

## 3 Components to Successful Digital Transformation

By: Andrew Morawski

The line between our daily lives and digital lives has never been more blurred. Whether it's buying a pair of shoes online, liking a Facebook post, or sharing a photo from a family party, digital systems and applications have ingrained themselves into our regular day-to-day. With this integration of digital into our personal lives comes the need for businesses to do the same. Customers expect a seamless experience across digital and physical platforms. This is why one of the biggest trends discussed today is digital transformation.



To stay competitive in today's shifting economic landscape, businesses must adapt their operations to leverage digital capabilities or risk being left behind. Companies are recognizing this need for change. In fact, the [Worldwide Digital Transformation Spending Guide](#) from IDC estimates that global spending on digital transformation technologies will surpass \$2.1 trillion by 2019 – including \$732 billion in the U.S. alone. While spending on these technologies may be expected to rise, many organizations struggle on where to make the proper digital transformation investments.

The integral first step for building a digital organization is educating leaders the possibilities and work that go into developing new, digital systems. Before starting any digital transformation process, the C-Suite must be in agreement. Digital and network based systems demand entirely new structures and management practices compared to their fixed predecessors. Incorporating these new infrastructures and successfully deploying them requires an understanding of the challenges ahead. To properly build, operate and grow a digital business, leaders will need to reallocate their time and attention, as well as financial and human capital for the transformation. A basic understanding of digital technologies starting in the C-Suite commits to a smoother transition as an organization undertakes the complexity of this process.

Not for distribution or reproduction.

An advertisement for gotransverse. On the left is a book cover titled 'Intelligent Billing Platforms' with a woman working at a computer. On the right, the gotransverse logo is at the top, followed by the text 'Go nimble Agile billing for Smart Business' and 'An Executive Guide to Intelligent Billing Platforms'. At the bottom, there is a call to action: 'Click this ad for more information'.

Once leadership has been educated on the need and digital transformation journey, they can begin to explore the solutions that will drive this change. Every digital transformation is different; however, there are some core components that each organization should consider to best position themselves for success during this transition.

## Connecting for Insights

We're constantly reminded that better data provides better insights. Be it through articles on the rising need for data analysts, or how companies are using new programs to predict consumer behaviors, it's clear that data is driving development. However, as everyone throws around terms like big data and data analytics, few realize the connective capabilities required to access this information and turn potential into reality.

Data insights are crucial for business development in any industry, but without connectivity there is no way to get this information to the right place to analyze. For example, a retail company may hold a promotion across one hundred different stores nationwide, but to analyze the success of their campaign, they'll need massive amounts of data from each store generated by registers and inventory systems across their enterprise to be warehoused, transferred and easily accessible. With antiquated infrastructures, the company may not be capable of processing all that information. This could create delays or even a network to shut down if the infrastructure cannot handle the amount of data being shared. As a result, a business may miss key data patterns around the sale allowing for real-time adjustments or not be able to measure appropriate KPIs to determine if the sale was successful.

Understanding the role of infrastructure is integral to mapping out a strategy for digital transformation. Having access to data insights requires a knowledge of the systems carrying this information. While every business has a subjective approach to their digital transformation strategy, understanding the importance of reliable connectivity across networks is an essential first step in the journey.

## Identifying a Long-Term Plan and Outlining the Assets Required

A true digital transformation requires a cohesive and strategic company-wide plan. This means outlining and understanding anticipated goals such as cost, performance, security and management. Once these principles are defined, transformation leaders should take inventory of all current network assets. It is key that an enterprise identify whether the assets on hand will be of use in the final product of their digital transformation. Leaders need to identify which parts of their existing infrastructure can be updated or used as they are.

By distinguishing these resources, companies can then determine what they can build internally, what will need to be acquired and what can be developed through strategic partnerships to successfully update their infrastructure with minimal interruption of connectivity.

Today, many organizations have a common misconception and hesitancy around the digital transformation process, fearing it will be destructive and inconvenient. However, implementing a new infrastructure doesn't need to be a demolition project and it doesn't need to interrupt the daily functions within a company. To avoid any disruption in efficiency, preparation is key. By methodically going through the process step-by-step, leaders can ensure seamless changeover and minimize disorder or any issues with connectivity during this change.

Another successful strategy is to deploy connective solutions through pilots or phased roll-outs across an enterprise. This process allows leaders to slowly assess the network needs of the organization and pinpoint issues in an isolated scenario as the company changes over their infrastructure. This approach allows organizations to troubleshoot their plan on a small scale, enabling them to then roll-out the new network quickly and efficiently company-wide once ready. Methodically identifying a long-term strategy and understanding the assets needed to put it into action will ultimately facilitate a seamless transformation.

## Diversifying and Restructuring Talent

Just as an antiquated infrastructure can cause latency in communication or slow efficiency across a business, a workforce lacking experience with these new technologies can create delays in productivity. As these changes occur across an enterprise, roles and functions within the business

will inevitably shift. Companies who undergo a digital change will need to recruit workers with the skills to support their new capabilities. On-boarding experts in machine learning and data science, and educating existing staff members are essential for a smooth transition onto a new system.

Oftentimes, as staff members are trained to understand the new capabilities available to them, their roles and responsibilities will change as well. For example, new digital applications may automate certain functions that were previously handled manually. With more efficient systems in place, employees can shift their focus to different areas of need within the business – ultimately generating efficiency and development in new capacities.

A workforce that has been equipped with digital skill-sets such as machine learning and data science open an enterprise to greater potential for change. With access to the tools, talents and understanding of these technologies, they are better equipped to confront the challenges of tomorrow's digital landscape. Looking forward, systems will continue to adapt with the market, ultimately making every business a digital one to some extent. Staffing an enterprise with talented individuals who can identify and troubleshoot these changes, will best position the organization for long term success.

In our digital economy, being adaptive is essential for companies to keep a competitive edge on the market, and organizations require the connective capabilities to accommodate their customers' needs. As businesses implement new infrastructures and networks, they'll need new strategies to utilize them. Starting with a base understanding of the connective needs for data aggregation, companies who create new road maps and diversify their staff will see the greatest success as they transform into a digital enterprise.