Every leader is a technology leader

Embracing a new mindset to shape a better future

After the huge disruptions caused by the COVID-19 crisis in 2020, companies are looking to get back on course and, importantly, build for the future.

The past year has poked holes in long-standing norms about how companies operate and how people live. Companies looked at their operations and saw fragile supply chains, untrustworthy information and radically new customer needs. As they've adjusted to these realities, the most successful ones have become Masters of Change.

While it will be tempting for companies to retreat to what they know, 2020 brought the need for a different path to light. If businesses continue to have a clear-eyed perspective and sharp focus on their expedited digital transformations, they can emerge as Masters of Change and the new leaders.

It's become clear that there is no leadership without technology leadership. The recent rapid digital acceleration has placed technology as the cornerstone of global leadership.

Companies have also learned that leaders don't wait for the "new normal," they build it themselves. Big changes today require bold leadership—and prioritizing tech. And it's not just about fixing the business, but upending convention and creating a new vision for the future.

In this future, companies are poised to have an outsized impact on the world around them—and financial success will only be one measure of leadership. It's a unique moment to rebuild the world better than it was before the pandemic. That means expanding our definition of value to include how well people thrive, the impact left on the environment, growing inclusivity and more.

A new future is on the horizon – one that's different from what the world expected. As this future takes shape, there will be no room for enterprises that cling to the past. Will you watch the world change around you? Or be the one leading it?

People are ready for something new and it's time for enterprises to join them.

{91% of executives agree capturing tomorrow's market will require their organization to define it.}

The technology trends which will shape the future

It's the moment of truth: technology has sustained us through the pandemic and now continues to redefine how we work, live and interact. These are the key tech trends leaders must embrace to forge a better future.

Architecting a better future

Companies will now be competing on their technology architecture. Enterprises can custom-tailor every layer of it now, but building and wielding the most competitive stack means thinking differently. Business and technology strategies must become indistinguishable. Whoever gains the upper edge on technology stands to emerge as number one.

The power of massive, intelligent, digital twins

Growing investments in data, AI and digital twin technologies are giving rise to a new generation of business and intelligence. Call it the mirrored world. More of the physical world is represented in digital space—with models of whole factories, supply chains, product life cycles and more. It's ushering in new opportunities for enterprise leaders to bring data and intelligence together, ask and answer big questions, and reimagine how they operate, collaborate and innovate.

The democratization of technology

Technology is democratizing. Natural language processing, low-code platforms and robotic process automation are adding a grassroots layer to enterprise innovation strategies. With democratized technology, every employee can be an innovator, empowered to create technology-driven solutions on their own.

Bring your own environment

At the start of the pandemic, enterprises ignited the biggest workforce shift in living memory by sending people home and doubling down on technology solutions to keep them productive. In doing so, they have made work possible not just from home, but from anywhere.

Leaders must now develop "bring your own environment" (BYOE) strategies to address the security ramifications of remote work, necessary cultural shifts and the evolving purpose of physical office space.

A multiparty system's path through the chaos

With multiparty systems, enterprises can gain greater resilience and adaptability, more seamlessly share data, and set new, ecosystem-forward standards for their industries. In the face of the global disruption of COVID-19, they are learning they are stronger together.

Stack the odds
Choose wisely – tech architecture matters more than ever

Cloud spending in the first quarter of 2020 was nearly triple that of the previous year, and by November, 70% of companies using cloud had plans to increase spending due to the disruption.

These rapid transformations and the sudden influx of new technologies have ignited an era of business—one where architecture matters more than ever, and industry competition is a battle between technology stacks.

Enterprises also have more technology choices to make than ever before. From the distribution of cloud deployments, types of AI models and wide range of edge devices, to the design (and even basic physics) of hardware and computation—

each layer of the stack is expanding into new dimensions. The abundance of "as a service" solutions, improvement in technology standards and growing cloud foundation throughout the enterprise has made taking advantage of this choice extremely accessible.

{77% of executives state that their technology architecture is becoming very critical or critical to the overall success of their organization.}

Reflect reality
Powering new possibilities through a digital-physical World
Digital twins are proliferating across many enterprises and industries and driving an irreversible inflection point—the birth of the mirrored world.

When digital twins were initially adopted, they were championed for their ability to monitor, simulate and streamline the data of different devices. But recently, the scale of the models, layering in of AI and increase in adoption has transformed the equation. Leaders are starting to connect massive networks of intelligent twins, linking many twins together to create living models of whole factories, product life cycles, supply chains, ports and cities. They are creating unbroken threads of data—fabrics that will soon be essential to every enterprise's digital strategy.

When built on comprehensive, compatible and trusted data, intelligent twins and mirrored environments will help enterprises optimize operations, detect and predict anomalies, pivot to prevent unplanned downtime, enable greater autonomy, and dynamically adjust their designs and strategies with every new piece of data they collect or new test that they run.

