



DX IN 2024

A practical guide for digital
experience professionals

DX IN 2024

**PANDEMICS. REMOTE WORK.
GENERATIVE AI. CHATGPT. IF THE
LAST FEW YEARS HAVE SHOWN US
ANYTHING, IT'S THAT WE CANNOT
PREDICT WHAT'S GOING TO
HAPPEN NEXT.**

Long-term planning is redundant. It's time to come back from the future and focus on right here and now.

This has a monumental impact on how we treat digital customer experiences. It's impossible to know what customers will need when you cannot predict how the market will shift.

One thing we can be sure of is we cannot sit still.

Customer demands change by the day. Innovations and trends emerge just as fast. There is no value in planning beyond the year ahead because nothing will look the same then as it does now.

Success lies in testing, learning and iterating continuously.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



As we entered 2023, all eyes were on exciting new tech developments that promised to catapult personalized user experiences. Then, overnight, these technologies took a backseat. AI became accessible to all, and tools like ChatGPT became household names.

However, the rapid introduction of AI to a mainstream market also posed significant security and governance risks. Suddenly, everyone had access to tools that would make their lives and jobs easier. All they had to do was part with their data.

In 2024, while other tech shifts will happen, there's no doubt that AI will continue to be the trend. What we will see though, is organizations moving away from just 'playing' with these tools, towards more practical implementations.

**THIS WHITEPAPER DIVES INTO
FOUR MAJOR TECH TRENDS
WE'VE IDENTIFIED FOR THE
YEAR AHEAD. EACH STEMS FROM
ONE KEY THEME: THE DEATH OF
THE FUTURE.**



TREND 1

THE FUTURE IS DEAD

While digital experience professionals must, of course, still have goals. It's time to realize that how things happen needs to change. Lengthy roadmaps have become a waste of precious time.

If you haven't already, now is the time to start thinking less about digital transformation projects, and more about your digital experiences as a product. Managing a product that you own needs constant iteration to meet customer expectations. That's the only way you'll avoid placing the wrong long-term bet and being left behind.



TREND 2

STOP PLAYING, START PILOTING WITH INTENT

In recent years, visionaries have poured investment into user experience to drive mass adoption of their products. The accessibility of such emerging tech, like AI, has enabled everyday people to interact with tech like they never have before.

What's notable for enterprises is that employees can now easily find, download and start "playing" with new tools - in many cases, without their employer's knowledge. We explore how this is going to evolve in the year ahead, how experimentation will continue alongside implementation and dig into the value of Large Language Models (LLMs), one tool that could be put to great use in complex, service-led organizations.

04



TREND 3

IT'S TIME TO TAME THE "FRANKENSTACK"

The proliferation of more-accessible-than-ever tech in the market means that many organizations have been left with a vast "Frankenstack" of tools. The number of software programs and platforms running under one roof has become unsustainable. It also poses security risks due to less control over where data is being used and stored.

We discuss the steps organizations can take to optimize their tech stack without compromising brilliant customer experiences.

TREND 4

WELCOME TO THE ERA OF PROFESSIONAL INDEPENDENCE

We've moved into a new paradigm in which all digital experience professionals - including developers, marketers and content editors - can DIY. Rejoice! We can finally take more ownership thanks to the evolution of tech that allows us to conduct our roles with less input from others.

Design? Got it. Campaigns? No problem. Programming? Can do. Creating content? Easy. We take a closer look and share how best to manage this new trend in the year ahead.

"IN 2023, WE SAW SOME BRANDS EXCEL AT PERSONALIZATION BEYOND THE USUAL SUSPECTS: AMAZON, NETFLIX, AND AIRBNB,"

- TOM KIRKBY, PRESIDENT - NORTH AMERICA AT SQUIZ

WHAT WE SAW IN 2023

IT BEGAN WITH NEXT-LEVEL PERSONALIZATION

Before ChatGPT exploded onto the scene, the digital experiences of 2023 looked set to be all about personalization. Customers were able to interact with companies more intimately than ever before.

