Communications, Information, Technology, and Management (CiTM)

November 2020

THE EDITOR SPEAKS - Election-Business Processes

With another United States presidential election behind us, a review of the campaign process uncovers lessons that pertain to marketing strategies in the private sector.   Campaigns can be viewed as a data driven marketing program run at light speed. In business, marketing campaigns take place over months, the results are considered, and programs are revised before being reapplied and in effort to steadily increase market share over time. In contrast, political campaigns are, at their core, marketing campaigns that must be executed, analyzed and reconsidered in a matter of days. Campaigns do not have the luxury to build market share over time; the win or lose question a campaign faces is only months away.

The election of 2020 was unlike any other in our history. The COVID-19 pandemic presented new challenges for both parties as each sought to find new vehicles to communicate with potential voters. This particular election was the most divisive of modern times. The animus between the supporters of their chosen candidates was on constant display. In an election, the parties typically segment their efforts into three different areas, a registration drive, a drive to energize their base, and a drive to win over independents. A significant number of independent voters made up their mind before the campaigns got into full gear. With the independents having chosen their candidate early, both campaigns increased their efforts to register new voters and to motivate their supporters to actively participate in the process. Neither party wanted to experience voter apathy or attrition that manifests itself when supporters fail to cast their ballot because their vote was seen as inconvenient or inconsequential.

The election of 2016 broke previous participation records by drawing 137M voters to the polls. In 2020, 158M voters cast ballots easily surpassing the 2016 participation level. Both campaigns ran effective registration and get-out-the-vote campaigns. As a percentage of eligible voters, 66% of the electorate participated in the 2020 election, a record in a country where voting is not compulsory.

The analog to the voter registration function in the business world is characterized as "filling the funnel". In business, the initial goal is to increase product awareness so that potential customers can be informed about the company's offer and the potential benefits it provides. The process of filling the funnel is not intended to be a sales pitch but to create customer interest in the product or service while also identifying potential customers for the company. The analogy to a campaign's effort to win independent voters can be viewed as the company's effort to convince potential customers that the company has a superior solution compared to the competition. Finally, the campaign's effort to energize their supporters is similar to a company's push to move the customer from a position where they appreciate the solution to one where they will buy from the company. The purchasing process is the customer's way of voting for the best product.

When considering the 2020 election, both candidates were able to drive a significant increase in voter turnout despite the limitations associated with social distancing. When the pandemic drove much of the campaign process on-line, there were early concerns that participation levels might drop. Instead, by moving components of the campaign on-line it appears to have made it easier for voters to participate in the process via social media and email. Moreover, many states expanded the mail-in voting process which appealed to many voters for its convenience and the social distancing it allowed.

The experiences with the 2020 election demonstrates the importance of resetting from established campaign strategies, Businesses should learn from these experiences and treat the pandemic as their own reset rather than assuming their markets have taken a pause until the emerging vaccines can be widely deployed. For businesses, the pandemic has changed marketing tactics and it has driven changes in the supply chain, increased the importance of data, changed product/service definitions, and in some cases even stimulated changes to a company's business models. Some industries have been impacted more than others. Regardless of the industry, it would be better to characterize the impact to businesses as a reset rather than a pause.

The similarities between business and politics do not end with the election. Once a candidate is elected or a product is purchased, the customer will compare performance against their expectations. If expectations are met, the candidate will be re-elected and the customer will remain loyal to the product. It is not as simple as asking whether the candidate met their campaign promises or whether the product

delivered as advertised, expectations are more nuanced. For both candidates and products, there are many unstated expectations that must be met and the expectations change as the environment evolves.

UPCOMING VIRTUAL EVENTS

December 10, 2020. Unintended Consequences - A Discussion of Second-Order Effects. A conversation about how second-order effects drive consequential impacts to business, technology, and politics.

December 22, 2020. Exploring Digital Health Tech to Maximize Health & Eliminate Disparities. The New England Healthcare Information and management Systems Society will discuss news and developments in the healthcare space brought about by digital innovation.

