Developing a Digital Transformation Strategy

Introduction

In today's digital first world, technology has become an immutable part of our daily lives. The convergence of megatrends, such as Big Data, Artificial Intelligence, Mobile, Cloud, and Social Technology, is rapidly rewriting the business landscape, transforming consumer behaviour and disrupting long-standing business processes.

Organisations are facing increasing pressure to implement technological advancement strategies to remain competitive and relevant in the market. With digitally-driven companies reporting benefits that run the gamut from lowered costs to improved customer satisfaction, efficiency, decision-making and speed-to-market, the impetus to embrace digital transformation goes well beyond the reflexive desire to adopt 'the next big trend'. Indeed, for some industries it is a case of adapt or die – either learn to strategically leverage digital technologies or get left behind.

Gartner's CEO Survey[1] reveals that forty-two percent of respondents said "digital first" or "digital to the core" is now their company digital business posture.

Forty-seven percent of CEOs surveyed are being challenged by the board of directors to make progress in digital business, while fifty-six percent said that their digital improvements have already improved profits.

Despite these promising statistics, more than half of respondents (53%) could not provide a clear metric for digital transformation and success.

Digital transformation, like many industry voguisms, is accompanied by a sense of urgency, but also a general lack of clear, quantifiable measures for successful implementation. Bombarded with information from a dizzying array of sources, organisations know they must act, but remain unclear on the How, When and What.

This paper delves into the challenges businesses are likely to face on their digital transformation journey, and sets out actionable steps to overcome these barriers and implement a successful Digital Transformation Strategy in your organisation.

Are you ready to start implementing a digital transformation strategy?

Learn how Alemba Service Manager can help you do this.

[1] https://www.gartner.com/document/3678617?srcId=1-8619339564

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What is Digital Transformation?

It is clear that implementing a considered digital transformation strategy has become imperative to business success in the age of rapid technological advancement. But what is digital transformation, exactly?

Definitions vary and digital transformation may mean different things for different segments of society, or even within individual organisations. Digital transformation has become an umbrella term to indicate changes associated with the adoption of digital technology across all spheres of human society, including government, science, medicine, social and business.

In the context of digital business transformation, the term can be broadly defined as:

The profound transformation of business and organisational activities, processes, competencies and models to fully leverage the changes and opportunities of a mix of digital technologies and their accelerating impact across society in a strategic and prioritized way, with present and future shifts in mind[2].

Digital Transformation is not (only) Digitization

Often, what is referred to as digitalization or digital transformation in an organisation is in fact merely digitization. The distinction is an important one. Digitization is what we would commonly refer to as 'going paper-less' – converting existing analogue or paper-based forms or process to digital format to enable the automation of manual processes.

In contrast, digital transformation goes beyond simply automating an existing process, but also includes the overall strategic transformation and optimization of business processes and models through leveraging digital technologies.

Steps towards a Digital Transformation Strategy

Every company is different and what works for one may not necessarily work for another. However, there are a few basic steps you can follow to help formulate the digital transformation strategy that is right for your business.

What does digital mean for you?

As mentioned above, digital transformation will look different for every company. The first step towards developing a strategy for digital transformation is defining what digital success would look like for your organisation.

This could be as simple as moving away from paper-based processes to digital forms, or a more complex overhaul of business models, processes and products.

Start with a vision and then work on setting goals to achieve this. What that vision is may depend on a single individual such as a CEO or CIO, an executive board, or may even be established through a crowd-sourcing approach that involves the entire business through workshops and surveys.

Like any business vision, this may change as you move forward, and needs to be revisited from time to time.

[2] https://www.i-scoop.eu/digital-transformation/

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Think like your customer

Ultimately, your business is shaped by the needs and behaviours of your customers. It makes sense then to approach your digital initiative from the point of view of your target audience.

Understanding how customers interact with digital technologies, what their expectations are, and what pain points they have will allow you to optimize you customer experience and help inform decisions on technological investments.

What are the risks?

As already discussed, embracing digital innovation goes hand in hand with some risk and experimentation. However, that does not mean blindly rushing in only to face problems that could have been prevented by a proper risk assessment exercise.

Carefully consider the potential impact of digital disruption on your organisation. If required, conduct a readiness assessment to establish your business' digital maturity, employees' digital skills and the organisational changes that would need to be made to drive a successful digital development project.

Are you in a position to conduct an effective in-house risk and readiness assessment? If not, consider calling on an independent professional to help out.

