

Creating a digital strategy to provide exceptional digital experiences



Executive overview

Statistic upon statistic tells us it's a digital world. For example:

- As of June 30, 2012, more than 2.4 billion people were Internet users.¹
- By 2017, it is estimated that there will be more than 3.9 billion global mobile subscribers.²
- In a Pew Research Center study conducted in August and September 2012, nearly half of American adults (45 percent) and two-thirds of young adults (66 percent) reported that they own a smartphone.³

Today, not only are our personal devices digital, but increasingly, so too are common, everyday-use items such as televisions, appliances and automobiles. The net is, people, machines, data, processes and more are more connected, in more ways, and at a pace not previously envisioned; as a result, the means of user interaction are evolving rapidly, and the outcome is an explosion of information increasing at epic rates.

The opportunity, then (or challenge, depending on the perspective), for an organization is to execute a strategy to most effectively participate in, exploit and derive ongoing value from the expansive digital world. To evaluate and ultimately better facilitate this, many organizations are specifically defining a digital strategy as part of, or in addition to, their overall general business strategy. Central to that digital strategy is the digital experience. How, depending on your organization's focus, will you deliver customers, partners, citizens, patients and employees an exceptional experience across all points of digital interaction? Where will the experience take place? On what device? How will you identify the behaviors of target audiences? These digital experience questions and more must be addressed as part of your digital strategy to help ensure consistent and relevant brand image and user engagement across touchpoints.

Digital strategy: The U.S. government has one—do you?

The U.S. government is not typically an entity thought of as leading or innovative—especially when it comes to processes and services. However, in May 2012, the White House issued a digital strategy initiative with a stated objective to “*seize the digital opportunity and fundamentally change how the Federal Government serves both its internal and external customers—building a 21st century platform to better serve the American People.*”⁴

Certainly, based on one's perspective, one can take exception to the idea that the U.S. federal government can effectively execute the strategy; however, perceptions aside, one must at least recognize that the federal government properly understands that it needs to be “*ready to deliver and receive digital information and services anytime, anywhere and on any device.*”⁵ No doubt most other organizations would also readily agree with that statement as an objective. The question is, Do you have a strategy that addresses that objective?

Like most business strategies, various interpretations exist, but in general, a “digital strategy” involves:

- Working within the digital landscape to drive more customized, personalized (and, in many cases, self-service) interactions with customers, employees, citizens and other stakeholders.
- Leveraging data-driven decision making to make those interactions more effective
- Using an organizational model that is more nimble and reactive to changes in the digital environment

Recognizing that such a strategy is imperative, IBM continues to provide digital experience technology and innovations that may be combined with IBM and related IBM ecosystem services, consulting and solutions to enable organizations to execute many of the digital strategy objectives above.

Exceptional digital experience

In the age of the interconnected world where the primary touchpoints are digital, the purpose of the digital experience as part of the digital strategy is clear: deliver an engaging, useful and, ideally, differentiating experience to the user. Given the choice users have to virtually browse the world via an ever-changing array of access options, the opportunity to capture the user’s attention is fleeting.

The goal then, isn’t just the digital experience but rather the *exceptional* digital experience as part of the organization’s overall strategy and objectives. IBM clients have been able to achieve impressive business and operational results by adopting an approach to exceptional digital experiences as part of their digital strategy to serve the organization’s overall business strategy and goals.

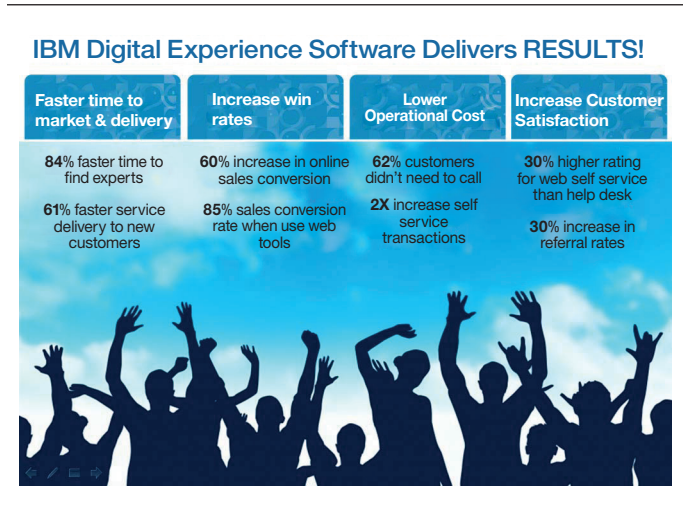


Figure 1. IBM clients have achieved accelerated delivery times, increased win rates, lower operational costs and increased customer satisfaction.

