

The time has come for digital transformation

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Using technology to drive business transformation is hardly a new thing. In fact, reducing paper and automating processes are goals many organisations share. Yet, change has been slow in coming with some decision-makers even resisting digitalisation. This needs to change if organisations are to unlock new insights from their data.



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Making this journey more challenging is the fact that the benefits of going digital have not been specific. This often adds to the 'language barrier' that exists between technology departments and business-focused divisions. Even though the organisation has a unified goal, the disparate approaches between technology and business can cause friction or a lack of meeting deliverables.



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As a first step, and to make the broader organisation excited to drive change, those promoting the digital process need to show how to derive real business value from those efforts. Use cases become essential tools to show non-technical people the merits of digital transformation.

For example, the true value of automation does not lie in what the business knows but rather the things it does not. Paper-based processes cannot produce any insight into the organisation. Furthermore, these traditional methods are unable to bridge the silos that have been growing inside a company over many years.

Understanding change

Getting across the understanding of how digital can drive inter-departmental collaboration and produce previously untapped sources of information can contribute greatly to fostering a willingness for change. From a strategic level, this requires moving from a focus on operational efficiency towards one targeting tactical and strategic insights. In this way, digital becomes an enabler for change at a business.

While understanding this is important, executing a digital information platform strategy requires several components to be put in place. It is not a 'fire-and-forget' way of working. Instead, it requires continuously reviewing paper-based processes and replacing them with digital ones. This will grow as employees become more adept at engaging with the newer digital platforms.

This is not to say that companies can just throw technology at their processes and hope it works. Rather, the success of this strategy will be determined as much by the adoption rate of employees as the technology being implemented.



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IT must engage closely with business to understand which processes will have the greatest impact in the organisation. Once that is done, a detailed structural approach needs to be undertaken to determine how those processes can be enhanced to increase collaboration between departments.

Leveraging data

This will have the additional benefit of identifying where information is being duplicated. Not only does this duplication result in an inefficient company, but it is also prone to errors thanks to the manual nature of many legacy (and paper-based) systems. On the flip side, the data generated in a digital environment will be stored in a way that best suits the platform used to generate that information.

And this is when the magic starts happening. Once captured and stored, the analytical tools can unlock insights that can positively impact all areas of the business. By leveraging ETL (extract, transform, load) to stage the information in such a way that it is accessible by all reporting and analytical tools, the business can deliver true value to its stakeholders.

When all of this is done, those insights can be used to improve the existing digital processes. This cycle is a continuous one and will change the fundamental elements as technology evolves. None of this is possible by remaining on paper-driven processes. Digital transformation is upon us. It is time to act and deliver value before it is too late

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