The business world is changing dramatically. Customer and partner expectations are higher than they have ever been. Competition is global, not local. Technology is an integral part of every business and every person’s daily life. Mobile devices, the Internet of Things (IoT), cloud services, partner communities and the demands of people within the business are putting tremendous pressure on organizations to either adapt and evolve or face serious operational, security and financial risks.

Although the term “digital business” has been kicking around for a while and has carried a variety of meanings, it is now solidifying as a term explicitly used to describe an emergent business ecosystem that will soon dominate the way business gets done. Regardless of how individuals or businesses have thought about digital business in the past, it’s time for a reset.

The explosion in smartphones, tablets, wearable devices, Internet-connected objects and an ever-expanding universe of business-to-business and business-to-consumer apps means that a company’s ability to interact personally, directly and in real time with consumers and business partners is becoming not only limitless, but essential. The rapid, game-changing evolution in digital technology amounts to a paradigm shift in how businesses will grow, compete and thrive. This is the era of digital business — companies that fail to transform will be left behind.

**Speed, agility, innovation — the digital business imperative**

What does it mean to be a digital business? First and foremost, it means the business is agile, and can move with great speed to meet evolving customer needs, adapt to market and regulatory change, and deliver innovative products and services anytime,
anywhere. This can’t be accomplished piecemeal — a new website here and a mobile app there aren’t enough. To transform into a nimble and innovative digital business, companies will need to make sweeping, top-to-bottom changes to IT architecture and business processes.

**IT transformation:** Traditional IT is designed primarily for stability and security. IT now needs to make agility the new #1 priority. Why? Because digital business applications:

- Must be **extensively integrated,** not just with back-end servers and applications, but also with mobile and the IoT
- Require **real-time access to data** in order to provide adaptive functionality based on situational intelligence
- Often deliver added value and differentiation using **data and services that you don’t own and you can’t control**
- Tend to be **disposable or short-lived** and must have cost structures that support this model

**Business-process transformation:** Driving efficiencies into business processes to deliver goods and/or services faster and cheaper — the primary goal for traditional businesses — is still necessary, but not sufficient. Modern business processes must be more agile and responsive, so the business can anticipate and respond rapidly to customer demands, create “sticky” digital relationships that boost loyalty and sales, and “carve off” and capture opportunity from traditional businesses that can’t keep up.

In short, “business as usual” translates to lost opportunity and competitive disadvantage — speed, agility and innovation are imperative in the new era of digital business.

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**IT must be a strategic force behind digital transformation**

In today’s disruptive environment, where the status quo is quickly becoming insufficient or obsolete, IT can no longer focus on “keeping the lights on” and supporting innovation. Today’s IT, and IT leaders, must become a strategic force that actively encourages and champions innovation.
A recent Forrester Research, Inc. report found that while almost 74% of today’s business executives say their company has a digital strategy, “only 19% of executives believe their firms have the right technology to properly execute on the digital strategy.” This illustrates the fact that, rather than fully embracing the paradigm shift to digital business, many organizations are taking a “bolt-on” approach, creating siloed environments that solve isolated problems, or “one-off” apps that lack the agile and responsive capabilities customers and partners demand.

One simple example is the ubiquitous “version 1.0” smartphone application that fails to deliver against customer expectations, resulting in a slew of withering 1-star social ratings. Without a strategy, this is basically wasted effort that can actually do significant damage in terms of brand loyalty and customer/partner satisfaction. And it’s not uncommon — according to one study, 22% of mobile apps are used only once.

Simply put, most organizations’ existing technology infrastructure and business processes are not ready to support digital strategies. As a CIO or CISO, your role must evolve from operational to aspirational, where you not only create an IT architecture for the digital business era, but you also offer strategic guidance across business units to help them define, develop and deploy innovative digital business applications.

To truly transform your business, you will need to do these three things:

1. Digitize the customer experience, and how you deliver your products and services
2. Build an IT infrastructure that ensures digital operational excellence
3. Govern data flows across the enterprise and throughout your partner community in support of B2B interactions

Not all companies are prepared for this type of fundamental transformation. In fact, a recent survey found that while 58% of respondent enterprises cite data security, privacy and governance as key elements of an integration strategy, 71% of those same respondents revealed a significant disconnect between integration strategy on the one hand, and data security and governance frameworks and policies on the other. But the era of digital business is here, and there’s no more time to waste. The time to clarify a strategy and begin making the transition is now.

**5 key elements of a successful digital transformation strategy**

Delivering the best digital customer experience and achieving digital operational excellence is no small task. It requires an infrastructure and data flow governance that enables your business to be consistent, organized and in control on the one hand, and data security and governance frameworks and policies on the other. But the era of digital business is here, and there’s no more time to waste. The time to clarify a strategy and begin making the transition is now.

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2  http://www.marketingpilgrim.com/2013/09/twenty-two-percent-of-mobile-apps-are-only-used-once.html
hand, and extremely agile and innovative on the other.

At Axway, we believe there are 5 key strategic elements to a successful digital transformation strategy:

1. **API Integration & Management (API):** Integrate cloud services, mobile and enterprise applications to protect and grow your business in the digital economy, and open new channels by creating and securely exposing APIs to existing back-end systems.

2. **File Transfer Management (MFT):** Secure and manage file transfers to ensure regulatory compliance and meet Service Level Agreements inside and out of the enterprise.


4. **Visibility/Operational Intelligence (OI):** Track, monitor, measure and improve the data flows that support your business processes.

5. **Hybrid Platform (On-Premise & Cloud):** Leverage the best of both worlds — the innovation and savings of the cloud, and the compliance assurances that come with your own on-premise environments.

