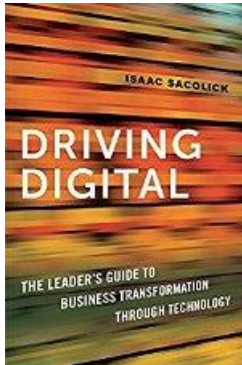


PM WORLD BOOK REVIEW



Book Title: ***Driving Digital: The Leader's Guide to Business Transformation Through Technology***

Author: **Isaac Sacolick**

Publisher: AMACOM

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Publication Date: 2017 ISBN: 9780814438602

Reviewer: **Kim Hylton-Reed, PMP** Review Date: November 2017

Introduction

For forward-thinking leaders who want to drive a digital business transformation, every day represents another opportunity to do something that adds value for customers and makes their company smarter and faster. In *Driving Digital*, the author carefully lays out the building blocks necessary for successful transformation and presents an approach, which emphasizes: transformation is done in a series of baby steps; companies need an updated set of (agile) practices to compete; businesses need to be data-driven organizations; and culture matters! For organizations and businesses desiring to undertake a business transformation through technology, *Driving Digital* is an excellent guidebook.

Overview of Book's Structure

The book begins with a “must read” introduction and covers the “how to” of digital business transformation in the subsequent seven chapters. Chapter 1 describes “The Transformation Imperative” and makes the case for beginning or continuing a digital transformation to avoid obsolescence. The author asks the reader to assess his/her own organization and to consider how a new competitor (“digital disruptor”) might enter the business today. This is a thought that would keep any traditional business owner awake at night.

Chapter 2 through Chapter 7 describes the practices involved in a digital transformation and provides relevant examples that drive home the points. The author explains that a business needs to start by creating a digitally driven IT organization that utilizes agile practices and is driven by customer and market feedback. Later chapters describe how to create organizational alignment by instituting digital and data-driven practices in other parts of the enterprise, including Finance, Product Development, Marketing and Sales. And finally, the author discusses the significant role of culture in a transformation program and emphasizes

the need to gain the support of stakeholder groups, including the Board and CEO, the Executive team, management and employees.

Highlights

Some of the many highlights of *Driving Digital*, spread across several chapters of the book, include:

Agile is a Key Transformational Practices (Chapter 2; p. 20) – Establishing basic agile practices may enable an organization to execute at a higher level. However, to truly transform an organization, agile practices must evolve to include marketing, operations as well as other functional areas and the organization must adopt an agile culture.

IT Culture (Chapter 3; p. 114) – A team that shares similar values and principles will develop its own culture. Team values may be tied to practices such as agile, while other values may be business related or “may be more aspirational, like the ability to deliver innovative solutions”. “Culture is what brings people together to collaborate and solve problems” and therefore, it is important to work on the unique culture within IT.

Data-Driven Organization (Chapter 5; p. 209) – “Leveraging data and analytics is the core competency to enable transformation...it requires the entire organization.” Being data driven is a business imperative for companies trying to compete in an environment of rapidly changing market conditions.

Building a Digitally-Driven Team (Chapter 7; p. 253) – To build such a team, you start by finding the early adopters. You will need a few supporters on the executive team and within each functional area of the business. However, since “individuals have different motivating factors and constraints, you’re not going to be able to do this with a one-size-fits-all approach.”

Highlights: What I liked!

Driving Digital really hit home for me because the author describes a wholistic approach to transforming an organization to a digital one. My own experience has been that the most successful organizational transformations are ones where a company follows a wholistic approach. I’ve also witnessed situations where organizations discounted the need for, and subsequently under-resourced, a key function such as planning, communications, quality assurance or configuration management. This frequently resulted in the organization facing significant risks later in the development process or project. What I most liked about *Driving Digital* is that it espouses a multi-dimensional approach to achieving a successful digital business transformation.

Who might benefit from the Book?

Whether a CIO, a CTO, a leader in an organization contemplating a business transformation, or simply a person trying to make sense of “everything digital”, the reader will benefit greatly from “Driving Digital”, which describes in a clear, straightforward manner what it means to be a “digital business” and how to get there.

Conclusion

Digital start-ups (such as Uber and Air BNB as two examples) have been responsible for some of the biggest shifts in their respective industries. To keep pace with this changing world around us, businesses need to quickly join the digital revolution or may someday soon watch their business becoming obsolete.

Traditional businesses that are successful at making a digital transformation will be able to provide increased value to customers and capitalize on new business opportunities. More importantly, a successful transformation will enable a traditional “brick and mortar” business to differentiate itself from its current competitors as well as better compete with new market entrants, including digital start-ups.

To begin on the path of digital transformation, business leaders need to look no further than to “Driving Digital” to make their company smarter and faster and enable them to thrive in the digital world in which we live.

For more about this book, go to:

<http://www.amacombooks.org/book.cfm?isbn=9780814438602>

Editor’s note: This book review was the result of a partnership between the publisher, PM World and the [PMI Silver Spring Chapter](#). Authors and publishers provide the books to the PMI Silver Spring Chapter, where they are offered free to PMI members to review; book reviews are published in the PM World Journal and PM World Library. PMI Silver Spring Chapter members can keep the books as well as claim PDUs for PMP recertification when their reviews are published. Chapter members are generally mid-career professionals, the audience for most project management books. If you are an author or publisher of a project management-related book, and would like the book reviewed through this program, please contact editor@peworldjournal.net.

About the Reviewer



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Kim Hylton-Reed is a Senior Program Manager with more than 20 years' experience in the IT and Telecom industries. Currently, she is a Vice President at ITellect Consulting supporting U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) clients. Prior to 2017, she was a Lead Associate at Booz Allen Hamilton and previously worked in the telecom industry. Kim has an MBA from Harvard and a B.S. Engineering from MIT.

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