

Transformation You Can Dance To

American music icon and Nobel prize laureate Bob Dylan, famously sang, “The times they are a-changin’.” That may have been the case in the past, but we’re no longer living in a world of change. We’re in a period of outright transformation.

It’s essential to understand and embrace that reality in order to move yourself and your organization into the future with the greatest certainty possible.

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Some people make the mistake of assuming that change and transformation are essentially the same thing, with transformation just a bit more extreme than change. That’s not true at all. Here are some examples to illustrate the enormous differences.

Many of us have distinct memories of listening to music on LPs, not to mention the hassles that went along with that: the scratches, the hisses and having to pad around the room to make certain the record didn’t skip from the vibration of our footsteps.

Then came smaller spinning discs—CDs. At the time, they seemed like an answer to a prayer; not only was a CD more compact, but it was also less vulnerable to scratches and other physical damage.

Notice I said “less vulnerable.” A careless CD owner could still leave discs out, causing the same sort of damage that an LP could suffer. Still, it was a welcome form of change.

Music lovers these days have probably stashed their CD collection in a closet. That’s because they can listen to the same music in a digital format. Even better, they can access it through their computer, tablet or smartphone.

To bring the point home further, describe to a young person what it was like to have to get up and fix a skipping record halfway through an album. You might as well be talking about the “horseless carriage” parked in your driveway.

That’s not mere change. That’s true transformation.

Not Just Technology

It’s also understandable to assume that this sort of transformation is limited to technology. Granted, from wearables that can track our fitness to automobiles that are becoming increasingly autonomous, technology is transforming our lives in many ways.

But that’s by no means the limit to transformation. Consider:

Not very long ago, if you wanted funding to start a business, you had to go to the bank, hat in hand. Now, with platforms such as Kickstarter, you can leverage the financial potential of thousands of small investors who share your enthusiasm for your ideas.

Once, when you needed a ride to the airport, you often had to battle with a dozen other people looking to flag down an available cab. And once you did, you hoped you had enough cash on hand to pay for the trip. Now with Lyft, Uber and others, one swipe of an app arranges your transportation, and paying the

driver upon reaching your destination is a thing of the past.

Those and other examples like them underscore the dynamic that is transformation. Simple change is more a variation on an existing theme; transformation is an utterly new and revolutionary process. It's an out-and-out game changer.

Transform or Miss a Beat

I've been tracking the impact of what I refer to as the Three Digital Accelerators, computing power, bandwidth and digital storage, for going on three decades. They're the driving force behind the sort of transformation I've been discussing. Just as important, due to a predictable and exponential rate of change, they're only going to bring about transformation at an ever-faster rate of speed.

Within the next several years, outright transformation will impact how we sell, collaborate, train and educate. That means if you limit yourself to simple change, you're going to fall behind faster and faster. Transformation is going to occur and, if it can be done, it will be done. Further, if you don't do it, someone else is going to.



About the Author:

DANIEL BURRUS is considered one of the world's leading technology forecasters and innovation experts, and is the founder and CEO of [Burrus Research](http://www.burrus.com), a research and consulting firm that monitors global advancements in technology driven trends to help clients understand how technological, social and business forces are converging to create enormous untapped opportunities. He is the author of six books including The New York Times best seller [Flash Foresight](#). This article is reprinted with permission. Reproduction without permission is strictly prohibited. For reprint permission, contact Burrus Research, Inc. at office@burrus.com.



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