



The right digital strategy
matters now more than ever





There is no such thing as an analogue business

The pandemic has accelerated the adoption of digital technology to an extent that could not have been predicted. British supermarkets experienced a 91% jump in sales for home delivery¹, Zoom became the top offering in Apple's App Store², and Microsoft experienced a staggering 775% increase in cloud services such as Microsoft Teams³. There are no such things as "digital" and "analogue" businesses now - just those that use technology well, and those that don't.

This is a good thing. Technology can bring huge benefits, and enable businesses to operate at speed and agility that would previously not have been possible. One of the biggest factors that differentiated businesses in this crisis was their ability to be quick off the mark in setting and executing their digital strategy, as well as the ability to adjust and adapt as the situation demands. Everyone should now be better prepared should something similar happen again.

It is hard to predict when the current crisis will truly be over, however, businesses who prepare for the post digital era today will give themselves the greatest chance to thrive and overcome future crises. For many businesses, this will mean establishing the right digital foundations - technology, agile working practices, "user-first" concepts such as design thinking and customer experience design - that will enable them to adapt in the short term, and accelerate in the longer term.



1. <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2020/jun/23/britons-local-food-shops-online-stores-covid-19-supermarket>
2. <https://9to5mac.com/2020/07/17/app-store-record/>
3. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/johnkoetsier/2020/03/29/microsoft-775-increase-in-cloud-services-44-million-daily-teams-users-900-million-meeting-minutes-weekly/#520044ce7c79>

What we mean by digital strategy

Digital can mean different things to different people; an IT executive might focus on the journey to cloud, whereas a finance executive may consider digital as the ability to use data in everyday decision making. At its simplest, a digital strategy articulates how you will harness modern technologies to drive your business forwards. At Oaklin, we believe the best digital strategies are not solely built around technology investments, but paired with an understanding of how to leverage modern working practices across the whole organisation.

Good digital strategies enable businesses to make bold but calculated bets, carve out new opportunities to experiment with new digital offerings, implement a customer centric approach through design thinking, stand up new technologies and establish new ways of working.

We explore three elements that every digital strategy should adopt:

Flexibility and adaptability

Built around platforms & ecosystems

Understanding the workforce of tomorrow



What makes a good digital strategy?



The trend towards digitisation has highlighted the need to partner within mutually beneficial ecosystems, invest in talent and ensure the right structures are in place to help businesses navigate the new normal.

Flexibility and adaptability



Organisations that have a **dynamic strategy setting process** will thrive in uncertain times, this means being **quick to read and act on rapidly changing signals of change**; digital strategies must be kept abreast with their micro and macro surroundings, being iterated and adjusted as required.

Establishing a **feedback loop into your strategy setting process** will ensure strategies remain **relevant**, whether it is customer data, employee feedback or financial KPIs, organisations that are well informed will be in prime position to act and maintain their competitive edge.

Built around platforms and ecosystems



A platform-based approach puts **digital platforms, online exchanges and open innovation networks front and centre** of an organisation's digital strategy, in effect **enabling new connections and collaboration opportunities with wider ecosystem partners**, enhancing the ability to experiment, innovate and develop new business models.

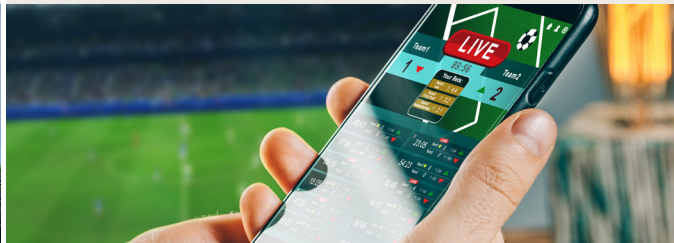
The most successful companies of the last decade have also been some of the most innovative; what sets organisations like Apple, Facebook and Google apart from more traditional businesses is their **ability to move faster than anyone else, achieving greater scale than the competition**. The foremost driver for this is their ability to bring new digital offerings at speed through a platform-based approach.

Understanding the workforce of tomorrow



It is often thought that technology is a direct replacement for humans, and this is true when it comes to automating mundane and repeatable tasks. However, **digital strategies are successful when they consider the aggregate impact of automation, boosting productivity and creating headspace** for more interesting and higher value activities.

Investing in a **workforce that is relevant for the post-digital era with the right combination of skills, knowledge, and experience** is paramount. This may mean a re-think of management and reward structures, office use, and working patterns to enable self-organising teams to quickly solve the most pressing problems.



We combine years of industry experience with our domain and subject matter expertise to bring the best of digital to our clients



Technology



We work closely with you to build your platform strategy and establish digital platforms as the basis for development and pursuit of your digital strategy.

We identify opportunities to collaborate and co-create with ecosystem partners where it is mutually beneficial.

We help you think outside the box for new opportunities using technology as the basis for creating innovative new business models.

Training & Engagement



We help clients take a proactive role in upskilling and training their workforce; investing in e-learning, bite size content that allows for a personalised learning curriculum will ensure greater accessibility and scale, bridging gaps in skills for the future.

We help shape knowledge management and access strategies, as employees move between roles, retaining knowledge and access to it will become even more crucial.

Governance



We support our clients by establishing a tailored governance framework to better drive strategy, policies and standards.

We help clients harness data and information from across the organisation to instil a culture of review & refinement ensuring strategies and actions are kept relevant.

Our Perspective



Operating Model

Traditional function-based hierarchical structures are no longer fit for purpose; we will help you define and establish a fluid and agile operating model allowing the organisation to flex resources as required.

We will help you make the move away from rigid structures to establishing a pool of talent to increase agility and enable reallocation of talent across the business, ensuring high value digital initiatives can access the right resources quickly.



Culture & Mindset

We will help establish a robust change function to enable transformations at speed, removing obstacles and catalysing cultural change.

We believe it is OK to fail; the best ideas come from testing and learning. We help instil an innovation culture, where failing (and learning!) is encouraged and success stories shared across the organisation.



Data & Analytics

Whether it is data about your customers, your workforce or operations, we bring best in breed of data and analytics to ensure your organisation is always responding to the most relevant challenges.

Our expertise has helped clients across a range of industries to define and deliver their digital priorities



Health & Nutrition

Oaklin were engaged by a European vitamins and food supplements retailer to shape its multi-channel digital strategy aimed at enhancing customer experience and maximising profitability.

Oaklin developed a 5-year digital strategy and application roadmap to address challenges with their planning, merchandising and warehousing. The multi-channel strategy and roadmap drove short- and long-term results as they developed their in-house capability and reduced reliance on third parties.



Aerospace

The new CIO of Rolls-Royce aerospace engaged Oaklin to develop a bold and innovative strategy for a new “digital by default” approach to technology development and delivery. The work culminated in the introduction of new concepts like virtual reality modelling and 3D printing as prototype ideas to accelerate the adoption of new technology in complex manufacturing.

A global IT transformation programme was launched as a result and successfully delivered new digital capabilities in the aerospace business, that have gone on to be the foundation for a fully digital and technologically competitive business.



Oil & Gas

An Oaklin consultant led the definition and delivery of a major Oil & Gas organisation’s digital strategy. By mapping core business capabilities to technology solutions, the Oaklin consultant helped the client leverage strategic tech platforms aimed at reducing the fragmentation that had occurred as a result of a highly decentralised approach. The multi-year technology strategy was translated into country specific roadmaps that enabled the business to digitise capabilities at speed across the retail value chain.

Using a platform-based approach also resulted in several data monetisation opportunities.

