

Digital transformation: How COVID forced change across the business landscape

By [Arindam Ray Chaudhuri](#)



One of the most prolific business trends to come out of the pandemic has been that of digital transformation. COVID-19 forced change across the business landscape, and the sudden scramble to go digital has completely altered the way companies do business. Whether it be internal changes through productivity tools or security, or external changes in how businesses interact with customers, we can see that some type of digital transformation has taken place in almost every business vertical.

In the pre-COVID era, businesses only called upon their digital transformation capabilities occasionally. In a 2018 Tech Pro Research study, about [70 percent](#) of organizations surveyed confirmed having a digital transformation strategy already in place, or were working on one. However, they also reported challenges in buy-in and funding. Then, almost overnight, digital transformation was quickly adopted as the spread of COVID-19 shut down regular work functions. As companies were pushed into exploring digital solutions, organizations found new ways through this digital transformation to continue business, serve clients and keep their employees safe.

Technology challenges that organizations faced

Many organizations struggled to manage with the sudden shift of having most or all of their staff working from home. There were three main areas of concern: communication/collaboration, productivity and security. For instance, many had inadequate tools to measure productivity, unavailability of advanced learning and knowledge management tools to ramp up skills, lacked smooth processes for employee onboarding remotely, and had to make adjustments to securely manage important employee and HR data. Above all, the adoption of advanced technology like Cloud and others entailed major changes in how organizations managed their workflow and required complex migration.

The impact of these digital transformation challenges

In order to facilitate the work-from-home environment, businesses recognized the importance of investing in strategic and critical digital transformations. This included funding and new investments in technology solutions, adoption of the Cloud, developing new and advanced ways of collaboration, providing employees with new skill and technology development, new governance and compliance guidelines as well as re-orienting employees with the new workflow. Also, since so many consumers are now leaning on new online technology methods for regular purchasing and interaction, businesses had no choice but to move online as well.

The acceleration of digital transformation

There is no doubt that the pandemic has accelerated digital transformation. While before the pandemic businesses saw technology as a way to reduce costs, now technology means so much more. Digital transformation has provided companies with improved customer experience and a more efficient and productive work force. Additionally, process automation, which is helpful for mundane and repeated tasks, smart analytics and the adoption of cloud technology, has led to better collaboration and security. By modernizing their technology capabilities, businesses gained a competitive advantage and created a business culture that focused on digital advancements.

Digital transformation success

As the world optimistically looks forward to the end of the pandemic era, many might wonder about the future of the digital transformations post-pandemic. While the crisis forced businesses to quickly overcome barriers to digital transformation, the trend is likely to continue as the need will only continue to grow. Companies have already reaped the benefits of digitally transforming their businesses, and it's unlikely that they will abandon their continued transformation journeys as the world starts to reopen. This could lead to the birth of a new culture of the connected home office. Now that employees have had a taste of virtual offices and remote working, and companies know that it's feasible, the need for large physical office spaces may be reduced. Tech savvy organizations will continue their quest for improved or deeper digital transformation. They'll focus on leveraging advanced analytics to extract insights from customer data, continue internal and external data integration and develop a more holistic approach. Now that the rush to simply make it work is over, businesses would be smart to continue exploring technology integrations and innovations to continue their digital transformation journeys successfully.



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