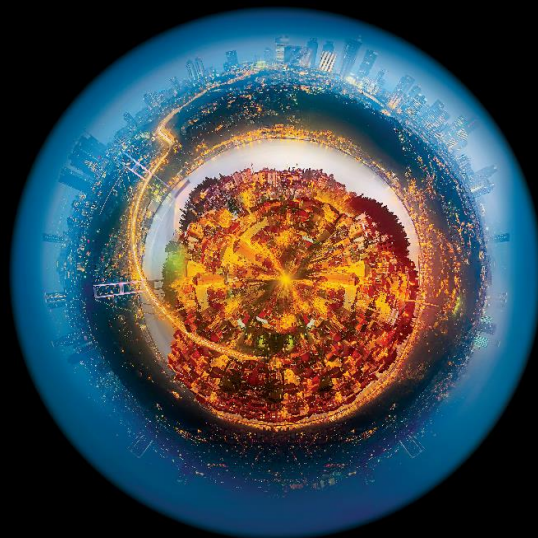


PEOPLE, CULTURE AND ADOPTION PACE

How Defence can embrace disruptive technologies



Defence IQ gained some exclusive insight from Hani Girgis, Partner - UK lead for Deloitte's Defence Technology practice

Hani is the UK lead for Deloitte's Defence Technology practice. Hani is also the Global Digital Lead for Infrastructure Capital Projects. Since joining Deloitte in 2009 he has been primarily focusing on leading Deloitte's Digital Capital Project efforts at Expo2020, Crossrail, HS2, Saudi Aramco, Thames Tideway Tunnels and Ministry of Defence.

Additionally, Hani is Deloitte's Enterprise Content Management Practice Lead within the Analytics & Information Management Services Line. He is an accomplished Information Management evangelist and a leading Subject Matter Expert in the field of Ubiquitous Portals, Document Management and Business Process Management, having presented in numerous international conferences. In this remit Hani's focus has been on the programme management, planning, design, implementation & delivery of large scale Data Driven technology programmes in the Infrastructure & Capital Projects space, covering both private and public sector clients.



Defence IQ: What does Deloitte's experience in the commercial sector highlight as the key opportunities and challenges to embracing digital technologies?

Hanis Girgis: The accelerating pace of technological change means that organisations have to become more adaptable and agile, they can't rely on assumptions, systems and process built for a disappearing status quo. The current wave of technological progress means there's a massive opportunity to cost-effectively deliver an ideal outcome for your organisation, its personnel and wider stakeholders. However, there is also an opportunity that many are taking across industries, to get distracted by every new solution that appears.

We no longer need to be led by how technology works or its capabilities, but can focus much more on outcomes and experiences we're trying to achieve, with users at the heart of the process, and then look at the solutions to enable this. In all the clients we've worked with, delivering this will either be possible now or we can put in place the building blocks to deliver it within the next 5 years.

This will often require taking a step back and challenging some long-held assumptions about how an organisation is run and the way things have been done but the opportunity, to deliver that ideal user experience, is a huge one.

Defence IQ: What are the key barriers to organisations identifying and adopting disruptive technologies in the commercial sector, and what methods and approaches best overcome them.

Hanis Girgis: As well the large barrier of being technology led rather than user led, other key related obstacles include lack of agility and a lack of communication across silos in an organisation.

We therefore use something called the Tangible Hypothesis, a concise user level description of the ideal journey for the key users, plus other journeys (staff members, etc). This focuses on users and functionality rather than on solutions, and aids communication between different parts of the organisation. This allows for the creation of a coherent, end to end experience, rather than a patchwork of point solutions where users fall through the gaps.

This experience led approach and the communication that it facilitates also allows for better adoption of technologies that works across silos, rather than monoliths being created that repeat functionality. There is a real need, in order to have the adaptability required to survive, to aim for solutions that are flexible and modular, with procurement strategies and financial planning to match. This is not just about changing the mindset of the technology team, but shifting the way that the entire organisation behaves.

Defence IQ: Given your experiences in the commercial sector, what do you think are the big opportunities for Defence and Government and what should they prioritise if they are to realise them?

Hanis Girgis: I think the potential benefits offered by technologies such as AI, Machine Learning Robotics and 5G are well documented, if perhaps a little misunderstood, and there is a constant tension between the hyperbole and the reality. Cynics will always hold back until the technology is proven whereas the innovators see each new technology as the world beater. The challenge is to find that middle ground, and here Defence shares many of the same challenges here that face the commercial sector.

In many ways, language is the problem. For example, the use of Digital Transformation implies a move from where we are to something new at which point we have transformed, whereas in fact the pace of technological change requires a constant, and probably accelerating evolution. Change and innovation will be a constant and part of the culture and fabric of Defence, and this must be driven by perceived and realisable user benefits in the field.

So my first point would be that it is people, not the technology that is key to disruption. Here I would quote Professor Nina Kollars whose mantra is 'there is no disruption without adoption!' ; she advocates that it is the experienced and 'curious' practitioners who are key. They will have earned their spurs through constant improvisation in their specialised areas and connected an appropriately federated and empowered experimentation, exercising and training 'infrastructure', they will translate good ideas into adopted capability at pace.

My second point is that of culture. This nearly always features at the top of any 'risk register', and attracts lots of good 'nudging' ideas; but Defence has some ingrained structural and cultural challenges that it will need to address if it is to even begin to adapt to, let alone compete in, this accelerating world of the 4th Industrial Revolution. Our experience is that innovation and adoption will be driven bottom up, as will operational decision making; General Stan McCrystal has described this well in his book Team of Teams. Methodical hierarchical structures and behaviours will be an increasing inhibitor to the disruptive aspirations of Defence.

My final point relates to acquisition. Clearly Defence must be accountable for how it spends its money, but similarly to my point on culture, speed to adoption will be key. In many ways this is the pivotal issue: you can sort out the culture, and harness the good ideas, but if they are slow to the front line you will always place the horse against the tank which is probably not where Defence wants to be.

"The pace of technological change requires a constant, and probably accelerating evolution"

Defence IQ: Why has Deloitte decided to support the Disruptive Technology for Defence Transformation conference this year and what do you hope to achieve?

Hanis Girgis: Deloitte is developing a network of leading start-ups, working to translate the potential of disruptive technologies into practical business solutions for the firm and its clients. Deloitte accelerates digital transformation by bringing together critical assets and capabilities from the domains of cognitive technologies, automation, the Internet of Things and blockchain. By engaging the world's leading start-ups on a number of fronts, Deloitte are in a unique position to deliver the right path for an organisation given its place on the innovation journey.

Tapping innovation successfully can take a variety of forms, but the heart of it is having the right relationships to draw from, at the appropriate stage of the innovation lifecycle. Deloitte is able to develop the right culture within an organisation, enabling them to adopt a new approach to margin improvement and competitiveness—and by actively looking for ways to strategically harness the power of rapidly emerging digital technologies to enable new business models — organisations can dramatically improve efficiency and effectiveness, taking control of their destiny, becoming the disrupter rather than the disrupted.

DISRUPTIVE TECHNOLOGY FOR DEFENCE TRANSFORMATION



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