

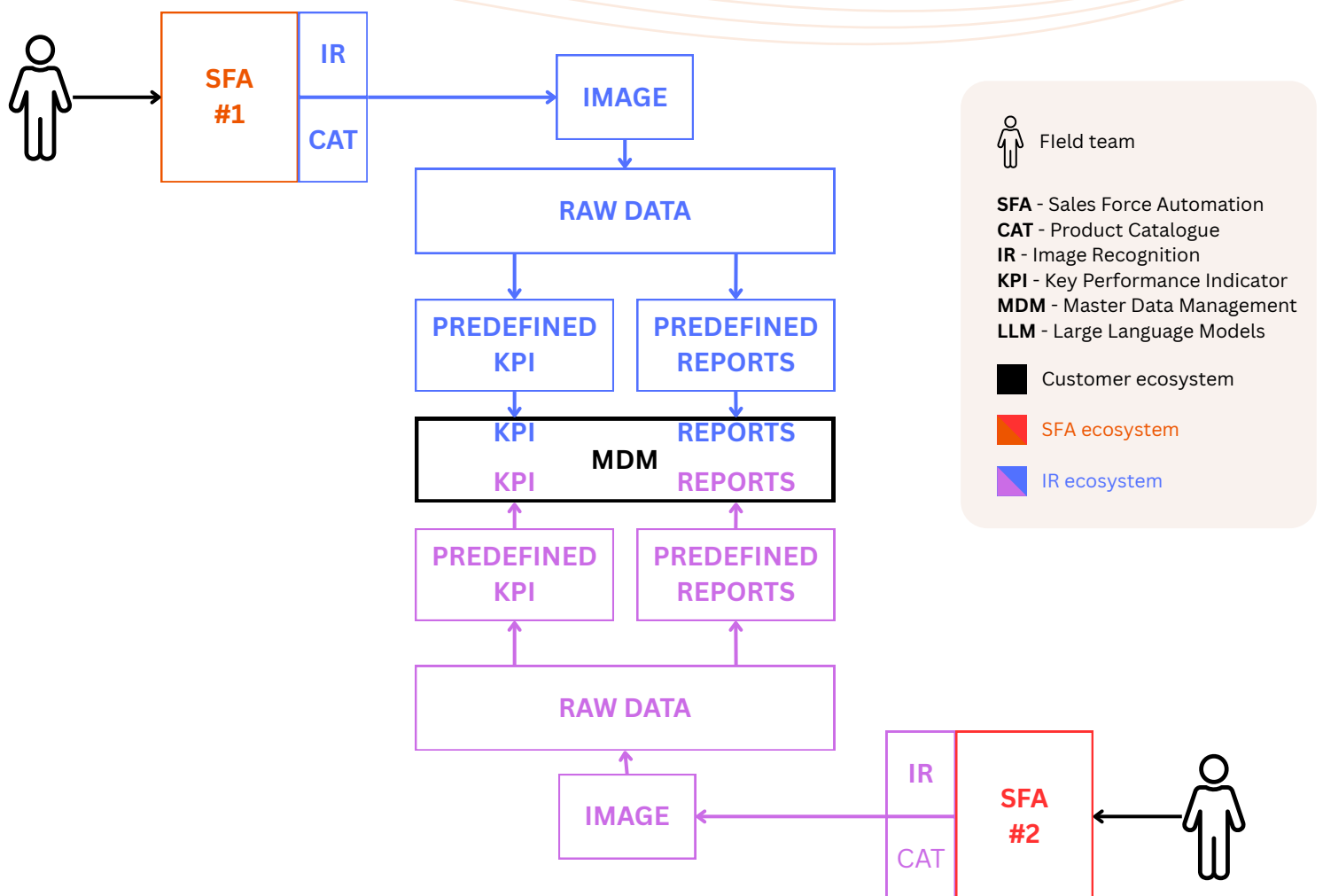


Option 1 – Packaged IR Solutions (e.g. Trax)



Packaged IR platforms offer a turnkey approach to automating in-store execution, but they operate within closed ecosystems that limit integration, customisation, and innovation. You're bound to the vendor's release cycles and development priorities, making it difficult to adapt to enterprise-specific needs or evolve quickly as your strategy changes.

