

# Delivering Business Certainty



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# There is no room for ordinary anymore

What we termed 'business as usual' in a less unstable world and economy isn't fit for the future. Naturally, some organisations are still striving to return to their status quo. Yet many others are recognising that their markets now require more, they require certainty.

Fast-moving, digital-first firms are becoming more intelligent about everything. They are equipping themselves to act in a constantly connected and increasingly agile way to create the certainty that their stakeholders and investors desire. Competition for customer attention, loyalty and wallet is hotting up. Service innovation is now as critical to competitive edge as new product development. Most companies are already hugely customer-centric, yet even more change may be inevitable because...

- **Ordinary proposals** built using manual processes, based on guesstimates and utilising incorrect assumptions, won't help you win the pipeline of new, profitable, business that you need to grow.
- **Ordinary service operations** cannot effectively balance the competing challenges of efficient project delivery, optimised utilisation rates, customer satisfaction, forecast demand and resource capacity management.
- **Ordinary finance departments** that are preoccupied with collating data from multiple diverse sources and solely interacting with customers for issue resolution, cannot leverage real-time information to optimise cashflow and provide strategic insight to the business.
- **Ordinary customer experiences** cannot ensure that you retain the most profitable customers nor attract new ones, if they are promised more and better service offerings by other more agile and innovative competitors.

# It will be those who seek and see opportunity at every turn who come out of the ‘tough times’ ahead of the pack.

It's time to invest in creating excellence in every area if you want to thrive and deliver certainty for your business.

Every business can increase their ability to see ahead and be assured of their future — but the ambition to go above and beyond, to maximise customer satisfaction, must become endemic, not just in how you create products and services, but to the workings of every function that delivers them.

It means innovating and improving across finance, operations, services, and customer success. Demolishing walls. Building bridges. Connecting people, processes, and information to create incomparable, companywide clarity that enables swift, sure, impactful decisions and creates business certainty.

It will demand constant evolution and supreme agility to create and capitalise on new opportunities that enable you to get to market with your innovative ideas faster and better than anyone else.

**It sounds like a lot. Where do you even begin?**

# In pursuit of certainty

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*That which is certain, a clear fact or truth —  
full assurance of mind, and exemption from doubt*

Achieving business certainty is not an easy challenge in such uncertain and uncharted times. It means striving for a state of such assurance of your ground, confidence in your decisions and clarity on the path ahead, that you can focus on the future without ever feeling the need to look back. Because this isn't about returning to business as usual as we knew it. It means creating a new state of business which has more transparency, all-round business insight, and intentionality than was possible in the past.

Reaching a state of certainty offers a tantalising opportunity to control and create your future, and a chance to accelerate past competitors.

It's a significant change in emphasis and cannot come from tactical piecemeal initiatives. Instead, it requires a more holistic business transformation which embraces a shift in mindset across every area of the enterprise.

To achieve it, businesses will need to create intentional change and commit to these things:

# 1

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## Eliminate everything extraneous

While many businesses find comfort in maintaining ‘the way we do things here’, those setting out to create certainty will deliberately seek out exceptions and opportunities for change. They look for ways to remove limits on the performance of every function, team and individual — eliminating anything extraneous that carry delays, costs or barriers.

Where low-value, manual activities limit the speed or predictability of a process, automation enabled by connected platforms and integrated customer and finance data, can free your people’s time and attention to focus on delivering improved services for customers.

Equipping employees across every function, with simple, engaging tools and relevant, accurate information helps eliminate unnecessary administrative actions and redundant steps. It smooths processes and the clumsy handoffs of information and responsibility between individuals. Time is no longer wasted logging into several different systems, searching for customer information, waiting for account finance information, or seeking answers from colleagues in different teams.

Everyone can simply stay focused on delivering the best service for customers, every day.

# 2

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## Embrace disruption deeply

The fact that the world is changing and will continue to change isn't just a 'new normal.' Tomorrow's winners see it as a world of exciting opportunity and a signal that it is time to re-orient.

They will shape organisations with deeply ingrained cultures of creativity, to make innovation a core business attribute of everyone, rather than a special activity for the select few.

Embracing conscious, constant acceptance and active encouragement of change can only raise the competitive bar. It will be driven by an organisation-wide mindset shift that encourages disruptive ideas, harnesses creativity from individuals and teams, and lets people try, fail, and celebrate each attempt at business improvement.

