

Chapter 85

Digital Businesses: Creation of a Research Framework for Organizational Readiness for Enterprise 2.0

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ABSTRACT

Customers are no longer at the receiving end in the new digital economies. They have a say in everything and are co-creating products and services. Their connection with other customers is stronger and the influence they exert collectively on businesses is phenomenal. All this has been made possible by the technologies that the collaborative internet has made possible. Businesses have discarded hierarchies and functional pyramid structures in favor of flat empowered structures to improve decision responsiveness in the new age. Competency is fast replacing compatibility amongst successful employees. Geography is dead and interactions take place across boundaries of distance, time, language and culture. This transformation of the business enterprise to Enterprise 2.0 has become possible due to the use of Web 2.0 tools becoming common place and has had far reaching implications. The question that it raises is that are all organizations equally well equipped to take advantage of these changes or is it going to change the relative power equation amongst them to make some small forward looking technology savvy organizations suddenly more powerful than the erstwhile successful large giants who had built themselves on the strength of their products and markets over time. This paper aims at creating a framework that can help evaluate this emerging equation and assess the state of readiness of all organizations to meet this onslaught of business change. The framework addresses these technologies, the way they are impacting business strategy and spells out all that organizations need to do to be able to gear up to face the changing fabric of the new age enterprise.

INTRODUCTION

The last decade has seen a lot of new technologies impacting the business enterprises. Besides the real impact of internet technologies, mobile, social networks and cloud technologies have become mainstream and are having a real commercial impact and are no longer a novelty. Big Data appears to be arriving in a big way and making its impact on reaching the right customers at the best time and making a real impact on the top line and bottom line. However it needs enterprises to be more nimble and responsive. The resulting change in people skills, culture and attitude, training and talent acquisition etc. needs a new strategy, evolved techniques and business models. All organizations cannot and will not respond to this equally effectively. It needs a discussion on how success will be measured in the next decade and the state of preparedness of different organizations.

Big Data, on the other hand promises that if you have the capability of tackling the 3Vs viz. variety, volume and velocity of the data typhoon, you can obtain real value out of it. It has its own series of challenges and opportunities to offer. The insights that can be gained can be game changers for many businesses and combining interactions with transactions can multiply the worth of both of them many times. The right combination of structured transactions with unstructured interactions can similarly be harnessed to obtain huge impacts on the top line and bottom-line of the businesses.

REVIEW OF CURRENT LITERATURE

Web 2.0

Web 2.0 “technologies are used on organizations’ intranet and extranets”. Enterprise 2.0 aims to help employees, customers and suppliers collaborate, share, and organize information via Web 2.0 technologies. Enterprise 2.0 refers to the “the use of emergent social software platforms within companies, or between companies and their partners or customers” (McAfee, 2006).

The Web 2.0 wave has strongly spilled over the corporations’ boundaries and created a good deal of discussions about the way businesses have been managed so far and how they will evolve in the future. Under the name of Enterprise 2.0 social media has found its way into many businesses. From many examples we can now see what approaches lead to success. The mistakes that were made at the beginning do not need to be repeated. Some examples of early case studies in the field of Enterprise 2.0 were marked by a bottom-up, unintended approach. Nowadays you will find a strong agreement on a more strategic approach for future initiatives in order to extend the idea towards an Enterprise-wide approach with a transformable scope for the organization.

Organizations saw a lot of activities around blogs and wikis at the beginning. Collaboration and collecting knowledge was the main focus. Some of these activities went very well, but some projects led to great frustration. Connecting people with a Facebook-like social network or using micro-blogging seems to be the approach which works better than other Enterprise 2.0 activities. The activity stream provides the employees with information and gives companies the ability to communicate easily.

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