

W H A T
DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION
LOOKS LIKE IN THE AGE OF
G E N E R A T I V E A I

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INSIGHTS ON DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION AND GENERATIVE AI

Digital Transformation felt like a well-structured, formal progression.

LONG ROADMAPS



NUMEROUS
MILESTONES



MULTIPLE-YEAR
INITIATIVES



were set as an example of successful digital transformation.

Generative-AI has changed that approach to digital transformation. The fact is that Generative-AI has disrupted this transformation process and many of those well thought out plans now seem, let's face it- antiquated.

Now, the new approach to digital transformation appears very much more fluid, less predictable and in some aspects represent a more human element to the business.



Historically, digital transformation had a great deal of focus on systems

MOVING TO
THE CLOUD

MODERNIZATION
OF ERP

STREAMLINE
PROCESSES

among other issues. Generative-AI refocuses the efforts of digital transformation from improving business systems to improving business decision-making. How quickly an organization can interpret information, gain insight into that information and act on that information is what the bottleneck is in today's world.

In a retail transformation where I was a part of, the most significant value or breakthrough did not result from implementing a new platform but rather through the use of AI tools by merchandising teams to validate pricing scenarios and test those scenarios almost in real-time. The AI technology did not replace the merchandising teams but instead augmented their data validation process.



As much as we like to think that adopting AI for a business is a linear process, it isn't. AI adoption is messy- some teams seem to move rather quickly, while others seem to hesitate.

Governance has difficulty keeping up with both fast and slow moving teams. It is in the messiness of adopting AI for many organizations where the technology is the easy part but the alignment of teams that represent a much higher degree of difficulty.

Another area of concern with the adoption of AI, is the possibility of over-automating a process. Not every process will benefit from the incorporation of AI technology. During the validation of a process, the judgment being utilized to "optimize" the chance for success will often time be the critical factor.



The significance of adopting generative-AI, enforces the understanding of having a product-focused (or consumer-centric) outlook.

AI tools are not just tools to use, but will be utilized to develop experiences for the end-user. When using an AI tool, what benefit will the end-user receive? Will they receive faster service? Will they be offered more accurate recommendations based on their previous purchasing patterns? Or, will they receive a more efficient backend that no one will even see?

Those organizations that get this right, treat their AI capabilities as features of a product- not as an initiative which is not directly related to their core products.



The questions associated with the use of AI will require governance. However, this is also a fine line. Concerns relative to

BIAS

DATA PRIVACY

HALLUCINATIONS

These are real issues that need to be addressed. Many organizations will tend to over-correct when addressing the governance issue making innovation virtually impossible, particularly when technology might be utilized in the first place because of the risk aversiveness in each of the mentioned areas.

With respect to governance of using AI to support business, embedding your governance processes within the work flow for the teams (and not as a separate or top of process activity) has proven to be the solution.

A DIFFERENT **FORM OF** TRANSFORMATION



Digital Transformation in this current era of Generative-AI appears to be more of a capability than an isolated program - it is ongoing, iterative, and will likely be uncomfortable. That may very well be the bottom line.

About the Author

Dr. Fumbi Chima is a global technology executive who has led digital and operational transformation initiatives at industry-leading brands including adidas, Burberry, Walmart, Boeing Credit Union, and Fox Networks. Her experience spans P&L ownership, M&A, operations, and enterprise technology leadership across retail, CPG, digital, and financial services.

She is widely recognized as an AI thought leader with a strong reputation for aligning innovation with business goals to deliver sustainable value and competitive advantage. At adidas AG, she spearheaded large-scale infrastructure and process transformations, achieving cost savings, accelerating speed to market, and enabling cross-market scalability.

Known for bridging the gap between technology and business, she fosters high-performance cultures rooted in innovation, accountability, and transparency. Her leadership has consistently increased employee engagement and organizational impact.

Throughout her career, she has championed innovative solutions in data strategy, digital marketing, and cybersecurity, always with a relentless focus on driving growth and enhancing customer experience.



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