Axway 5 Suite unites these 5 elements, enabling companies to govern the flow of data that fuels digital business.

**Axway 5 Suite: Governing the flow of data to enable digital business**
With a comprehensive integration foundation, a unified governance layer and customizable delegated administration services, Axway 5 Suite gives you the power to embrace the digital economy by integrating, securing, managing and measuring all of the data flows that drive your business interactions — not just within the four walls, but out to your customers, trading communities, the cloud, mobile devices and the Internet of Things.

Below are four business use cases that illuminate how Axway is helping diverse companies around the world make the digital business transformation, enabling them to get closer to their customers and work smarter with their partners.

**Essent**: Accelerating application delivery and customer satisfaction with an Axway API First strategy

“I think it’s crucial to govern the flow of the data, not only from a risk-management and fraud-detection point of view, but also to optimize the quality of service and end-user experience. It’s all about the customer.”

— Menno Abbink Senior Enterprise Architect, CIO Office, Essent

Essent, a leading producer of sustainable energy, uses Axway 5 Suite to provide digital services for partners, customers, employees and the public.

- All two million customers can manage their utility contracts online using a self-service portal powered by Axway API Management. Process automation eliminates the need to develop specific code to open up web services to external users, and the underlying web APIs can be reused as needed for other applications.
- Four mobile applications available from the Apple® App Store™ and Google Play™ store use Axway API Management to provide secure access to back-end customer systems.
- Axway API Integration is the underlying API layer for multiple platforms (web APIs and mobile apps) and multiple types of user communications (B2B and B2C). With greatly improved agility, marketing initiatives can rapidly be transformed into targeted campaigns and new apps can be quickly brought to market, enabling Essent to differentiate itself from the competition.

UTi Worldwide: Strengthening relationships and business performance with a global B2B “Center of Excellence” powered by Axway 5 Suite

“Before, we had to rely on the client telling us something went wrong, which didn’t make for a very efficient process, or a satisfying customer experience. Axway Sentinel enables what we call ‘data flow governance,’ allowing us to manage our B2B data, gain positive control and empower our people.”

— Theresa Gosko, IT Manager, UTi Worldwide

UTi Worldwide, a $5 billion provider of integrated and innovative supply chain services and solutions, uses Axway 5 Suite to centralize B2B commerce in a global Center of Excellence that minimizes processing costs and delivers added value for clients.

- The business has a single, global view of B2B processes across 245 logistics centers in 59 countries.
- Without IT involvement, users can follow an individual purchase order through each step in its lifecycle as it transitions from a PO to an advanced ship notice (ASN) to an invoice, including client acknowledgements (or lack thereof) all along the way.
- Staff can keep an eye on what is happening at all times by monitoring key performance indicators across all regions and countries. Automated alerts tied to events and business rules proactively inform them when something does not happen as expected.

Read the full story at http://axway.com/en/casestudy/uti-worldwide
Bank of the West: Delivering innovative cash management offerings with Axway 5 Suite

“Axway 5 Suite has allowed us to deliver a number of services by leveraging a single solution. We have all the resources to make things happen, and to discover new ways to help our customers be efficient and effective. We have a great relationship with Axway, and we look forward to continuing it into the future.”

— Omar Loya, CTP Product Group Manager, VP, Bank of the West

Bank of the West, one of the largest regional banks in the United States with 700 branches, uses Axway 5 Suite as a platform to deliver new innovative products that meet the needs of current customers and attract new commercial clients.

- The system automatically provides payment instructions, banking information, and communications between the customer and the bank — for payables, receivables and information reporting — reducing the need for portal-based communication.
- The bank can set and configure business rules, telling the platform not just to move data between the client and the bank, but how to inspect, authenticate, validate, transform and provide visibility into mission-critical, “big-value” financial data.
- Axway 5 Suite connects the bank with its customers’ ERP systems, which handle transactions such as shipments, invoicing and payments. This enables bank customers to automatically process electronic payments and reconcile information received from the B2B software. Other banks provide these services only to their larger customers, but Bank of the West now extends technology cooperation to mid-sized organizations as well.

Read the full story at http://axway.com/en/casestudy/bank-west
**Varner Retail AS**: Leading through innovation in purchasing, logistics and payments

“Now that our partner interactions are fully automated, our processes have become more agile, [enabling] us to grow and [positioning] us for future expansion.”

— Ole Martin Holt-Jacobsen, Head of Business Applications, Varner Retail AS

Varner, a leading fashion retailer in Northern Europe, uses Axway 5 Suite to manage complex interactions among internal stakeholders and external partners such as suppliers, transportation and logistics providers, and financial institutions.

- Automated digital interactions with partners provide for vastly more efficient purchasing, logistics and payments processes across 1,380 locations and over $1.3 billion in sales.
- A system that automates and integrates the physical distribution of Varner’s goods while facilitating the entire order-to-cash process is essential to the company’s growth and to the overall health of the business.
- Data flow governance ensures time-critical business processes occur on schedule.


**Ready to transform your business for speed, agility and innovation? Axway can help.**

The arrival of the digital economy is turning existing ecosystems upside-down and generating new and growing needs for cloud and mobile integration, as well as the integration of smart objects, social networks and “big data.”

To adapt and grow in the digital economy, you need to be able to integrate, secure, manage and measure all of the data flows — new and old — that drive your business processes and interactions, both inside your organization and beyond your firewall.

Axway 5 Suite delivers enterprise solutions to help you do just that.

Learn more about Axway 5 Suite or contact us to get started.