Competitor analysis

Fear of being outpaced by competitors is often a catalyst for digital transformation initiatives.

While it can be useful to keep tabs on the neighbours to find out how digital technologies are being

leveraged within your industry, don't allow the activities of your immediate competitors to narrow your vision. Looking beyond your field can help you gain an understanding of wider digital trends that could affect or assist your business.

Goals and objectives

Once you've established a clear vision for your digital future, it's time to set some concrete goals to help get you there. Digital transformation can be seen as a multi-step journey and may play out across an extended time frame. Thus, short- and long-term goal setting, accompanied by actionable steps to achieve these objectives, is key.

Establish a logical starting point and decide which goals require immediate attention and which can be achieved incrementally. As with your overall vision, your goals may change as you progress and require regular review.

How do you measure success?

Perhaps one of the most challenging steps in implementing a workable digital transformation strategy is defining success metrics. Again, KPIs will vary from organisation to organisation, depending on their digital ambitions.
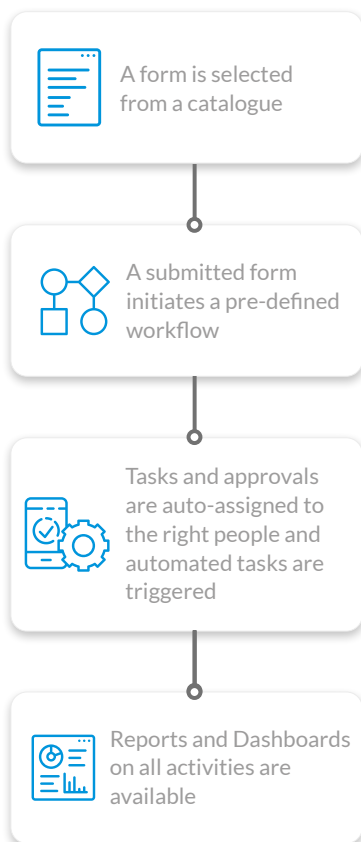
Indicators of success may include user adoption, customer reviews and feedback, new customer acquisitions, turnover, speed to implementation of new technologies, completion rates, brand value, etc.

How you define and measure return on your digital investments is up to you, the most important thing is that you do have standards in place for measuring ROI.

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Digitize your paper forms with Alemba Service Manager

Alemba's expert consultants have great experience in helping customers along the journey from paper-based process to delivering optimized digital processes.

Alemba Service Manager enables you to digitize your organisation's paper-based forms. Online forms can be published on the Self Service portal as part of the service catalog. Once the form is completed and submitted, the workflow engine automatically assigns the relevant tasks and approvals to the correct stakeholders, at the appropriate points in the process.

A form is selected from a catalogue

A submitted form initiates a pre-defined workflow

Tasks and approvals are auto-assigned to the right people and automated tasks are triggered

Reports and Dashboards on all activities are available

A single shop front for users to submit, approve and track forms.

Request and approval forms designed with codeless configuration.

A proven workflow engine to automate assigning and actioning of different tasks; developed using a simple drag-and-drop interface.

A single source of truth to manage the outputs of the online forms and enable an audit trail and reports.

Are you ready to start implementing a digital transformation strategy? *Learn how Alemba Service Manager can help you do this.*

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How Alemba Service Manager met a local NSW government department's needs:

A New South Wales Government Department needed to find a way to limit the time Service Desk staff spent on performing repetitive tasks, allowing them to focus on improving the speed and quality of service delivery.

The first step was to identify and streamline those tasks that were taking up the most of the team's time. Reports were run to identify the highest consumed services, and the results were eye-opening:

- 61% of the top ten call types were creating, deleting, extending or modifying accounts.

- 19% of the top ten calls could have been resolved by implementing self-service password resets.

- 18% of the top ten calls could have been resolved by implementing a customer-facing knowledge base.

Once the Department's team had identified the best services to automate, the next step was deciding how to go about automating these services. The Alemba team recommended the use of VMware's vRealize Orchestrator (vRO) to achieve the required automation.

The Alemba vRO adapter was the ideal solution to the Department's need to find ways to automate its Active Directory updates.

The vRO automation process was simple and quick to implement. The Technical Support Team Leader and his team were up and running within a day or two without any real issues.

Benefits

- Fast and simple automation of Active Directory updates

- Overall time savings of 2 full time equivalent employees

- Wait time for new account creation reduced from 2 days to 30 minutes

Find out more about this project [here]()

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