

Top 4 digital transformation must haves



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While not new in concept, digital transformation remains a boardroom-level topic going into 2020. There are many well-documented reasons for this. A combination of technology advances, evolving customer expectations, process evolutions such as digitization, and new business models are forcing IT and line-of-business executives to rethink previous strategies. In the end, the decisions they make on how to address these changes will have a direct impact on differentiation, growth and scale, profitability, customer satisfaction and speed-to-market. Those are surely enough reasons to take notice.

Therefore, the primary question today is not whether you should pursue a digital transformation strategy, but how you should pursue it - or more specifically, what the core elements of your strategy ought to be and what you should prioritize. While the latter is subjective based on your needs and current gaps, the former is typically uniform from organization to organization. Chief information officers generally agree that to compete more effectively in today's business environment, they need to accomplish four key actions:



Move more quickly



Provide greater flexibility



Derive more insight from data



Mitigate risk by protecting critical assets

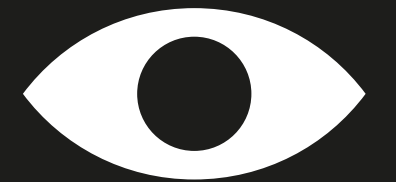
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The good news is that these four digital transformation must-haves align very closely to core technology available from top software vendors and service providers:



1. Enterprise DevOps **delivers speed**. Organizations recognize that every day they have not progressed is another day they have fallen behind. They should also realize that an absence of tools to rapidly build and deliver quality software is unnecessarily blocking their success. Emerging DevOps technology, implemented as a high priority, reduces operational friction through automation and enhanced collaboration. This boosts business confidence because quality and security are in plain sight, letting organizations deliver better outcomes through ongoing assessments and course corrections on core business processes.

3. Predictive analytics **derive more insights**. Data lakes, which are growing every day as the internet of things (IoT) and other new ways to capture information expand, are valuable only if you can glean insights from them. Organizations that place a premium on advanced analytics are bound to learn about unmet customer needs, underfunded parts of the business, emerging business models and more - and naturally drive the top line. Predictive analytics also lower costs, manage risk and streamline processes such as robotic process automation (RPA).



2. Hybrid IT management **supports optimum flexibility**. Today, organizations are operating in an increasingly complex IT reality. They are not simply deciding between the cloud and on-premises operations, but instead choosing among many alternatives, and they must find software that supports a mixed (hybrid) infrastructure for optimum flexibility. Enter hybrid IT which accelerates delivery of IT resources, increases IT efficiency, and fuels creativity and innovation - thereby bridging traditional and transformational IT services from mainframe to mobile, from corporate to cloud.

4. Security, risk and governance **policies protect assets**. Protecting an organization's most critical assets - identities, applications and data - is important at any point, but perhaps never more so than during a period of transition, when previously established standards and processes are stress tested. Without question, the cost for a breach can be significant, and fines and sanctions for not protecting data can be consequential, affecting the bottom line. However, the longer-term, hidden costs associated with failure - including potential lawsuits, impact to the brand and even shareholder value - can be more significant.



Focusing first on these four critical aspects of digital transformation helps organizations establish a strong core foundation before investing in supplementary projects and features - saving time and money and fostering success.