



DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION - BEYOND THE BUZZWORD

Understanding the impact transformative change can have on a modern business and defining a starting point





2018 will be a year of reckoning for those that have held on too long or tried to bootstrap their way through transforming their business. Simply put, the distance between customer expectations and the reality on the ground is becoming so great that a slow and gradual transition is no longer possible. Incrementalism may feel good, but it masks the quiet deterioration of the business.

Forrester: Predictions 2018 - A Year of Reckoning

What is Digital Transformation?

If there's anything that's consistent about the term digital transformation, it's that no one person, analyst or business defines it exactly the same. But for the sake of defining it here, it is the application of technology to facilitate new business models, processes, applications and systems that lead to increased revenue and efficiencies and greater competitive advantage.

The Time to Start Your Transformation Was Yesterday

Ready or not, digital transformation is here. Organizations that embrace it can quickly breathe new life into business processes, products, employees and customers. Industries that don't, or fail to leverage it fully, will quickly find themselves way behind the competition. But where does an organization start? We know it's happening, and we know it's critical, but articulating the need and prioritizing where to start is an all-too-common challenge.

In this eBook, we will look at some of the common challenges facing today's organizations that digital transformation can help solve, as well as some tangible steps that you can take as you embark on this step-by-step journey.

What's Really Driving Digital Transformation?

Customer Expectations Continue to Rise

2018 is all about the customer. They want always-on, self-service, personalized access from anywhere through their chosen platforms, and when they don't get it, the impact on loyalty can be devastating to a brand. To meet these new expectations, organizations must innovate faster and offer products that are software enabled and inter-connected.

Customer experience alone could be one of the biggest factors driving transformation initiatives. But it's also offering businesses a huge opportunity to better understand their buyers and deliver services in more ways than they could before. With the use of AI and machine learning, today's business can serve their customers needs faster and without human interaction, leading to a more agile and responsive customer experience.

Increased Demands in Workforce Mobility

[According to IDC](#), the U.S. mobile worker population will grow at a steady rate over the next five years, increasing to 105.4 million mobile workers in 2020. By the end of the forecast period, IDC expects mobile workers will account for nearly three quarters (72.3%) of the total U.S. workforce.

Just like customers, today's workforce wants always-on access, even if they are not sitting at their desk, and allowing them to access business tools outside of business walls only drives increased levels of engagement with customers and other team members. Organizations that recognize the need to move towards a mobile-first approach will only fuel other digital-first initiatives that accelerate transformation and incorporate mobility into their day-to-day business processes.



Digital disruption will displace nearly 4 out of the top 10 incumbents by industry over the next five years.

IMD and Cisco, [Digital Vortex: How Digital Disruption is Redefining Industries](#)

Intelligent Work Processes

The combined use of artificial intelligence (AI) and automation is continuing to spread, as organizations realize how it will help them create more efficient working environments. In fact, according to a 2018 [CompTIA study](#), AI, blockchain, and VR/AR are the top technologies driving enterprise digital transformation.

It's not that AI and associated technologies will replace the need for humans, but as [Information Management summarizes](#), AI will do a lot of the upfront, tedious work, in turn freeing humans to focus on resolving complex cases that involve resolving ambiguous information, exercising judgment in difficult cases and dealing with dissatisfied customers - unlocking what they call the third wave of business transformation. The resulting efficiencies here are only beginning to be realized.

The Growth & Acceptance of Cloud

The role of the cloud in digital transformation is undeniable. When adopted and driven by an over-arching strategy, the cloud brings huge benefits: efficiency, speed, cost reductions and significant impact to the bottom-line.

At the end of the day, digital transformation is about using technology to drive faster responsiveness to customer and workforce demands, and that means supporting highly scalable workloads and applications for which the cloud is most often a perfect fit.

Cost Savings

Digital transformation can deliver significant cost savings to any organization willing to embrace it, from higher workforce productivity, increased customer engagement, and optimization of your operations with intelligent processes and modern technologies. While some transformation initiatives may require upfront investment, the potential back-end benefits are hard to dispute.



Where to Start...



According to Harvard Business Review, 84 percent of today's CEOs believe digital disruption is imminent, and almost half think their business model will be obsolete by 2020.

