



DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION TRENDS 2021

HAS THE PANDEMIC CHANGED OUR NEED
FOR BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION?

ANIMAL CRACKERS
WE FEED THE RATS TO THE CATS
AND THE CATS TO THE RATS
AND GET THE CAT SKINS
FOR NOTHING...

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BEWARE

Xebia

CREATING THE FOUNDATION FOR THE FUTURE

PRE COVID-19, A DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION HAS BEEN ON THE AGENDA OF MANY COMPANIES. IS THAT STILL THE CASE OR HAS THE PAST YEAR IMPACTED OUR WILLINGNESS TO CHANGE? TURNS OUT, THE PANDEMIC HAS ACCELERATED TRANSFORMATION. WE HAVE NO OTHER CHOICE BUT TO EMBRACE A NEW WAY OF GETTING THINGS DONE, LIKE WORKING REMOTELY. AND TECHNOLOGY PLAYS THE LEADING ROLE.

WHAT ARE IMPORTANT DO'S AND DON'TS FOR LASTING CHANGE?

Thomas H. Davenport and Thomas C. Redman (Harvard Business Review, 2020) state that assembling the right people in four domains - technology, processes, data, and culture - is crucial to succeed. As we know, talent is scarce, and we're all still figuring out how to work best from home. So, how do you ensure a successful transformation in times like these? We are here to help you focus on the most important domains of change.

TECHNOLOGY: FROM MAINTAINING TRADITIONAL IT TO SECURING FUTURE SUCCESS

The current circumstances force organizations to be creative to deal with competition and changing consumer behavior. IT is a significant expense, and current revenue might not cut it. However, not acting is not an option. The organizations that are successfully coping with the crisis are flexible. They use innovative solutions to scale up webshops, downscale where possible, enable remote working, or accommodate online customer interaction. As both consumers and employees increasingly use digital channels, businesses need to keep up. Cloud allows you to shift from maintaining IT to benefiting from a more scalable and stable platform. Improvements are implemented quicker and more frequently, and resources are freed up to focus on innovation. Done well, your customers will benefit from a better service or product.

PROCESSES: PAVE THE ROAD TO SUCCESS

Times of crisis tend to reveal your weak spots. Did the past few months show you which processes are slowing you down? Architecture is emerging as a driver for change. Now is the time to design and realize a Modern IT Architecture to survive, recover, or thrive. But how do you improve your business' backbone? Identifying the processes that need renewing is the first step. The hurdles you encountered in your initial response to COVID-19 reflect the areas that are in dire need of change. Accelerating time-to-market while remaining scalable, agile, and compliant isn't easy. The right architecture will enable you to create or automate processes, control costs, reap Cloud and DevOps benefits, modernize applications, access AI and Machine Learning, or ramp up security. If today's challenges are bringing you down, it's time to explore how a modern IT landscape combined with DevOps and Agile can help your business bounce back.

DATA: USE TODAY'S INSIGHTS TO DO EVEN BETTER TOMORROW

The promise of data comes with many questions, like: "How to extract value from data efforts? Or, how to collect data and make it properly available to the organization?" As regulations like the GDPR impact data usage and technology evolves faster than lightning, there is a growing need for knowledge in this field. To bridge the gap between traditional business and this new world, companies crave the skills of experienced Engineers, Data Analysts, and Scientists. With more interactions taking place online, the amount of data is skyrocketing. Joining forces with data experts will help you reap the benefits: make better decisions, meet customer demand, and create more industry or challenge-specific solutions.

CULTURE: CREATE CHANGE CAPABILITY

It comes as no surprise that culture plays an important role in change efforts. Your workforce needs to understand why you're shaking things up and embrace innovation. The speed with which you turn opportunities into actions determines the growth you achieve. As most of our collaboration now takes place online, technology deserves a more important place in our culture. Remote working is on the rise, which opens the doors to opportunities and challenges; the battle for talent has moved to the global arena, and culture is one of your ways to stand out! Yet, creating a culture that enables you to thrive is not an easy task. Find the resources to coach your workforce towards continuous innovation and a more cost-efficient, agile, and customer-focused way of working.

BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION CHALLENGES AND ACTION PLANS 2021

THERE'S MORE TO CHANGE THAN MEETS THE EYE! BESIDES THE FOUR DOMAINS JUST DISCUSSED, IT'S IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND THE VARIOUS BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION COMPONENTS -SOME MORE APPLICABLE TO YOUR ORGANIZATION THAN OTHERS. HERE, WE DISCUSS THESE COMPONENTS BY SHARING CHALLENGES AND ACTION PLANS!

