STRATEGENICS

Enterprise Operating Models

Navigating Principles, Practice, and Obstacles for Sustainable Growth and Success

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Introduction

Enterprises are constantly seeking innovative ways to streamline operations, enhance efficiency, and drive sustainable growth.

At the heart of this pursuit lies the concept of enterprise operating models—the strategic frameworks that underpin the organisation's structure, processes, and systems. The principles, practice, and obstacles of enterprise operating models have become critical considerations for businesses striving to stay competitive in an increasingly dynamic marketplace.

This paper explores enterprise operating models, including their fundamental principles, implementation strategies, and common obstacles. Its goal is to empower leaders and decision-makers with invaluable insights to navigate the complexities of these models effectively.

In this journey, we explore core principles for an effective operating model, including alignment with strategic objectives, customer-centricity, and adaptability to rapidly transforming market conditions. We also address challenges like resistance to change, cultural barriers, technological complexities, and resource constraints, providing businesses with strategies to proactively prepare them for success.

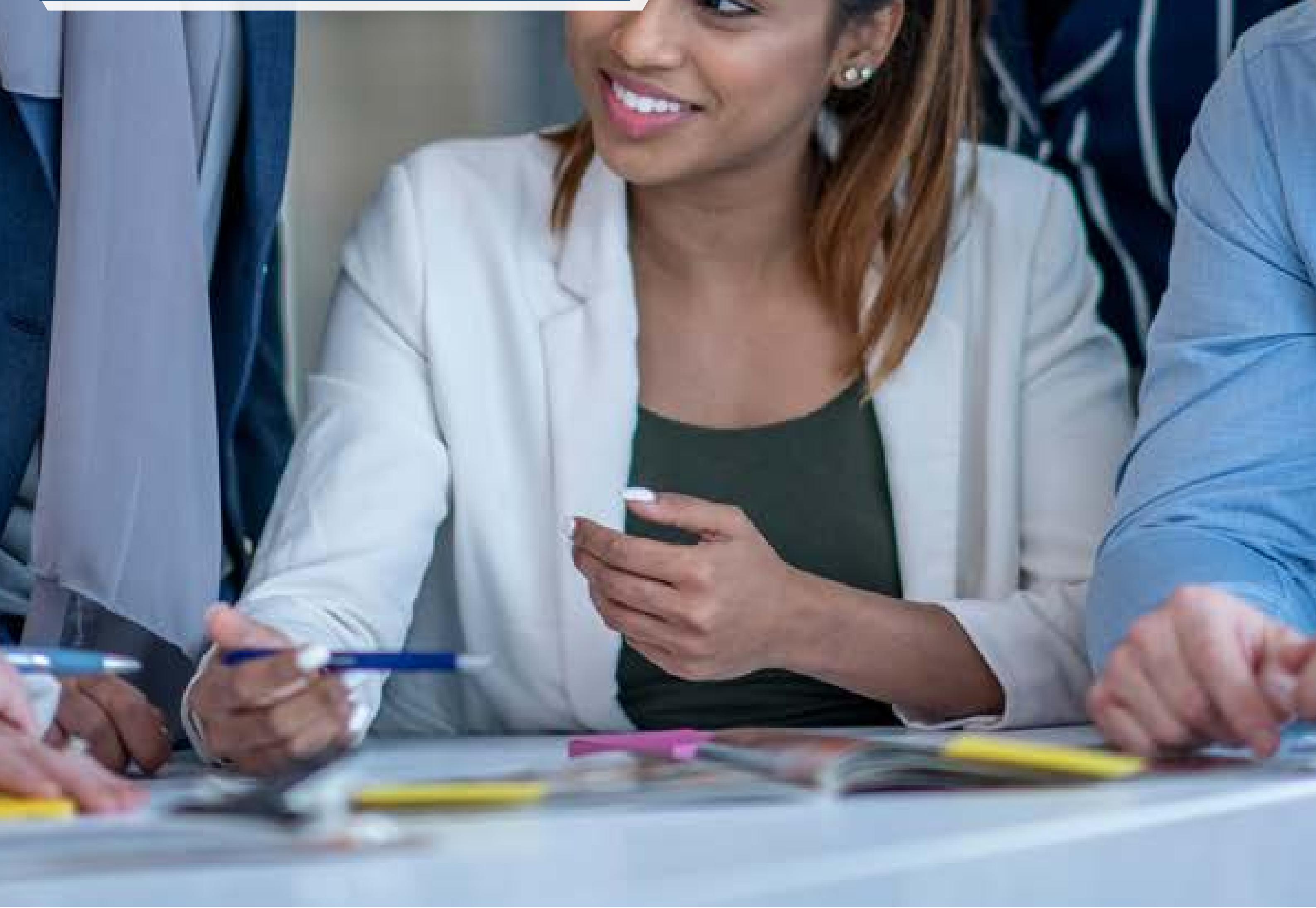
Join us in this enlightening exploration of relevant academic articles, case studies, and expert opinions that illustrate practical applications and tangible benefits for sustainable growth and success. Explore the benefits of partnering with a strategic advisor to enhance operating models, navigate challenges, drive excellence, improve capabilities, and gain a competitive advantage.

