



Strategies for a Customer-First Digital Transformation



Digital transformation has gone from being one of many IT responsibilities to quickly becoming its primary purpose. That's because your business no longer relies on technology just to make work happen. Instead, it depends on technology to be the foundation for the products, services, and customer experiences you deliver.

Almost every company today is in some way driven by technology. Even the most traditional industries and organizations use technology like the cloud, IoT, and analytics, which makes them light years ahead of what the world's most innovative, leading-edge companies were using a decade ago.



Transformation: A Process, Not a Destination

If you think digital transformation is over, think again. We're still in the early innings of digital transformation, along with the business disruption it can bring. Underpinning the process is software—both internal-facing to reshape business processes and the ways in which people work, and external-facing to deliver services and (re)build customer experiences. To continue driving and maximizing your digital transformation efforts while avoiding unexpected disruption, you'll need to reconsider the way you approach software development.

COVID-19 provides just one example of why. When everyone was forced to stay at home and do all of their shopping online, it created a ripple effect of more than \$3 trillion shifting away from some sectors and into others, or being lost entirely.¹ For businesses that had the ability to reconfigure on the fly, this created opportunities to capture new customers and markets.

Unexpected global calamities are far from the only disruption facing your business. We live in a world where e-commerce behemoths are opening up brick-and-mortar locations, where technologies like 5G enable unheard-of new applications, and where the chance of competition can come equally from a well-funded rival as from a student in a dorm room. Disruption is no longer the exception; it's business as usual.

¹ Accenture, The Big Value Shift. <https://www.accenture.com/us-en/insights/strategy/big-value-shift>



Shifting to a Customer-centric Business Model

Many businesses already see the writing on the wall: Only 8 percent of companies say their current business model will remain economically viable if their industry keeps digitizing at its current course and speed.² But to become a modern digital business, you must go beyond just digitizing old business models and instead use technology to align your people, processes, and technology around entirely new ways of serving customers.

By placing the customer at the center of everything you do, you can create products, services, and experiences that are more valuable to your buyer, allowing you to stand out in an increasingly commoditized world, drive more profit, and generate more brand loyalty.

As you undertake digital transformation to make your business more customer-centric, there are four areas where you should focus your investments:



Customers

To build a customer-centric organization, it makes sense to start with the customer experience. These digital transformation initiatives include things like creating new digital products to enter new markets; digitizing the customer onboarding process; and creating portals, mobile apps, and support chatbots that allow self-service so that customers can get help immediately instead of waiting on hold for human support staff.

² McKinsey, Why Digital Strategies Fail.
www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/mckinsey-digital/our-insights/why-digital-strategies-fail

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Workforce

In a highly competitive and increasingly global labor market, the employee experience is essential to attracting and retaining top talent. These digital transformation initiatives include things like creating applications to ensure the safety of employees when returning to the office, as well as benefits, performance, and talent management apps that put information just a tap away while keeping employees highly engaged and motivated. By making sure that new employee onboarding processes are digitized and easy to navigate, you can ensure that your new hires can ramp up quickly, enabling you to effectively automate and scale your operations as you continue to add new staff.



Operations

In a hybrid work environment, your operations are now everywhere, not just at the office or in the factory. As a result, you need to consider how to digitize and automate your operations so that all of your data is available to any employee who needs it, no matter if they're at their desk, in the conference room, at home, or on the road. These digital transformation initiatives include things like providing new applications that can better support field staff, such as field inspection apps and sales apps that provide real-time information on mobile and tablet devices; adding a cloud-based inventory management system that can power digital sales tools such as e-commerce; and creating operational dashboards that give managers instant access to KPIs so they can make data-driven decisions.



Core systems

Underpinning everything are your core systems, like the ERP, CRM, and cloud services that you use to create and share the data that impacts your customers, your workforce, and your operations. These digital transformation initiatives include things like extending and simplifying access to existing systems with newer, more intuitive front-ends; rebuilding legacy systems to the cloud; and maximizing your existing investments by integrating siloed systems.

How to Ensure Digital Transformation Success

The development processes that brought you this far won't necessarily be enough to remain competitive. It's time to rethink your approach to increase your odds of digital transformation success. Here's how.



Change the way you develop software

Due to the tight market for developers, you can't throw more people at the problem. Instead, you need to focus on boosting the productivity of your existing dev teams. By using a visual, model-driven application development platform like OutSystems, you can increase productivity and reduce your development and testing time by 60 to 80 percent.

In addition, artificial intelligence (AI) can help your developers eliminate manual, redundant activities so they can focus more on building new applications and features. AI can also help manage the architectural and security soundness of their code to ensure that it works right for the customer from the start while eliminating future technical debt.

You should also rethink the way you approach integrations to other systems of record. By working with a modern application development platform that lets you automatically integrate all your existing application, infrastructure, cloud, and SaaS investments, you can significantly extend the value of those investments without slowing down the development of new applications and workflows.

Finally, building on a modern application development platform means you never need to build from scratch—giving your developers a head start when developing specific types of applications or services. Your team can build fully customized prototype versions of their apps within minutes or hours, instead of weeks or months.

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60-80%



Address digital business initiatives holistically

Digital transformation initiatives that are undertaken in a vacuum are likely to fail. Just like you want to avoid data silos, it's important to avoid digital transformation silos.

A full-stack visual development platform like OutSystems can help ensure that all your digital transformation initiatives take place under one umbrella by allowing you to start your journey anywhere. Full development expressiveness makes it simple to create rich experiences across any platform, including mobile, desktop, web, and emerging use cases like smartwatches, smart speaker apps, augmented reality, and IoT devices.

By approaching all of your development projects holistically through one platform, you can also leverage code reusability. This allows you to build a component once and then use it multiple times across applications and channels. Because the code is contained in a module, all you have to do is update the module to update the code across all applications.



Build with change in mind

Instead of treating go-live as the end of the process, you need to think of development as an ongoing activity. By making it easier to code and issue regular updates, agility becomes a competitive advantage over your slow-to-update competitors.

A modern application development platform like OutSystems makes code self-documenting, which allows for faster updates, fixes, and improvements. In addition, it lets you go from testing to live with a single click, while automated dependency-checking ensures that any change made to one component won't create inconsistencies elsewhere. This lets you continuously innovate without experiencing negative effects or creating technical debt.



Accelerate Digital Transformation With OutSystems

To succeed at digital transformation, you must relentlessly pursue customer-centricity. This requires you to dramatically improve your development process, eliminate digital transformation silos, and build with agility. That's where OutSystems comes in.

Using visual, model-driven development, AI-powered tools that improve the entire application lifecycle, and a cloud-native platform, OutSystems can help you quickly and easily build, deploy, and manage your applications and workflows. For example:



- 1** Energy services provider [Shawcor](#) used OutSystems to deliver its new iTrack mobile app and customer portal, simplifying the management of its customers' inventory.
- 2** Access mat supplier [YAK MAT](#) leveraged OutSystems to build a customized ERP to track its mobile inventory, significantly increasing the company's operational efficiency.
- 3** Rail logistics provider [Green Cargo](#) utilized OutSystems to overcome legacy IT systems, allowing the company to enable in-house innovation instead of continuing to depend on outsourced IT.
- 4** Logistics giant [Estafeta](#) used OutSystems to quickly pivot during the pandemic by creating six new or adapted apps, allowing it to keep deliveries moving despite a 50 percent increase in delivery volume.



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We envision longevity in our business relationships for a win-win associations. nihicia ditiam quias peliqui tet et alit voluptatur molent.

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