Leading Digital: Turning Technology into Business Transformation

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Become a Digital Master—No Matter What Business You're In

If you think the phrase "going digital" is only relevant for industries like tech, media, and entertainment—think again. In fact, mobile, analytics, social media, sensors, and cloud computing have already fundamentally changed the entire business landscape as we know it—including your industry. The problem is that most accounts of digital in business focus on Silicon Valley stars and tech start-ups. But what about *the other 90-plus percent of the economy?*

In *Leading Digital*, authors George Westerman, Didier Bonnet, and Andrew McAfee highlight how large companies in traditional industries—from finance to manufacturing to pharmaceuticals—are using digital to gain strategic advantage. They illuminate the principles and practices that lead to successful digital transformation. Based on a study of more than four hundred global firms, including Asian Paints, Burberry, Caesars Entertainment, Codelco, Lloyds Banking Group, Nike, and Pernod Ricard, the book shows what it takes to become a Digital Master. It explains successful transformation in a clear, two-part framework: where to *invest* in digital capabilities, and how to *lead* the transformation. Within these parts, you'll learn:

• How to engage better with your customers
• How to digitally enhance operations
• How to create a digital vision
• How to govern your digital activities

The book also includes an extensive step-by-step transformation playbook for leaders to follow.

Leading Digital is the must-have guide to help your organization survive and thrive in the new, digitally powered, global economy.

Leading Digital: Turning Technology into Business Transformation Details

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Sg says

A great book for organisations embarking on the path to becoming more digitally-minded. At its most fundamental, becoming digital is indeed firstly about having a vision of what it would look like - lots of ideas and case studies in this book to help you get started. If you already have a vision, roadmap, and your digital platform underway, this book may be too basic for you.

Pipat Srimattayakul says

The content is OK but you can cut the words by two thirds and still get the same amount of detail. Too wordy and too many repetitions throughout the book.

Greg says

This book is an outstanding account on how businesses transform into more profitable and viable sources of value using modern technology. It provides a vivid picture on how different types of firms face the disruptive changes across their respective industries.

The authors of this book started by giving us a background on how having a set of digital capabilities and leadership capabilities are important to become digital masters. This was followed by the discussion on what it takes to have digital capabilities. The next part was devoted to the different areas of leadership capabilities important to having a digitally driven firm.

Here are the following reasons why I will purchase this book and read it again:
1. It will help me understand in macro perspective how organizations should respond to the call of digital change.
2. The authors presented a very compelling argument and ideas on how to be digitally prepared in this modern era.
3. This book is very entertaining in itself, especially with the way the authors presented a colorful picture on how each company discussed harnessed the power of leading digital.
4. This book is published by well-respected organization, Harvard Business Review Press.
5. It will help the readers prepare to become an agent of change towards helping their organization become digital masters.

Grzegorz says

Leading Digital is about setting and executing strategy of "going digital" or using new technology and

innovation in customer engagement, internal processes optimization.

The books lists some random examples of companies that according to the authors are "Digital Masters" - companies leading both in digital capabilities and leadership capabilities to execute the digital vision.

There are some good examples from P&G, Starbucks, Codelco, Burberry.

I liked especially the example from Codelco - a Chilean mining company.

As a first step of "going digital" Codelco introduced autonomous mining machinery in shafts built by human miners and for human miners. The machinery is operated from the remote control center by specialized personnel. In second step the experience enabled them to build "no human needed" shafts in which only the autonomous and remotely controlled machinery operated. As you can imagine this allowed for vast cost optimizations due to lesser risks regarding safety and working conditions.

Hess says

A dense, repetitive, unfocused, kitchen-sink-type book in serious need of an editor. Veers between trying to do it all and buzzword bingo (*Digital Mastery*, anyone?). Highlights include the various case studies (Hailo, Zara) and Chapter Three on creating an operational advantage.

Readers looking for insight on Digital Strategy would be better served checking out Knowledge@Wharton, Statechery or even Gigaom.

Readers looking for insight on *implementing* strategy might like to try S+B, HBR's Must Reads Digital Boxed Set, the strategy+business collection: The Executive Guide to Strategy or even Value Proposition Design: How to Create Products and Services Customers Want.

Disappointing.

Atif Rahman says

Ofcourse the review is based on how useful the book was to me; very subjective. Nevertheless the book can be one third the size as multiple times the author kept on repeating similar narrative that made it hard to focus on the good parts.

A bit of a painful read and personally not very inspired

Hannamari says

Leading Digital managed to describe what I as a consultant aim to achieve at work, and structure it into neat and useful lists. I found the approach focusing on large companies to be refreshing in the world of startup hype. Real examples (numerous and excellent) were, in my opinion, the beef of this book.

As a sidenote, as for many American business books, I do think here too the pages could have been cut by half without much loss in content.

Supratim says

I chanced upon this one while book browsing in my library. The title, the praises from Harvard professors and CEOs as well as the credentials of the authors made me borrow this book. I have a great interest in the use of digital technologies in marketing esp. in the use of social media for gleaning consumer insights and fostering a strong bond with customers.

