



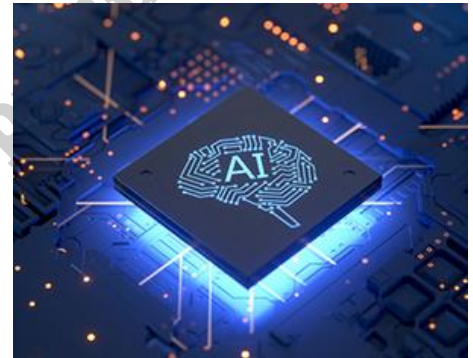
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How IT Initiatives and Business Transformation Can Go Hand in Hand

By: [Sharon Mandell](#)

The overall understanding of IT and the role it plays in serving business operations has significantly changed in recent years, for the better. What was once perceived as a recurring financial burden is now viewed more positively as a fundamental catalyst necessary to drive business innovation and market leadership. This shift goes beyond simply a changing perspective; it is also about achieving real and measurable outcomes which have a direct and lasting impact on the success of a business.



The most successful organizations now share an important commonality — they understand how to leverage recent IT advancements to drive measurable business outcomes. This isn't achieved by a stroke of luck or coincidence. It is the direct result of carefully planned strategies designed to bridge the gap between technological capabilities and business goals. In doing so, global companies can enhance their performance, maintain a competitive edge within their respective industries, and improve their over efficiency.

Harnessing Technology to Achieve Seamless Digital Transformation

To meaningfully align technological investments with key objectives, practical and comprehensive approaches are needed. This must extend beyond simply recognizing IT's importance. Rather, IT initiatives should align with core business goals to make sure that the technology serves as a catalyst to achieving strategic outcomes. To accelerate this alignment, several methods can be explored:

Technology Business Management (TBM): This kind of analysis provides clear visibility into IT investments across an organization. The results from it can enable data-driven approach facilitates more informed internal conversations about allocating resources and setting strategic priorities. It shifts conversations from cost control to value creation and demonstrates IT's direct impact on business success.

For example, in a manufacturing business, IT specialists can collaborate with supply chain managers to optimize logistics using real-time tracking and automation. This cross-functional partnerships ensures that technology adoption is not just about IT itself, but about improving other business outcomes too.

Objectives and Key Results (OKRs): *These will ensure organizations go beyond traditional project and portfolio management. They encompass the focus on ambitious and measurable business outcomes that drive progress over time. By aligning work to these outcomes, tech teams can foster a culture of accountability and transparency which ensures that everyone understands how their work supports the business' goals.*

Rather than setting vague IT goals, such as improving system performance, an OKR-driven approach might define a specific goal. An example of this could be a commitment to reduce website load times by an agreed amount over a certain period of time to improve customer experience and conversion rates. This level of clarity ensures that IT efforts are directly tied to tangible business benefits.

Utilizing AI-Native Operations to Propel Innovation

As AI continues to revolutionize modern IT operations, it is also enabling teams to shift their priorities from routine maintenance to advancing key business objectives. By automating repetitive tasks and producing real-time insight, AI is empowering IT to shift focus away from reactive troubleshooting to proactive optimization. This mitigates distractions and aligns with broader business objectives.

AI-native networking is a clear example of this transformation, capable of delivering up to 90 percent less trouble tickets and nine times faster deployments. This capability helps IT teams to reduce possible downtimes and enhance the user experience. Additionally, it also allows teams to dedicate further time to initiatives which optimize supply chains, accelerate business growth, and improve customer engagement. Furthermore, AI-native automation within a network can handle complex processes such as security threat detection, predictive maintenance, and help identify the most critical software patches for the specific environment. With real-time monitoring, IT systems can detect potential failures before they happen, preventing costly disruptions.

Aside from networking, AI-driven operations represent a larger transition into how IT projects are managed and executed by steering away from traditional larger-scale rollouts to more agile and less disruptive tactics. Through the use of continuous monitoring and real-time insights, organizations can modify their technology solutions to meet evolving business needs.

This also frees more time up for IT professionals, allowing them to prioritize innovation instead of putting out putting out fires. AI-powered chatbots, for example, can manage basic customer service inquiries, allowing IT teams to focus on more complex problem-solving. Therefore, IT teams that can embrace AI-driven operations can become true drivers of business success. And in doing so, organizations are better positioned to achieve measurable outcomes and maintain a necessary competitive edge within their respective industries.

Investing In and Improving IT Talent

The most successful global organizations recognize that technology-driven transformation requires more than just new solutions. Instead, it necessitates a business-wide cultural shift. This consists of expanding the role of IT teams from traditional "order-takers" to effective decision-makers to help model and

execute business strategies. The key to achieving this is by creating an environment where innovation can flourish. In doing so, tech professionals must also feel empowered to share their unique perspectives within business conversations.

Additionally, business leaders should also invest in both the technological and business expertise of their IT talent. Focusing on these key areas can allow teams to understand the broader business context of their work and contribute more effectively during strategic discussions. What's more, IT professionals which understand both technology and business can become essential collaborators in cultivating broader innovation within their organization.

To achieve success in this area requires a firm commitment to continuous learning. Organizations should actively promote opportunities for upskilling and offer training opportunities in key areas – such as cloud computing, cybersecurity, AI, and data science. Offering certifications, online courses and mentorship programs can also empower IT professionals to stay ahead in a rapidly changing landscape. This approach fosters the cross-functional collaboration needed to expose IT teams to new business perspectives and challenges.

Developing IT Leadership for the Long-Term

The most successful organizations will be those that can identify what the potential is of emerging technologies and integrate them into their strategic plans with minimal disruption to existing workflows. For those who plan to take this on, it will involve considering several key aspects, including:

- Distributing critical data insights along different business units to facilitate better decision-making.*
- Appreciating technology investments as critical assets rather than an operating expense.*
- Prioritizing continuous feedback and adaptation.*

When it comes to developing IT leadership, organizations must also recognize that digital transformation is an ongoing process rather than a one-time event. Those that cultivate strong IT leadership can ensure that they remain adaptable during evolving and ongoing technological advancements. This involves not only investing in emerging technologies but also creating a company culture that embraces innovation and continuous improvement.

To accomplish this, businesses must focus on recruiting and retaining top IT talent while also nurturing leadership development among their existing teams. Providing leadership training programs, mentorship opportunities, and cross-functional collaboration initiatives can help IT professionals develop the skills needed to take on more strategic roles within their organizations.

Ultimately, conversations by business leaders should no longer question whether tech professionals belong in strategic discussions, but how they can effectively leverage the technology needed to drive business success. This will require environments which foster open communication, align IT with business objectives, and deliver measurable value. Now is the moment for IT leaders to step up by seizing new opportunities, asserting their influence and redefining the future of their organization's long-term success. By doing so, businesses can create a future-proof IT strategy that drives innovation, enhances efficiency, and sustains a competitive advantage for years to come.