For these IBM clients, the answer to the question “Is the digital experience exceptional?” is realized in the results. For them, it’s a balance of form and function appropriate for the target audience—varying as required and continually evaluated and optimized for maximum benefit to the user and the organization. Although there is no single model of what makes up an exceptional experience, IBM offers an approach (Figure 2) that provides organizations the flexibility to further their digital experiences—and strategy—that has been proved to help organizations differentiate themselves via their digital experiences.



Figure 2. The IBM approach to an exceptional digital experience encompasses a variety of technologies and capabilities employed as required.

Notable in the figure above is that “experience”—and by extension the user, be that the customer, partner, patient, citizen, student, employee or whomever an organization intends to target and serve via the experience—is at the center of the IBM approach. Each individual organization has unique requirements for an exceptional experience; those requirements then determine what technology is needed—all of the technology elements are not always required to create and support an organization’s requirements. As we stated previously, there is not a single model that covers all requirements—so the IBM approach supports flexibility to address the organization’s current digital experience requirements and supports evolving requirements as they emerge in the rapidly changing digital landscape.

The IBM exceptional digital experience—a closer look

IBM has adopted an agile model for the delivery of offerings, capabilities, innovations and solutions—*defined by our clients as important to their digital experience objectives*—cultivated from an

array of exceptional resources from IBM, including IBM Research, worldwide development labs, strategic acquisitions and a vibrant IBM Business Partner solution community. With purposeful integration and open standards support, IBM can help clients bring the following elements and capabilities together to help meet an organization’s digital experience requirements at nearly any scale.

Content and rich media management

Content—textual and, perhaps more important today, rich media—is an essential part of the exceptional digital experience.

IBM web content and digital asset management capabilities help marketers and other content owners within organizations more effectively manage and automate the distribution of content and rich media across required channels.

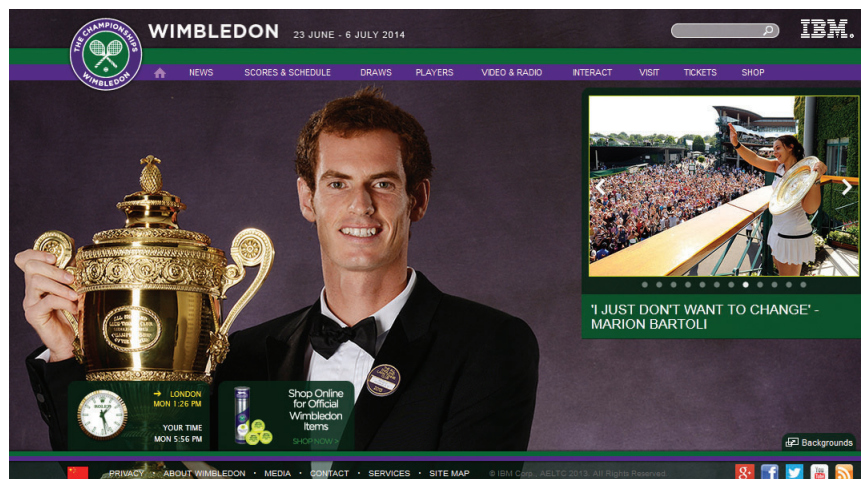


Figure 3. Wimbledon.com served 15 million unique visitors and 451 million page views of content, photos and videos in 2012.

Mobile

With the explosion of mobile, Internet-connected devices, organizations must assume that their audience is now accessing or will soon try to access the experience from a mobile device.

IBM digital experience capabilities offer responsive web design support out of the box and include a mobile application platform to create web, mobile web, mobile web hybrid and mobile apps—helping ensure a consistent and useful experience on practically any device and in nearly any resolution.

