

Focus on the challenges, not the technology

Digital transformation and the Internet of Things (IoT) are widely discussed topics in business today. That said, many organisations are still slow in getting their transformation initiatives underway and implementing tangible IoT solutions.



Rodney Taylor, CEO of Activate Group

According to Rodney Taylor, CEO of Activate Group, this is because most people get so caught up in the technology that they do not focus on the challenges they are trying to solve.

“We need to move away from the notion that when a new technology emerges, we must find an application for it in our business,” he says.

“It is because of that type of thinking that organisations often implement technologies on a whim, only to find that it does not yield the type of results they were expecting. This then leads to them being hesitant to adopt new technologies in the future, because they are not yet proven.”

Think differently about technology

Taylor says that we need to change the way we think about technology, particularly when it comes to IoT. “For IoT to make a tangible difference to business, organisations need to focus on the challenge first. The technology is there, but unless you have an in-depth understanding of the issue you are trying to solve, you will become bogged down and progress will be slow,” he says.

“However, if you focus on the challenge and then look at what technologies are out there that could solve the problem if applied differently, you will see how much easier it is to embrace IoT.”

Connecting things

IoT is always about connecting things and making the organisation’s most valuable assets visible.

“We work with many retail clients and two of the biggest challenges they face is the cost of electricity and optimising their workforce.”

“Through IoT, for example, they can monitor electricity usage in real-time and can switch off appliances remotely when they are not required. At the same time, they can monitor employees to ensure that their time is spent optimally on the most important tasks,” says Taylor.

“This is just one example where IoT can drive efficiency and save costs, but there is a myriad of other applications out there as well.”

He adds that it cannot be about embracing every hyped-up technology that comes across your desk.

“Unless a technology can solve an immediate problem for your organisation, improve efficiency and drive down cost, it is probably not the right solution for you,” says Taylor. “Technology for the sake of it can be very dangerous and costly. However, if it is applied in the right way to solve business challenges, the business can benefit hugely.”

“I am yet to see an industry or sector that cannot benefit from IoT,” he says. “It’s the application thereof that makes all the difference.”

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