"In 2023, we saw some brands excel at personalization beyond the usual suspects: Amazon, Netflix, and Airbnb," says Tom Kirkby, President - North America at Squiz. Retailers such as Sephora and Nordstrom are two examples of retailers that nailed customer service with personalized experiences.

But it wasn't just retailers who put swathes of customer data to good use. Utility companies began to take advantage of new technology to deliver personalized account updates and encourage self-service. At the same time, local government agencies recognized the power of custom geolocation alerts. Sending updates and warnings directly to citizens' mobile phones to increase engagement and ensure public safety.

Looking back, how did personalization become so sophisticated? User-centered research began informing UX design more than ever before.

Chris Crammond, Managing Partner at Deepend says, "Quantitative insights from various analytics platforms became more accessible. Qualitative insights via interviews became more valued. The data points that enterprises had at their fingertips to lift measurable engagement rose to an all-time high. As a result, more investment poured into user experience research and design."

While hardware became smaller and systems became smarter, 'voice' also became synonymous with search. Today, 90% of consumers believe it is faster and more convenient than text. Gathering information on the go, hands-free, has started becoming the norm.

¹ Ris News, 2019: <https://risnews.com/top-10-retailers-do-personalization-best>

² Forbes, 2023: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbescommunicationscouncil/2023/07/06/what-the-impact-of-global-voice-recognition-means-for-todays-brands/?sh=52d55a2c20c2>

THEN CHATGPT DROPPED THE MIC

As the year progressed, the spotlight shifted towards the democratization of AI, exemplified by platforms like ChatGPT.

Although AI had been incubating for a long time, it wasn't until 2023 that we all "started taking AI seriously", says Sam Altman – one of the founders of research lab OpenAI – in his Time Magazine 2023 CEO of the Year interview³.

People have since sat up in bewilderment and begun to realize AI's potential to transform everything. The dramatic rise of such low code/no code solutions enabled everyday users who were not certified coders, designers, or writers, to start using tech in a new way, hugely benefiting their work.

Due to open access to **LLMs** (large language models), such as ChatGPT, suddenly anyone with internet access could start to explore and integrate AI applications into their tech ecosystem. This shift has fueled widespread acceptance and growth of AI faster than anyone would have expected.

"AI's transformative capabilities have sparked widespread anticipation of a radical overhaul. It promises increased efficiency and innovation across various industries," says Julie Brettle, Chief Product Officer at Squiz.

"From chatbots that are actually helpful to predictive forecasting, real-time language translation, workflow efficiencies and content summarization, AI is completely revolutionizing processes, decision-making, and user interaction."

³ Time, 2023: <https://time.com/6342827/ceo-of-the-year-2023-sam-altman/>

WHAT ARE LLMs?

A LARGE LANGUAGE MODEL (LLM) IS A SPECIALIZED TYPE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) THAT HAS BEEN TRAINED ON VAST AMOUNTS OF TEXT TO UNDERSTAND EXISTING CONTENT AND GENERATE ORIGINAL CONTENT.

– GARTNER



SECURITY BECAME MORE COMPLEX

In 2023, the accessibility of technology like AI played a pivotal role in accelerating its evolution beyond initial expectations. But are we ready for it?

While it encourages efficiency, it also raises several concerns: ethical considerations, job displacement, biased algorithms. These are just a few matters that reflect a dynamic and rapidly evolving digital environment.

One potentially catastrophic challenge has kept CIOs and CTOs awake at night: cybersecurity. With fast-growing adoption of emerging low-code/no-code AI, the integrity of digital ecosystems continues to be a challenge.

IBM cites that the global average cost of a data breach in 2023 was USD 4.45 million⁴ (a 15% increase over three years) and Distributed Denial-of-Service (DDoS) attacks surged by 65% in 2023 Q3 (targets included Israeli newspaper and media websites, as well as financial institutions and government websites).

Greg Sherwood, Squiz CTO says, “There has always been **shadow IT** in organizations where staff can enter their credit card to access SaaS services, without going through official IT governance. But today, what this means is that we have a data protection problem. Compared to traditional models of risk, there is no longer an attacker coming in – the problem lies in the fact that company IP is being so easily and willingly shared.