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION —

How do you improve business performance? Is your company stable enough to survive and flexible enough to thrive? The past year has only expedited the pace at which enterprises digitize, and you need to do the same to keep up. If you are wondering how to transform your business amid a crisis, let's start by taking a look at your strategy.

CHALLENGES

The world is changing at a staggering pace, and underperformance and ineffectiveness are not uncommon. Today's market asks companies to move faster or in a different direction, which can only be achieved through a new way of working. Transforming means rethinking your strategy and improving culture, technology, and knowledge. To become 'future fit,' having a clear vision is a must, just like providing your teams with the right resources to deliver. Companies increasingly seek expert change leaders to help define their future business model, kickstart and operationalize innovation, educate managers and teams, and provide organization-wide Agile and strategic advice.

ACTION PLAN

If you're eager to dive into your Digital Transformation, assess your current operating model and strategy first. What changes do you want to make, which stakeholders need to be on board, and what actions can you take to start building a 'sustainable future fit organization' that creates more value at a higher pace? Digital transformations often span large areas of the organization. Building a transformation delivery structure will secure progress and create buy-in. To truly embrace digitization, training all business levels is essential. Before you make significant changes in the four crucial focus areas mentioned earlier, make sure your workforce is equipped to turn your strategy into reality.

Digital transformation is the key to becoming extremely agile, more customer-focused, cost-efficient, and a great place to work. However, it does require the entire business to commit to a value-maximizing strategy and innovative operating model.





DEVELOPER VELOCITY —

Because technology increasingly underpins everything; from how a business operates to the products or services it offers, organizations in all industries must learn to excel first and foremost at developing software. But, how do you drive business performance from software development? Developer velocity! Start creating the right environment for developers to innovate.

CHALLENGES

Tools, product management, culture, and talent management significantly impact Developer Velocity and business performance. But organizations have grown accustomed to particular tools and a set way of working - changing the culture takes a significant effort. To move to a new Target Operating Model, you need an overarching strategy to restructure the traditional organization significantly. Innovative tools are often considered a solution. They are, but only to a certain extent. Businesses need to embrace new technology, as well as leadership and organizational trends, to accomplish a full circle transformation.

ACTION PLAN

Assess the current level of Developer Velocity in your organization and create a program to improve where it will make the most impact. The willingness of senior management to re-imagine the way they run the business is crucial to this. Metrics show that working with senior leadership to drive change can reduce the time it takes to transform from years to months. All it takes is the boldness of senior leadership to drive the change with our guidance.



Empower developers to drive business outcome! The more you enable developers to build on their terms, collaborate across borders securely - whether remote or collocated - and scale what they invent, the better results you'll see in financial performance, innovation, customer experience, brand, and talent.

AGILE —

How do you make time-to-market your competitive advantage? Can your team deal with ever-changing customer needs or global challenges? COVID-19 has exposed an increased demand for business agility. Processes need to be able to pivot on a dime without impacting speed. But, what's the best way to deliver under dynamic circumstances? Agile provides the answer.

CHALLENGES

Companies that are dealing with the current situation best are those that can respond quickly. If anything, the pandemic has highlighted the parts of your business that need updating to stay competitive. One way to make sure you are better prepared for change is by replacing the traditional waterfall approach with an Agile way of working. But how do you transform the way your organization operates? To speed up without slowing down, it's essential that leaders understand what Agile can, and can't, do for their business and supervise change with the help of experts.

ACTION PLAN

Agile can offer a solution to many problems, as can Cloud or DevOps. However, to benefit, you need to understand how (and if) it will work for your business. Explore the role Agile can play in your transformation and determine what training your workforce needs to change how they work. Develop necessary Agile know-how throughout the organization, tailor information to C-level needs, and bundle expertise in an Agile Expert Group. Bring principles into practice by setting up a Development Team, providing guidance to new Product Owners and Scrum Masters, and shaping your first Backlogs and Sprints. Tailoring your Agile transformation to your unique requirements is the first step on the road to success.