Whether you are a seasoned executive looking to revamp your organisation's operating model, a project manager seeking insights for a specific initiative, or a curious mind, eager to understand the intricacies of enterprise management, this white paper will serve as a comprehensive guide to help you navigate the principles, practice, and obstacles of enterprise operating models.

The value proposition

Principles of Enterprise Operating Models

Highly successful enterprise operating models possess three essential characteristics. They are in sync with the overall business strategy, enabling the organisation to attain its strategic goals.
There's clearly articulated value proposition ensures consistent delivery of value to customers and stakeholders. Finally, a design that emphasises modularity and scalability to enable the organisation to adjust to changing market fluctuations and seize opportunities for growth.

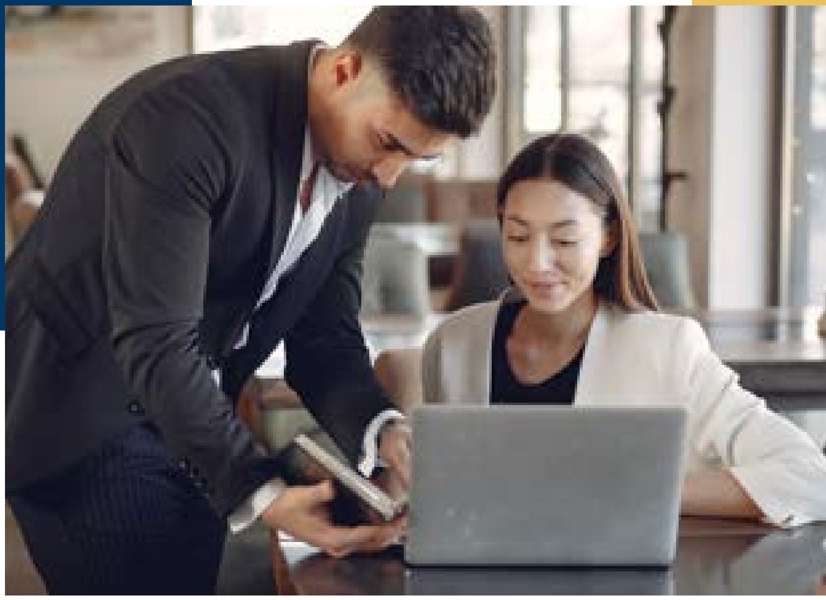


Effective enterprise operating models possess **three key attributes** to be truly effective.

1) Alignment with business strategy.
Firstly, they need to be aligned with the overall business strategy, enabling the organisation to achieve its strategic objectives. It is widely argued that the effectiveness of an enterprise operating model hinges on its ability to seamlessly integrate with and propel the organisation towards its strategic objectives. Frigo, & Ramaswamy [1], claim that effective enterprise operating models ought to be aligned with the overall business strategy, enabling the organisation to achieve its strategic objectives [1].
A finely-tuned operating model that serves as the engine that drives the execution of strategic initiatives, ensuring that every facet of the organisation—from its structure and processes to its technology and people—is orchestrated in perfect harmony. This all sounds too good to be true, and for many organisations it is.