He continues, “Another challenge is that we’re now asking individuals to judge the security of a tool that is helping them every day when that’s not what they really care about. Enterprises become stuck in a trap with security teams wanting to put policies in place that are too hard to police.”

WHAT IS SHADOW IT?

SHADOW IT REFERS TO IT DEVICES, SOFTWARE AND SERVICES OUTSIDE THE OWNERSHIP OR CONTROL OF IT ORGANIZATIONS.

– GARTNER

⁴ IBM, 2023: <https://www.ibm.com/reports/data-breach>.



SECURITY BECAME MORE COMPLEX

From the adoption of **Zero Trust architecture** to the prioritization of cloud security and resilience against ransomware attacks, organizations are scrambling to implement comprehensive strategies that safeguard digital assets and customer data.

Thankfully, while legislation is slow to move, there has been some progress from world leaders. In December 2023, Europe became the first continent to develop a pact to regulate AI, with the EU AI Act becoming law in June 2024⁵. The UK has chosen not to regulate so far, preferring a pro-innovation approach without complex guardrails.

In the US, President Biden announced the Executive Order on the Safe, Secure, and Trustworthy Development and Use of Artificial Intelligence, aimed at strengthening AI safety and security, protecting Americans' privacy, and promoting innovation in government⁶. The order adopts a low-intervention approach to AI to promote industry growth.

WHAT IS ZERO TRUST ARCHITECTURE?

SIMPLY PUT: TRADITIONAL IT NETWORK SECURITY TRUSTS ANYONE AND ANYTHING INSIDE THE NETWORK. A ZERO TRUST ARCHITECTURE TRUSTS NO ONE AND NOTHING.

– CLOUDFLARE

⁵ Bloomberg, 2023; ⁴ IBM, 2023; <https://www.ibm.com/reports/data-breach>.

⁶ The White House, 2024; <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2024/01/29/fact-sheet-biden-harris-administration-announces-key-ai-actions-following-president-bidens-landmark-executive-order/>.



LOOKING AHEAD TO 2024

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TREND 1

The future is dead

Say goodbye to the five-year plan
and hello to a focus on right now.



TREND 1

THE FUTURE IS DEAD

WHAT WE NEED TO KNOW

The future is dead! Ok, hear us out.

Start by thinking about the online interactions you may have had with service-led organizations five years ago. Imagine you had to register a pet with your local council; perhaps you needed to find some information for a course you were studying; or maybe you needed to update some personal details with your utility provider. While a lot of this would have been completed online, the chances are the experience would have been somewhat different to that of today.

Every organization has had to adapt to major market changes in the last few years. COVID heightened the expectations people had of what they could do online. At the same time, technology innovation accelerated rapidly to help online experiences become a viable substitute for offline interactions.

If organizations had tried to plan for today's digital landscape five years ago (or, let's face it, even one year ago), they simply couldn't have.

Accenture reported a 183% increase in the rate of change in the last four years. They expect that to accelerate further⁷. AI is just the most recent example of a shift that is driving this. There will be others and we won't have to wait long to see them.

It has become impossible to plan for a long-term or even medium-term future. In short, your plan will be out of date before you've finished writing it.

“PREDICTING THE FUTURE APPEARS INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT, SO LONG-TERM PLANNING IS OVERWHELMING. THE ONLY SOLUTION IS TO SET GOALS OF DIRECTIONAL INTENT AND RESTRICT ACTUAL PLANNING TO SHORT-TERM TIME HORIZONS,”

– JOHN-PAUL SYRIATOWICZ, CO-FOUNDER AND CHAIRMAN AT SQUIZ

⁷ Accenture, 2024: <https://newsroom.accenture.com/news/2024/businesses-anticipate-unprecedented-rate-of-change-in-2024-new-accenture-pulse-of-change-index-shows>



"Remember when business strategy development was a linear process? When a five-year plan could serve a company well? No longer. Today, the when is now. Hard choices have to be made in days not months."