The book talks about Digital Masters – companies that have made fantastic use of digital technologies (analytics, cloud, social media, mobile etc.) for creating a wonderful customer engagement, overhauling their internal processes or have created/reinvented their business model.

What I liked best is that the authors studied companies in diverse industries as well as companies from all over the world. We have examples from mining, manufacturing, publishing, airlines, wine business, cosmetics, FMCG, hospitality, technology, banking, insurance, automobiles etc. from countries such as US, UK, India, Chile, Switzerland, France, Denmark, Sweden etc. Along with companies, there are examples of how the Cleveland Museum of Arts has used digital technologies to create a fantastic experience for their visitors, how the Nordic Posts of Denmark and Sweden diversified into e-services in the 1990s.

The authors have themselves stated that this book is a guide and not a blueprint for transforming your business with the smart use of digital. The book provides examples how companies such as Burberry, Codelco, Nike, Starbucks, Asian Paints, Volvo, Pernod Ricard, Nestle, Caesars, L'Oreal, Intel and a host of other companies have used digital technologies to their advantage. The third part of the book is a playbook for senior management people. There are questionnaires which would help them gauge the status of their companies with regards to digital and leadership capabilities.

The key message from the book is that investment in technology alone is not sufficient to become a Digital Master. The company should have a strong vision – digital vision which needs to be effectively implemented in the right direction. This would be achieved by creating a symbiotic relationship between business and IT. A very strong top-down leadership is required to bring about the desired digital transformation.

Some of the examples provided were interesting. I am providing a small gist:
Burberry's digital initiatives creating a highly engaging customer experience; Codelco (a mining firm owned by the government of Chile) using data analytics to improve their operations as well as improving the safety of their employees; Volvo coming up with their B2B2C model to get closer to their customers without bypassing their dealers; Jean-Pierre Remy, CEO of Pages Jaunes (Yellow Pages of France) steering his company to make the digital transformation; Pernod Ricard engaging their employees via a companywide enterprise social network which leads to sharing of best practices with respect to sales and marketing; Caesars Entertainment using data analytics to provide their guests with a personalized experience; reverse-mentoring program used by L'Oreal; crowd sourcing initiatives by EMC and P&G and the list goes on.

The examples were fine but I would have preferred a few detailed case studies, but the examples can whet your appetite for further research. I found some interesting articles in the Notes section also.

This book won't make you master in the field of digital transformation but gives you an idea about the benefits offered by it and how some companies have successfully implemented it. People interested in the

use of digital technologies might want to give this book a try.

? ? says

Great book but makes me uneasy. In a sense, we can never stop learning. We have to constantly update ourselves to this environment. There are opportunities but a lot of stress that comes with it. Don't chase all the digital trends but not shunning it altogether is good sound advice.

Nishant Bhagat says

This book was released in 2014 and it is quite ironical that I finally read it only when I quit Capgemini. A extremely relevant book based on a study conducted by MIT and Capgemini, this book explores what it means when one says "Going Digital" .

The study has classified companies into 4 quadrants as Conservatives, Beginners, Fashionistas and Digital Masters. Exploring each type through the lens of various real life cases this book does a splendid job in terms of explaining what "Going Digital" really means.

A part of the book gives you a Leader's Playbook for Digital Transformation. This part explores the areas you need to look at, to work towards a Digital transformation of your company. What I really liked here is that scorecards are provided for a lot of parameters and so If you just follow those then it will give you a great idea of your "As is" state versus your "To be" state. This practical aspect of the book makes it a worthwhile investment. Though the book does tend to ramble on a bit more in this section, I felt it was necessary.

I believe that the authors had a vision to make this book a practical guide rather than a research report and boy have they succeeded. I would recommend this book to everyone as "Going Digital" is a reality and here to stay!

Jean Corbel says

This book will offer you a wealth of quotes and situations. But unfortunately not much more as the content is not very rich beyond that. I invite you to read from HBR Press the Dual Transformation. you will learn much more to address the digital transformation in that excellent book.

Lalit Panda says

Very well written guide for CIOs and CDO's on how to vision, mobilize and execute digital transformations in large organizations using very detailed examples of successful cases. Thoughtful and practical with loads of insights.

Parth Agrawal says

My views on this book is biased. What I felt is that learning from this book will be at its best if a person reads this while or after working in a IT sector. Lack of examples was another issue which makes this book hell lotta difficult to complete smoothly as whenever you read a concept it feels as if either it has been talked about before or what the hell is difference between the previous concept and present one!? My gains from this book were that i came across various such companies who were pioneer of their respective sectors and i hadn't heard of them yet.

Bharath says

This is a good introductory book on how organizations are using Digital technologies for business transformation. There are a number of examples from diverse industries globally. However, I was hoping to find more longer term views and plans which is missing. A good read for an introduction..

Lee says

Definitely one of the better digital books. It takes a really sensible approach guiding the read through the benefits of clearly defining your vision, before building strategy, through roadmap development, investment analysis and onto the change required to guide your organisation and partners through the digital journey.