

**Finding your way in an increasingly digital world**

# Digital – Different things to different people

“Digital will mean different things to different people and organisations. I have led strategies and programmes that:

- Implement workflow to orchestrate the customer service from point of request to fulfilment (digitisation)
- New online business-to-consumer systems that enable the customer to seamlessly switch between online and contact centre with automated campaign pricing, single customer view, etc.,
- Support the implementation of ERP systems that automate processes surrounding manufacturing.



All fall under the digital heading, but are very different in their character, so this paper avoids the solutions themselves. **Instead by posing a series of questions, this paper explores key considerations in 7 areas leading to the definition and delivery of your digital strategy.**”

This paper is aimed at Small Medium Enterprises who are thinking about how digital technologies can benefit them.

Its not written about any particular type of style of 'digital', instead asking a series of questions that are aimed at helping an organisation understand its own position and capability and take action to prepare the way for their digital journey.

It is provided by Qualocity™, Stuart Duthie's company, set up for Stuart to offer interim management with the aim of providing Direction, Pace and Quality in IT and Digital

# Know your approach

**Continuous Improvement** | refining what is already present

**Digitisation** | using technology to support or orchestrate an existing business process or customer journey. You may position this as transformation to make people sit up and listen, but it's evolution (and there is nothing the matter with that).

**Digital-isation** | introducing a new technology-driven business model, supplemented by people. This is revolution.

The reason this page is included is that being clear on your approach will help define the actions you need to take and also the risks you will need to cover during the journey and transition.

Read on and take a look through the 7 areas to consider what this might mean for your organisation.

# Clarity of vision (Why?)



There is a lot to consider to ensure a sustainable change.

1. **Where you are trying to get to?** Could you write the 'postcard back from the future' which describes how your company is working and performing?
2. **What are you customer digital expectations**, the competition and general operating environment? Bear in mind your customers will interact with a wide variety of companies in the daily lives. (*To be pioneering, you need to go further and build their future expectations rather than today's*).
3. **What is your company's (unique) proposition** and place in the market?
4. **Why are you doing it?** Do you and your colleagues understand the "whys" and costs associated with it?
5. **Can you coping with senior level change?** What happens to the vision if (or when) there is a change at a senior level, will the people moving up or in have the same goals, drive and passion?
6. **What is the stability of the vision**, i.e. what stuff could happen that might affect or influence it in the future?

# What is your culture?



**What's your current mindset (and how will you manage it)** at various levels, from executive, to departmental managers to operational staff? This is such a key element, because the mindset will drive activity. Fear drives a number of reactions including protectionism, defensiveness, resistance, etc., which don't make change easy.

**Is your organisation internally or externally focussed?** Digital should be focussed on your customers and will consider elements such as “the customer journey” and build the model from there, where many organisations will think first about their internal process and checks, and then apply those to the customer.

**How do people work together?** Specifically how closely do IT and the rest of the business work together? “Digital” means technology runs the business, either automatically, or with some staff involvement.

If your IT team is seen, and behaves, as a purely specialist team, slightly remote from the rest of the business, that supports ‘systems’ for the benefit of ‘users’, rather than an intrinsic part of the business then there is work to do.

# Your current technology



**How the new and old fit together?** This will include the systems you currently run, how appropriate they are to the new digital vision, how you can integrate with them, etc.

**Do you have a plan for your older systems?** These can be expensive (and hugely distracting) to replace, so you will need to identify the right tactics to deal with them and the data held within them.

**Your tech may influence how you work.** Agile projects involve a very close working relationship between IT developers and business experts, frequently demonstrating, reviewing and adjusting the design until something is created that is ready for release. Certain technologies are more conducive and understanding this will help define the way you work.

# Delivery Capability



**Change maturity?** Do you understand change and the various stages and emotions you will go through? How good is your company at getting your people to work in a different way? How have previous changes worked out? Are you clear on the various responsibilities and accountabilities required to deliver successful change?

**IT Capability – have you planned the people/skills element of this?** New technologies, different ways of working (agile), more communicative and engaging way of working with the business, the associated tools, maturity of processes such as the way you release new code into your ‘live production’ environment.

**The right tools for the job – do you have a ‘best practice(s)’ and do you flex it/them depending on the circumstances?** Gartner have talked quite a bit about “bi-modal delivery”, i.e. some things are quick and can be run in an agile way, some take longer and require a more structured ‘gated’ approach. It’s important that everyone recognises the difference so they know how to work with others.

# Data, insight & regulation



**Are you managing your data quality?** Garbage-in means garbage-out particularly applies to automated or online systems. But we (people) might misspell things, miss out fields, record notes in various places, and these idiosyncrasies change over the life of your systems, so identifying, fixing and managing this is important.

**How do you measure business success & insight?** *“We need to be able to measure the impact of the change, so we need the new systems to feed our existing reports”* is a common statement, but can significantly increase the complexity, costs and frustrations because the new processes and systems probably generate, store data (and measure success) in a very different way.

**Are you on-top of the regulation?** Regulation will require you to do certain things or make certain design decisions during your digital programme, and in many sectors it is changing. Currently data legislation globally is developing, and for European citizens' data, GDPR will apply.

# New Vendors and Cloud



**Are you cloud-aware?** You will probably want to look towards the cloud rather than buying or traditional hosting. This allows more speed and flexibility in trying different approaches, quickly switching things off that are not successful, and the ability to scale-up when successful. It also provides elasticity, the ability to cover peaks in activity.

**Do you have the right tech vendors and relationships?** Getting the most from your vendors will be important to allow you to exploit new technology.

In some areas vendors products are similar and can all “do the job”. So when selecting between them you should consider their plans to incorporate the new wave of technology (e.g. artificial intelligence, internet of things) into their products, their ability to help you exploit them as well as more traditional considerations such as ‘relationship’, ‘service’, etc., etc.

If you are working with a new “start-up” to deliver something innovative, you will need to think about their health, ability to deliver, cash-flow, etc. This will lead to a different relationship and associated contracts to be successful.

# Who is going to lead this?

## **One person to lead and champion the cause?**

Harvey Nash/KPMG CIO Survey 2016 suggests that 16% of CIOs are being asked to lead on digital. And 19% of companies have a CDO – Chief Digital Officer. The challenge (and trick) for them is how they step outside their area of direct control and influence and engage the rest of the organisation.

**An alliance within your board or management team?** Perhaps between IT, Marketing and Operations/Fulfilment? For SMEs its most likely it will be a combination of IT and Marketing (14%).

Even if it's "everyone responsibility because digital is the way we will do things round here" it will require thought-leadership, delivery management with clear, consistent messages from the top-down, and everyone will need to play their role as per any successful major change.

# Reprise



Digital provides the opportunity for you to forge new relationships with your customers taking advantage of technologies and devices (such as Smartphones) that they love. It enables new, slicker delivery mechanisms and in doing so increases your business, generates competitive distinction (and advantage) and holds off others who may want to take your place.

Acting now with an eye on the future should also put you in a good position to exploit the wave of new technologies as they become available, keeping you competitive and relevant in the future.

**Help is at hand.** Stuart set up Qualocity™ to provide interim management to organisations in the areas of technology and digital and can help identify the way forwards, mobilising and delivering your digital programme. He brings the experience in technical solutions, business change and senior IT leadership, includes circumstances where a new direction is required.

If you wish to progress your journey beyond this document lets have a chat on **07870 510839**. You can also make contact on **hello@qualocity.co.uk**