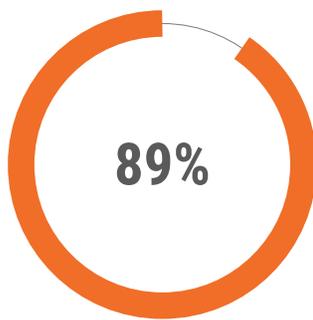


5 Steps to a Successful

Digital Transformation Strategy

We're living in the age of digital revolution – constant, perpetual, relentless digital revolution.

As new digital technologies are innovated and introduced to the market, companies of small and large scales are pressured to stay up-to-date with advancements that serve to solve common problems and gaps in business strategies.



According to IDG, “89% of enterprises are planning to adopt or have already adopted a digital business strategy.”

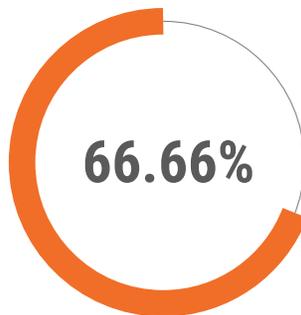
Why are so many companies undergoing a digital transformation? The simple answer is competition. Companies must consistently revisit technology decisions in order to retain their market advantage. A successful digital transformation strategy combined with a change communications strategy helps to secure this market advantage and align your employees with new systems and processes.

What is digital transformation strategy?

Digital transformation is the transition that takes place in a company to integrate new digital technologies into every step of the process; from internal operations, to work culture, to consumer interactions.

Creating and establishing an effective digital transformation strategy helps to improve the customer experience, and refine business models and processes so they can operate with greater efficiency.

Companies must remain fluid in their technologies and digital strategies to secure a competitive advantage in the market, and to adapt to the ever-changing world of technology. This includes preparing for a new digital implementation, avoiding resistance against the natural direction of digital evolution, and formulating a strategy to ensure that the company transforms parallel to the digital market.



According to Seagate, two-thirds of global CEOs started focusing on digital strategies to improve customer experience by the end of 2019.

An effective digital transformation strategy is one that will safeguard a company against the inevitable reality of digital disruption.



What is change communications?

Every business must deal with change – whether within mundane day-to-day processes, enterprise-wide shifts in business models, or with larger initiatives – digital transformation being one major example. It is easy to become so caught up in the technology, execution, and implementation process of a digital transformation that organizations sometimes overlook how important employee buy-in and participation is, in order for them to be successful.

That is where change communications can help. Change and implementation don't happen all at once – instead, they tend to be lengthy processes that require collaboration and alignment on all organizational levels. Change communications is the foundational tool that will drive all activities and actions for your digital transformation.

What is digital disruption?

Digital disruption describes the process by which new technologies emerge, completely disrupt the market, and affect the value of related products and services.

Today, as digital technologies are erupting and new business models are on a relentless mission to replace more traditional processes, the possibility of digital disruption should remain at the forefront of any company or organization's digital transformation strategy.

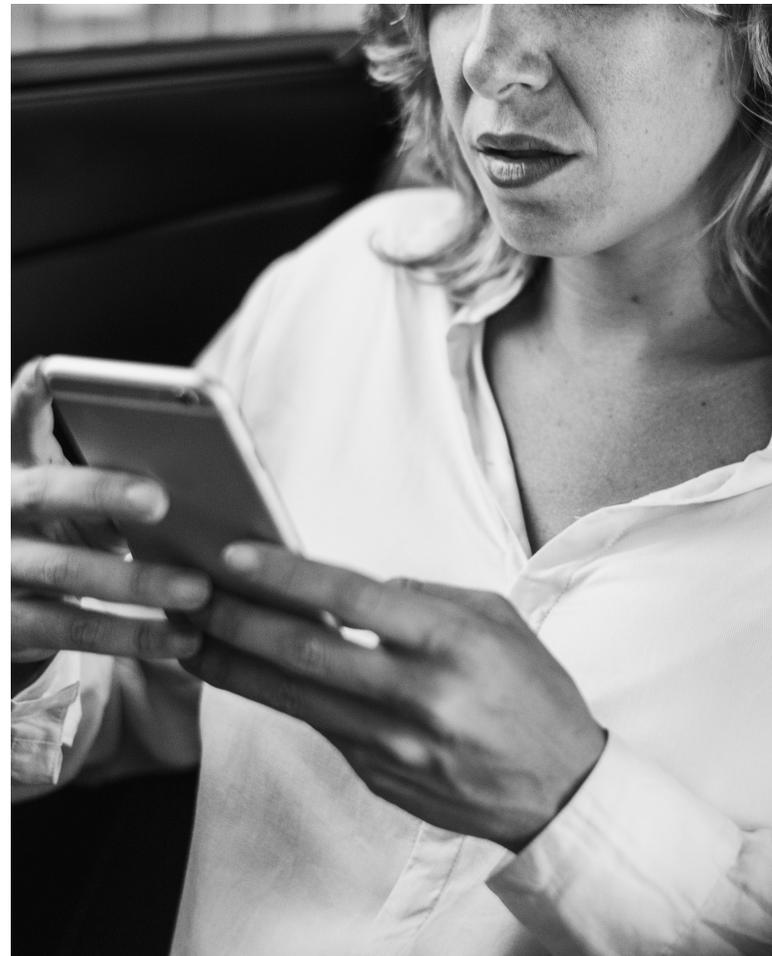
Through the creation of a strong marketing strategy that excites consumers, and the implementation of advanced technologies that refine processes, companies can successfully disrupt the digital market. When this happens, companies and employees are left to catch up with these marketing pioneers.