2) A clear value proposition.
Secondly, a well-defined value proposition is crucial in designing an enterprise operating model, as it ensures that the organisation continues to deliver value to its customers and stakeholders.
Competition is fierce and customer expectations are ever evolving, a well-defined value proposition serves as the cornerstone for designing an effective enterprise operating model. Articulating and maintaining a clear value proposition allows stakeholders and customers to understand what the organisation offers them and what value they can expect when engaging with the organisation [2] .Recognising the importance of a strong value proposition, organisations can shape their operational framework. A compelling value proposition sets a business apart, guiding strategic decisions and aligning processes, capabilities, and resources to provide an exceptional customer experience. A well-designed enterprise operating model that revolves around a compelling value proposition becomes a catalyst for sustainable growth, customer loyalty, and competitive advantage in a dynamic business environment.

3) Be designed with modularity and scalability in mind.
Lastly, an effective operating model should be designed with modularity and scalability in mind to adapt to a flexible market scenario and seize growth opportunities. It must evolve in sync with the external landscape, accommodating emerging trends, technologies, and customer expectations. Organisations that proactively monitor market dynamics and embrace continuous improvement can adjust their operating model to thrive in an ever-changing world, leveraging change as a catalyst for growth. Emphasising modularity allows for greater agility, while scalability enables effortless accommodation of increased volumes, product diversification, and market expansion without compromising efficiency or quality. By prioritising both modularity and scalability, organisations position themselves for success and responsiveness to evolving market demands.



Expert Opinion

Clayton Christensen, renowned Harvard Business School professor and author of "The Innovator's Dilemma," emphasises the importance of aligning operating models with strategic objectives and customer-centricity. He suggests that organisations should be willing to disrupt their own successful operating models to stay ahead of the competition.

Christensen argues that organisations should focus on understanding the ‘jobs’ customers are trying to accomplish and develop operating models that effectively address those needs while remaining adaptable to changes in the market.

> *Operating models must continue to evolve, not just to manage our organisations, but to stay relevant*

Real World Example

Amazon's operating model is a prime example of aligning with strategic objectives, customer-centricity, and adaptability. They prioritise customer satisfaction, fast delivery, and personalised experiences through their logistics network, data-driven recommendations, and customer service excellence. Their adaptability is evident in their expansion into various sectors like cloud computing (AWS) and entertainment (Amazon Studios), continuously responding to market dynamics and consumer demands.

> *A well-designed enterprise operating model becomes a catalyst for sustainable growth, customer loyalty, and competitive advantage.*

