

## A perspective on accelerating digitalization

**Eddy Abboud, General Manager GBM Oman, talks about how businesses can get through digital deadlock and create partnerships to enhance their use of technology.**

Whether we like to admit or not, it is common knowledge that technology has grown to be the biggest driver in the business world today, across all sectors. The largest and most successful organizations globally are those who now have digital transformation at the heart of their aspirations.

Today's businesses are under pressure to achieve business outcomes in a world where tech is disrupting industries. Therefore, they have been forced to explore new business models, find ways to increase customer acquisition ratio and provide next generation customer experience. These factors, seamlessly integrated through digital business solutions and secure digital infrastructures, are at the core of digital transformation. While this sounds quite complex to undertake, having the right elements in place would ensure a higher probability for success, namely through strong leadership, adequate budgets, and alignment between the various internal teams while developing a transformational journey for financial and performance improvements.

With the support and progressive vision of the Omani government, Oman's private and public sectors have made positive strides and grown their technological capacities. Technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI) and cloud (hybrid and public) will prove to be crucial in reaching these aspirations, and diverse industries in the country must embrace the wave of digital transformation globally to keep pace.

At GBM, we recently collaborated with IDC to release a study highlighting the need for organizations to overcome significant organizational and technological barriers as they strive to break out of the "digital deadlock" and accelerate their digital transformation. The whitepaper titled "Breaking the Deadlock and Accelerating Digital Transformation" indicates that nearly 60% of organizations globally are trapped in a digital deadlock.

Defining the direction to take as an organization is crucial to the digital transformation journey. During my education at Harvard Business School, we were introduced to "Hardware within the Congruence Model" which was defined as the elements related to processes and solutions, new revenue streams, and IT investments that serve the key business objective. What is also equally important to address is how to implement this digital transformation, which includes people, culture and leadership style. This is referred to as "The Software".

Over the years, I have come across a sentiment among management and employees in multiple industries that digital transformation is not expected to be beneficial to their organizations. While pursuing this discussion further, it has become obvious that this sentiment is facilitated by inadequate attention being placed on "The Software" part of the

organization.

While many organizations can execute relatively smaller digital projects within departmental or functional silos, a large proportion of them are unable to move beyond these ad hoc digital projects and scale transformation across the organization. A study released by McKinsey in 2018 titled “True Gen: Generation Z and its implications for companies” stressed the importance of empowering people to work in new ways, reimagining the workplace, building capabilities for the workforce of the future, and upgrading the organizations hard wiring.

I believe the hardest part for many of our clients is in designing their digital transformation journey and taking the first step in executing the digital transformation strategy. It may seem overwhelming, both practically and monetarily, which is why many organizations postpone the transformation. This highlights the need for an experienced technology partner that can help steer companies in the right direction while keeping in mind the business objectives.

Finding a partner who not only possesses suitable technology capabilities and skills, but also has sufficient understanding of their industry and business, is crucial to handle the nature of such projects. At GBM, our goal as a digital transformation partner is to enable organizations to achieve greater agility, improve efficiency, transform customer experiences, provide insights and, most importantly, unlock new dimensions, visibility and context from real-time quality data.

It is no secret that there is a strong value and necessity for organizations to invest in accelerating processes and competencies, as well as leveraging digital technologies in order to strategically prepare themselves for today’s market demands and the future. With a strategic approach and partners like GBM, I am confident that organizations in the region can overcome the digital deadlock and swiftly find themselves on the path of digital transformation.

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