This requires shared information and insights to give firms the capability to execute on the very best of their ideas. In these firms, improvement isn't just about research and development, new products, and service innovation. It entails a new way of thinking, working and actioning change, combined with a technology environment that is flexible enough to deliver against this promise. In this way, small incremental tweaks every day, across the business, can translate into vast annual efficiency improvements and significant competitive advantage.

# 3

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## Energise employees every day

Brands that wish to outperform, outcompete and out-experience their peers to win over customers reliably and constantly, are reliant upon talented individuals and productive teams. The challenge of securing talent is endemic across software and services businesses, yet this is only part of the story.

High performing businesses invest in their talent by creating a culture that energises people every day. They also provide them with the collaborative tools they need to work effectively as one team, empowering employees with insights, intelligence, and analytics.

Such tools need to be compelling, engaging, and simple to use. They should provide easy access to everything that is required to successfully do a job, all through one 'pane of glass'. And rather than cluttered with extraneous and irrelevant information, they should be personalised to the needs of individuals and their particular roles.

Employees can access the data for their day-to-day job by tapping into a common source of complete and correct customer information; a 'golden record' that is shared with their colleagues across the business. By understanding the business impact of their role, in concert with that of colleagues and partners, they can deliver more positive and profitable relationships with customers.

# 4

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## Build an incredible infrastructure

Businesses cannot execute such significant change based on ambition alone. Certainty requires everyone to be deeply and constantly informed. They need to invest and embrace the building of a systems infrastructure that releases them from their limitations and enables everyone to act more intelligently every day.

They need platforms to connect the organisation and power essential processes within it — from those that run back-office functions and administer operations, to those that serve customers directly. Such systems deliver the data to empower employees and allow executive leaders to see and share the status of their projects, finance, and customer relationships clearly, completely, unequivocally and without room for misunderstanding.

This visibility for leaders and for employees depends on data that is no longer siloed but deeply democratised. This can then be leveraged for powerful insights to inform not just what happens today, but project what may happen in the future. As a result, companies can truly understand the levers of profitability, optimise customer lifetime value, and deliver the predictability and certainty that the modern business needs to survive and thrive.



# 5

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## Employ extraordinary leadership

Breaking away from the banal requires a step change away from purely functional expectations, towards a more collaborative style of leadership and mutual service. It will demand different things from leaders across finance, operations, service and bring customer success into the spotlight as a shared mission. Future leaders will lead by example, inspiring and motivating beyond their own teams to encourage everyone to strive for outstanding results beyond normal expectation.

**Finance Leaders** will push to eliminate unnecessary complexities that impede their visibility or ability to make swift and sure decisions, dispense with unproductive and time-consuming financial activities and turn their back on siloed data models. Instead, they will embrace smart finance solutions that work in harmony with systems that directly support and engage customers, and work to build agile, compliant, and financially aware cultures in which customer and finance data is unified, valuable, and accessible to the entire team.

**Operation Leaders** will not just focus on meeting expectations for the organisation but exceeding them for customers. In charge of execution on which every customer renewal depends, they must maintain the best possible balance between experience and profitability, ensuring that targets are achieved, and no promises are made that cannot be met. They will look to connect data and processes that stand in the way of service-centricity and their ability to keep control, allocate resources optimally, and trounce competitors in the process.

**Service Leaders** need a central, consistent, complete source of certainty about customers, resources and more to do the job that lies ahead. As well as supporting customers they will now be supporting growth, not just by retaining customers based on service excellence, but in finding new ways to enhance margins and new service opportunities that offer revenue potential. They need extensive and clear visibility across project finances and client accounts to exert great control and stay attuned to changing needs.

**Customer Success Leaders** will become a nexus of customer insight and understanding, working collaboratively with teams across the business as customers move ever further to the centre of their world. Higher CSAT scores will directly drive confidence and certainty in the organisation's ability to retain and renew customers, and gain more through word of mouth and enhanced brand reputation. While success owners will be on point to build proactive, close vendor-customer relationships that help everyone to gain increasing value.

## Summary

Businesses everywhere are becoming used to a climate in which uncertainty is the norm. That doesn't mean they have to accept the status quo in their own organisations. Those who adapt fast, innovate most, connect everything, and grasp every opportunity to operate more intelligently, will create their own climate of certainty. With this, they will be more profitable, more able to predict the future, and they can build momentum which will enable them to confidently leave competitors in their wake.

# Experience Modern Delivery

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