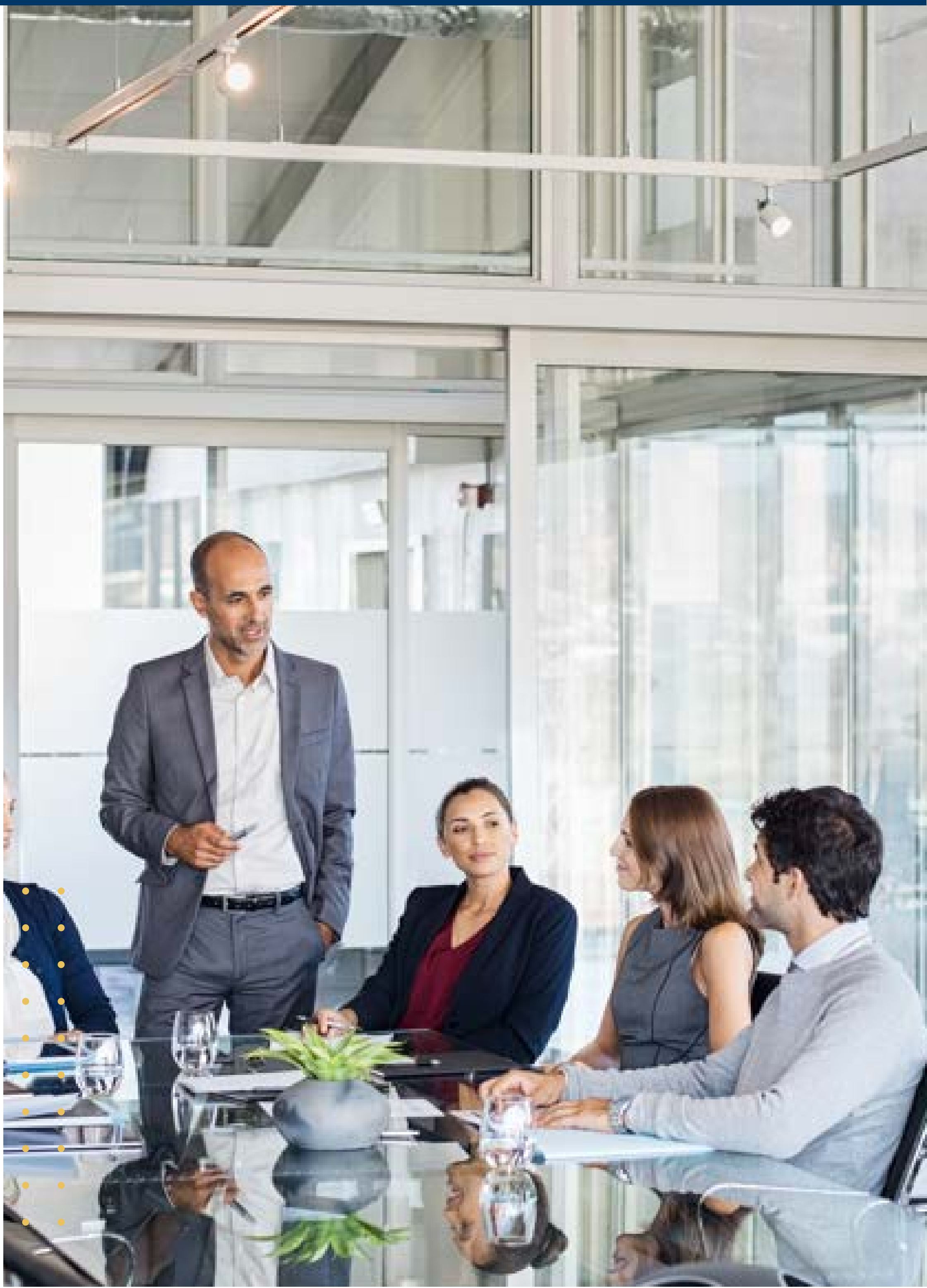
Apple Inc. exemplifies a successful operating model built around a clear value proposition, leading to enduring success. Their focus on delivering innovative, user-friendly products with seamless integration of hardware, software, and services prioritises customer experience and ecosystem cohesion. By consistently providing exceptional software experiences packaged in well-designed hardware, Apple has created a loyal customer base and achieved remarkable financial success.

Airbnb's operating model demonstrates the importance of embracing modularity and scalability. Through their platform, they enable global short-term accommodation rentals, using a modular approach to scale rapidly while providing a consistent user experience. This design allows hosts to list properties and guests to search, book, and review accommodations seamlessly. With this model, Airbnb can expand into new markets and accommodate growing user demand, ensuring sustained growth and scalability.

The current state

Overcoming obstacles and optimising enterprise operating models

Explore the challenges faced in enhancing enterprise operating models and assess strategies on how to overcome these obstacles to achieve optimal performance and efficiency.



1 Senior executive buy-in

Typically, an operating model needs both senior executive support and organisational buy-in for the workforce to feel empowered by it.

Senior executives play a vital role by championing and endorsing the model, providing resources, removing barriers, and allocating talent for its implementation. Organisational buy-in empowers the workforce to embrace the model, contribute ideas, and drive its implementation. Fostering a culture of support and collaboration unlocks the full potential of the operating model and harnesses the collective capabilities of the workforce.

The success of updating an operating model relies on senior executive support, strong leadership, and effective change management practices. **Leaders must model and drive** the desired changes throughout the organisation, **communicating the vision** and benefits of the new model while addressing and supporting employee resistance. Change management practices, such as **stakeholder engagement and training, are crucial** for navigating organisational complexities and ensuring successful adoption of the model.

Investing in the right technologies and infrastructure is vital, especially in the context of digital transformation. Organisations must embrace suitable technologies like cloud computing, data analytics, and artificial intelligence to align with their strategic objectives. By **investing in the right digital tools and infrastructure**, organisations can enhance agility, efficiency, and customer-centricity, facilitating the effective execution of the operating model and supporting the broader digital transformation journey.

Senior executive support is essential, but successful implementation of an updated operating model requires strong leadership, change management practices, and the right technology and infrastructure investment. By combining these elements, organisations can drive transformation, overcome resistance, and execute their enterprise operating models effectively, particularly in the dynamic landscape of digital transformation.

