



Re-navigating the journey to the cloud

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The disruption organisations have faced in 2020 has propelled them to rethink the way they run their business and the role technology plays in this – in particular, their approach to cloud.

Cloud has no doubt been on the technology agenda for a while, and **DXC's Beyond Disruption 2020 Business Pulse** found that **90 percent of businesses** see it as central to making them more resilient in the future as they quickly recognise its importance in helping them confidently navigate the unknown road ahead.

The speed at which organisations have had to foster new approaches to employee and customer engagement, collaboration and communication has well and truly made them evaluate how they want to embrace disruption and the steps taken to get there. A lot of uncertainty remains, but it's become clear that while the digital transformation destination hasn't changed for many organisations, the journey has.

Businesses who were once concerned with long-term cloud strategies are now laser-focused on having technology in place that will enable them to be as flexible and adaptable as possible. So, what do they need to consider to embark on this new path?

An emphasis on the short-term

The rapid shift to remote working highlighted just how many businesses weren't prepared for these changes. Some organisations that have previously 'lifted and shifted' applications to the cloud were limited by not having the flexibility and scalability promised to pivot quickly when needed, showcasing the need to focus on short-term requirements to improve agility. While innovation and transformation are still key priorities for businesses, many have parked their long-term transformation plans in favour of setting more tactical goals to navigate immediate change. During these uncertain times, it's important for business leaders to strip back the bells and whistles, take a look at the current state of their infrastructure and identify where it needs to be to ultimately solve problems, reduce cost, or increase productivity in the short term.

We've seen businesses bolster their technology by investing in mobile applications to engage with customers and staff (34%), remote learning platforms (22%), chatbots and digital assistants (22%), as a way to focus on the here and now and ensure short-term needs are fulfilled. This approach and the conversations around it are very different from what they are used to, however it's become paramount that those who want to set up their people, processes, and technology for success need to have a 60-90 day view of what needs to happen to effectively shift the needle. This includes leaning on known working blueprints to ensure success, relooking at the immediate steps to get to a longer-term goal, and prioritising SaaS.

From 'cloud-first' to 'SaaS-first'

DXC found that 54 percent of organisations have a 'cloud-first' policy, whereby they aim to utilise cloud as much as possible within business practices. This breaks away from legacy views where they do what they've always done, and instead looks to new ways and models of embracing technologies. In the midst of the current disruption, businesses that take this approach recognise the pace and scale of innovation achievable with cloud, and position this as the starting point in a forward-looking strategy.

But as the next step becomes critical, many businesses are evolving this notion to become 'SaaS-first,' and in-turn deliver greater business outcomes with more flexibility. Being a 'SaaS-first' organisation means looking at innovative ways to use software to deliver a defined outcome, as opposed to relying on shared services. Moving away from using horizontal shared solutions and taking advantage of what SaaS has to offer has proven to be faster for businesses, enabling them to be more flexible and agile, and empowering them to pivot quickly to stay ahead of disruption.

Weighing up innovation and risk

Over the past few months, we've seen a major shift in the way that business leaders approach cloud innovation, from being 'technical perfectionists' to now 'technical pragmatics'. **82 percent of organisations** are rethinking their business strategy in order to provide a more current technology roadmap and have less of a focus on blue-sky transformation and a more realistic goal of driving commercial and operational results.

Those that want to succeed in the short, medium and long term need to follow in the footsteps of those organisations who have embraced the current disruption and led the way when it comes to cloud adoption, rather than pioneering high-risk projects with unknown outcomes. And while risk has tempered now, it's evident that organisations are far more creative than we imagined. As they become accustomed to navigating the new normal, they will develop a knack for dealing with change, so it's no surprise that **85 percent are open to embracing new and emerging technologies** down the track to foster this process. When it comes to cloud, the paradigm shift towards serverless technologies presents a huge opportunity for organisations to achieve unprecedented speed and cost savings.

Disruption really has taken on a whole new meaning in 2020 and has brought up conversations and situations for businesses they never thought they would have. While it's certainly had its challenges, it's also proved that employees and organisations are much more adaptable than given credit for. Business leaders have been forced to overcome inertia and reconsider the pace, method and path they take to achieving their goals. The ones who embrace disruption and its future possibilities, are the ones that will thrive.

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