

# How does a mid-market Canadian operator decide on Fractional CIO capability?

The Fractional CIO decision for 60-150 person Canadian mid-market operators: when, why, and how to scope it. Three signs you need it, three engagement structures, five scope dimensions. Designed for the IT lead who's drowning.

FOR: GROWING E&P + DIRECTIONAL SERVICE (60-150 PEOPLE, OVERLOADED IT LEAD)

VENCER GUIDE • DECEMBER 2026

## How do you decide on Fractional CIO capability?

When to add fractional CIO capability, how to scope it, and the patterns that produce real ROI versus expensive overhead. For mid-market operators 60-150 people deep into the question.

### QUICK ANSWER

The Fractional CIO question comes up at the 60-150 person scale: the IT lead is capable but drowning, the math on a full-time CIO doesn't work yet, and doing without strategic capacity doesn't work either. Three signs you need it: the IT lead spending more than 60% of their time on operational firefighting; strategic projects (cyber posture, M&A readiness, AI deployment) consistently slipping; the board asking strategic IT questions the IT lead can't cleanly answer. Three engagement structures fit different operator needs; five scope dimensions define what's actually included.

~3,000 words • Approx. 12-min read • Companion to The Operating System