> *"Organisational transformation requires leaders who can model the desired changes and drive them throughout the organisation."*

2 Organisational silos and resistance to change

Change can be challenging, as people often prefer the comfort of familiar routines and mastery of processes. Implementing an operating model faces two key challenges: silos and resistance to change. Silos create isolated pockets of knowledge and hinder collaboration, while resistance to change can impede the adoption and implementation of the model.

Overcoming these challenges requires **breaking down silos, fostering collaboration, and implementing effective change management** strategies to gain widespread acceptance of the operating model and ensure its success. Addressing these challenges is crucial for organisations to optimise processes, achieve strategic objectives, and create a positive environment for sustained success.

3

Outdated legacy systems and processes

Outdated legacy systems and processes present challenges for adopting a new operating model, particularly in the context of digital transformation. These systems can **hinder an organisation's ability to respond effectively** to market forces and meet customer needs, which increasingly require digital competencies for competitive advantage.
Transitioning to a greater digital capability with increased agility is essential to overcome this obstacle and align with the evolving market demands.

Investing in a new system can lead to:

- improved efficiency
- enhanced security
- better integration
- scalability
- enhanced user experience
- support and updates
- regulatory compliance and
- cost saving
- allowing your organisation to adapt to the evolving business landscape more effectively.

> *When organisations introduce a new operating model, it often requires shifts in processes, roles, technologies, and ways of working.*

4

Adopting a digital model

The digital marketplace is a disruptive force affecting various industries, necessitating digital transformation and reshaping operating models. Aligning operating models with the demands of the digital marketplace is crucial for organisations to remain competitive and thrive. This involves **reimagining processes, adopting agility, fostering innovation, and prioritising customer-centricity.** Embracing the digital marketplace is inevitable, and operating models act as a driving force behind this evolution.

By doing so, organisations can position themselves at the forefront of digital innovation, unlock new growth opportunities, and create sustainable business value. Successful adaptation to the digital marketplace requires a holistic approach that encompasses both technological and cultural transformations, enabling organisations to **unlock growth opportunities** and **create sustainable value** in today's business ecosystems.

> *Organisations often face resistance when trying to implement new operating models due to the deep-rooted nature of legacy systems and processes.*

In this context, enterprise operating models assume an even more significant role. They serve as the **blueprint for organisations to effectively embrace and leverage digital technologies** in their operations, strategies, and customer interactions.

5

Enterprise agility

By embracing an Agile Operating Model, the organisation can seamlessly pivot in response to changing market conditions, customer needs, and emergent opportunities. This agility not only drives efficiency but distinguishes the organisation from competitors, providing a significant point of difference and a sustainable competitive edge.

With faster iteration cycles, collaborative team structures, and an emphasis on continuous improvement, Agile Operating Models empower organisations to stay ahead of the curve, quickly capitalise on opportunities, and drive innovative solutions that resonate with market demands.

Expert Opinion

John Kotter, a renowned expert in leadership and change management, underscores the pivotal role of leadership in successful organisational change. He stresses that when leaders actively endorse an operating model, it profoundly impacts how the workforce perceives its significance.

Kotter advocates for leaders to act as change agents, effectively communicating the purpose and benefits of the operating model to the entire organisation.
By demonstrating commitment and enthusiasm, leaders create a sense of urgency and alignment, inspiring employees to embrace the change and overcoming resistance.
Their active championing serves as a positive example, influencing others to follow suit and fostering a positive ripple effect throughout the organisation.

Brian Solis, a digital analyst and anthropologist, highlights the challenges posed by outdated legacy systems during digital transformation. He emphasises that resistance to new operating models is common due to the deeply ingrained nature of legacy systems and processes. Solis advocates for a cultural shift alongside technological changes to successfully undergo digital transformation. Organisations must embrace agility, adaptability, and innovation to thrive in the digital era. By proactively addressing these challenges and adopting new technologies and approaches, organisations can unlock opportunities and achieve sustainable growth.

Real World Example

Ford Motor Company, a prominent automotive manufacturer, faced challenges during its operating model transformation, including silos and resistance to change. To transition from a traditional automaker to a mobility company focused on electric vehicles and autonomous driving, Ford needed to overcome internal departmental barriers hindering collaboration and technology integration.

