

Trans Tasman Insurance and Banking Group: Digital Marketplace Strategy and Architecture Roadmap

Role: Engagement Lead, Digital Strategy and Architecture

A leading trans Tasman financial services group, operating across general insurance, life, banking and superannuation through a portfolio of well known brands, engaged me to define the digital architecture and investment roadmap needed to underpin its corporate strategy. At the heart of that strategy was an ambitious marketplace vision: a connected network of brands that would let customers move seamlessly between products, guided by curated solutions designed to improve their personal and financial wellbeing.

The group had a clear aspiration, but the strategy beneath it was still forming. Several of the questions that shape an investment roadmap remained open, including where value was moving in the industry, how digital disruption would affect the business and by how much, and which opportunities for defence, differentiation or disruption suited the group best. Without that bridge, there was a real risk that technology investment would run ahead of strategic clarity.

Working with the executive leadership team and the customer technology function, I led a team that ran a series of executive workshops and built the analytical framework linking market opportunity to capability and investment. Rather than wait for every strategic question to be resolved, we identified the capabilities the group would need under any credible strategy and designed the architecture around them.

Key areas of focus included:

- An eight question strategic framework linking market change, opportunities and the investment roadmap
- A target digital capability model aligned to the six themes of the marketplace strategy
- A layered reference architecture spanning channels, integration, core systems, analytics and security
- Design principles for a mobile first, personalised and API enabled physical architecture
- Structured evaluation of platform options for mobile development, real time decisioning, conversational AI, API management and customer data
- Three alternative build out options, ranging from a minimal marketplace build to a full capability build

The work gave executives a shared language for the marketplace, a clear view of the nine architecture areas that needed to be built or rebuilt, and a set of options that could be scaled to the level of ambition the board chose to pursue. It also set out the specific gaps in the strategy the group needed to close, from documenting the market drivers for change, through confirming portfolio priorities, to refining the target customer experiences.

The engagement was subsequently extended to further define the marketplace and its customer journeys and to translate them into architecture building blocks, physical architecture patterns and a prioritised delivery sequence. In parallel, I led a review of IT operations performance and reporting across a technology organisation of more than 2,700 staff, contractors and partners, recommending a capability scorecard and a centralised performance and reporting function to connect operational metrics to strategic outcomes.

The outcome was a defensible, capability led architecture roadmap that allowed the group to begin investing in its digital foundations with confidence while its marketplace strategy continued to mature.

For more information about this case or to discuss how similar digital strategies could be applied in your organisation, please contact me at marco@marcociobo.com or visit www.marcociobo.com.