

Digitalisation: Not just an IT challenge

Written by Peter Ward, 3 October 2022



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Potentially re-shaping the organization – a C-suite challenge

I appreciate that the grandly termed 'Fourth Industrial Revolution' has been a reality for at least the last decade, with the World Economic Forum giving it some shape back in 2016. But its impact, while in plain sight, really comes home to you when granddaughter changes 'Why? Granddad' with 'Google it, Granddad'! I guess that for these past few years, we have treated this new way of operating as an extension of the Third Industrial Revolution: the era of electronics, IT and automation around since the sixties. But it is much more than this, with new businesses, communication and distribution channels proliferating on the back of technology.

We have been engaged with strategic transformation for over twenty years, but have been content to treat digitalisation as something that our clients need to commission separately. But its impact on the overall performance of a business and the people in it, suggests that embracing this revolution is overdue. We are now adding to our capability through the formation of Telos Partners Digital Limited and this will enable us to offer access to top class expertise able to (as our new team would say) 'explain, advise or do' in this important area.

Of course, many of our clients are well down the path with their own digitalisation strategies, and for some it has been mission critical that they continue to develop and enhance their business models to fully embrace the impact of technology. But there are others that we can see could benefit from some external input:

- Those that have embraced the revolution so far as technology has been employed, but are now looking to harness the new data available to them to address customers' changing needs
- Those that have committed to the systems and process changes, but now are looking for an agile way of continuously improving to reduce cost and improve impact
- Those where the majority of responses are being catered but leaving unmet expectations from an increasingly demanding customer base. Isn't it amazing that expectations which would not have even been in our minds ten years ago, are now seen as a must have in 2022. Think banking on the move, card transactions and streaming services!
- Those with complex delivery issues that now need smarter responses

Add to this list those more traditional businesses that perhaps have yet to embrace the potential of an agile approach to technology.

It is this agility which drives Telos Partners Digital:

- Using open source technology to deliver cost competitive and easily implementable solutions
- A big picture, problem solving orientation to assure a complete response for all stakeholders
- An agile approach to project management, assuring rapid deployment of change (dealing with the inevitable 'yes, I know we scoped it three months ago, but can we just...')

This may come as a surprise, but technology does go wrong! Our team has the experience to deal with the emergency situations with a Red Adair (remember him dealing with fire in the oil fields?), crisis response approach. If it needs fixing, sleep becomes a luxury!

Our biggest challenge, and probably a contributory factor in the lack of our speed in developing our capability, is to make digitalisation accessible to the C suite in general, taking it out of the CTO or CIO domain. Both positions are important, but without the whole of the senior team embracing the digitalisation challenge, there will be opportunities unrealised and threats unmanaged. Simple (was it Einstein who said 'Make everything simple, but not simpler'?) needs to drive the language of change and lead to concise explanation of challenges and responses.

If we are to deliver a simple solution, then removing complexity in the early stages of our approach is fundamental. So critical is abandoning 'a one size fits all' approach and starting each engagement with a listening phase: really understanding the unique challenge that faces each business. And this is where the Telos philosophy kicks in. Building on trusting relationships to provide enduring solutions to enhance their own long-term success.

So the start of a digital engagement is a human conversation! And with a partner who can 'explain, advise and do' but only after carefully listening to the challenge.

Have a look at our website <https://telos.digital> to see more detail on problems solved and team capability.

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