Building your business's digital future on strong foundations

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[Emma Veitch](#)

Senior Business Advisor

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Technology is transforming business. Faster, more reliable tools are now essential to how we work and live, seamlessly integrated into our daily routines. From remote work to open-plan offices or traditional setups, computers and phones are essential to our daily lives. To test perhaps, try leaving your phone at home or working without tech for a morning.

For businesses to truly adapt and flourish, they must look beyond simply acquiring the latest tech. The focus needs to be on their core foundations: **People, Process, and Technology**. While it's tempting to dive into trending innovations like Artificial Intelligence (AI), genuine digital transformation isn't just about adopting new tools. It's about making sure your core foundations are strong. Without robust building blocks in your people, processes, and existing technology, even the best new tools can fall short of delivering real value.

Technology

Before you can leverage the newest tools, you need to understand your current technological landscape.

- Where are you now? Are you relying on outdated "legacy systems" that are difficult to update or integrate with modern solutions? Or do you have adaptable infrastructure ready for change? Knowing your starting point is crucial and moving from this can be daunting
- Data accuracy: Is your data clean, consistent, and reliable? Bad data fed into good systems leads to bad outcomes. Accurate, well-organised data

is essential for any digital initiative. Many businesses are data-rich, mining and enriching this can produce significant benefits.

- Digital presence: Can your customers easily find you online or are they finding your competitors more readily instead? Are you optimised on technology platforms for all demographics? This includes your website, social media, and ensuring you rank well on search engines like Google. Can you easily "channel shift" - guiding customers to interact with you efficiently through your digital channels?
- Integrated systems: Do you have a robust Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system? A CRM is more than just a contact list; it's a central hub for all customer interactions, sales data, and service history. Seeing everything about your customers in one view can really improve how you serve them and optimise engagements.

Process

Technology enables processes, but effective processes are designed by people.

- Are your workflows efficient?: Examine your current business processes. Do things flow easily, or do you have steps that slow you down or require too much manual work that hinders productivity? Look for friction points and ask yourself if these are built with the customer in mind?
- Ready for digital: Do your processes truly use digital tools to their fullest? Or are you trying to squeeze old habits into new systems? Making your work processes digital-friendly from the start is crucial for making your business more efficient.
- Customer journey: How well do your internal processes align with your customer's journey? Seamless digital interactions often require changes to how different departments collaborate internally.

People

Ultimately, technology is a tool, and whether it works well is up to the people who use it and value it.

Employee training: Do your employees have the right training to use your current and new technologies? Having a team that's comfortable with digital tools is key. Employees who aren't confident or trained will struggle to use new systems, which can lead to problems and wasted resources.

- Open to change: Beyond just technical skills, do your employees welcome

new ways of doing things? Encouraging a culture where people keep learning and can easily adapt makes sure your team is ready for whatever comes next.
- Customer experience: How would your customers rate their experience with your technology? This often reflects your employee's ability to confidently use and support your digital offerings.

The benefits of a strong foundation

Once your people, processes, and core technology are aligned, the real opportunities of digital transformation become clearer:

- Deeper customer understanding: A strong CRM and clean data allow you to truly understand customer needs, personalise offerings, and deliver exceptional service, fostering loyalty.
- Operational excellence: Streamlined processes and well-trained employees, supported by integrated technology, lead to your business running more efficiently.
- Enhanced customer engagement: When customers can easily find you online, interact seamlessly across channels, and receive personalised experiences, satisfaction goes up.
- Strategic insights: Accurate data, accessible through dashboards and reporting, provides the clarity needed for informed business decisions, from optimising sales strategies, improving stock management, understanding customer trends, spotting potential problems early, seeing where time is wasted, and finding ways to save costs.

Strong foundations are also key to business security

Crucially, strong foundations in people, process, and technology also form your first line of defence against cybercriminals. Robust, well-managed systems, combined with trained employees who understand basic security protocols, are essential. Trying to layer advanced security tools onto an outdated or poorly managed IT environment is like decorating a cake that's already fallen apart. Your foundational technology and processes are where you proactively manage vulnerabilities and detect threats.

Checking the strength of your foundations

For businesses to truly adapt to a technological future, the focus must shift from simply acquiring new technology to strategically aligning people, process, and existing technology first.

1. Assess your current state: Conduct an honest review of your existing technology, your internal processes, and your team's digital capabilities. Identify gaps and areas for improvement.
2. Prioritise foundations: Invest in modernising core systems (like CRM), ensuring data accuracy, and providing comprehensive training for your employees *before* considering advanced innovations like AI. Remember, AI thrives on good data and efficient processes, but it won't fix underlying problems.
3. Foster a culture of continuous improvement: Help create a workplace where learning never stops. Support your employees as they pick up new skills and get comfortable with new tools and work methods.
4. Security from the ground up: Integrate cybersecurity into every layer of your operations, from initial technology choices to ongoing employee training.

By focusing on these fundamental pillars, businesses can build a resilient, adaptable, and truly digitally transformed future. It's about setting the stage for growth, ensuring that when the time is right for more advanced technologies, your business is truly ready to harness their full potential.

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