



DISCOVER WHAT DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IS AND **WHY CHOOSE IT4IT**

It's surprising how many transformation programmes and projects seem to be undertaken for the sake of transformation itself. Although there is usually an underlying goal, it's not always evident. So, what are transformations for?

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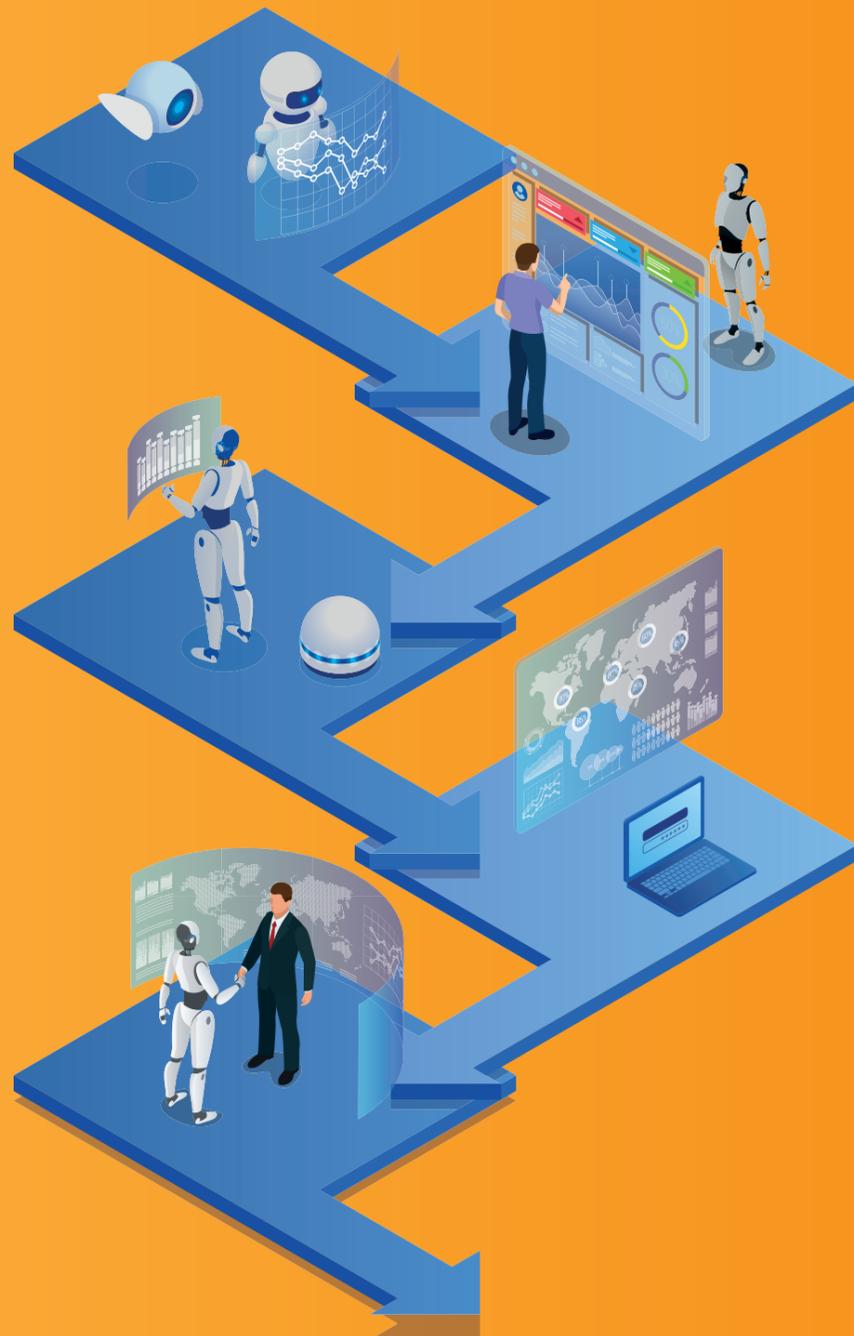
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"Transformation" means major change. No more and no less. Major change as opposed to moderate or minor change. It also sounds impressive, which is why it's used more often than it deserves to be. The same hyperbole applies to "digital". And "digital transformation". But it does serve to draw attention to something and as long as the hype is not too extreme, this semantic stretching may be justified.

OK. So, the hype has got your attention. What actual benefits are people trying to achieve?

First, let's make the distinction between digital transformation and its less sexy counterpart, IT transformation. Digital transformation is about major change to the way an enterprise uses IT, while IT transformation refers to how the IT products and services are delivered. Digital transformation is about having the right IT, IT transformation is about doing IT right. The two are interrelated in the sense that digital transformation often places higher demands on IT, requiring transformation of the IT function.

Where's the "for" in digital transformation? It's usually for making more money with products and services with significant IT inside. It's often for using IT to enhance the customer experience and in so doing, generating more sales and justifying higher prices. Sometimes it's 'just' for improving the internal processes with IT, without the customer being aware of it – physical products and services, digitally produced and delivered. But in all cases, it's primarily about the functionality.



Whereas with IT transformation, the functionality is a given. It's about how well the defined functionality is developed, deployed, run and supported. It's about how quickly this all happens. And how cheaply. Better, faster and cheaper. Where "better" is not fitness for purpose (this is the functionality) but fitness for use. In ITIL terminology, warranty, not utility.