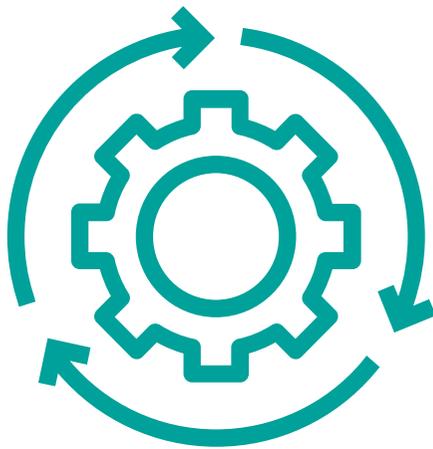
To respond to unexpected situations and overcome future challenges, you need to prepare for change. Agile gives companies a competitive advantage: enabling hyper-growth, accelerating value creation, and ensuring flexibility.





DEVOPS —

In a pre-corona world, DevOps was adopted to accelerate feature delivery with a higher level of team autonomy. Velocity, high-quality software, and happy teams enabled companies to adapt to changing market requirements quickly. When the pandemic hit, these factors helped organizations meet the new working environment in a resilient way. Additionally, other DevOps benefits gained importance, like scalability, business continuity, and compliance. Many companies faced severe financial pressure; therefore, cost optimization and optimal use of its infrastructure and cloud technology became a priority. Working the DevOps way helps companies meet these challenges efficiently and proactively.



Holistically approaching DevOps, we take into consideration how to set up your organization, its architecture, and platform technology and keep your business reliable for your customers' ultimate benefit. You will not only be ahead of your competition but also more resilient and ready to face any future market disruption.

CHALLENGES

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has been unprecedentedly disruptive for some business areas. But how do you react to this enormous disruption? How can you guarantee business continuity with a keen eye on cost management? -Simply turning everything off is not an option; scalability, reliability, and a shared understanding of measures and KPI's are.

ACTION PLAN

Even when the going gets tough on your DevOps journey, do not lose sight of the lighthouse. If you initiated this transformation with fast feature delivery and a high level of team autonomy in mind, enjoy how your progress facilitates many means to optimize processes and raise your level of agility. If you are considering DevOps in these turbulent times, think: "Why not"? Use this moment as an opportunity to drive innovation. Let Modern IT Architecture be the backbone, while Site Reliability Engineering and observability ensure a good night's sleep. Modern Cloud platforms enable your team in an easily scalable way. But besides all technology aspects, remember the most valuable asset: your people. Encourage them to work together, share knowledge, and develop Communities of Practice. This way, DevOps will enhance your organization's effectiveness and provide inspiration, vision, craftsmanship, and enthusiasm. Whether we will soon be dealing with the aftermath of the pandemic or the next wave, you will be ready.

CLOUD —

You want technology to work for you. But how do you shift from maintaining legacy to building innovation? COVID-19 has opened our eyes. We need technology that is reliable, scalable and acts as an enabler instead of a business blocker. If you want to become digital-native any time soon, cloud is a great place to start.

CHALLENGES

In the process of becoming digital-native, businesses will face three immense challenges: how to upscale and downscale smartly, how to boost innovation, and last but not least, how to cut costs. On top of that, online interaction is currently skyrocketing, which places extra pressure on IT. Is your current landscape fit to deal with change? To offer both your workforce and your customers the best experience, secure, flexible, and carefree IT is essential. Moving to the Public Cloud can relieve your team's pressure to maintain old software and free up more time for them to innovate your business.

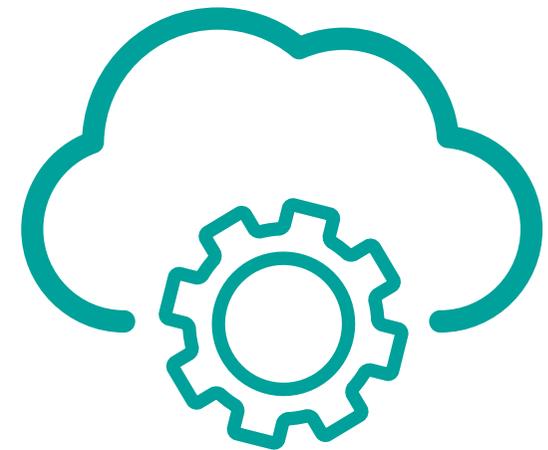
ACTION PLAN

'Cloud done well' offers many benefits. To unlock them:

- Look for experts to guide you on this journey.
- Explore how you can set yourself apart from your competitors through innovation, standardization, automation, and remote engineering by default.
- Train your team and bundle knowledge in a Cloud Competence Center to make sure expertise is readily available.

