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Integrating Strategy with Transformational IT Capabilities

# COVID-19 BUSINESS RECOVERY PLAN



**4 STEPS**

**90 DAYS** TO REALISTICALLY RECOVER  
FROM THE COVID - 19 SLUMP

**Inc.**  
**5000**

Silver  
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Partner

**IBM**



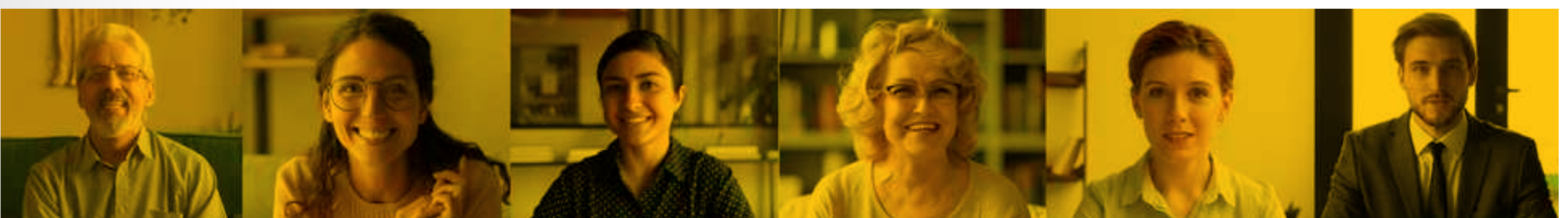




The Covid-19 era will definitely be counted as an exemplary example of human adaptiveness and resilience in the history books. This pandemic didn't just turn out to be physiological or medical one in nature like the previous one's that came before it – wiping out large chunks of population and then dying down.

This Covid-19 pandemic spread across the globe and became massive because of the speed at which people can move across countries and borders today - and the virus spread fast with them. This interconnectedness and interdependence - which was a boon for us, soon became the reason initially the major countries and eventually the rest of world got hit with this virus at breakneck speed.

As entire populations went into lockdown under pre-emptive social distancing, businesses started suffering and slowly the global economy started contracting.







Some industries like ecommerce, insurance, information technology etc., were able to continue their operations by letting their employees work from home and by digitalizing their team and client meetings on virtual platforms.

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But still, even those operations which continued from home were and are still hurting because their clients are also impacted. It is obvious that their clients need to be profitable or at least in a position to be able to pay for their services. The entire value chain is impacted and to get things working back again or let's just say for the economy to return to some semblance of normalcy - the consumer has to return.

The pandemic is still evolving and the threat to lives and livelihood still persists. A vaccine may have the capacity to 'save the world', but we are still months away from discovering an effective vaccine and then getting the whole world vaccinated.





# What is the Next - Normal for Businesses?

In this uniquely challenging environment, what can you do as a key decision maker to make your business more resilient? Before that, ask yourself some questions -

After almost 6-7 months of responding to the pandemic -



- 01 Have you learnt something new?
- 02 Have you grown as an enterprise?
- 03 Have you seen all the different sides of your operations?
- 04 Have you and your team grown out of your comfort zones?
- 05 Have you taken the financial hit you never thought of before?
- 06 Have you dealt with your customers in a much more considerate way?
- 07 Have you understood your customers needs better?

If you've answered 'yes' to some or even one of the questions above, we think this pandemic has given you an opportunity to think differently - which otherwise would not have happened voluntarily - if you were in your previous comfort zone. There needed to be a little bit of shaking up to help you start looking for better alternatives of doing business



Growth comes from discomfort. Businesses have suddenly jumped by 5 years in terms of digital adoption in just a matter of 4-8 weeks, and the biggest realization to dawn is that business can be fully run remotely. These realizations wouldn't have happened if not for the pandemic.



In the post-COVID-19 world, software organizations must respond to a rapidly changing reality. This will require organizations to holistically embrace new technologies, mindsets and cultural changes to emerge better and importantly stronger.

## The 90 - day recovery plan is based on four pillars -

- ✓ Refocusing digital efforts in response to evolving customer needs
- ✓ Using big data and AI to improve business operations
- ✓ Selectively modernizing technology capabilities
- ✓ Changing your organizational operations forever

### 1. Refocusing Digital Efforts in Response to Evolving Customer Needs

You'll need to accelerate your shift toward digital-first models – at warp speed.