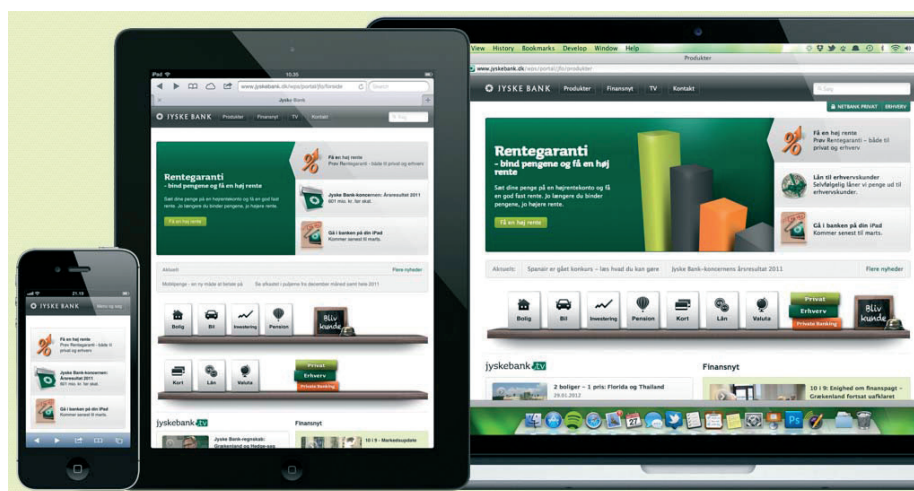


Figure 4. Jyske Bank (jyske.dk) employs responsive web design to serve more than 1 million visitors each month.

Portal, personalization and integration

Exceptional digital experiences often require access to legacy IT investments. When combined with personalized content, they can deliver incremental return on investment (ROI) from those previous investment. Benefits can also be derived from cost-reducing self-service digital experiences.

IBM's marketplace-leading portal capabilities and offerings can help clients derive new value from existing investments. Our offerings can be delivered across the Internet, extranet and intranet and are highly scalable to help meet a variety of digital experience requirements.

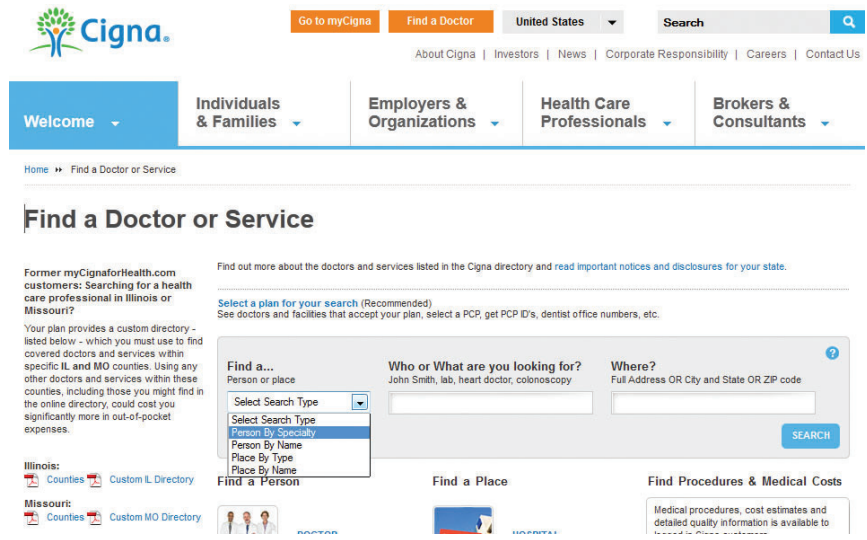


Figure 5. myCigna.com provides members personalized information on 200 procedures that represent 80 percent of Cigna's medical claims.

Social networking and unified communications and collaboration

The value of social networking and unified communications and collaboration (UCC) is increased when applied to the enterprise. Organizations can engage customers to join their peers to socialize product ideas in highly secure communities—gaining valuable insight. Employees can find the right people—experts—the first time, thus saving time and increasing productivity.

IBM's marketplace-leading enterprise social networking and real-time collaboration capabilities seamlessly integrate into the digital experience.

