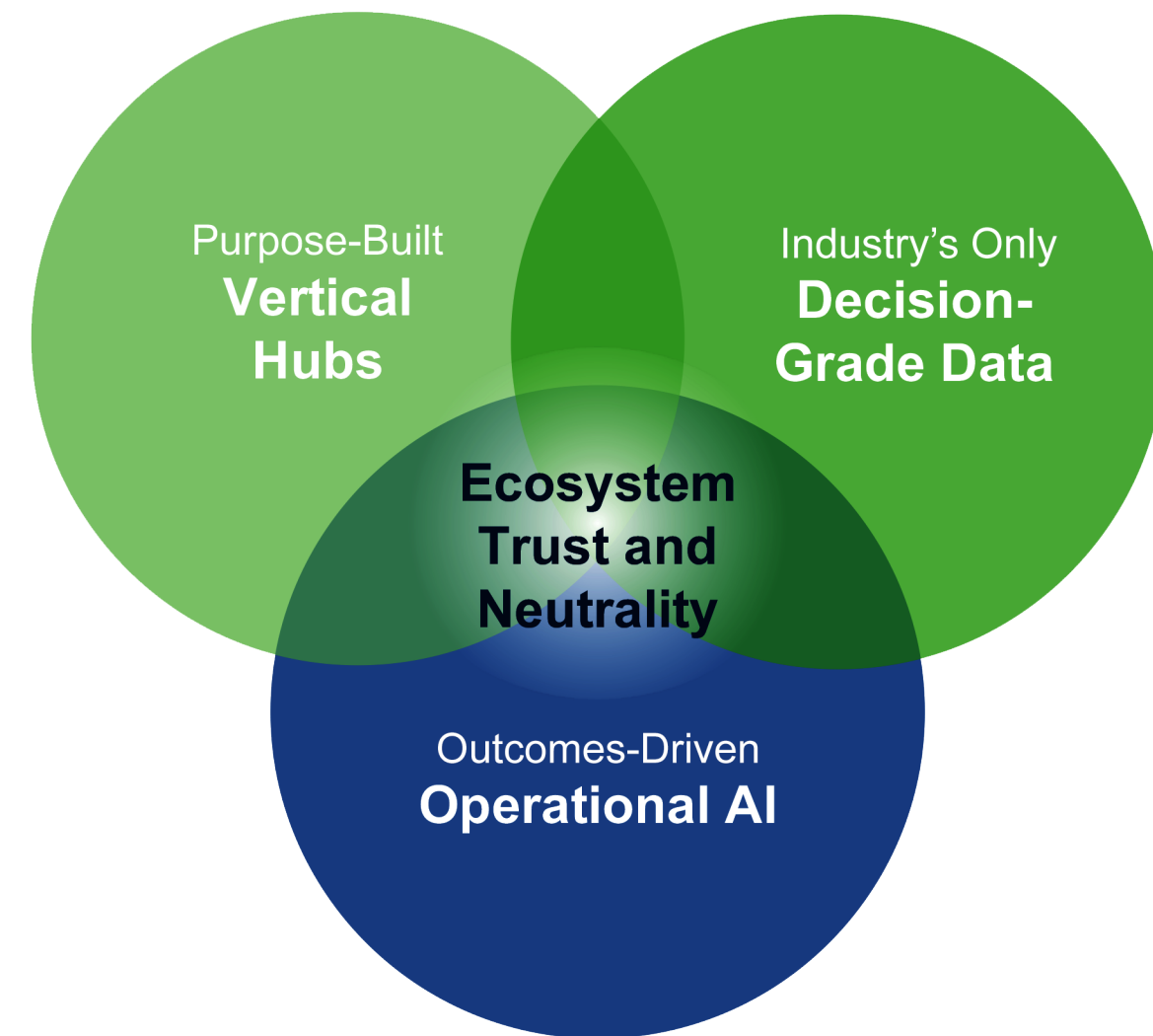
The DTN Difference: Decisioning at Scale

Once the case for operational decisioning is clear, the next question becomes: **who can actually deliver it?** DTN is not just a data provider or software vendor. We are the **Operational Decisioning Company**—trusted by leaders across the industries that feed, fuel, and protect the world to power decisions in the moments that matter most.

Our platform is designed to do one thing better than anyone else: enable essential, high-value decisions at scale.

Here's how we do it:

Purpose-Built Vertical Hubs

We don't retrofit generic tools—we build industry-native platforms from the ground up. Each DTN hub is engineered with decades of sector expertise, embedded operational workflows, and data structures aligned to how your business runs—not how software is sold.

Purpose-Built
Vertical Hubs

Industry's Only
Decision-Grade Data

Ecosystem Trust and Neutrality

Outcomes-Driven
Operational AI

Decision-Grade Data

Not all data is created equal. DTN delivers the industry's only decision-grade dataset—granular, dynamic, normalized, governed, and AI-ready. This data is sourced from a combination of first-party, third-party, and DTN-derived intelligence, continuously refined and validated over decades.

Quick definition:
Decision-Grade Data is granular, governed, real-time, operationally structured, and optimized for AI. It's the difference between knowing and guessing.

Outcomes-Driven Operational AI

We don't just forecast—we train AI to improve decision outcomes. DTN's models are precision-engineered to simulate scenarios, identify inflection points, and drive intelligent action across business processes. From pricing and supply to risk modeling and forecasting, AI isn't an overlay—it's the engine.

Ecosystem Trust and Neutrality

In a world where data governance and compliance are strategic risks, DTN is a neutral ecosystem intermediary. We steward shared data with transparent governance, provide auditable flows, and avoid conflicts of interest. Trust isn't a tagline—it's how we operate.

DTN by the Numbers

- 160+ patents
- 130M+ API calls daily
- Serving 126 countries
- 70K+ weather inputs processed daily
- 95% of U.S. farm data
- Trusted by 85% of downstream U.S. refined fuel wholesalers

These aren't just metrics—they're proof points for decisioning at scale.

About DTN and Next Steps

Who We Are
DTN is a global data and technology company helping operational leaders in energy, agriculture, and weather make faster, smarter decisions—powered by our Operational Decisioning Platform—to boost margins, growth, and resilience.

We invite you to explore what operational decisioning can do for your business.

Ready to explore what's possible? Reach out.

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