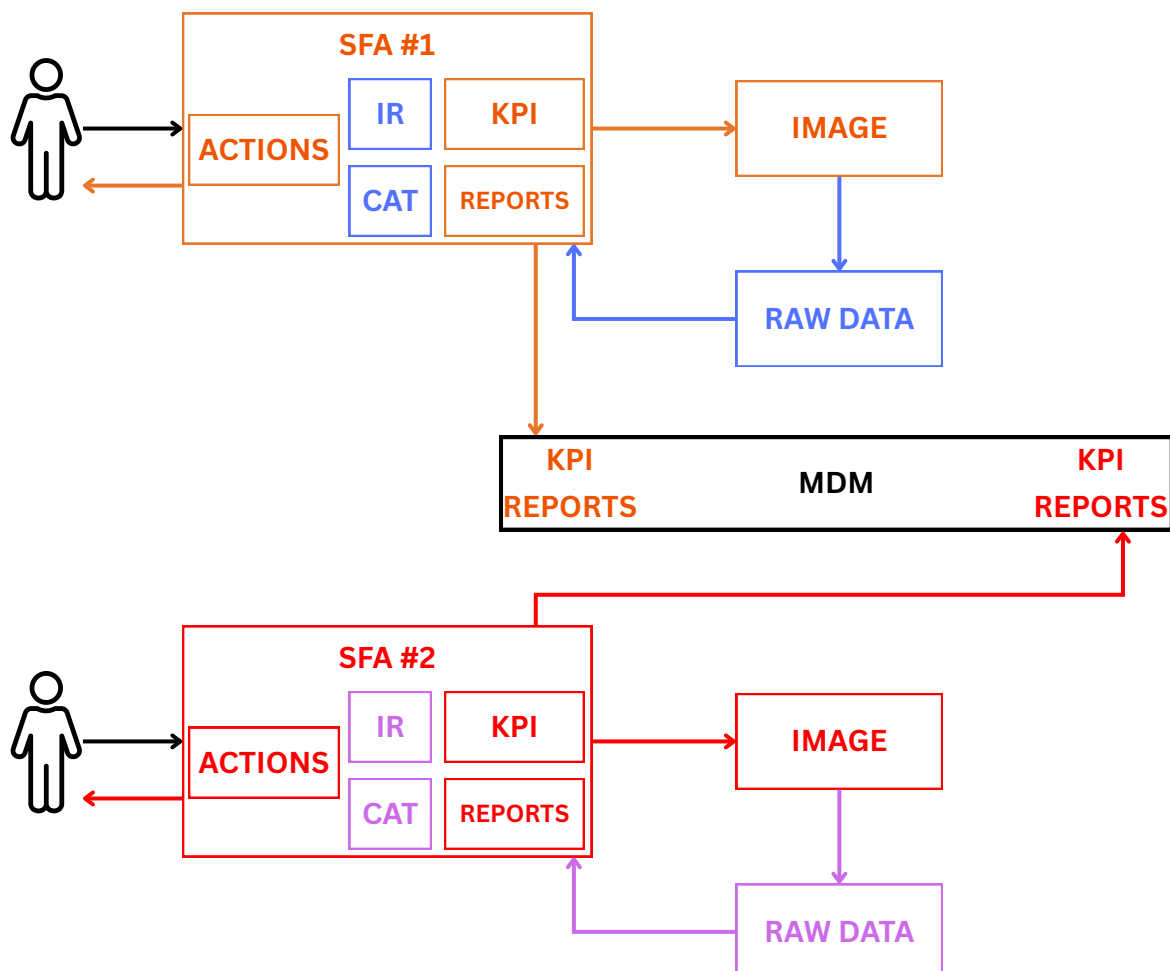
Pros 	Cons 
Quick time to deploy	Vendor lock-in
Off-the-shelf functionality (albeit typically limited to local markets)	No access to raw data/insights to be leveraged by AI/LLM (client's MDM/ "brain")
Pre-defined KPIs and reports	Limited flexibility and innovation
	Minimal customisation options
	No two-way connection with the SFA tool
	Catalogue managed by IR vendor with input from customer – often inefficient, slow, and frustrating



Option 2 – IR Integrated in SFA Tools



Some SFA platforms bundle IR as a built-in feature, offering convenience for existing users. However, these solutions are typically generic, inflexible, and driven by the SFA vendor's roadmap—leaving little room for custom rules, AI experimentation, or scalable innovation. The result is long-term rigidity as your needs grow more complex.

