MVNO NATION

How to guide - How to digitise your business

Lebara has been one of the most established and well-known brands in the MVNO market. Like all the others, Lebara has embarked on a journey of digital transformation. Nabil Nazar, Digital Solution Architect, Lebara shares the key learnings.

FIND YOUR WHY

Before starting your digitization journey, understand why you're pursuing it. Nabil cites Cisco's John Chambers, warning that 40% of businesses may face extinction without adapting to new technologies in the next 10 years.

DEFINE YOUR GOALS AND BE CLEAR ON WHAT DIGITALISATION MEAN FOR YOUR BUSINESS

Clearly articulate what digital transformation means for your business and align it with your business strategy. Don't undertake something just for the sake of it; there should be a clear reason, and technology serves as an enabler to achieve that outcome. Involving all key stakeholders and gaining their buy-in is also essential.

Nabil Nazar - Lebara (NN): "We had a very clear vision and strategy outlining what we aimed to achieve through digital transformation. Crucially, this vision did not originate from technology but was derived from the product and functional areas. They identified specific problems and formulated clear problem statements to address. The strategy's outcome was aligned with the overall enterprise strategy, ensuring stakeholder buy-in. (...) We conducted stakeholder workshops.

During these sessions, we presented the proposed plans to stakeholders, seeking their input, addressing objections that ensured that everyone involved was on the same page."

ASSESS YOUR CURRENT STATE

Examine your existing systems, processes, and capabilities to identify areas for improvement. Assess the digital capabilities and practices of competitors and market leaders, learn from their successes and take inspiration.

NN: "We defined the architectural landscape, mapped existing business processes, and outlined the capability model. Additionally, we conducted a competitor analysis. To ensure achievement, we mapped the assessed architecture to capabilities. To gather real customer feedback, we partnered with an external agency, receiving insights from various markets, demographics, usage patterns, and competitor comparisons. This feedback was instrumental in reaching our goals."

CREATE A ROADMAP

Clearly map how to move from your current state to your desired goals:

- Identify initiatives based on their potential impact. Clearly define the objectives and expected outcomes for each initiative.

- Break down the digital transformation journey into smaller milestones.
- Determine and secure the necessary resources - budget, talent, or platforms, and then proceed to execution.
- Follow your roadmap closely while executing your strategy.
- Don't forget to foster a digital culture.

NN: "Regarding the roadmap, typical elements such as program plans, transition plans, allocations, and migration plans were included. We conducted an external audit of our architecture to validate its relevance and partnered with technology providers through the standard RFP/RFQ process. In the execution phase, managing multiple project teams and prioritizing among eight projects were crucial. C-level governance oversaw the entire program, ensuring alignment with objectives and operational process maturity."

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS - ITERATE AND ADAPT

NN: "We are assessing whether we are achieving our set goals or if we are too far off. We are adapting the rollout strategy accordingly. The scale of the program touched about three-quarters of our capabilities, indicating the extensive scope of our efforts. This doesn't necessarily mean introducing entirely new capabilities; rather, it involved modifications and new approaches aligned with our goals."
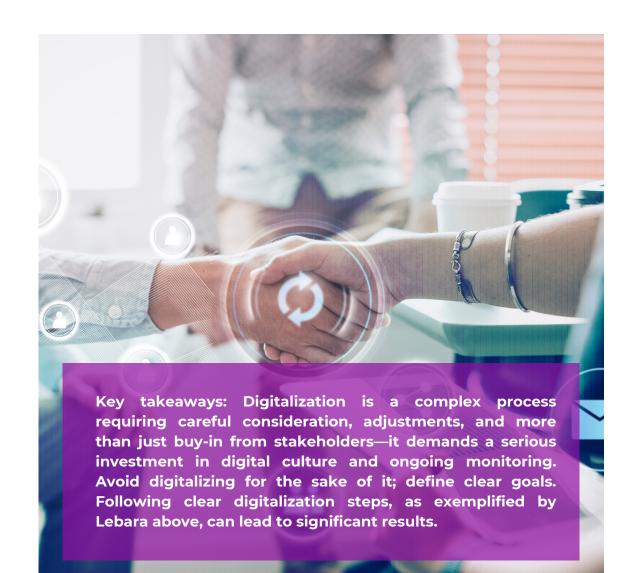
PITFALLS TO AVOID

- Company culture: Cultural transformation is challenging and time-consuming. Even with a personal appreciation for new tools, team adaptation takes time. Investment in cultural shifts is crucial in such programs, considering buy-in just the initial step.
- Training is crucial, enabling individuals to use the new system more effectively.
- There must be a defined approach for business processes, providing clarity on the new way of doing things.

NN: "That's the key message I want to convey – while state-of-the-art platforms are available, mastering these human and cultural aspects is the real challenge."

LEBARA'S ACHIEVEMENTS!

Despite the magnitude of the task undertaken, the results for Lebara truly speak for themselves.

- Operational efficiency: The tech operations team is now more balanced, with 40-50% independence, compared to their previous 100% dependence on technology teams. Country marketing teams, now equipped with access to the test ecosystem, can make changes independently. The customer service function has been optimized due to reduced calls.
- Customer experience: Lebara focused on customer pain points, enhancing self-care journeys, UX/UI, and implementing a conversation-based chatbot to reduce customer service calls.
- Technical excellence: Attained technical excellence with a cloud-native platform, state-of-the-art security frameworks, and exceptional scalability, crucial for our transformation's success.

Key takeaways: Digitalization is a complex process requiring careful consideration, adjustments, and more than just buy-in from stakeholders—it demands a serious investment in digital culture and ongoing monitoring. Avoid digitalizing for the sake of it; define clear goals. Following clear digitalization steps, as exemplified by Lebara above, can lead to significant results.

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