The last few years represent more changes in the way we do business than any other time in human history. Virtually every business is going digital, and almost any transaction can now be conducted using a smartphone. New products, services and even new companies spring into existence seemingly overnight, empowering customers and driving the need for relentless innovation to keep pace or even to survive.

Backend and front-end systems must be carefully designed to support seamless customer interactions. This introduces new challenges in terms of managing and integrating heterogeneous systems. The operational demands placed on today's IT organizations are staggering. How will we optimize our IT infrastructures to meet the demands of today's digital world?

With seemingly endless ways to connect with customers—including mobile, social and cloud—the implications to IT infrastructure extend across the enterprise. Can a business confidently update core business systems and introduce new products and services without risk of system delays or downtime? Can we ultimately re-learn how IT is done today?

The way it was is not the way it is: Keeping Pace with the Increasing Velocity of Business Change

By Daniel Gannon, President & CEO, TurnKey Solutions

The businesses that will be successful will have strategies that reduce complexities, beginning with the business culture first. In this new fast paced hybrid business/ IT model, the roles across business and IT will continue to blur and the combination of people, process and technology will help to enable rapid response to ever-changing business demands.

When supporting this shift to the new digital world, there are a few points CIOs should carefully consider:

Maintain Your Focus on Customer Experience

What was once acceptable in terms of turnaround for rollout of new functionality or system upgrades, both in terms of time and cost, is no longer good enough. Customers of all kinds now demand near instant

gratification, without any interruption in service or degradation of quality. In fact, the quality must consistently improve over time—if you don't meet the customer demand for new sources of products and services fast enough, your competition will. All it takes is 3 seconds. As an example, roughly 40% of users will abandon an application—move to a new app and provider, and not return—if the application does not load in 3 seconds or less.

The need for increased organizational agility as a means to elevate the customer experience is the new business requirement. Today's business wants to move quickly from idea to innovation to implementation. Modifying existing processes to enable continuous, agile delivery is certainly achievable, but only if the right tools and technologies are in place to effectively support these new business-critical processes.

Leverage Automation and Full End-to-end Lifecycle Management

Older applications that do not accommodate the new technologies and applications necessary to support this new era will become obsolete. The time for standalone point solutions has officially passed. When these disparate systems or applications are yoked together, different upgrades in functionality released at different times result in delivery challenges, adding time and cost to the ever-expanding financial equation. To support the growing drive for fast quality, we need to automate the outcomes and eliminate deviation. Leading companies are increasingly turning to providers like HP for comprehensive, one-stop-shop offerings—fully integrated solutions, coupled with innovation that can support the pace and functionality demands of tomorrow's business

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environment. These application platforms seamlessly integrate new functionality and innovation, making the process of implementing and maintaining them easier and more cost effective.

Strive For Quality and Efficiency, Without Compromise

Of course these operational improvements must be accomplished

in spite of the inevitable squeeze in IT budgets and resources. It always seems that the price tag of keeping pace with change velocity is more than the business can sustain. At the same time, making the changes in existing systems and taking advantage of new operational efficiencies and supporting the rollout of new products, services and revenue streams remains critically important to business success. In fact, adding new capabilities without a keen eye on quality negates any value gained from adding the new features; in fact, it can actually detract. This has led to a greater focus on quality; statistics show that companies are increasing QA and Testing budget allocations, and these increases are expected to grow by almost a third (31%) by 2017. The digital transformation process only emphasizes the importance of application quality.

Customer stickiness is often only as good as your last interaction in the new world of IT. Broad-based technologies like those that HP offers deliver application support from legacy to net new—and support integration and continuous delivery from mobile to ERP—all with a choice of delivery models that meets any business need, whether on premise, SaaS or in the cloud. This helps reduce the overhead and complexity of blending new and older systems while empowering business to maintain pace with the demands of customers and internal users alike.

The way it was is not the way it is, and will never be again. The truth is, in a short time we will probably look back at the rate of change that we are experiencing today and consider it to have been quite leisurely. Making the right choices of platform technology and partners will mean the difference between those businesses that maintain pace—and those that don't. CR