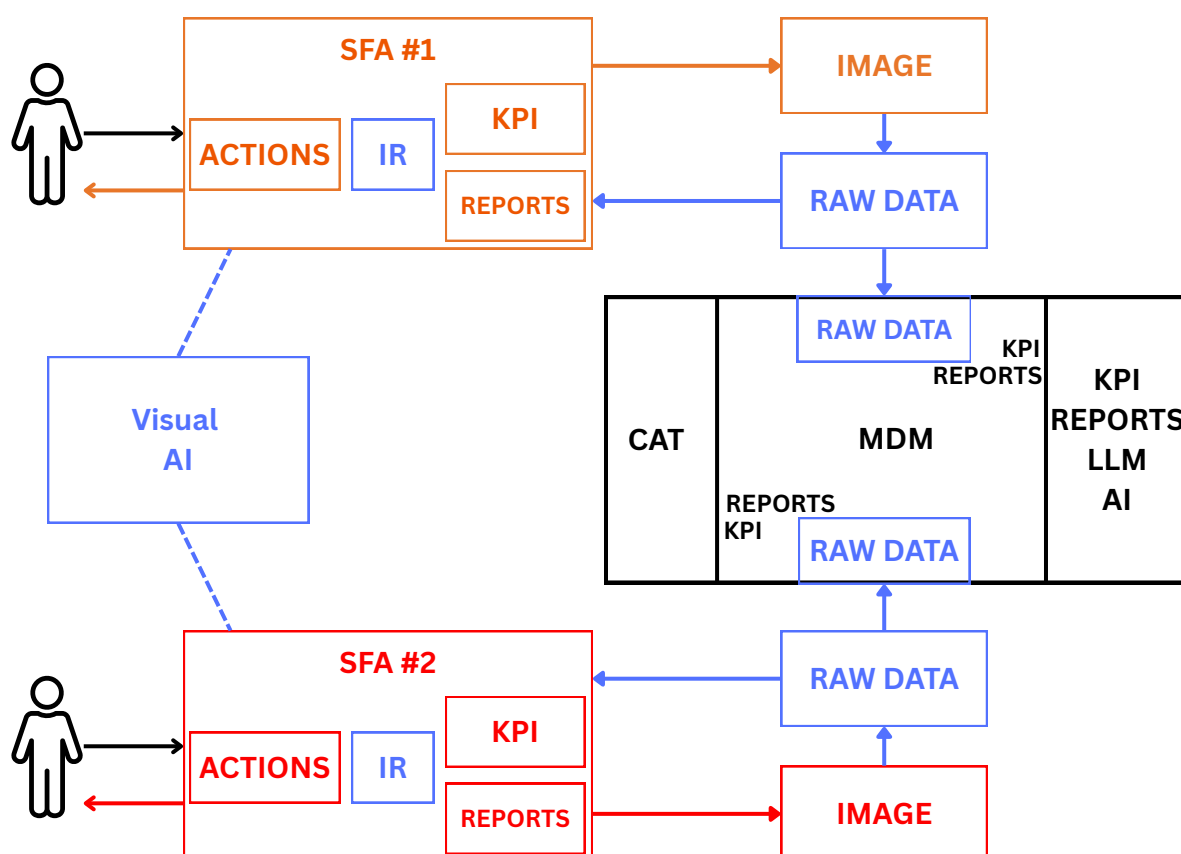
Pros 	Cons 
Seamless integration into field workflows	IR capabilities limited to vendor priorities
No need for additional tools	No access to raw data/insights
Simple onboarding for existing SFA users	Low flexibility or customisation
Direct connection with SFA tool allowing for immediate actions on insights	Catalogue managed by IR vendor with input from customer – often inefficient, slow, and frustrating
	Innovation takes a backseat to SFA development



Option 3 – Image Recognition as a Service (e.g. Neurolabs)



IR-as-a-Service is a modular, API-native model that plugs into any tech stack, whether in-house or third party, giving enterprises full control over how IR connects with any MDM (local/global), any SFA, product catalogues, or AI engines. Like Lego blocks, each component can evolve independently, enabling long-term flexibility, customisation, and future-proof integration of AI or LLM-based intelligence.

Pros 	Cons 
Fully modular and API-native	Requires active orchestration by internal teams
Fast to deploy and integrate	May demand greater upfront configuration
Standardised raw data/insights straight into the MDM	
Customisable KPIs, reports, and workflows	
Compatible with multiple image capture methods	
Catalogue managed and owned by client – allows faster onboarding, direct control, and API connectivity to client's MPC	