January 6, 2021. CES 2021. Consumer Technology showcase for innovators and technical breakthroughs.

January 25-29, 2021, The Davos Agenda. IA forum for global leaders to work together virtually to create a more inclusive, cohesive and sustainable future.

January 26, 2021. Digital Health Innovation - Reimagining Healthcare. A virtual conference focusing on the use of digital technology to redefine the healthcare space.

February 10, 2021. Digital Enterprise CIO and Data Transformation. A virtual think thank that focuses on sharing experiences associated with transformational projects.

March 18, 2021. Horasis Extraordinary Meeting on the U.S. A virtual meeting to discuss and shape the vision of the new U.S. administration.


If you have an event that you would like us to include in our newsletter, please send an email to manager@i3-iot.net

READER CONTRIBUTION: The HOW of Digital Transformation: Perspectives from Practitioners **By Jot Chahal, Hillrom Global Marketing Director and Asim Akram, Honeywell Digital Transformation Leader**

Digital Transformation initiatives in large organizations are both complex and challenging. It encompasses technology as well as cultural change (usually underestimated) which takes time and significant effort. This is true in both the scenarios whether you are attempting to transform an operational element of your business (quote to cash) or bringing a customer-facing solution (PaaS) to the market. The goal of this article is to provide readers with practical insights based on both real-world experiences as well as an academic research perspective. Our insights do not focus on the 'Why' of Digital Transformation but instead on the 'How' of the transformation.

Insight #1: Digital Transformation must include both Digitalization and Digitization
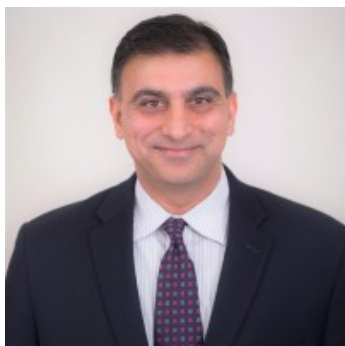
Jeanne Ross, a research scientist at MIT Sloan School of Management and the MIT Center for Information Systems Research, has very nicely outlined these two components of Digital Transformation in her latest book (*Designed for Digital: How to Architect Your Business for Sustained Success*). While Digitization focuses on streamlining organizations' internal core operational processes along with the data and systems, Digitalization focuses on external-facing customer solutions that are ideally co-created with the customers. Digitization is about operational efficiency while Digitalization is about growth strategy.

Insight #2: Digital Transformation is about Step Change, not incremental change

Automating an existing process, replacing existing technology with a new one, rationalization of platforms, are all components of Digital transformation but not *the* Digital Transformation as they only lead to incremental changes. Digital transformation is about Step Change, enabling new business models, new revenue streams, enabling new customers, and digitization of objects (e.g. airline boarding passes, self-check-in kiosks, e-invoice). Product as a Service is a great example of a new Business Model that encompasses both enabling a front-end customer application supported by strong operational processes. Digital transformation should encompass the co-creation of

solutions with the customers that they are willing to pay for. A solution that a customer loves but is not willing to pay will not help an organization.

Insight #3: Don't underestimate the Cultural aspect of Digital Transformation

Digital transformations must focus on the cultural and political dynamics of an organization. To unlock the power of digital transformation, C-suite must understand, support, and communicate the overhauling of the existing structures in multiple ways e.g. Digitization efforts could collapse organizational structures due to the process efficiencies and automation. Managers might resist these changes to protect their turf. On the other hand, Digitalization could introduce subscription billing which might not sit well with Sales teams whose commissions were historically based on big upfront sales. This shift requires a strong internal and external messaging strategy around transformations and commensurate focus on customer story streamlining.

Insight #4: Need for new functional competencies

New functional needs emerge with the massive data collection platforms which get created through these transformative efforts. Data governance, data security, reporting, and visualization are competencies which in traditional organizations had been relegated to excel charts, and slide shows now demand advanced governance, visualization, and analytics. In regulated industries like healthcare, and finance, the burden is even higher.