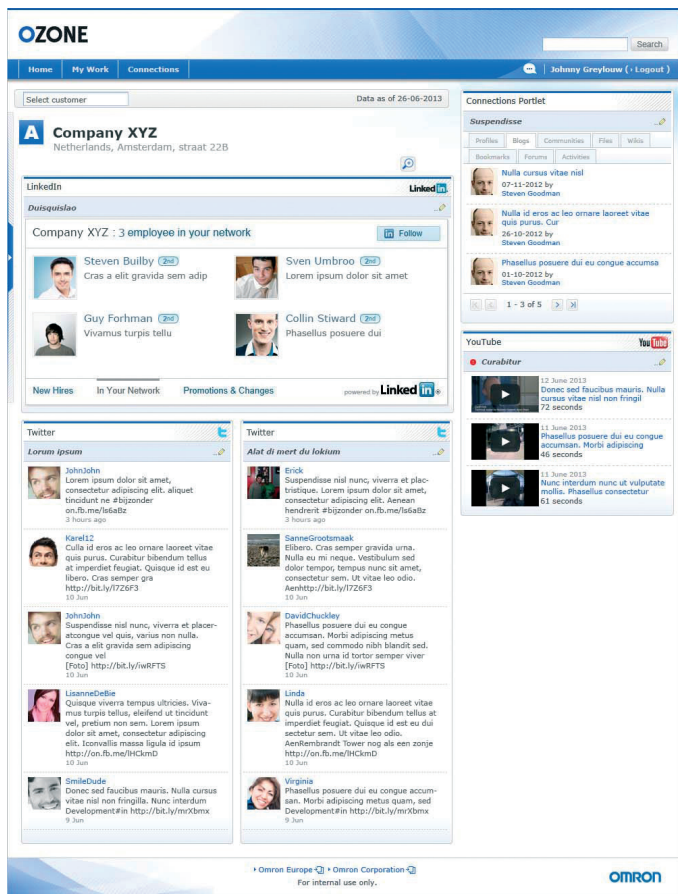


Figure 6. Omron Europe infuses social networking and real-time chat inside the employee digital experience, eliminating meetings and speeding decision making.

Commerce, marketing management and analytics

The rise of digital has dramatically altered the approach organizations must take to meet consumer and customer demands to shop, buy and get exceptional service from wherever they choose, via whatever digital device they are using.

IBM commerce, marketing management and analytic capabilities help organizations know the customer so they can tailor offers accurately, gain insight into the behaviors of individuals and segments of users to better personalize the digital experience, and measure the performance and relative importance of digital experience elements to continually optimize the experience.



Figure 7. Amadori transformed its marketing using analytics and digital experience software to create highly interactive sites and achieve 100 percent improvement in exposure

Summary

Statistics may affirm it, but in reality, one only needs to observe the behavior of people in the airport or at the mall, of their children, and certainly of colleagues in the workplace to understand that the world is digital. A digital strategy—one that recognizes that ever-evolving digital devices, technologies and user expectations is now the norm—must include how best to approach the continually changing digital experience requirements spurred by the evolution.

IBM recognizes the challenge businesses face in this digital world. Our exceptional digital experience approach has been embraced by thousands of organizations worldwide in virtually every industry, helping turn that challenge into an opportunity.

For more information

To learn more about digital experience capabilities from IBM, please contact your IBM representative or IBM Business Partner, or visit: ibm.com/digitalexperience

Additionally, IBM Global Financing can help you acquire the software capabilities that your business needs in the most cost-effective and strategic way possible. We'll partner with credit-qualified clients to customize a financing solution to suit your business and development goals, enable effective cash management, and improve your total cost of ownership. Fund your critical IT investment and propel your business forward with IBM Global Financing. For more information, visit: ibm.com/financing



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¹ Internet World Stats, "World Internet Usage and Population Statistics," June 30, 2012, <http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm>

² GSMA, *The Mobile Economy 2013*, 2013, <http://www.gsmamobileeconomy.com/GSMA%20Mobile%20Economy%202013.pdf>

³ Pew Research Center, *Two-thirds of young adults and those with higher income are smartphone owners*, September 11, 2012.

⁴ "Digital Government: Building a 21st Century Platform to Better Serve the American People," *The White House*, 2013, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/egov/digital-government/digital-government.html>

⁵ "Digital Government: Building a 21st Century Platform to Better Serve the American People," *The White House*, 2013, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/egov/digital-government/digital-government.html>



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