Option 4 – Custom IR Built In-House

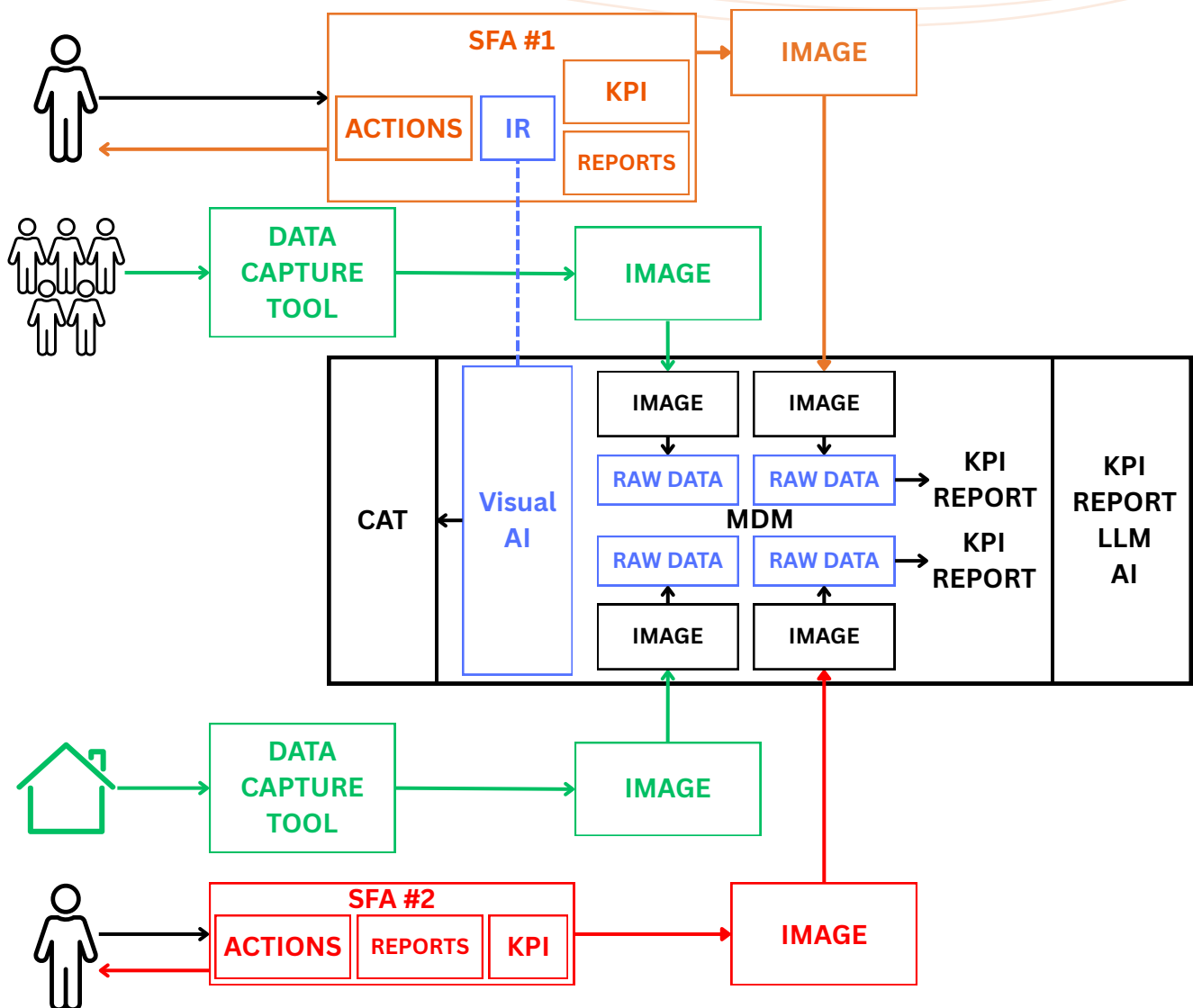
Building IR capabilities internally using cloud platforms offers complete control and tailoring to specific business needs, but comes with high development, maintenance, and resourcing costs. These projects often move slowly, stretch internal

Pros 	Cons 
Total control over data and roadmap	High cost of development and maintenance
IP remains in-house	Slower innovation cycle
Deep customisation possible	Difficult to scale across markets
Catalogue fully owned and managed by client – tightly integrated with internal data systems	

Option 5 – Hybrid Distributed IR Capture with Central Brain

This emerging architecture separates distributed IR capture (via reps, crowd, or customers) from centralised intelligence housed in data lakes or LLMs. It offers maximum flexibility and scalability for organisations looking to build adaptive, AI-powered systems—but demands careful orchestration, cross-team alignment, and a long-term vision to execute effectively.

Pros 	Cons 
Supports any image input (dedicated field teams, crowdsourced, retailer, CCTV)	Requires complex orchestration
Decouples capture from processing for ultimate flexibility	Demands maturity in internal data and ops teams
Ideal for large-scale AI and LLM integration	Longer setup timelines
Catalogue managed centrally by client – enables global reuse and efficient integration with MDM/data lakes	



Comparison Table

Criteria	Packaged IR	SFA-Integrated	Visual AI	In-House Build	Hybrid IR Capture
Time to Deploy	Fast	Medium	Fast	Slow	Medium
Integration Flexibility	Low	Medium	High	High	High
Customisation	Low	Low	High	High	High
Innovation Ownership	Vendor	Vendor	Joint	Internal	Joint
Cost of Ownership	Medium	Medium	Medium	High	Medium
Scalability	Medium	Medium	High	Medium	High
Control Over Data	Low	Medium	High	High	High
Suitable for Trials	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Image Capture Sources	Fixed (vendor app)	Field teams only	Any (API-compatible)	Internal only	Any (crowd, CCTV, etc.)
Support for AI/LLM Evolution	Low	Low	High	Medium	High
Catalogue Management	Vendor-managed (split, slow)	Vendor-managed (split, slow)	Client-managed (API-native)	Client-managed (in-house)	Client-managed (centralised)