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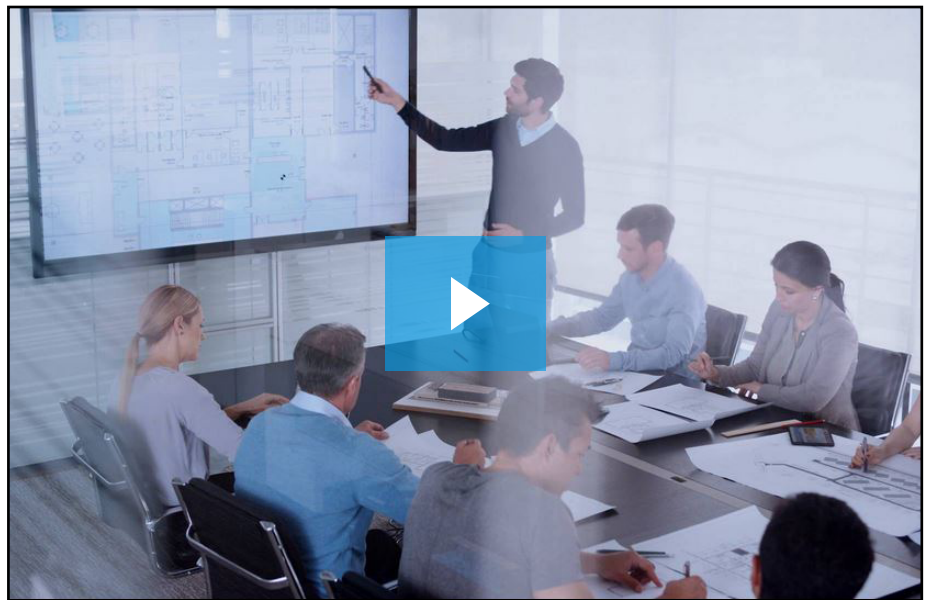
Becoming a digital disruptor is essential to surviving and thriving in a market that's constantly evolving. Today's digital economy is proving that companies that are slow to change simply can't compete — they must deliver their products and services with a digital-first mindset to remain relevant.



The secret of change is to focus all of your energy, not on fighting the old, but on building the new.



— Dan Millman



### Why strive to be a digital disruptor?

eCommerce, digital assistants, subscription services, constant connectivity and other market disruptors have changed consumer expectations. Not only do customers expect to be able to make purchases from the comfort of their home, they expect to do so at a restaurant while they wait for their appetizer, or during an Uber ride while on vacation. They expect to be able to register for and have instant access to a service without talking to a person, immediately troubleshoot devices on their own, and communicate with a customer service agent via chat/messaging from their mobile device.

And they don't expect all this just from companies like Amazon. They want the same convenient, seamless experience with every brand they engage with and will spend their money with those that provide it. It takes more than a couple of minor investments in technology to become a disruptor, so the change must be continuous and there should be an end goal in mind.

### Where do you start?

When facing such a crucial transformation, many traditional companies drag their feet simply because they don't know where to begin. A change of that magnitude — from traditional to a digital-first business model — is daunting for any company, and the bigger and older the establishment, the more overwhelming the task becomes. Here are a few starting points to get you off on the right foot:

#### 1. Develop a strategic agenda for change.

You must begin in the mindset of transformation. While becoming a digital-first company won't happen overnight, it's also not a transformation that can't be executed so incrementally that you end up being left behind. The change needs to be companywide and should begin at the heart — your company's vision and purpose. Consider what your customers want and what value you bring to them and focus your strategy on those outcomes.

This shift may require significant changes throughout your organization. Traditional organizational operations tend to function in a very siloed environment with a hierarchical structure of departments that don't work well together. This limits the ability to drive a digital environment because digital is all about collaboration, high engagement and using data to create an informed customer journey. If you want people to work in a different way, you must operate in a different way. Focus on and organize around the big initiatives you're pursuing and help employees understand what role they play in achieving them.

## 2. Learn from customers, competitors and partners.

This goes back to understanding customer expectations, not only of you but of the market as well. How do you compare to other companies when it comes to providing value through an intelligent customer experience? What differentiates you from those same companies?

Consider the strategies leveraged by brands that already provide a complete, end-to-end digital journey, and identify what components could work for your team. Pay attention to your customers' habits and needs when engaging digitally with other brands, and then meet them in that digital landscape. Leverage partnerships with vendors and innovators who can help accelerate your digital strategy.

## 3. Bring in digital-native leaders.

"Digital-native" employees are critical to the process of transformation because they're already comfortable with the technology being introduced and its rate of evolution.

They understand how adopting tech innovations can help them do more in less time, they're unencumbered by "the way things have always been done," and they're looking for the next big advancement.

Attracting this population to your workforce will not only provide you with employees who are proficient in a digital environment, it will reinforce your vision of transformation. Digital-first companies will better retain the digital natives who are already flooding the workforce. In turn, they will serve as a resource to the rest of the employee population, helping to convert and develop others' skills in the digital mindset.

Implementing a digital-first business model enables an intelligent, seamless customer experience that will attract new customers, retain existing customers and build brand loyalty. Data science paired with innovations in automation, AI and machine learning provide employees with meaningful work in a flexible environment. With these two crucial populations — your customers and your employees — moving quickly toward a digital-first expectation, success is dependent on becoming a digital disruptor.



### Kelly Morgan

Executive Vice President & Chief Strategy Officer

Kelly is the Executive Vice President & Chief Strategy Officer of Sykes Enterprises, Incorporated. His role focuses on innovating the customer care experience and leading strategic transformation for SYKES. He also serves as the executive sponsor for client relationships, maintaining and growing our client base. Kelly has more than 20 years of industry experience in software, telecom, cloud and high-tech services. He brings valuable thought leadership in strategy and innovation, transforming the traditional approach to customer care to an intelligent customer experience.

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