Digital disruption can lessen the market value of products and services, given that new technologies and advancements can shift consumers' perceptions, expectations, and behaviors.

Take Uber as an example of a major digital disruption:

Uber is a successful taxi company that doesn't own a single taxi. By staying ahead of the market, and by implementing highly-advanced technologies that had never been employed before, Uber's technology disrupted the taxi market.

Uber's digital disruption successfully lessened the demand for taxis in the broader market, and they continue to make waves as they implement new strategies and features to improve the customer experience.



Why is it important to create a digital transformation strategy?

It's no secret that the market is evolving rapidly in today's digital age. New digital platforms, technologies, software, programs, and similar digital initiatives continue to flood the market, and businesses need to stay ahead of the digital curve.

By anticipating coming technological advancements and the digital evolution ahead, companies can:



Improve the consumer/customer experience



Boost employee efficiency



Refine business processes to fulfill any gaps



Streamline DevOps processes



Align employees on changes and their benefits



Gain a significant competitive advantage in the market



Increase profits



Acquire the best talent pool in the area

A successful digital transformation strategy enables a company to anticipate coming digital transformations in the future, as opposed to catching up to digital transformations once they're already disrupting the market. Setting up a change communications strategy alongside

a digital transformation strategy allows companies to take employees with them on this change journey. It allows you to build trust and transparency with your workforce, which results in higher adoption, and ultimately behavior change.



How to create a successful digital transformation strategy

The foundation of any digital transformation strategy begins with a clear vision for the future. Leaders of a company must clearly define where they see the company going, then communicate it to the organization. More specifically, CIOs driving these digital transformation initiatives need to partner with the organization's CHRO to maximize change acceptance and adoption.

Businesses should follow a digital transformation roadmap that aligns leadership, ensures buy-in from employees, anticipates market trends, fulfills gaps in the business strategy, and cultivates new opportunities on a digital platform – all to undergo a successful business transformation.



Step 1

Determine business objectives, gaps and needs in the company.

Examine why your company is considering a business transformation.

Does the organization's digital strategy require a more customer-centric approach? Or is the company seeking to better optimize the customer experience on mobile devices? (After all, creating an optimal mobile experience is critical in the digital age, as nearly half of mobile users will switch to a competitor if they have a bad experience with a company's mobile site.)

Where are the holes or gaps in the business strategy? Which pieces or processes could be refined for the company to operate with greater efficiency? (A program such as a core values communication campaign can help to facilitate constant communication, to effectively disseminate business objectives among team members.)



Step 2

Assess the market and the current state of the business.

Once you've identified the gaps that need satisfying and the business objectives that need accomplishing, you should have a clearer understanding of which market trends to look out for, and which technologies to adopt.

To determine market trends before they're implemented by the competition, it's critical to assess the market to understand what's to come in the digital future.

Are programs and software powered by machine learning or artificial intelligence taking precedence in the market? What types of new products are emerging? And, most importantly, where does your company fall in the market spectrum?

Business executives and CIOs need to determine where the company currently is, and which technologies and strategies it can adopt to surpass the market.

Step 3

Identify the talent and skillsets needed to achieve business goals.

Not only does a company need to determine the digital technologies it requires to further a digital transformation, but it also needs a clear understanding of the talent pool, skillsets, and competencies required to undergo the transformation.

Leaders need to be skilled, competent, and effective in communication to execute a successful technology implementation. Employees, managers, and leaders who have the skills that align with the company's digital future should collaborate and communicate openly to establish the best digital strategy for integrating new technologies. The importance of effective internal communications should not be overlooked during any business transformation.

Step 4

Create a linear roadmap for digital transformation.

A digital transformation roadmap can assist a company's project management approach to create a clear, linear roadmap that serves to navigate a successful digital transformation.

Is there a missing talent? Include a talent recruiting/acquisition milestone to the roadmap. Does the development process have unnecessary, additional steps that need to be discarded for a streamlined process?

Determine the steps, goals, and milestones that need to be met to create an agile software development.

Step 5

Prepare the work culture.

Ensuring that the work culture is prepared for a digital transformation is imperative. Are team members, managers, leaders, and business executives ready for radical change in technologies?

No company wants to be in a position where its employees aren't adapting to new programs or software. This step could quite literally make or break the entire business transformation. If a company identifies gaps in the process, assesses the current market, and integrates new technology, employees have to be on board.

After all, employees will be the ones working closely with these new technologies. A custom communication journey can aid in any digital transformation by inspiring employees to take action, educating employees on strategic initiatives, and reinforcing custom messages to keep employees updated and engaged.

Leaders of a company need to identify whether their work environment will take well to a digital transformation. If the culture isn't adaptable to new technologies, it might be time to integrate some new talent in the workplace.

A digital transformation strategy can improve the customer experience, increase the company's overall profits, and streamline business processes to enable smooth, efficient operations.

When competing organizations disrupt the market with new strategies, business models, and technological advancements, your company needs to anticipate this disruption and have a plan in place to counter the competition and surpass its efforts. Regardless of a company's industry, market audience, or KPIs, all organizations should see the indisputable value in implementing a successful digital transformation strategy.

