

## Vodafone Q&A: IoT Transformation

By: Scott St. John

*Pipeline* recently had an opportunity to explore the topic of digital transformation with the Head of IoT at Vodafone Americas, Ludovico Fassati. We discussed ways companies are achieving their digital transformation initiatives, distilled some advice for CIOs, and examined how IoT is changing the game. He also shared key insights from the latest [Vodafone IoT Barometer Report](#). Highlights from our discussion appear below.



***Pipeline:* How have you seen IoT impacting digital transformation initiatives?**

Fassati: IoT is making a huge impact on digital transformation initiatives. [Vodafone's IoT Barometer](#) found that two-thirds of companies surveyed consider digital transformation “impossible” without IoT. The organizations that have adopted IoT are leading the way in digital transformation, as compared with competitors in the market who have not yet implemented the technology.

***Pipeline:* What kind of opportunity does IoT present to organizations?**

Fassati: IoT is a game-changer for organizations in every industry. The technology allows businesses to gain real-time access to key data, enabling increased efficiency, better customer experience and improved visibility into the performance of key assets. For example, in the healthcare industry, IoT-enabled medical devices give doctors real-time information about patient medical adherence, allowing them to adjust treatment plans according to patient needs. In manufacturing, IoT sensors embedded into equipment on the factory floor offer managers key data on equipment performance, energy usage and more.

***Pipeline:* How are you seeing the role of IoT evolve in digital transformation initiatives?**

Fassati: IoT adoption has increased steadily over the last few years, and as businesses continue to integrate IoT into their operations, the technology’s role in digital transformation initiatives has become increasingly important. Whereas in the past, IoT may have been considered one component of digital transformation, it now underpins digital efforts for many businesses.

***Pipeline:* How do you see the role of IoT evolving in the future?**

Fassati: Digital transformation efforts are a main priority for enterprises, and IoT technology is only going to drive these efforts further. In the next five years, IoT will be coupled with the adoption of new technologies, like the use of artificial intelligence for business operations, which will be integrated into daily operations to generate faster and more precise insights from IoT data. In the future, we will likely take for granted that IoT and AI will enable remote monitoring and control of nearly everything – from vending machines to vehicles to HVAC systems.

***Pipeline:* Which industries are leading in IoT use cases?**

Fassati: Organizations across industries recognize the value of IoT – adoption of the technology continues to increase nearly everywhere. But a few industries are leading the way when it comes to IoT adoption. Vodafone’s IoT Barometer found that 90 percent of retail companies have more live IoT projects now than they did a year ago. The same is true for the automotive industries – 82 percent of automotive businesses are using more IoT connections than they had been in years prior.

**Pipeline: What are the drivers for IoT and digital transformation initiatives?**

Fassati: IoT is incredibly valuable for any business seeking to connect objects in order to transform them into intelligent assets that can communicate about status and environment, leading to insights about performance. IoT is a critical component of digital transformation – a main driver for digital transformation is the need to modernize operations to keep pace with the growing expectations of customers, employees, stakeholders and partners. IoT is key to increasing speed and efficiency, which helps businesses meet those needs.

**Pipeline: How have you seen IoT being used to modernize operations?**

Fassati: IoT sensors are an excellent example of how the technology is streamlining efficiency and modernizing operations for enterprises across industries. These sensors can be integrated into anything from a machine in a retail production line to a transport fleet. IoT sensors track data in real time, sending alerts about issues before they become critical. This allows key personnel to take preventive measures to avoid equipment breakdown, limiting downtime for repairs.

**Pipeline: In which industries do you see the most digital transformation or IoT innovation?**

Fassati: Businesses in every industry are introducing new solutions to enable digital transformation. In particular, healthcare presents interesting use cases, as infrastructure across the industry evolves to keep pace with the technological advancements in the field. Fast, agile and secure systems can connect patients to doctors in ways we've never imagined. Digital initiatives will revolutionize such progressive solutions as remote patient monitoring, remote care and rehabilitation, telemedicine and even remote robotic surgery.

**Pipeline: What advice do you have for CIOs as they plan their digital transformation strategy?**

Fassati: Every CIO is going to have a different plan that best meets the needs of their business and aligns with their capabilities and the needs of employees and customers. While these specific details will be unique to each enterprise, it's crucial when planning and implementing a digital transformation strategy that the CIO understands a transformation will cause disruption to every aspect of the business. Understanding, preparing for and communicating this across the C-suite and the entire business will create a smoother transition as changes are rolled out.

**Pipeline: What do you think is the primary reason some digital transformations fail?**

Fassati: There are many reasons a digital transformation effort may not succeed. Having said that, a key pitfall that will cause a program to fail – if left unaddressed – is lack of talent. Transformation initiatives often center on such next-gen technologies as cloud, big data analytics, artificial intelligence and machine learning. However, in order to use these solutions, businesses need skilled employees who are trained on, and knowledgeable in, these technologies in order to successfully deploy them. Businesses that lack the resources to hire or retrain their workers are unlikely to reach their transformation goals.

## **IoT as a game changer**

There's no question that digital transformation is affecting nearly every enterprise. But IoT is changing the game by adding intelligence to devices that can be remotely monitored and even acted upon. It's another tool in the enterprise toolbox which can provide rich information to better – and more efficiently – run operations and serve customers.

Like any tool, workers need to be trained to use it. But IoT is unique in that it can impact nearly every part of enterprise operations. A clear strategy is needed to ensure digital transformation occurs with minimal disruption and maximum benefit.

I want to thank Ludovico for sharing his insights and the findings from Vodafone's latest report. I look forward to being kept up-to-date with new IoT innovations coming from Vodafone, as it helps

its customers continue to transform their businesses.