So, the primary "for" in IT transformation is achieving major change in the following areas:

- More frequent, faster and reliable development and delivery of the applications, data, infrastructure and IT services that provide the functionality*
- *More resilient operational performance (availability, response times, security etc.)*
 - *Lower expenditure – both OPEX (running costs) and CAPEX (investment)*

Another reason to transform the IT function is to make IT a better place to work. It's been well established that a healthy workforce – whether in IT or elsewhere – correlates well with superior organizational performance.

So, it's plausible to assume that investment in the well-being of the IT workforce will have benefits across better, faster and cheaper IT. "Putting the fun back into IT" is something that comes up frequently in the DevOps community. It's encouraging to see presentations at conferences, for example, that address stress, social awkwardness and mental health. This is all part of the normalization of IT: making IT less of a special case.

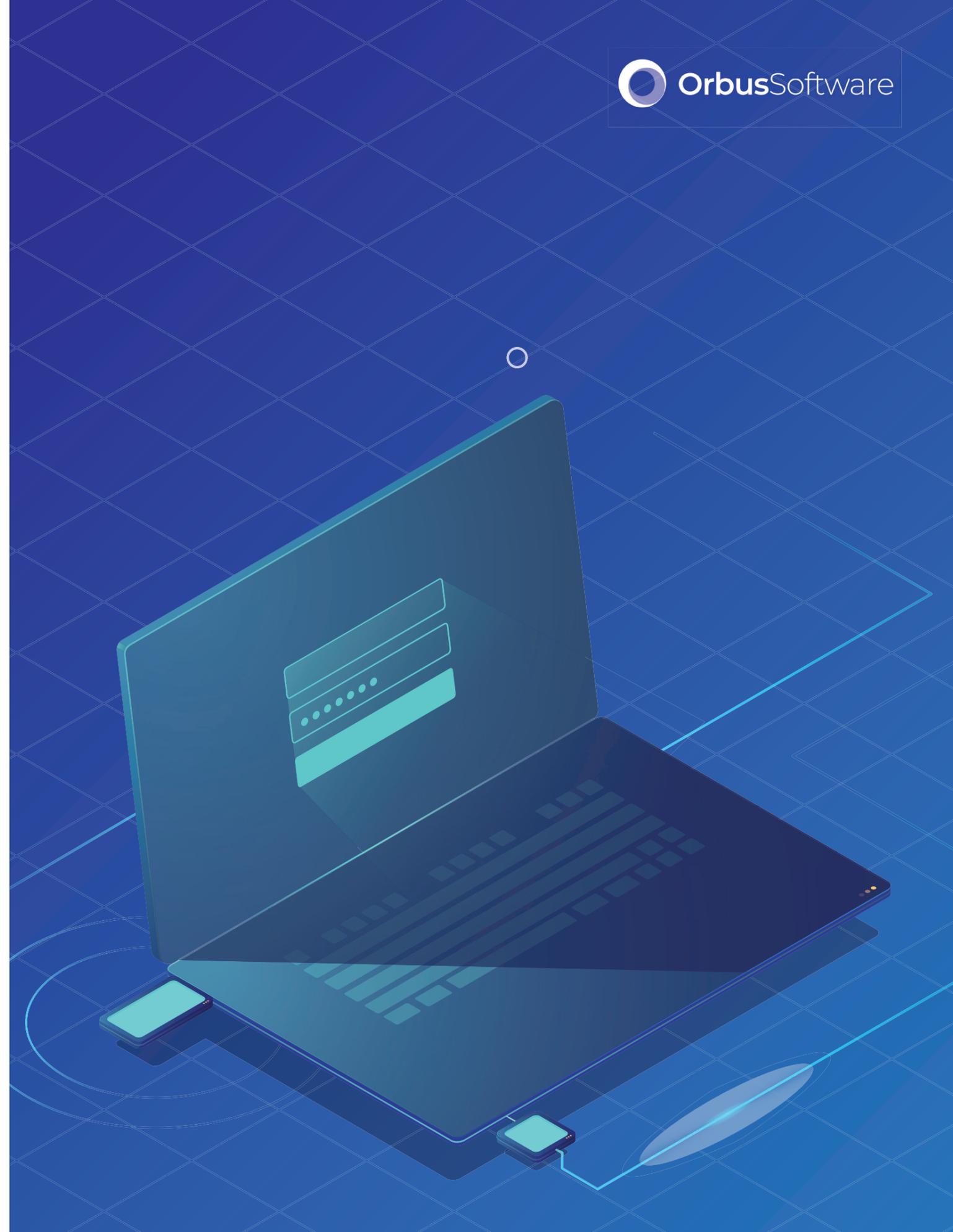
The primary "for" in digital transformation is significant use of IT in achieving major change to:

- *Products and services*
- *Customer experience*
- *Business processes*

If IT is strategic for the business model, then it's "digital".

In summary, when people talk about transformation, is it about the use of IT (digital transformation) or the delivery of IT (IT transformation)? Is the goal is external or internal, business or IT, or better, faster or cheaper? Or happier? No, make that and happier. Investing in people usually gives the best return on investment.

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