By moving to an IT infrastructure built entirely around Cloud, you are preparing for a future built on innovation. Cloud and the unique functionality of this scalable and stable platform make it easier to develop specific and unique features that will enhance your product or service. If you can create value by completing improvements quicker and more frequently, your customers are more likely to stick around.

Cloud-native is the dot on the horizon for numerous companies. Cloud enables you to prepare for a future of extreme automation, machine learning, data, artificial intelligence, and remote working.





DATA AND AI —

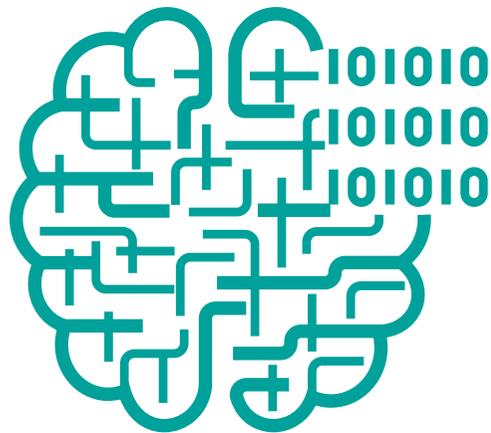
Staying one step ahead of your customers' needs can be challenging in a world that's been turned upside down by COVID-19. How do you use data to get the insights you need? The pandemic has boosted online business, resulting in heaps of data. But, how do you make the most of all this information - before your competitor does?

CHALLENGES

Whatever reason you have for exploring the world of data, be prepared to encounter more questions than answers at the start. What are the rules regarding the collection and use of (personal) data? How can making data available to my teams support business growth? At Xebia, we see a developing need for expertise in this field to boost data-efforts' value. Additionally, Data Science is on the rise, giving software engineering best practices and standards a leading role. Enterprises are increasingly looking for (senior) data professionals, Analytics Translators, and Engineers to take care of this vital Digital Transformation component.

ACTION PLAN

To start bearing the fruits, you need both organization-wide knowledge and innovative tools to gather and process data. Additionally, you will need to free up resources and create new data-focused roles within your company. If your ambition is to become data-driven and make processes more efficient, assessing current in-house knowledge is a must, just like setting up a central Cloud platform for data availability. Look for experts in the field to help select or build the right tools and provide training that'll deliver data-savvy teams that know how to create a product that satisfies your customers' needs.



Data science will make solutions and services increasingly industry-, challenge-, and consumer-specific. To remain competitive and facilitate these developments within your business, an in-depth understanding of data and ai are crucial.

QUALITY SOFTWARE DELIVERY —

Do you feel like technology is holding you back? How do you update processes without slowing them down first? Doing a better job at delivering software requires the best people, practice and technology. By focusing on improving quality, you have a better chance of getting it right the first time!

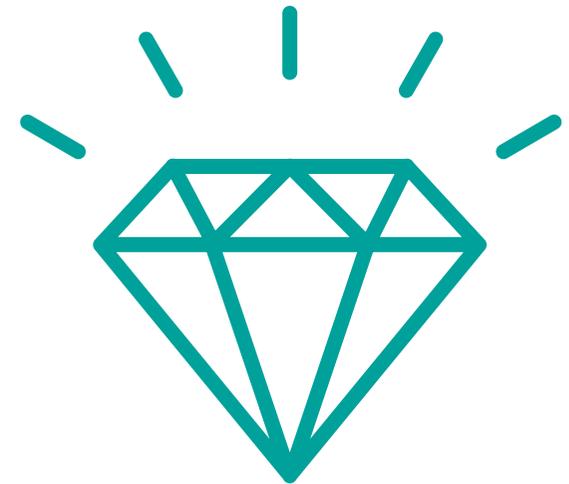
CHALLENGES

Are you struggling to deliver the desired value? You are not alone. Xebia sees organizations struggle to scale and manage quality in a supplier-heavy landscape. Working with many stakeholders can be demanding, and attempts to speed up the process often lead to big, hairy, unmaintainable solutions. Especially when trying to make data-driven improvements based on customer feedback at the same time. Additionally, the pandemic has provided companies with another challenge: keeping a grip on delivery processes with your teams working from home.

ACTION PLAN

Make quality your highest priority, and find the methods and tools to bring what you preach into practice. Maybe your software is too complex, and you can't deliver it in time or at the right quality. Set up a CI pipeline, improve quality through Test Automation and Quality Assurance, find out what works through A/B testing. Dive into DDD, BDD, or SBE and discover how they can provide more insight into your software delivery processes, boost business value, and shorten your time-to-market.

