Business Strategy

Helping organisations unlock digital and agile

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Why you might want to leave now…

- I'm going to explain why I think if your boardroom is talking about digital and agile you need to change the conversation.

- I'm going to make the case that if you allow your organization to focus on digital and agile then you will come unstuck.

- I'm going to argue that any supplier who tells you they can deliver your digital strategy doesn't understand the real world.

- I'm to going to argue that you need to fight to get the word agile out of your organizational lexicon.

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Business Strategy

- **HBR divides strategy into trying to achieve three things:**
    1. Doing something new.
    2. Building on what you already do.
    3. Reacting opportunistically to emerging possibilities.

    The general view is that you cannot focus on more than one at any time.

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Business Strategy and ICT

- Arguing about whether your business has the right strategy is a discussion for another day.

- The question is where does ICT fit?

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So remind me, what is the problem?

- **The problem is that Boards and Executives are imposing solutions onto ICT without understanding the core business objectives.**

AND/OR

- **IT leaders are imposing solutions onto the business without understanding the core business objectives.**

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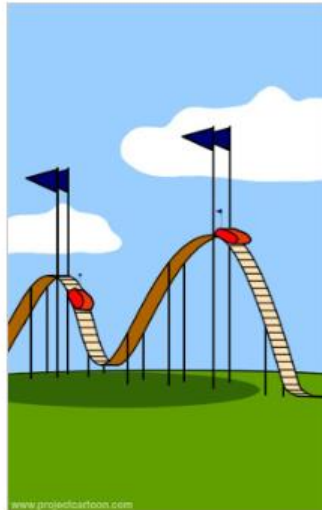
What the exec got excited about at a conference.it is quicker, cheaper and everyone's doing it

How the IT leader described it when they said it was simple

What the customer thought they wanted
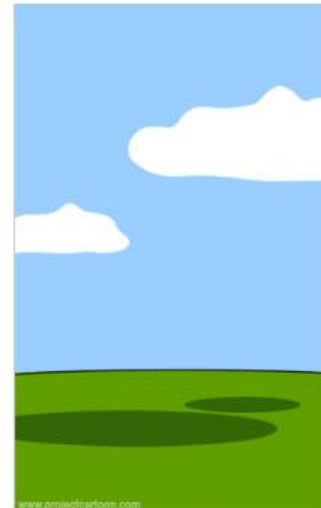
What the customer really needed

When it was delivered in the new quick and cheaper way

the level of collaboration between customers, senior leaders and "the doers".

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What the customer already had….

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What's the answer?

- There is no one answer, but there is a seat to be earnt to shape and influence the discussion away from methods and trends to how do we achieve things.

If you take one thing away from today it is

- **have you, are you, and how** in the future **will you and your team** earn the right to be at the table**?**

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What this has meant at Bromford?

- **In 2016**
  - We had a spaghetti landscape of 100 systems including ~50 LOB systems.
  - We had individual business units procuring, and [in theory] managing and supporting business solutions.
  - We had people wondering
    - why we had 000's of operational spreadsheets.
    - why data was not consistent across the organisation

  - We didn't have people asking why
    - Our customer journey was so difficult
    - Our IT projects weren't working

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What this has meant at Bromford?

- **Since 2016 we have:**
  - Taken a root and branch approach to our organisation – NOT system and data driven.
  - Launched an organisation business transformation programme which is benefits-led and links every outcome to our strategy.

  - Undertaken a procurement exercises using an outcomes based approach to replace ~50 systems with 2 major and 15 minor. We did this in less than 12 months.
  - We are just finishing design and our end users are still smiling despite not specifying 000s of requirements upfront.
  - Default position is out of the box is good enough.
  - No Bromford specific processes identified.

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What this has meant at Bromford?

Not this approach – we will only do this for <5% that really does need specifying.
Colleagues often find the prospect of specifying requirements scary, onerous and often both they and ICT get it wrong.

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What it might mean for you?

- **Take ownership of the debate in your business about how technology enables strategy.**

- **Stops being "done to" by the business rather proactive partners in achieving the business strategy.**

- **Puts you in a place to question the business strategy on an equal footing.**

- **Turns the conversation with suppliers on its head and asks them how they will support your outcomes, rather than being grateful for the changes they make.**

- **Your organisation might need to accept that 95% of what is do isn't special.**

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Unlocking digital and agile

- Don't let the executive capture your solutions.

- You deliver to outcomes – not to solutions.

- Talk outcomes, not solutions, not technology and certainly not AGILE or DIGITAL.

- The use of digital solutions is a decision for those trying to address a stated outcome.

- The use of agile is a decision for those trying to delivery a solution to achieve a state outcome.

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Why does all this matter?

If you don't challenge this you will always end up being the owner of spaghetti.

IT leaders need to earn the right to take back ownership of digital and agile from their colleagues.

Just remember if you don't AGILE and DIGITAL will become

- AGILE – the phase used to describe everything and nothing – but doesn't it sound great and dynamic. Watch as I promise to do lots, but somehow do little as I am being "agile".
- DIGITAL – the phrase used to say we put it on the website or an app. Who cares whether it helped our customers or colleagues.

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Warning

AGILE and DIGITAL
CAUTION: Valuable and to be handed with care and by professionals.

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In the end….

- **You can come to Housing Tech conferences and complain about executives, users and suppliers**

OR

- **You can try to take some ownership and become a genuine value adding part of your organisation clearly being able to demonstrate how you have helped the business achieve its strategic aims.**

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