

OPINION

Achieving the Balance between Innovation and Governance

The belief that technology alone will change the way teams work together is false and unhelpful.

To improve your time to market, your business needs to be agile and modernized. But pretty much everyone knows that now. So the real question is: "If it's not happening, why not?"

We know why, and we can shortcut that.

It's because you're not innovation-ready. You don't have the technical or cultural permissions to develop new products and get them to market fast and with confidence.

That is a big issue if you want to compete today.

As a CXO, it's lovely to stand up at town halls and investor meetings and say, "We are on transformation journey." But to actually achieve it is something completely different.

The promise of technology often inspires a belief that using a new platform, app, or tool will change behaviour. But in reality, it can do the opposite.

The resolute belief that technology alone will change the way teams work together is false and unhelpful.

The pain and cost of not properly understanding and balancing critical elements within a digital transformation strategy, particularly in cloud technology and modernization efforts, cause misalignment and prohibit successful business outcomes.

Even when companies buy the right technology (and often they buy a cluster of technologies that don't work well together) they put their faith in it solving much deeper people, business, and customer problems than it really can.

This is no more apparent than when you see the constant conflict between teams who drive innovation and the teams charged to protect the brand against risk, security, and regulatory damage.

For instance, if you work in insurance, and you want to release a series of new products quickly, you might get laughed at by governance teams because they know time-to-market has always been long and traditionally hard to launch products.

Equally, you can come up against the same "no" culture when trying to innovate internally even for your team or department.

“It will need to go through the approval stages” is often the rallied cry. “And that could take time.”

But how long can you accept that as an excuse to go to market slowly? Isn't that exactly the problem you are trying to solve for with your cloud transformation plan? It costs months of wasted time, weak financial statements, and customers who will walk. You are opening the door for competitors and disruptive companies to deliver the customer experience that you can't get released in line with customer expectations.

You can't centralise innovation, so don't try to. You need to empower people to create and show you trust them to use their brains while providing the right model for them to do so.

Companies need to reduce the amount of activation energy required for them to be innovative with their digital transformation journey. That means reducing the pointless, repetitive, and unprofitable work in many areas where governance and agility clash while you move to cloud or manage a hybrid environment.

If we look at the struggle between agility and governance as a deployment issue, then it makes sense to change the ways of working around the way products and services are deployed. They should all work through one service deployment ecosystem.

But it's not good enough to just invest in a deployment system alone. It needs buy-in and recognition from the people who create and make something happen internally and for customers.

We want the business leaders to worry about business issues and drive the outcomes they need, not worry about how their cloud transformation strategy is going to be deployed or how their technology stack is going to be modernized.

If they achieve this collaborative mind shift, employees and CEOs find this empowering as the entire organization—not just the IT department—can see service deployment as a platform that helps them to build tools and products they want to build to implement their digital transformation plan.

If teams buy in, they'll work with service deployment platforms to spin up innovation flywheels and iterate progress, without the traditional heavy lifting. They can begin to see their teams beyond technical resources, expertise, restrictions, and limitations.

Teams drive transformation

Some 80% of CIOs say they have not attained the level of agility they sought through modernization.

Driving transformative business outcomes through Amazon Web Services (AWS) cloud can only come by having a partner with the experience to maximize the benefits.

Cognizant and AWS have migrated over 50,000 applications to the private and/or public cloud and are ready to continue to unlock immediate value at speed while keeping long-term success top of mind.

Learn more about how Cognizant and AWS can get you innovation-ready and drive the outcomes that matter to your business at <https://www.cognizant.com/partners/aws>