For example, if you are a predominantly brick and mortar retail operation, it would be great idea to invest more into a fully functioning e-commerce business interconnected across all business functions (warehousing, merchandising, marketing, customer support, etc.) and it all starts with getting your website up

integrated with the latest secure payment gateway . This would help you offset you lost pre Covid sales from traditional retail stores by a robust ecommerce channel,

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But, it's not just about digitizing randomly for the sake of it. Companies must re-imagine their customer journeys in-depth to reduce friction in their buying

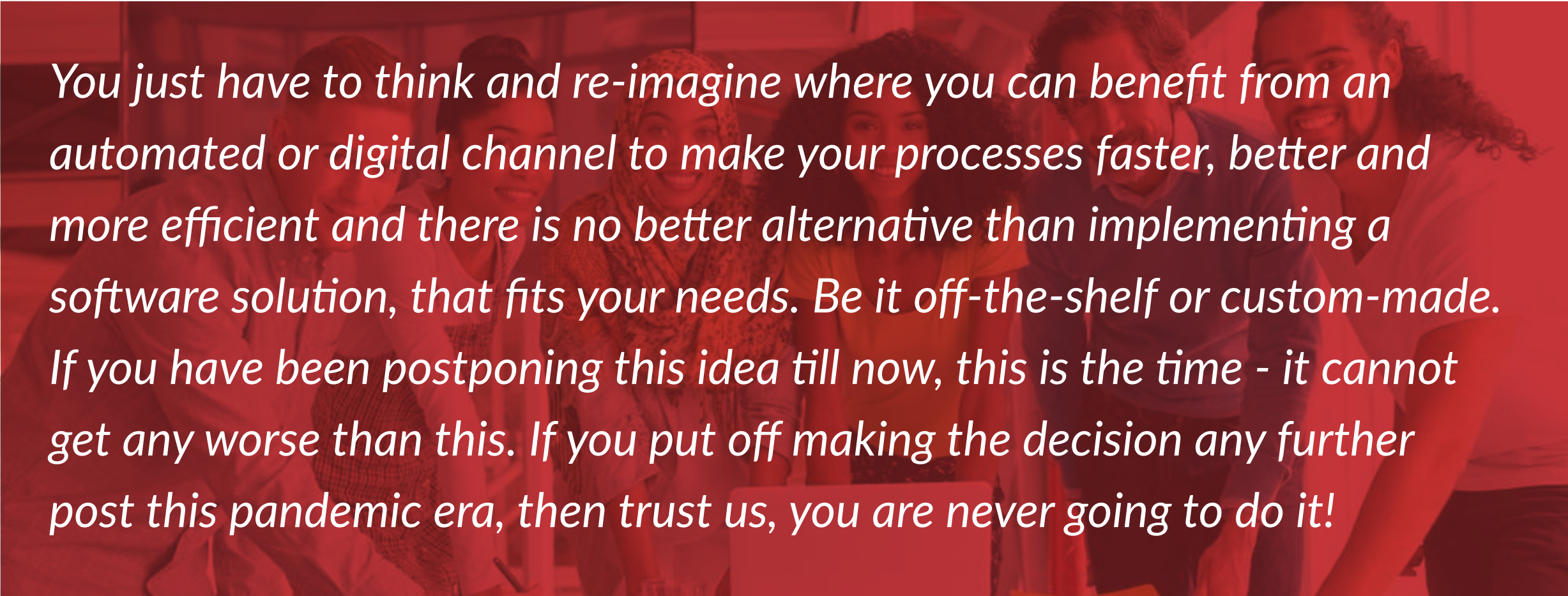


behaviors while accelerating their shift to digital channels.

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For example, if you are an automobile manufacturer you will need to handle functions that were traditionally performed by dealers, such as trade-ins, financing, servicing, and home delivery of cars online.

You would need custom software solutions which were not easily available in the market, because nobody could foresee such a business situation and hence nobody built such software.



*You just have to think and re-imagine where you can benefit from an automated or digital channel to make your processes faster, better and more efficient and there is no better alternative than implementing a software solution, that fits your needs. Be it off-the-shelf or custom-made. If you have been postponing this idea till now, this is the time - it cannot get any worse than this. If you put off making the decision any further post this pandemic era, then trust us, you are never going to do it!*

## **How to tackle this realistically in the next 90 days:**

CEOs or the leaders should ask their business leaders to assess how the needs and behaviors of their most important customers have changed and benchmark their digital channels against their needs and be vigilant of their competition.



This information should form the basis of a renewed digital agenda and it can include points like getting a new software onboarded - and the implementation roadmap should take no longer than 30 days. The management team can then quickly gather agile teams to execute the most urgent business needs.



Such initiatives can deliver meaningful results in mere weeks.

