



BENEFITS:

- Investing money is the process of committing resources in a strategic way to accomplish a specific objective.
- Compound interest is the eighth wonder of the world. He who understands it, earns it. He who doesn't, pays it.
- When digital transformation is done right, it's like a caterpillar turning into a butterfly, but when done wrong, all you have is a really fast caterpillar.
- The Last ten years of IT have been about changing the way people work. The next ten years of IT will be about transforming your business.

A Digital Transformation Framework for Success

Digital transformation — the process by which organizations modernize themselves to incorporate new digital technologies throughout their entire business — is becoming absolutely essential. Today's businesses are discovering that new

The business world is in a period of transition. As technologies evolve, industries across the globe are discovering that the tried and true processes that have kept them afloat for decades may no longer be enough. Today's clients are connected, informed, and unprecedentedly technologically savvy, and they expect that the

Customer Expectations Are Evolving.

A large part of this shift has to do with evolving customer expectations. Today's consumer is connected, informed, and unprecedentedly tech savvy, and they expect the organizations they do business with to be likewise empowered.

According to the Salesforce 2016 “[State of the Connected Customer](#),” more than half of customers agree that technology has significantly changed their expectations of how companies should interact with them. Additionally, 71% of consumers say that customer service provided at any time has an influence on their loyalty.

Modern clients want brands that can deliver on their promises instantly. They want brands that can offer service and support whenever they might need it. They want brands that can connect with them where they are, not where the organization tells them they should be, and ones that offer a seamless experience across every channel. And, when they don't get it, [70% of consumers](#) say that new technologies have also made it easier for them to take their business elsewhere.

And while the customer experience will likely always be the biggest differentiator for buyers in all industries, client expectations don't necessarily begin or end with the transaction. Customers want to know that their brands are not dragging their feet when it comes to technology, with [57% of consumers](#) saying it's absolutely critical or very important for companies they purchase from to be innovative

With this in mind, decision makers in businesses are emphasizing the need for digital transformation within their organizations. It is predicted that [by the end of 2017](#), two-thirds of the CEOs of Global 2000 companies will have digital transformation at the center of their corporate strategy. But many still have a long way to go, as currently [only 10% of companies](#) describe themselves as fully digital.



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SMAC Technologies Are Driving Digital Transformation

At the heart of these changing customer expectations and improving business capabilities are the SMAC technologies (social, mobile, analytics, and cloud).

Social media and communication advances are providing unrestricted connectivity between consumers and key players in every industry. Mobile connectivity is connecting employees and consumers with advanced computing power available anywhere and at all times. Improved analytics technology is turning massive amounts of readily available raw data into actionable conclusions. The cloud is removing data storage limitations, and making powerful customer service, analytics, and organizational tools available to businesses of all sizes.

SMAC technologies for business rely heavily on access to client data, which is why the introduction and subsequent rise of the internet of things (IoT) is so exciting. IoT devices have the potential to revolutionize data gathering, improving data quality for businesses and leading to a more effective, digitally-enhanced customer journey. In fact, 85% of high-performing marketing teams that are using IoT-based marketing rate it as effective or very effective at helping their company create cohesive customer journeys.



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However, while SMAC technologies may be driving digital transformation, without the right strategy in place, implementing these technologies in an effective way may be impossible. Digital transformation is a complex process — one that requires a potentially complex roadmap to navigate. In short, organizations need a digital transformation framework.

Digital Transformation Requires Strategy and Adaptability

A digital transformation framework gives organizations a process, with achievable goals, by which they will be able to make the transition into a digital business. Of course, just as every business is unique, no single digital transformation framework is going to be effective for every company. As such, rather than outlining a comprehensive strategy, this article will instead share suggestions on how to develop a comprehensive strategy.

Here are five important steps to creating a practical transformation strategy for any business: Start Big

A complete digital transformation takes time, but by focusing on the largest, most impactful processes first, organizations can see significant improvements earlier rather than later. Less impactful processes and systems can be targeted after the fact, once the most important factors have already been optimized.

Build The Right Workforce

The data and connectivity made possible through Smack technologies is central to digital transformation. This means that in order to reach full digital potential, organizations need a workforce that demonstrates the ability to make the most of SMAC in all of its forms. This hints at a wider concern: Organizations need forward thinkers if they want an effective transformation. Hiring the right people is essential.

Focus Everything on the Customers.

Customers are the center of every business, and they should be the center of every business process. Organizations that are able to see the customer impact of every decision will be more likely to enjoy a transformation that leads to improved client experience. Finding and eliminating customer pain points, taking advantage of every digital channel, and building customer-centric applications that connect employees, partners, and products into client data means more informed processes, and happier clients overall.

Connect the Digital Dots

The digital age is the age of connectivity, and in a digitally-enhanced organization, everything is connected. Seeing those connections, and perhaps more importantly, seeing where those connections are lacking, gives businesses a checklist by which to solve issues and potential issues before they become real problems. At the same time, by anticipating areas where clients will expect digitally enhanced service, businesses can provide more satisfying customer experiences.

Empower Employees with Data

Customers are the center of any business, but it's the employees that keep things running. When the right employees have access to the right data, businesses are more efficient and productive. SMAC technologies — particularly mobile and cloud technologies — can ensure that workforces are connected to the data they need to do their jobs well, and employee-facing applications can empower them with tools designed specifically to fill the responsibilities of their positions.

The Salesforce Platform Paves the Way

Business applications are some of the most effective tools for incorporating, analyzing, and coordinating client data, which makes them absolutely vital for organizations embracing digital transformation. The best applications are those that are custom designed to meet the data needs of a specific business. Unfortunately, many organizations undergoing transformation simply don't have the resources or the infrastructure to design and deploy their own custom apps. Or so they might think.

The Salesforce Platform is a cloud-based PaaS that offers businesses the power to quickly conceptualize, build, and employ custom applications. As a customer platform, the Salesforce Platform brings together the SMAC technologies, combined with database models, APIs, integration services, rapid visual development, and reporting and management services, and incorporates easy-to-use drag-and-drop app design tools, for users of all skill levels. Additionally, Salesforce Lightning Process Builder empowers organizations to automate essentially any difficult, complex, and repetitive tasks, for improved speed and accuracy across an entire organization, resulting in an average ROI of 478%.

The business world is in a state of transition. Customer expectations are changing, and new technologies are affecting the way organizations operate both internally and externally. Embrace that change. Optimize your organization's digital transformation with custom applications from the Salesforce Platform. Sign up today for your free 30-day trial, and see how the right applications can transform your business.