Ensuring continuous delivery of high-quality software is vital in a highly competitive landscape. More companies choose to invest in data-driven systems to improve. Implementing these practices will pose a challenge and boosting your knowledge level is key is to stay ahead of the game.





SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT —

How do you create an online strategy and what does moving your business to the digital domain entail? A growing number of b2b and b2c interactions take place online, especially now. Data-driven, high-quality, and safe (cloud) solutions can help you stand out in a global crowd and increase customer value!

CHALLENGES

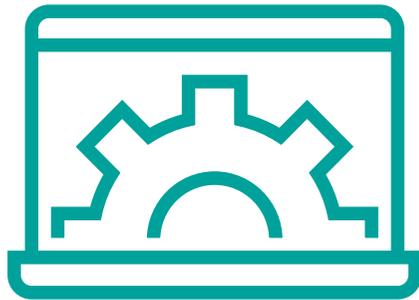
The reason e-commerce suddenly skyrocketed is twofold. On the one hand, it is the only way for many organizations to stay in business during a lockdown. On the other hand, with consumers moving to the digital domain, companies gain many global competitors and need to act! Businesses that leaped at the beginning of the pandemic were often confronted with outdated web and mobile applications and systems that held them back from meeting customer needs online. The more successful ones had scalable and flexible IT to back them up.

ACTION PLAN

When it comes to staying connected to your customers in a highly-competitive environment, time is of the essence. Start by outlining your online strategy and mapping the status quo of your IT environment. You can use the following questions as a guideline:

- Do you have the in-house expertise to start a transformation?
- Are you able to embrace remote engineering?
- Is there legacy technology that needs replacing?
- Do you need tailor-made tools for new features?
- If so, are you fit to build them yourself, or would you prefer to partner with a trusted advisor?

Approach your move online as if you are setting up a new business. Create a clear vision before leaping, and make sure your development teams have the skills to make your online business a success!



We observe an increasing need to replace outdated software with customized solutions to support online business and accelerate the shift to the digital domain. Time-to-market is more important than ever.

SECURITY —

Once companies start their transformation, they often move quickly and focus on reaping the benefits of agile, DevOps, or cloud. But what about security? How do you make sure the bore of rules and regulations doesn't kill the enthusiasm of your workforce? That's where xebia comes in!

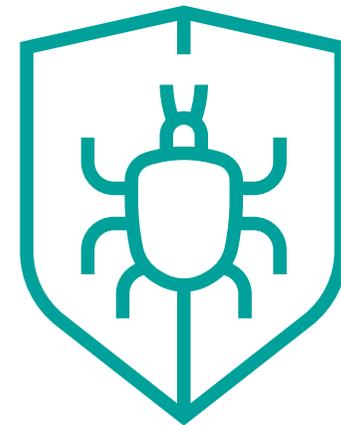
CHALLENGES

Making sure your business is scalable, agile, knows how to deal with security issues and complies with external and internal regulations can be quite the challenge. But it doesn't have to be if you make security work in your favor. A Digital Transformation is all-consuming. From adopting Agile and DevOps to moving to the Cloud, automating processes, dealing with BYOD, and incorporating data, AI, Machine Learning, and IoT. With so much to think about, security is often overlooked or only thought of after the transition. It's essential to embed security into your culture from the get-go.

ACTION PLAN

Are you aware of your security maturity level? Do you know how to create a security policy that will not slow down your DevOps team? The key to a safer way of working (in the Cloud) is giving teams the responsibility and the know-how to identify and solve security issues. Additionally, to recognize potential risks, you need insight into your IT. Threat Modeling or Pen-testing are just two of many ways to realize acceptable residual risk and regain control over your data platform and web, mobile, and Cloud processes. By boosting security awareness in teams, problems are detected sooner. As a result, fewer incidents take place, and when they do, they have less impact.

Security is becoming less of a specialty. Instead, it's a thread that runs through every aspect of your business as a standard way of working.





ABOUT XEBIA

Xebia was founded in 2001 as the first organization in the Netherlands to embrace Agile. With roots in architecture and Java development, Xebia has grown to be a full-service IT consulting firm operating globally with offices in the Netherlands, Belgium, India, Dubai, UK, and the US. As a pioneering IT company, Xebia delivers high-quality services to cover all components of Digital Transformation. From Agile, DevOps, and Cloud, to Data and AI, Software Development, Quality Software Delivery, and Security.

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