Changes that require more fundamental work, like setting up a new e-commerce channel or getting a software developed or outsourcing , will typically take longer.

It is also advisable, that you keep measuring the performance of your digital-channel during this 90 day period and adapt quickly as you learn more. A weekly meeting with senior management of your company to discuss the learning and to drive the full agenda at a desired pace and in a coordinated fashion is recommended.



## 2. Using Data Analytics to Improve Business Operations

In every organization, there are multiple decisions that get made on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis. And every business has its own forecasting and planning model to guide such decisions. However, in these times, organizations will need to re-validate these models.

In the same way that many companies had to rebuild their risk and financial models, which failed during the 2008 financial collapse, models will similarly need to be replaced because of the massive economic and structural shifts caused by the pandemic.

For example, models that use time-series, oil-price, or unemployment data will need to be rebuilt entirely. The data must be re-evaluated as well.

*Your analytics teams will likely need to bring together new data sets and use enhanced modeling techniques to forecast demand and manage assets successfully.*



If you are an automotive-parts supplier, for example, you will have to develop a forecasting model that incorporates previously unused third-party data. This model will help you spot potential issues with your own suppliers' ability to deliver needed items, offering a chance to reach out to your suppliers to work out logistics or find another source.

Other business areas can benefit from more sophisticated modeling as well. Financial-services providers, for example, can use data analytics to generate leads for their sales agents, with models calibrated to handle the current environment.

### **How to tackle this realistically in the next 90 days:**

As a first step, your chief analytics officer (or equivalent) should mobilize an effort to look into the models that currently support your business operations and work with business leaders to analyze them based on their impact on key operations and their efficiency in the current era.



This assessment is urgent and should be completed as quickly as possible. It will essentially define a program of quick fixes that the data and analytics team can undertake, working hand in hand with business and functional leaders.

Once the situation stabilizes, CEOs and business leaders should push their data and analytics teams to develop next-generation models that leverage data analytics and modeling techniques better suited for fast-changing environments.







All the advanced companies are already creating synthetic data sets using advanced machine-learning techniques, such as generative adversarial networks (GANs) to train new analytical models because historical data are of little use or no use in this current scenario.

### **3. Selectively Modernize Technology Capabilities**

You have the potential to free up as much as 45 percent of your IT costs over the course of a year. Our experience suggests that roughly two-thirds of this potential can be achieved through measures such as extending hardware- and software-refresh cycles, rapidly renegotiating vendor contracts, and restricting cloud workloads by turning off noncritical jobs.

#### **How to tackle this realistically in the next 90 days:**

First, develop the plan to rightsize and create a more variable cost structure—the faster the better to free up resources for the digital agenda.



Next, choose your cloud partners. While speed is of the essence, CIOs should thoughtfully consider the contractual structures offered by technology providers. Carefully review those that appear too good to pass up to ensure that the providers aren't capturing all the value. And remember to launch appropriate internal efforts to train and prepare teams to operate in the new environment. During this sprint, it's also time to modernize the tech stack selectively—"selectively" being the catch word.



Most companies won't have the management bandwidth and resources to take on a full-scale modernization in the next 12 to 18 months. By focusing on setting up or enhancing a cloud-based data platform and equipping agile teams with automated software delivery, CIOs can double, or even triple, development velocity in the short term.

In the final sprint of last 30 days, it's a no-brainer to launch the recruiting of additional digital talent and accelerate digital upskilling of the entire organization. These steps will prepare organizations well for a more substantive modernization of their application landscapes after recovery.



#### 4. Change your Organizational Operations Forever

Banks, pharmaceutical companies, insurance, e-commerce, software companies have pivoted their entire field forces to a remote model and have succeeded massively.

The current crisis has forced organizations to adapt rapidly to new realities, opening everyone's eyes to new, faster ways of working with customers, suppliers, and employees.

Many CEOs wonder what it will take to maintain this improved productivity levels. Its simple - maintain whatever you have been forced into. Continue the remote working model you never thought would be possible or even productive, because now you know it works.

*Companies that have led the way in adopting flatter, fully agile remote organizational models have shown substantial improvements in both, execution pace and productivity.*



While many companies have at least a few agile remote teams in place, few have successfully scaled to hundreds of teams staffed with many more “doers” than “checkers,” which is what’s needed to drive the accelerated organizational pace the crisis—and even the next normal—demands.

Remote working can help organizations move at a faster clip, as companies tap into new labor pools and specialized remote expertise. (And yes, speed can be executed remotely!) Remote working can also enable new productivity opportunities, especially for companies with large field forces.

