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How 21st century companies must thrive on digital disruption.

Why adaptability and agility are key for businesses today.

By Vox Creative

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Speed to action has become the capability that organizations must master. According to a [2018 Innosight report](#)¹ on corporate longevity, companies are spending less time on the S&P 500. In fact, at the current rate, 50 percent of companies on the S&P 500 are projected to turn over during the next decade.

“The competitive environment in the mid-21st century is radically different than it was previously,” says Jay Scanlan, Genpact’s head of Global Growth Ecosystems. “It’s more connected; it’s more fluid; it’s more dynamic.”

For some legacy companies, operating in such a fast-paced, ever-evolving environment is a challenge, even uncomfortable, Scanlan says. But in comparison to the alternative — corporate extinction — evolving an organization’s business model and ways of working seems like the clear winning choice.

Survival in this rapidly changing business world looks like the ability to connect, predict, and adapt in real time for the benefit of your customers — meaning companies stay ahead of change and disruption, build customer loyalty, and grow revenues. Companies can also move toward making better, faster decisions based on relevant data and insights, while both anticipating future opportunities and mitigating risks.

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And the payoff is major — to businesses and consumers alike. Imagine a world in which your store sent you groceries before you realized you needed them. You never

¹ *2018 Corporate Longevity Forecast: Creative Destruction is Accelerating*. By Scott D. Anthony, S. Patrick Viguerie, Evan I. Schwartz and John Van Landeghem.

experienced plane delays again because unscheduled maintenance vanished. Your house detected a leak, shut off the water, and submitted an insurance claim all before you even got home from work.

That reality sounds far off in the future, but it'll be here sooner than you think. As companies break down inter-organizational silos, analyze data for predictive insights, and tap into their knowledge, they're working toward the ultimate goal: becoming a customer-centered organization that can act instinctively.

Meet the instinctive enterprise.

Just as complex organisms harness instinct to survive in nature, the next generation of advanced businesses will also flourish by behaving instinctively. This is a major shift in thinking, as many businesses operate using a less nimble command-and-control leadership model. Major decisions come from the top and are disseminated downward to the rest of the company, with the expectation that these directives will be followed without opposition. Accordingly, different departments operate in their own individual silos.

What emerges is a company slowed down by bureaucracy, driven by disconnected moving parts that operate independently from one another, often without regard for a central integrated strategy. And when the agility of the organization is lost, Scanlan says, "the consumer experience and the business customer experience suffers."

Advanced businesses, however, recognize that there's a better, more efficient way. At these firms, delivering business outcomes is more important than maintaining rigid operational structures. Employees are empowered to act in the interests of the customer, and make decisions based on robust analytics and insights.

The end result is an instinctive enterprise that is more flexible and has the ability to reimagine industries, reshape business models, and amplify human potential.

Instinctive enterprises embody three important characteristics.

- They're embedded in a connected ecosystem.

Instinctive enterprises view boundaries as permeable entities, things to be blurred and crossed with impunity. Internally, these companies look to break down walls between

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teams and eradicate silos; externally, they have a vibrant, connected ecosystem of partners.

These enterprises might even collaborate and share data with competitors, if it means customers benefit. [Pharmaceutical firms](#), for example, are starting to share data with one another to not only improve patient health but also patient trust.²

- They prioritize the ability to anticipate and predict opportunities and change.

Thanks to technology, companies have the ability to gather more data than ever, both from internal and external sources, while also tapping into structured and unstructured data. But figuring out how to interpret that data is another story. Companies currently don't have the skills or tools to draw actionable insights, so the decisions they make are poorly informed.

Instinctive enterprises, however, view data as a force for insight and foresight. These firms prioritize the predictive nature of data: the ways in which analytics can point to future trends or reveal potentially game-changing (or even life-saving) customer insights.

For example, [commercial banks](#) can use predictive algorithms to analyze a small firm's finances, balance sheet, P&L, and cash flow so the business is awarded a line of credit in minutes, not weeks.³ It could even have pre-approved credit before the company even requests the loan. That allows growth to happen that much faster.

- These firms encourage an adaptive workforce.

In a command-and-control leadership model, every employee has their prescribed place in the organizational silo. Leaders think about jobs in terms of purely functional roles, meaning employee output is emphasized.

However, instinctive enterprises understand that employees flourish when they're seen as vital colleagues who can evolve in the workplace in parallel with changes to strategic goals and organizational shifts. Technology also allows workers to be proactive — not reactive — in their day-to-day work life, and reach their full potential by empowering them to apply their knowledge and strengths to every situation.

² "The future of pharmacovigilance." Authored by *BK Kalra*, senior vice president, business leader for consumer goods, retail, life sciences & healthcare, and *Eric Sandor*, global leader for Cora Pharmacovigilance at Genpact.

³ "Harnessing instinct in banking," Genpact video.

Employees are purpose-driven and customer-focused, rather than simply worried about the bottom line, and have the tools to respond in a quicker fashion. They move from a focus on day-to-day tasks to milestone-based achievements, and work toward a common purpose.

Artificial intelligence is key to enabling instinctive enterprises to thrive.

Instinctive enterprises will succeed because they have artificial intelligence (AI) woven throughout their businesses. As its name implies, AI is sophisticated, machine-driven cognitive judgment, where machines are “interpreting, understanding, and responding to the world around it, given a source of inputs and derived set of rules,” Scanlan says.

AI gives companies the ability to harness real-time insights and be more agile in decision-making, in large part by helping firms make sense of data by quickly organizing it, finding patterns, and extrapolating future outcomes.

An instinctive enterprise has the ability to reimagine industries, reshape business models, and amplify human potential.

AI shall enable the instinctive enterprise: It functions as the connector between people, operational processes, and domain knowledge, and empowers both employees and the business itself. As a result, organizations are acting instinctively with access to internal and external insights, data, and knowledge, which means that they can make better predictions and decisions for the benefit of customers.

For example, [car insurance companies](#) might use predictive insights and advanced technology to assess car accident damage remotely.⁴ By analyzing previously gathered data about a specific model of cars and accidents as well as mobile phone photos or videos of damage, insurers can immediately advise customers about claims payments and repairs — maybe even by recommending appropriate repair vendors right away.

Instinctive enterprises are better positioned for global success.

Companies embracing AI have the potential to transform how we work and live. Of course, AI isn't meant to replace human judgment, but to enhance it — and enable

⁴ “When insurers become protectors.” Genpact video.

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instinctive enterprises to thrive. That's a good thing for everyone. In today's ever-shifting corporate world, instinctive enterprises are better positioned for global competitiveness and long-term success. Behaving instinctively isn't just a smart business approach — it's crucial for business survival.

Genpact brings digital solutions and intelligent operations to multinational organizations around the world. See how it delivers transformation that lasts at [Genpact.com](https://www.genpact.com)