Breaking down silos involved fostering cross-functional teams and promoting a collaborative culture. Ford also addressed resistance to change stemming from disruptions to manufacturing processes and job roles. Implementing change management initiatives, offering training, and highlighting the long-term benefits facilitated a successful transformation. Ford's transformation enabled scaling EVs and enhancing operations, unlocking new value opportunities.

> *Organisations often face resistance when trying to implement new operating models due to the deep-rooted nature of legacy systems and processes.*

Blockbuster, a former video rental store chain, failed to adapt to the digital streaming revolution led by **Netflix**. With a traditional brick-and-mortar model, Blockbuster's outdated legacy system and resistance to change caused its downfall, while Netflix's digital-centric approach and agility propelled it to dominate the video streaming industry.

Amazon, originally an online bookstore, has evolved into a global e-commerce powerhouse that disrupted the retail industry through digital innovation. By leveraging technology and introducing services like Amazon Prime, the company revolutionised the shopping experience.

Additionally, Amazon Web Services (AWS) emerged from the need to manage its vast e-commerce infrastructure efficiently. AWS has since become a leading cloud computing service. Amazon's innovative approach and commitment to embracing the digital marketplace have propelled it to global leadership, transforming retail and setting new customer-centric standards across various markets in the digital age.

The Solution

The role of strategic partners and advisors in operating model enhancement

Strategic partners and advisors are crucial for operating model design and implementation, offering specialised knowledge and industry insights. These partnerships provide access to best practices and experienced experts, informing the transformation process. Additionally, they serve as a valuable resource augmentation, offering skilled professionals to fill knowledge gaps and accelerate the operating model transformation.

Information and cyber security considerations of operating models

Strategic partners and advisors are essential for organisations seeking to navigate the complexities of information and cyber security and adopt advanced technologies like AI and Large Language Models (LLMs). These experts bring valuable skills and knowledge, assessing an organisation's security posture, identifying vulnerabilities, and developing comprehensive strategies to mitigate risks. In the realm of technology adoption, they guide organisations through the selection, integration, and configuration of AI and LLM tools, ensuring alignment with security requirements.

Moreover, they assist in establishing robust information and cyber security frameworks, covering access controls, encryption methods, security monitoring, incident response, and disaster recovery plans. Strategic partners and advisors also provide valuable insights into emerging trends and industry developments, helping organisations stay proactive in their security measures and comply with relevant regulations. By leveraging their expertise, organisations can confidently embrace advanced technologies while safeguarding against potential risks and threats to their systems and data.

Driving organisational competence and capability

External strategic partner-advisors can be a valuable resource for organisations seeking to enhance their operating models. Often, internal resources alone may not suffice to drive the necessary change. Strategic partners bring momentum, insights, and energy, helping organisations build internal competencies that can maintain and mature the model over time.

Partners offer support through training, mentoring, and guidance during the enhancement process, leading to improved alignment between operations and strategic objectives. Case studies have shown the transformative power of adopting agile principles in the operating model, resulting in enhanced operational efficiency, customer satisfaction, and competitiveness.

Agile operations facilitate quicker adaptation to changing market needs, foster collaboration, and enable data-driven decision-making, ultimately driving innovation and continuous improvement. Embracing agility in the operating model empowers organisations to stay ahead in ever-changing business environment and deliver value to customers.

Selecting and leveraging strategic partners effectively

When engaging a strategic partner, organisations should clearly define objectives and expectations to ensure value-driven results and alignment with operating model enhancement goals. Partner-advisors play a pivotal role in guiding organisations towards innovation and agility, leveraging their expertise to stay ahead in a fluid and evolving business landscape.

They encourage a culture of innovation and agility, enabling rapid responses to market changes and emerging opportunities. Effective communication and collaboration are vital in fostering a successful strategic advisory relationship, ensuring productive and mutually beneficial partnerships. Regular and transparent communication channels facilitate the exchange of insights and ideas, aligning strategies between the organisation and strategic partner/advisor for sustainable growth and competitiveness.

Case Study:
Implementing Agile Operations

The application of agile principles in enterprise operating models has become a prominent trend, transforming how organisations approach their operations. Agile operations prioritise flexibility, adaptability, and quick responses to changing market dynamics, enabling companies to navigate uncertainties and seize opportunities more effectively.

A case study by Talluri and Thummadi illustrates the successful implementation of agile operations in a manufacturing company, resulting in improved responsiveness to customer demands, reduced time-to-market for new products, and overall operational efficiency.