Insight #5: Shift in the competitive landscape

One of the often-overlooked aspects of Digitalization (external-facing solutions) is that it creates non-traditional competition. Firms undergoing digital transformation continue to measure their competitive advantage through the lens of existing competitive context. They should explore a shift in competitive dynamics both in the existing and in the transformed context. In certain cases, competitors become partners, and in other non-industry players start to compete for the same market segments as the entity undergoing the transformation.

THE I³ CORNER

The I3 Systems Beta Test program continues to make progress. The I3 Software was integrated into the findMeASpot software developed by the City of Los Angeles and a variety of parking related data feeds identified by the City for testing use. The system has been running for several weeks now. We are looking to do some stress/performance testing during the month of December and we are also planning an upgrade to the operational interfaces of the system to make the system easier for administrators to use in an operational setting.

Over the last month we expanded our engineering team and have put the final touches on our pitch deck. There is still a lot that must be done to hit our early 2021 launch data but we see no roadblocks to our schedule. We have even started planning our R2 feature rollout.   We even have given a facelift to the I3 Systems logo.

i3 Systems

In addition, we are working to restart the I3 Consortium meeting program. Much of the value associated with being an I3 member came from attending our bi-monthly meetings. Given the social distancing guidelines it has not been possible and the nature of the meeting did not translate well to a Zoom call. Working with the Consortium's board, we have come up with a new structure that fits the current situation and will allow greater participation even post pandemic. We are planning bi-monthly on-line calls. Each call will be hosted by an I3 member company where they talk about issues they are facing that cannot be sufficiently solved with internal resources. Each issue becomes a call to action where other members who face similar issues can choose to collaboratively solve the issue together. These kinds of collaborative projects will allow projects that might otherwise have been put on hold, move forward

with a reduced resource requirement for all parties.   Be on the lookout as we will be sending a meeting announcement to the I3 Consortium mailing list.

If you want to be on the I3 interest list, its simple. Just send and email to i3-join@i3-iot.org and you will be added to the info distribution list.

The Narcissist Organization
by Jerry Power

A narcissist believes the world revolves around them. Narcissists go beyond being confident and self-assured and actively participate in creating a world that reinforces their self-obsession. Narcissist's behaviors often include reinforcement of behavior in others that support the narcissist's self-centered vision of the world while denigrating those that express opinions that challenge their self-held beliefs. A narcissist will often create situations that provide them with opportunities to perpetuate their self-centered view of the world. Narcissists tend to be extremely bright people; it takes a significant amount of effort and energy to engineer situations that put themselves on center stage.

Narcissists tend to perform well in job interviews as these situations provide an ideal platform for them to trumpet their accomplishments. A narcissist's failures are often couched as being the result of the actions of others or a learning experience that taught them to avoid situations that might put their stature at risk. Despite a stellar interview performance, once on the job the toxic narcissistic personality can be disastrous for an organization. The narcissist is not motivated to contribute to the company but instead sees the company as being a platform that serves to raise their personal visibility. A strong narcissist can survive for years within a company by continually taking credit for the organization's accomplishments and discounting opportunities that were missed when the organization's culture began to shift to support the personality rather than the mission of the company.

Most efforts to examine narcissistic personalities assume the narcissist is a single individual. However, a narcissist in a leadership position, may be motivated to bring other narcissists on as managers as long as the new person can be controlled and does not threaten the established leader. This is not to say that the narcissist leader will surround themselves with 'yes' men, although that could happen. Instead the narcissistic leader prefers to surround themselves with other capable narcissists that accept that their own narcissistic view of the world is dependent on their not challenging the narcissistic views of the others. In such an organization, internal politics becomes the ultimate game of chicken where customers, employees, and stockholders become bargaining chips that are played against a backdrop of a much larger game.

