REINVENTING APP DEVELOPMENT

BY STRATEGEOS

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APP DEVELOPMENT DISRUPTION HAS BEGUN

App development companies are competing in a market whose economics are getting tougher while the underlying capability is becoming abundant.

The answer isn't to become a better app-development company. It is to stop being an app-development company.

“If app development becomes 10× cheaper, 10× faster, and largely automated, what exactly will customers still pay you for?”

- It’s not what can you build
- It’s not what technology you have
- It’s not what your competitors are doing

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HOW DO YOU BEGIN TO REINVENT YOURSELF?

What remains valuable after the cost of building software collapses?

That question changes the entire strategy.

Because if the answer is: “Customers will still pay us to write code.”

Then the company has a serious problem.

If the answer is: “Customers will pay us to understand their business, make the right product decisions, integrate software into their operations, assume responsibility for outcomes, and continuously improve the system.”

Now you're playing a completely different game.

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STOP SELLING DEV — START SELLING BUSINESS PROBLEM REMOVAL

This is probably the first major strategic move. You should deliberately make “app development” disappear from the company's positioning. Because development is increasingly becoming a commodity. Imagine three companies:

Company A: We build high-quality mobile and web applications.

Company B: We build applications faster using AI.

Company C: We help mid-sized companies reduce operational costs by 20% by digitizing their internal workflow.

Company C has a fundamentally different competitive position. It isn't selling software. It's selling economic improvement.

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THE STRATEGIC MIGRATION

From

Requirements → Design → Code → Deploy

To

Business problem → Diagnosis → Intervention → Software → Measurement → Continuous improvement

Software becomes the mechanism, not the product.

That's the first competitive advantage.

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PICK A NARROW ENTRY POINT

A generic app-development firm has a tough positioning problem because its potential market is essentially: Anyone who needs software. That's almost infinite—and therefore strategically useless.

Instead, find a narrow intersection of:

- Painful problem
- Measurable economic value
- Customers with budget
- Poor existing solutions
- Domain knowledge that compounds

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STOP ASKING “WHAT DOES THE CUSTOMER WANT?”

Customers don’t know what they want. You have to ask a more dangerous question.

One of our favourite strategic questions here would be: "What is this customer doing today that will look ridiculous three years from now?”

That question is gold.

Because customers often cannot articulate their future needs.

They can describe today's workflow.

They can't necessarily see tomorrow's workflow.

That's where the company can develop strategic insight.

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YOUR ADVANTAGE ISN'T TECH ANYMORE

Tech is becoming abundant. Code is becoming abundant. AI models are abundant. Even product development capability is becoming abundant. So where does scarcity move? Potentially toward:

- **Domain knowledge:** Understanding a particular industry's weirdness.
- **Embedded workflows:** Being deeply integrated into how customers operate.
- **Decision intelligence:** Knowing what should happen, not merely how to execute it.
- **Switching costs:** Becoming infrastructure rather than a vendor.
- **Reputation:** Being the company associated with solving a particular class of problem.

That's the strategic advantage you would have to build to reinvent yourself and win.

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THANK YOU

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