



Market Review: Organic Sprouts for Healthy Business





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BUSINESS NEED TO GET HEALTHY



A big question all businesses, from early stage startups to mature corporations, are asking themselves is how do I get healthy in this cloud era?

In our personal lives we are concerned about healthy living from exercise to eating right. We consume super foods like kale and chia seeds, and incorporate ancient grains like amaranth, quinoa, and teft. And of course organic farming is an important consideration as well.

In a similar way, in a bid to stay relevant, corporations have started to think about how they can serve “super foods” to their clients. The cloud era is an exciting time, and the prescription across the board is that all businesses need to begin thinking about how they can incorporate a digital practice into their value offering.

WHAT IS A DIGITAL BUSINESS



A digital business is one which wires themselves with an online component to enable the ease of communication, distribution, and continuous optimization that cloud deployment provides. This requires a smart integration of internal business processes and data with externally available information, synthesizing them to make existing products and services better. In this way, many are able to unlock a previously unimagined level of consumer experience.

Gartner defines digital business as “the creation of new business designs by blurring the digital and physical worlds. Digital business promises us to usher in an unprecedented convergence of people, businesses, and things that disrupt existing business models. With more than seven billion people and businesses, and at least 35 billion devices, communicating, transacting, and even negotiating with each other, a new world comes into being – the world of digital business”

Amazon for the past decade has been challenging the bricks-and-mortar business model for a wide range of companies—from Sears to Best Buy to Borders. They have also challenged the digital businesses of Google, Yahoo, eBay, and Netflix. Most companies are waking up to the reality that they must maintain agility in the cloud era by investing in appropriate internal business processes and technologies.

ORGANIC SPROUTS

Sprouts are interfaces that expose a service or data that can be published for others to use. Organic sprouts are one that businesses can build from the assets that they already have.

Organic Sprouts for Young Digital Businesses

Young digital businesses that are designing cloud enabled SaaS (Software-as-a-Service) solutions have a fantastic opportunity to lay the foundation for creating the right set of organic sprouts that can be published into the ecosystem. Companies like Amazon had the foresight to not only make their AWS services available through the web portal, but also concurrently through command- line interfaces. This enables them to offer a PaaS (Platform-as-a-Service). Companies that create a PaaS and define organic sprouts from inception are free to publish these sprouts to the world based on business strategy.



ORGANIC SPROUTS FOR MATURE BUSINESSES



Mature enterprises, digital or physical, have an enormous amount of data assets buried underground in silos. Many are realizing that they can “sprout” this data and unlock tremendous value for customers and ecosystem participants. Leading mature businesses have invested a lot of money over the years in improving their internal process through CRM, ERP, MRP, HRMS, Financial Services, IT service desk, IT asset management, IT catalog and other services. Some have started to mine the mountains of data being generated through Big Data Hadoop services.

These companies are rightly apprehensive of the security of the data and services that APIs expose them to. Through proper governance and policies, each of the sprouts can be protected for access rights and metered for abuse. Companies can plan to open APIs for internal use first, and then steadily roll out to allow innovators to start leveraging the data and services. Some of these services can eventually be made publically available and monetized. Many times the monetization of the public services tap into an amazing customer-experience that bridges the physical and digital worlds of their customers.

Publish Sprouts with Swagger

Modern web services have come to depend on REST APIs. Once you decide to sprout new RESTful services, it is important to consider how the world will come to be aware of it. In the old world there was Interface Definition Language (IDL) to define an API like CORBA or DCOM. In the RESTful world, the use of Swagger ([https:// helloverb.com/developers/swagger](https://helloverb.com/developers/swagger)) is a great way to document the interfaces published by the sprouts. Swagger enables a formalized machine- readable service contract for the REST interface, and great way to democratize sprouts.

Bottom Line

Becoming a digital-enabled business is becoming less and less of an option in today's business climate. A great way to compete effectively is to consider how your organization can sprout services and data for both internal and external consumption.



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