Dealing with the narcissist in a business setting is difficult. Some HR professionals may be inclined to confront the narcissist with reality and facts. However, most narcissists do not respond well to such direct challenges. They often respond with threats, misrepresentations, or undertake a behind the scenes attack to undermine the challenger. This can be extremely problematic if the challenged narcissist is an employee's supervisor. In these situations rather than challenging their authority, it may be best to placate them and put boundaries on the relationship. The employee should not expect any level of support from the supervisor unless it furthers the agenda of the narcissist. When an employee is faced with this situation, they must have an internal or external exit strategy that can be activated if conditions deteriorate.

If the narcissist is a peer or a partner, the narcissist has less direct control over the individual. In this case, the best reaction might be simply avoidance. Organizationally, such a strategy does not make for an efficient workplace but narcissistic behaviors are deep seeded issues that are often defy eradication.

When dealing with a narcissist as a business partner, it must be understood that narcissists have no true loyalty other than to themselves. Other than a transactional relationship, it is difficult to do business with a narcissist because there can never be an underlying basis of trust.   When forced to deal with a narcissist as a business partner, it is best to ensure the relationship is well documented and that there are alternative paths that can be activated should the relationship with the narcissist need to be severed.

Ideally, companies should avoid narcissistic personalities in the workplace because they can create a toxic work environment. However, this may not always be possible and should this happen, it is necessary for the organization to minimize the potential damage such a

personality could create. Narcissists cannot be reformed directly, but organizations can apply strategies that attempt to avoid problematic behaviors.

READINGS FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

- Four ways to accelerate the creation of data ecosystems. A data ecosystem to combat the COVID pandemic. However, data ecosystems have business value that can provide benefit to all businesses. Such data ecosystems cannot be thrown together, they should be planned as a sustainable part of the organization.
- Managing the people side of Risk. Managing risk is a people and process issue. Using technology can make the people and processes more effective but the deployment of technology in and of itself cannot solve the problem. Technology is an amplifier but cannot solve the problem by itself.
- When nothing is Normal: Managing in Extreme Uncertainty. We live in unprecedented times where the global COVID-19 pandemic is impacting customers and employees alike. There is hope that the vaccines will remedy the situation but little data to indicate how that new normal might compare to historic norms. In such an environment, companies must be adaptable and fast acting which puts different demands on management which have historically relied on historic data to optimize business operations. In today's business climate legacy understanding of the market must be accepted as uncertain guideposts for managers that are called to make bold decisions.
- California Privacy Rights Act Passes - Dramatically Altering the CCPA. California has passed CPRA. From an external perspective, the requirements are not unreasonable and there is time before the law takes effect. However, the requirements to impact multiple systems and coordination between these implementations will be tricky.

LET's CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION

Please feel free to forward this email to your friends and colleagues who you believe would benefit from participation in our community. For those of you who wish to be included among those who believe that technology is a tool and that business success is achieved by skilled wielding of the tools available to us, feel free to reach out to us. If you have suggestions, topics you want to see included in future newsletter updates, or other general inquiries, feel free to email us at manager@i3-iot.net. The ideas expressed in this newsletter are intended to stimulate conversation and dialog that will lead to a better understanding of our collective future. The opinions may not necessarily reflect the opinions of any members of our community of interested people.

ABOUT I3/CiTM

Originally founded under the guidance of USC, the Institute for Communication Technology and Management (CTM) was formed to support a deregulated telecom industry. Over time, computer and networking technologies evolved and grew changing the way we do business and live our lives. The CTM Newsletter was created as a vehicle to foster continued conversation about tech associated issues that transcend specific technologies and specific industries. CTM conducted foundational Internet-of-Things research and created a community driven IoT network vision. Working with the engineers at USC's Viterbi School of Engineering, the cities of Long Beach, Los Angeles, the County of Los Angeles, along with a host of supporting companies, academic institutions, and private individuals, this vision was turned into Open Source software that was released in December 2019. I3 Systems was formed to pursue commercial opportunities based on the work of the I3 Consortium and the concepts published in the newsletter. With this grass roots tech movement, the newsletter evolved and continues these conversations even further.

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