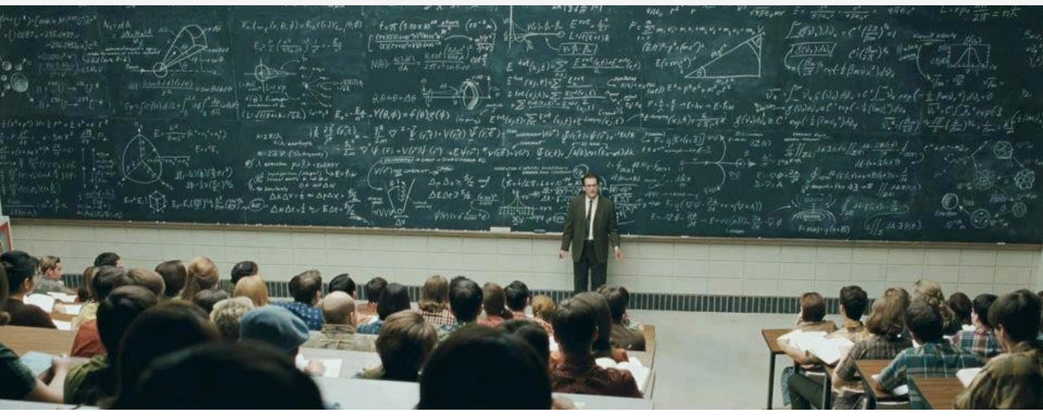

Get Out of Your Kitchen!

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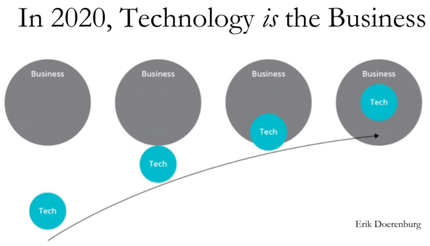
15 articles

Technology changes everything. It's time to move the discussion out of the basement. How do you turn the soup of complexity into something that provides business value?

Let's have a look at how you can start changing the perception of information technology inside organizations, how it can provide the basis for new business, and ultimately, the survival of your company in an economy filled with disruption. It's a journey towards much more exposure and closer collaboration with your customers – and you will really have to want it in order to succeed.



Think.

Strategic people create connections between ideas, plans and people that others fail to see – this means you need to find a way to put your thinking cap on and make it a habit of professional life to constantly reflect [1]. Are you too busy dealing with your own complexity as an engineering department or vendor? Would you buy the solutions you have on offer? Can you really blame the business for using shadow IT, given the SLA's and response times your department has? Have you ever seen advertisements (or training) for WhatsApp?

You may come to realize that it is a lot easier for technologists to pick up business knowledge than the other way round. And they are problem solvers, anyway. Except that here you are finding ways for overcoming organizational entropy [2] and applying Conway's Law in reverse [3].

Disrupt yourself, and get the house in order.

Losing an empire is not something many leaders are prepared for. They often hold the business hostage, and this sometimes has radical consequences. Have a look at your stack and find out for each individual piece whether you really have to build it yourself – or whether you can outsource the problem to someone else, while you focus on providing value. Your company probably does not have Diesel generators in the basement. Does every use case really require you to operate servers, or could you use the cloud for some? Brutally optimize and automate the bread and butter work.

As a result, you will not only have increased your efficiency, but chances are your department (or company) is on the way to becoming a great place to work – and is usually a place where great ideas are born and real innovation happens.

Team up, and co-innovate.

With your freshly established think tank, you may be able to create a service offering that people will want to use because it solves a critical business problem. Take inspiration from the story of how Amazon Web Services came to be [4]. As an example, it is a huge win if you can find a way for the departments in your organization to use modern tooling in order to communicate and collaborate effectively.

Run hackathons, but invite people with non-technical backgrounds to join the individual teams. Make sure you have business leaders on the panel of judges who are not afraid to tear some of the concepts into pieces if they see the numbers won't add up. If you're a vendor, turn a customer into a partner and identify a win-win scenario for joint investment and innovation.

The key is creating fast feedback loops with the end user – which also gives you a filtering mechanism for figuring out in almost real-time whether an IT project or emerging piece of technology is going to be successful or not. It's almost as if you are leaving your kitchen, and start creating exciting new dishes together with your guests. You will know right away if they enjoy your cuisine, but even more – you're making your customer part of the creative process. Bon appétit!

Digital Transformation is hard – let The Catalysts help you along your journey. It's not as much about which piece of software you should buy, but building out a strategy together for the things that really matter. You'll benefit from the proven frameworks, best practices, and essential techniques that bring your business to the next level. Let us speak about Accelerate. Today!

[1] https://www.macquarie.com/au/advisers/expertise/smart-practice/6-ways-you-can-improve-your-strategic-thinking

[2] https://ppiweb.com/leadership-organizational-entropy-second-law-part-1-2/

[3] https://runnable.com/blog/conway-s-law-in-reverse-how-app-architecture-influences-org-structure

[4] https://techcrunch.com/2016/07/02/andy-jassys-brief-history-of-the-genesis-of-aws/