

Firstsource: Kairos: Operating System for AI-Native Operations

AI-native operations platform transforming service delivery across pensions, healthcare, and financial services, with 50%+ of revenues linked to outcomes exemplified by a full-stack transformation at a global benefits and pension company with the creation of an AI and digitally enabled member experience operation that reduced operating costs by more than 50% and optimized staffing while improving customer and operational outcomes.

Award standing: **Finalist**

Firstsource emerged as a Finalist in the 2026 HFS SaS Awards, selected from more than 250 submissions across the awards program. The recognition centers on Firstsource's submission, "Kairos: Operating System for AI-Native Operations", in the category of Best Services-as-Software Transformation.

The challenge being addressed by the Firstsource entry

In 1969, as the Apollo 11 lunar module descended, its computer began throwing continuous 1202 alarms. Abort, or continue? NASA guidance officer Jack Garman recognized the pattern: the alarms were intermittent, not fatal. He made the call to proceed. That judgment existed in no procedure. It lived in one person's head. The same paradox defines enterprise AI in 2026. AI agents collapse on complex queries or return confidently wrong answers.

The work described was delivered for the client

What they built

- FirstSource built a new operating paradigm - Intelligence That Operates, powered by Kairos, the operating system for AI-native operations.
- Kairos is not an AI model or agent, rather it is the environment that enables AI-native service delivery by capturing decisions, encoding domain knowledge, and driving continuous learning across operations.
- At its core the Kairos Operating System is a five-layer architecture connecting enterprise data to autonomous operations: an AI-native agent layer for execution; a domain intelligence layer with skills, policies, and guardrails; an organizational context layer via the Intelligent Context Framework; an operations intelligence layer using process, task, and conversation mining; and a systems-of-record layer integrating enterprise data.
- Every layer contributes to a continuous learning loop where each decision improves performance.
- The Intelligent Context Framework acts as institutional memory, providing real-time context, decision traceability, execution insights, and cross-client benchmarking enabling agents to operate like experienced professionals.

Results

- The shift to "Intelligence That Operates", powered by Kairos, delivered quantifiable, cross-industry performance gains that demonstrate the power of a Services-as-Software model in real production environments.
- Kairos drives impact through three mechanisms: Context-aware decisioning (via Intelligent Context Framework); Operational visibility and optimization (via sensors and execution signals); and compounding learning loops (via Domain Harness and decision traces).
- There has been a 20–50% improvement in operational effort and 20–35% increase in first-time-right accuracy.

Bottom line

Firstsource's entry backs up its claims with production evidence rather than a roadmap: the shift to Intelligence That Operates, powered by Kairos, delivered quantifiable, cross-industry performance gains that demonstrate the power of a Services-as-Software model in real production environments.

Learn more about Firstsource at www.firstsource.com

Appendix: About the Category and the Awards

Best Services-as-Software Transformation

This category recognizes the enterprises and providers furthest along in merging services and software into a single delivery model. Rather than fitting into one of the three emerging Services-as-Software paths HFS Research has mapped out, transformation entrants are judged on how completely they have moved from people-led delivery toward outcomes produced by a combination of codified IP, AI agents, and human oversight, at production scale rather than in pilot.

Every submission in this category was evaluated by HFS analysts and board members against five shared criteria:

- AI-driven delivery – is the solution genuinely autonomous, or is AI still assisting humans doing the work?
- Agentic adaptability – does the platform learn and orchestrate across workflows, or does it execute fixed rules?
- Outcome orientation – are commercial terms tied to results? Is there a quantified business case?
- Scalable architecture – is the IP reusable across clients and industries, or bespoke to one engagement?
- Proven enterprise success – verifiable, production-scale evidence with named or named-tier clients.

The HFS Services-as-Software Awards recognize the enterprises and technology providers leading the shift from labor-based delivery to AI-native, software-defined operations. Finalists in each category were selected by the HFS analyst team following a structured review of submissions against the criteria above. Winners were then determined by the HFS board of external advisors, who scored and ranked the finalists to reach a final result.

About HFS Research

HFS Research is the leading global analyst firm focused on business operations, digital transformation, and enterprise modernization.

For over a decade, HFS has shaped market language – from OneOffice to Services-as-Software – helping enterprises and providers understand where operating models are headed.

We work with global enterprises, IT and business services providers, software and cloud vendors, investors, and innovators.

The Services-as-Software Awards extend that leadership by recognizing organizations delivering measurable transformation in the market.