

# Digital transformation - What does it mean?

 By [Megan Hollis](#)

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If you're wondering why the concept of digital transformation has been pushed into the limelight only now in 2015, you're not alone.

While organisational changes and new digital marketing paradigms have been emerging since the beginning of the internet, the following factors have meant a totally new era is busy being born. Adapting to it has become a strategic imperative.

I believe that the change has been born from the following two factors:

## Disruptive technologies

This is the most obvious factor necessitating change. New technologies that challenge the status quo are rife - which is both a terrifying and exciting arena to be playing in. Social media marketing has become more complex, the capabilities of real time marketing are now so powerful its overwhelming, not to mention the ubiquity and reliance of mobile we experience consistently in South Africa.



## Expectation

Businesses are now having a conversation with an exceedingly sophisticated consumer, whose expectations are higher than ever before, and believe it or not - digital transformation affects customers the most! Companies now strive towards being a consumer technology organisation - meaning the technology they use serves their consumers to efficiently deliver their services and products.

## Where to from here?

Previously, it seemed as though it was okay to cautiously adapt to new technologies. Now it seems the only way forward is to whole heartedly embrace radical and disruptive change in the environment.

Before we bury our heads in the sand, unsure of how to cope with these changes - let's contemplate the following:

1. All marketing initiatives should have objectives. Let's make our next one to optimise digital customer experience.
2. Every company has digital champions who are the early adopters and die-hard technology geeks. More than likely they will revel in the opportunity for 'intrapreneurship' and the challenge to be catalysts for change within your organisation, at something they are truly passionate about. Consider them your digital transformation team.
3. Hopefully, the extent of changes within the digital landscape is enough to jolt even the most lethargic executive into realising that you cannot do what you did last year, and every year before that. Derogatively referred to as "dinosaurs", elder management can slow down (even paralyse) transformation, presumably due to innovation fatigue and an unwillingness to change. Companies need to earn relevance within the new era and old tricks just aren't going to cut it.

Anything less than a collaborative approach will simply add insult to injury in what promises to be no small feat. The lack of urgency doesn't help either, with many brands promising to do something next year.

4. Legacy technology will always be a legitimate concern with mismatching technologies (often low-cost offerings, which were rapidly adopted to try to cope with social media and the like) now stacked high upon one another. Now is an excellent time to address these challenges, and ensure that infrastructure supports the business as it should.

My advice? Be a catalyst and support the change. This is what gives marketing its edge, and a challenge always separates the good from the great!

## ABOUT MEGAN HOLLIS

Megan is the Head of Strategy at Techsys Digital. She is passionate about all things digital, especially social media, eCRM and paid media.  
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