

Global Telecommunications and Media Executives on Digital Reinvention: Exclusive Insights from IBM iX at Mobile World Congress

Key learnings, challenges and opportunities from an exclusive gathering of more than 25 global C-level telecommunications and media companies

SAN FRANCISCO, May 5, 2017 /PRNewswire/ -- The brightest minds in mobile, telecommunications and media gather annually in Barcelona for Mobile World Congress, the world's largest meeting for the mobile industry. This year, strategists from [IBM iX](#) (NYSE: [IBM](#)), the global consulting agency, convened more than 25 global executives from leading telcos and media companies to discuss the challenges, opportunities and solutions for reinventing their businesses in a digital world.

Above all, the group recognized the need to create disruptive opportunities of their own before they themselves are disrupted. Companies are increasingly required to develop processes for identifying and understanding new digital paradigms that require attention, and the resources required to grow market share and profitability across their businesses. While the conversation focused on telco and media, the challenge of reinvention applies to all industries, from retail to banking to industrial products and beyond.

"The insights and energy generated in these sessions was palpable," said Brian Love, Associate Partner, IBM iX. "The discussions validated a rapidly changing world where customer expectations are on the rise, traditional customer relationships are changing hands and the demand for data drives massive investments in their networks."

Here are the top things learned during the exclusive sessions, and recommended actions to stay ahead of the digital curve:

- **Digital Orchestration** – while the majority of companies have already developed new digital initiatives, few felt they were maximizing their investments. Most have disparate efforts working under the CIO, CMO and various business unit leaders, and find that these efforts often conflicted with one another. Telcos need to find ways to better orchestrate these efforts to remain aligned to one another, and to the overarching digital strategy. These efforts must be sponsored from top-down, starting with the CEO.
- **IT / Business Alignment** – businesses face an ongoing divide between the technology organization and the business. The success of new innovative, customer-centered business strategies require CIOs to provide the technology to execute – operating otherwise can cause innovations to stall. Business and IT planning must coordinate to ensure that investment in the platforms and employee tools support the customer experiences the businesses envision.
- **Talent Reinvention** – participants indicated that only 30-50% of their workforce were prepared for their digital future. Telcos require significant retraining or refreshing of personnel capabilities, while tomorrow's employees will need new "digital-savvy" that must fluidly be incorporated into team environments. In response, companies must be customer-focused, agile in approach and iterative in delivery. Difficult decisions may be required to position a team for future competition.
- **Innovation Through New Businesses** – many of the executives report that existing corporate structures impair innovation. The pressures of maintaining their business frequently impede their ability to invest in innovation. To handle current and future disruptions, companies must consider creating new entities and/or companies to drive their innovation agenda. Smaller, more nimble up-start companies are more likely to have the freedom to experiment, evaluate new partnerships and offer differentiated measures of success and incentives. Incumbent companies must identify unique, proprietary resources and expertise, and innovate with institutional competitive advantages.

To learn more about IBM iX, visit www.ibm.com/ibmix.

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