Democratize your IT
Placing the power of tech in everyone's hands

An undeniable shift toward democratized technology is underway. Powerful technology capabilities are being put into people's hands, usable without highly specialized skills. It's not about a single tool or service, but the culmination of an array of technologies. Natural language processing, low-code platforms, robotic process automation (RPA) are just a few of the capabilities and services making technology more accessible. They each have different and unique applications, but all are bringing the innovative power of machines to human hands.

Democratized technology lets people optimize their work or fix pain points on their own. Without having to request major IT projects, people can create a custom dashboard for a group's finances, build an app to approve and automatically fulfill purchase orders and much more.

Suddenly, the ability to create technology solutions belongs to people all across the enterprise.

{86%

of executives agree their organization must train its people to think like technologists—to use and customize technology solutions at the individual level, but without highly technical skills.}

IT is not totally gone from the equation. IT will still be in charge of the big programs, scaling successful initiatives and injecting the most cutting-edge technology into the business. But they are free from many burdens that bog down big projects, like not quite capturing the users' needs or needing to customize for every user and use case.

This is every enterprise's opportunity to make their employees a core part of their digital transformation effort. But to do so successfully, leaders will need to emphasize innovation across every business unit. It's not just about giving people access to new tools; companies must actively teach their people to think like technologists. This doesn't mean turning everyone into an engineer, but rather enabling them to solve problems with technology.

Business your way
Creating a new culture of working
After the pandemic, no one is going back to work as they remember it. Companies and employees alike are moving instead into a new future, one where work can be done from anywhere.

What does this mean in practical terms? Think back to the early days of the "bring your own device" (BYOD) movement, when companies allowed employees to bring their own laptops or smartphones into the office. Employers had to implement new policies and tech solutions, enabling flexibility while mitigating the risk of devices that weren't entirely within their control. But it also gave employees a chance for a better work experience and ultimately saved companies money. Now we've moved beyond BYOD and into BYOE: employees are bringing entire environments to work.

After the pandemic, BYOE work won't be limited to employees' homes. It will give people the freedom to seamlessly work from anywhere—whether that's their home, the office, the airport, partners' offices or somewhere else.
{87%
of executives believe the remote workforce opens up the market for difficult to find talent and expands the competition for talent among organizations.}
In a BYOE model, leaders can rethink the purpose of working at each location, and when it makes sense to be at certain sites or with certain people. Three years from now, successful organizations will be the ones who resisted the urge to race everyone back to the office in favor of rethinking their workforce model for the evolving world.

Building a future together
Multiplying the impact of complex ecosystems
Multiparty Systems (MPS) share data between individuals and organizations in a way that drives efficiency and builds new business and revenue models. They

include blockchain, distributed ledger, distributed database, tokenization and a variety of other technologies and capabilities.

Even as companies were making drastic cuts and scrambling to keep operating during the height of the pandemic, organizations across industries doubled down on exploration and investment in MPS. From contact tracing to frictionless payments, applications for technologies that were once considered too complicated, far from maturity or niche suddenly took center stage.

With the benefit of hindsight, the explosion in adoption of multiparty systems isn't all that surprising. COVID-19 made it clear that companies can't navigate through disruption and uncertainty alone.

One of the biggest impacts of the pandemic was how it revealed the weaknesses of global enterprises, leaving companies cut off from their partners, scrambling for answers and needing to build new, trustworthy relationships.One of the biggest impacts of the pandemic was how it revealed the weaknesses of global enterprises, leaving companies cut off from their partners, scrambling for answers and needing to build new, trustworthy relationships.One of the biggest impacts of the pandemic was how it revealed the weaknesses of global enterprises, leaving companies cut off from their partners, scrambling for answers and needing to build new, trustworthy relationships.One of the biggest impacts of the pandemic was how it revealed the weaknesses of global enterprises, leaving companies cut off from their partners, scrambling for answers and needing to build new, trustworthy relationships.
{90%
of executives state that multiparty systems will enable their ecosystems to forge a more resilient and adaptable foundation to create new value with their organization's partners. }
COVID-19 itself demanded that businesses develop deep insight into how people and things were moving, without sacrificing privacy or efficiency—a capability existing systems were not ready to meet. Across many areas, multiparty systems quickly shifted from ambitious undertakings to desperately needed solutions.

As companies evolve beyond COVID-19, they must not rebuild the mistakes of the past. They face an enormous imperative to forge a resilient, adaptable and trustworthy foundation for their existing and future partnerships.

Disruption has upended our expectations for ecosystems and ambitious enterprises are creating new standards for industry. Coordinated, strategic ecosystem partnerships will set companies up to address today's disruptions and be better prepared to weather new ones, but they'll also enable ways to create new interactions or ways to approach a market. These partnerships will start to blur industry boundaries to solve problems or even begin to define entirely new industries.

On your marks. Reset. Go!

A new era of competition is dawning—one where architecture matters, and leaders will be decided not just on the success of their business plans, but on the ingenuity of their technology choices