### **How to tackle this realistically in the next 90 days:**

Get your senior management to assess where remote work models could unleash productivity benefits permanently for your organization. Think about who all can work from home on a continuous basis and still deliver exemplary quality work. This not just will help you downsize your savings on your office space commercials, but will also save the employees on their commute times and fuel surcharges, while contributing to lesser pollution and reduced cars on the roads.

In the second 30-day sprint, design the new models with consideration for staffing level, expertise mix, governance, and operating procedures.

Finally, in the third month, implement and operationalize the new remote working designs and make it the next normal even in the post-covid era.

### **Lastly,**

Leaders who want to succeed fast must quickly reset their operational agendas to meet new customer needs, ramp up their decision-support systems, and fine tune their organizational models and technology stacks to operate at the highest effective speed.





In other words, all the decision making executives in the organization must point their digital firepower at the right targets and quickly execute against them. It's essential to set these targets right and regularly measure progress against them.

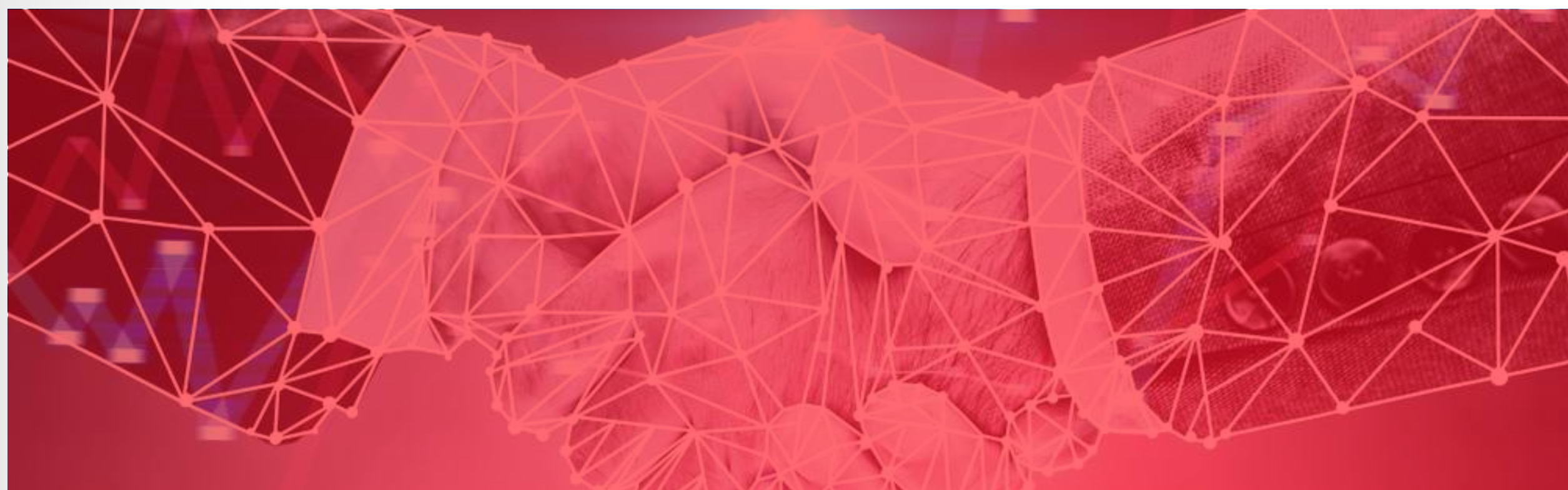
Achieving results across digital channels to win the revenue race, rebuilding the most critical decision-support models, and doubling development velocity are goals that should be of topmost priority in the next 90 days for your business to bounce back quickly.

*To move your offline processes online, leverage data analytics to boost process effectiveness and revamp the customer experience - software is the glue that binds all this together. The pandemic has simply elevated the need for companies across industries to become more software-centric.*



***Getting a software in at all the crucial points in your organization should be your topmost priority and the front and center of your go-forward strategy.***

The pandemic has forever altered our world, testing the ability of businesses to adapt unlike any other challenge in recent memory. While uncertainties loom over how things will play out, organizations can give themselves the best chance of succeeding by digitalization and modernization.





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## WE ARE ON A MISSION...

To help companies develop custom software solutions, web/mobile apps on Microsoft & IBM iSeries platforms to compete and succeed in a data-driven globally competitive world.

Unlike other software development companies, we remain subservient to our customer's success. **We are totally focused on "Helping our customers succeed first, our success comes second"** – we firmly believe we will invariably succeed.

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