WHY EXPERIENCE SHOULD BE AT THE HEART OF YOUR WORKPLACE STRATEGY

Shifting from End User Services to Total Employee Experience

PREPARING FOR THE 'NEXT NORMAL'

Businesses across all industries are preparing for the next phase of the pandemic and inevitable 'return to the workplace', which means that focus and attention should now be on how to work best and most efficiently going forward.

We have seen unprecedented levels of transformation in the last two years; new technologies have been introduced, people have adapted to new ways of working, and traditional platforms for collaboration and engagement have evolved.

Not only has this transformed the way we think of the workplace and how we work, but it has also provided access to new talent pools, allowing people who previously couldn't work to now join and collaborate with ease. It is hard to imagine going back.

Rapid technological changes and innovation means that businesses now need to transform their digital operations to streamline policy and processes, automate workloads, and secure the enterprise to see maximum value. As we enter this next phase, one thing is clear – with unplanned and rapid transformation comes technical and operational debt. Companies must now re-look at the changes introduced and the compromises that were necessary to keep people working and close the gaps;

We see our customers are concerned about new security vulnerabilities, architecture and tooling inefficiencies, and employee adoption. We advocate taking a 'human centric approach to digital enablement' and 'creating a culture of workforce digital dexterity' to build a workplace that delivers total employee experience.

SHIFTING QUICKLY FROM END USER SERVICES TO TOTAL EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE

Persona-driven services are essential for understanding the diverse groups of people within an enterprise, allowing the business to provide tailored services and some degree of flexibility for different employee groups.

New technologies coupled with hybrid working now require this persona model to evolve – We expect and have become accustomed to accessing company resources and collaborating as easily at home as we do at work, and this, in turn, has increased expectations on seamless access to the same tools and services when on the move. It is important to understand that people's expectations will vary during the day and may also depend on the environment in which they work.

If hybrid working is to realize its full potential, it is necessary to ensure people are adopting these technologies and getting maximum value from them. Studies show that the Digital Literacy gap has been growing as new technologies are introduced and as more industries become digital companies. Our **Future of Work** research show that 81% of executives are investing in on-line learning platform to bridge the Digital Literacy gap.

WE LIVE IN AN EXPERIENCE-DRIVEN ERA

More than ever, we are reminded that technology is no longer limited to a select few industries and white-collar workers, but rather it is now part of all companies, in all sectors, and part of all employee's ecosystems.

As a result, measuring employee experience is paramount, and using AI and intelligent systems to rapidly identify and optimize them increases adoption and productivity. These measures, combined with insights into productivity and collaboration, and using game-theory to gamify the output provide an exciting opportunity to augment the existing persona model, and allow visibility into how people's needs change based on where they work: at home, on the shop floor, in front of the customer, or an office.

We must help our customers understand their people's priorities and have the right combination of experience insight measures with traditional quantitative service levels to predict and be ready for these as they change. By working closely with the business to define the right measures and outcomes, we avoid creating new KPIs just for the sake of it.

TRANSFORM AND RUN

At the start of the pandemic, for most the priority was to avoid shutting down and keep people working, and the transformation needed from IT was implemented as quickly as possible. These dramatic steps were only taken, to 'keep the lights on' and survive difficult times.

Now, attention must turn to build on this foundation of rapid transformation and address any inefficiencies and vulnerabilities; what should be done to clean up, and how can we do this while still making sure we are doing it securely?

After all, flexibility is important and it drives great employee experiences, but an organization must protect its people and assets first and foremost. And because people work in multiple environments in ways that they have never worked in before, we need to secure all endpoints, people, and devices differently.

As we secure the enterprise and continue to transform, we must be careful to not negatively impact employee experience and prohibit the flexibility and opportunities for new ways of working that will drive innovation. DevOps and Agile working practices should remain the foundation for a bimodal workplace policy.

The strategy should be focused on predictability, stabilizing the infrastructure, allowing people and the business to work securely, whilst delivering exceptional experience wherever people choose to work, exploring and defining new digital journeys and experimenting with how IT can drive end-to-end business change across the entire workplace.

By offering a satisfying, rewardingly collaborative and frictionless work environment enterprises will not only increase the retention of their valued workers but can also expect greater success in recruiting the most promising talent (**The New Working Paradigm,** Capgemini Research Institute).

A recent **Gartner** HR Research found that organizations can increase inclusion by 24% in the Hybrid Work environment.

THE WAY FORWARD

If we are able to implement a workplace strategy that addresses the technical debt that is likely to exist as a result of the last two years, we can use it as a springboard to do exciting new things to provide people with inclusive and accessible workspaces, ensure that they are productive wherever they choose to work, and provide them with experiences that will allow them to be at their best.

For example, at Capgemini we are working on solutions that are more inclusive, and connecting technology and services together to allow diverse workforces to collaborate in virtual reality despite geographical distance.

These and other exciting solutions mean we must consider the total experience; not just with each individual employee, but also with all the people and systems within their complex ecosystem, which may be outside their company's perimeter.

Experience tells me that putting people at the heart of any workplace strategy allows you to consider what the business really needs to deliver real value and transformation. But to continually optimize and innovate, you need to measure and predict end to end experiences and close the digital literacy gap, ensuring that people get the most from the technologies and services available to them and feel like they are always supported as and when they need it.

AI and machine learning technologies can measure these experiences, to provide rapid feedback and interactions using all vital data points.

However, these factors must not be measured for the sake of measurement but rather to continuously improve the services delivered to the employees, and to drive the success of our customer's business. As such, we must also align ourselves with the specific needs of their industry by applying sector experience and knowledge to define the measures and outcomes relevant to their business need.

The investments made at Capgemini to develop and grow our intelligent automation platforms like DOP (Digital Operations Platform), allows us to continuously optimize and refine services for our clients and proactively engage customers, providing both support and training regardless of whether we are providing services, transforming their business, or advising and consulting them.

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