Harvard Business Review

1. Set Realistic Expectations

Right up front, there are some important expectations to set:

- **Digital transformation isn't easy.** While it would be nice to flip a switch and magically transform into a digitally-driven organization, the reality is it's not simple. Innovation requires a range of projects, projects that include optimizing core business operations, bringing on new technologies and creating new customer experiences. To accomplish these monumental tasks requires an overarching strategy comprised of many prioritized projects, and loads of patience.
- **IT and business alignment is a must.** The impact of digital disruption is driving significant IT and business-level changes. This includes platforms and architectures, as well as budget and development priorities. As a result, it's imperative that the business and IT be tightly aligned in this journey, and from this alignment will come the strategy required for real success.
- **Don't forget the people at the center of digital transformation.** Digital transformation is more than a technology initiative. You can't forget about the roles that company culture and processes play. This will need to be addressed with clear communication of the vision, collaborative planning, change management, process development and adoption strategy.

2. Understand your current environment.

Before you can truly start implementing a successful digitization initiative, you have to clearly understand your current state. It's critical to document your infrastructure, the applications running on that infrastructure, the interconnections and dependencies, as well as articulate the business processes that drive your day-to-day business. By documenting each piece of technology and its role in the business, prioritization can then take place of where it makes the most sense to start the transformation journey.

3. Build a long-term strategy based on smaller projects.

When developing your transformation plan, time to value and speed of execution is key, so it only makes sense to build your transformation plan as a series of smaller projects happening in tandem across the organization. This takes the pressure of a huge undertaking off the IT team and gives them opportunities to enjoy success on a regular basis, all while incrementally moving the dial towards real transformation.

4. Collaborate with line of business (LOB) owners.

Given the incredibly high stakes surrounding digital business, it's more important than ever for IT to work closely with their LOB peers. Not only will this aid in long-term adoption, but also in the prioritization of projects that will have immediate impact on the business.

5. Embrace Hybrid IT.

As you embark on implementing the technology vision, you want to take advantage of the latest apps and data — yet you have to maintain the workloads and processes that run your business today. A hybrid IT approach is where you'll find the best of both worlds, where you can still maximize the performance, cost and agility of applications, while matching each application and workload to the right IT platform.

6. Focus on outcomes, not just execution.

Although the public cloud has proven to be a highly viable execution venue for the majority of workloads, it's not always the best choice. So it is critical to focus on the specific outcome when determining the right execution venue for both legacy and new applications and workloads.



7. Keep security front and center.

As critical systems and business processes become modernized, it also opens the door to risk. The same power that enables these technologies to radically transform business processes also brings the potential to cause gaps in security and loss of information if not properly secured. Security posture assessments should be a critical part of any digital transformation initiative.

8. Partner with the best.

With so many different technologies hitting the market, it's incredibly difficult for any organization to truly know that one versus another is the best fit for their environment. A seasoned partner can be an invaluable asset in guiding your decision. In addition, they know that making the right choice of technology is only part of the challenge, as integrating it into your current applications and workloads without creating new complexities and risk is critical.

We're Here to Help.

As your business becomes more complex and the pace of digital change continues to increase, the role of technology in your organization is more critical than ever before. The OneNeck IT Solutions team of experts can provide real value on projects ranging from technology deployments to full ecosystem design, implementation and management. We will provide you with independent, unbiased evaluations and recommendations with an eye toward future-proofing to ensure the technology you implement today doesn't limit your organization tomorrow.

OneNeck has expertise leveraging a broad range of technologies and services that will help you operate more efficiently. We provide an end-to-end, technology-independent approach that includes a large portfolio of hybrid IT offerings across infrastructure, cloud, data center, applications and managed services. This approach enables organizations to transform their services, improving their speed to market, enhancing customer experience and establishing them in the forefront of the competitors.



About One Neck IT Solutions

OneNeck IT Solutions helps organizations grow and protect their business through client-centric hybrid IT solutions. We seamlessly integrate traditional hardware and cloud and hosting solutions, offering our customers choice and ensuring they get the best of both worlds.

With a comprehensive portfolio that includes multi-cloud solutions, 8 top-tier data centers, colocation, managed services, end-to-end security services, as well as numerous other advanced IT services, we help our customers securely use their IT to increase efficiency and productivity and grow their business.

Questions? Contact us at (855) ONE-NECK



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