The case study highlights the importance of cross-functional collaboration, iterative development, and data-driven decision-making in achieving agility.

> *By breaking down silos and fostering collaboration across different functions, teams were able to collaborate more effectively, resulting in faster decision-making and enhanced agility.*

One of the critical findings of the case study was the improved alignment between the company's operations and its strategic objectives. Agile operations allowed the organisation to quickly adapt its processes and resources to meet changing market needs and customer expectations.

Overall, the empirical analysis conducted by Talluri and Thummadi [3] provides compelling evidence of the positive impact of agile operations on the performance and competitiveness of organisations.

The case study emphasises the importance of aligning the operating model with agile principles, fostering cross-functional collaboration, embracing data-driven decision-making, and continuously improving processes. By embracing agility in their operating models, organisations can adapt to market dynamics more effectively, deliver value to customers, and achieve sustainable success in today's dynamic business environment.

Real World Example

> *Partner-advisors will often encourage organisations to include a focus on innovation and agility.*

Tesla's collaboration with Grohmann Engineering exemplifies a real-world scenario where a company leveraged external expertise to optimise production capabilities and increase automation in its factories.

By acquiring Grohmann Engineering's renowned expertise in automation and manufacturing solutions, Tesla successfully bridged skill gaps and accelerated its transformation process, leading to improved efficiency and scalability of electric vehicle (EV) production. This strategic partnership demonstrates how external partners can play a vital role in augmenting a company's workforce and driving successful operating model transformations, enabling organisations like Tesla to remain innovative and competitive in their industries.

Conclusion

Enterprise operating models serve as a guiding framework for organisations to align their strategies, optimise operations, and navigate complex business environments. The principles discussed in this paper seek to introduce a critical view of what obstacles organisations will need to overcome to achieve a competitive advantage through the effective design and implementation of their operating models.

These principles encompass factors such as agility, innovation, collaboration, data-driven decision-making, and continuous improvement. By embracing these principles, organisations can enhance their operational efficiency, responsiveness, and adaptability, thereby gaining a competitive edge in the marketplace. They provide a structured approach to designing and implementing processes, systems, and organisational structures that support the organisation's goals and objectives. However, achieving a competitive advantage through operating models requires overcoming various obstacles and challenges.

Effective design and implementation of operating models are crucial for organisations to achieve a competitive advantage. By ensuring executive buy-in and oversight, abandoning silos and embracing collaboration the operating model can optimise its value offering in the digital marketplace and overcome obstacles more easily without massive organisational change.

Strategic partners and advisors play a vital role in supporting organisations throughout this process. By leveraging these partnerships, organisations can enhance their operating models, improve competence, and build capabilities, ultimately driving operational excellence and attaining sustainable competitive advantage in today's dynamic business landscape.

Finally, strategic partners-advisors can play a vital role in guiding and supporting organisations to enhance their operating models, improve competence, and build capabilities. By leveraging the expertise, insights, and resources provided by strategic partnerships and advisory relationships, organisations can overcome challenges, drive operational excellence, and achieve sustainable competitive advantage.

How Strategenics can help

Unlock the true potential of your organisation by updating and optimising your business operating model with our expert guidance. Our business consultants and advisors bring specialised knowledge and industry insights, providing you with access to best practices and cutting-edge strategies.

Our collaborative approach ensures that your operating model aligns with your strategic objectives and embraces the digital marketplace, leveraging the latest technologies and methodologies. We understand the challenges of legacy systems and organisational resistance to change, and our change management expertise will guide you through a seamless transformation.

Book a consultation now, and let us help you shape an agile, customer-centric operating model that drives sustainable growth and success in today's shifting business dynamics.

Discovery & Design

- Strategic Evaluation
- Rapid Design & Roadmap
  - Current state
  - Future state architecture
  - Benefits statement
  - Delivery strategy

Delivery

- User stories and preparation
- Build, configure and test
- Reviews and showcase
- Launch

Operations

- Training services
- Managed services
- Ongoing support backed by SLA
- Continuous engagement

Book a consult with our experts for insights into improving your digital business strategy.

Other services we provide:

- Digital strategy & advisory
- Cloud managed services - (Saas, DaaS, PaaS and IaaS)
- Data science and analytics
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- Enterprise and business architecture
- Demand and resource management
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