ACCENTURE



TREND 1

THE FUTURE IS DEAD

WHAT WE NEED TO DO

START RIGHT NOW

Traditionally, digital experiences take way too long to build. This can be for many reasons, including a fear of change, legacy tech that's difficult to unpack, talent shortages to plan and execute accordingly, and tech and data silos that hinder impactful outcomes.

To be successful in providing brilliant digital experiences today, we need to think less in terms of projects that get us to a certain point in time and more about ongoing optimization for continuous improvement. It is possible to set goals, but how you get there is no longer a linear journey.

It's time to break down and tackle these challenges incrementally so small wins can be made each day. This is the only way to operate moving forward.

Trends 2-4 covered in this report, will highlight how the market is shifting to accommodate this move away from long-term planning.

TREND 2

Stop playing, start piloting with intent. Now's the time to embrace shorter, pilot programs that test tech and processes. In the year ahead we'll learn to pinpoint the tech we need right now and simultaneously experiment and implement new tools.

TREND 3

It's time to tame the "Frankenstack". There's no time to audit and replace your entire tech stack in one go. We need to be able to swap tools in and out, as and when we need them. Look at the tech you have, rationalize what you need right now and accept what you will need to continue to work with while you find an alternative.

TREND 4

Welcome to the era of professional independence. Moving quickly requires self-sufficiency. Employers must enable their people to test, learn and adapt without the need for input from others. 2024 will be the year great customer experiences are defined by this level of independence.

TREND 1

THE FUTURE IS DEAD

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WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR

ARE YOU STILL DEALING WITH GAMBLERS AND LIARS?

None of us knows what the future holds. Be wary of vendors who say they have the tech stack you need now, and promise that they'll deliver on your aspirations for the future. The unicorn doesn't yet exist!

It isn't wise to work with partners who promise you they can do everything you need... forever.

Instead, look out for those who offer you the flexibility to tap into the latest innovations (wherever they come from) to build, learn and adapt quickly to changing demands. Then, ensure that they can still support the practical need to make that dynamic and diverse tech stack secure, governed and scalable.

Importantly, it is about embracing change on your terms, not a vendor's. Don't tie your future to someone else's. The only thing you should lock your organization into is flexibility and control. Ensure you have the ability to adopt best-of-need tools at the time of the need, and the freedom to adapt those tools as quickly as demands shift, all without sacrificing the governance and security you need to protect your customers and your reputation.



TREND 2

**Stop playing,
start piloting with intent**

Say goodbye to novelty and hello to reality.

“Waiting for the perfect time” makes way for

“testing with intent, right now”.



TREND 2

STOP PLAYING, START PILOTING WITH INTENT

WHAT WE NEED TO KNOW

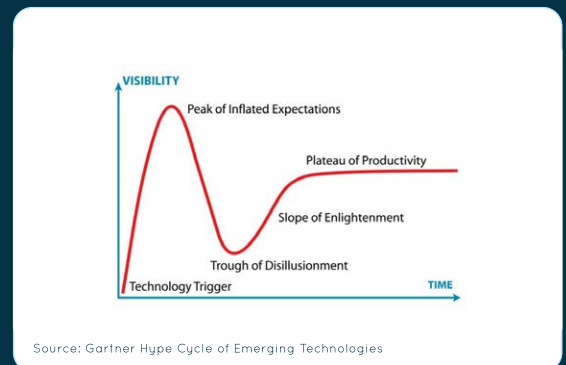
2023 was all about “playing” with new technology. As we enter 2024, we’re realising that AI will continue to grow. We’ll no doubt also see something else emerging as the year goes on. But while we continue to test, we also need to start implementing. We can’t wait until we’re collectively “ready” because something else will change as we do.

Working out how best to do this is the challenge. The doom and gloom predictions of AI are a long way off. It’s time to get on the bandwagon and ride the wave of AI’s emergence. But it’s not going to be easy.

“AI has remarkable capabilities, but robust implementation is not simple,” explains Tom Kirkby, President – North America at Squiz. “Predictions have included the replacement of search engines and the redundancy of content authors. And digital marketing could become little more than a chatbot conversation. Sure, these things could happen. But we’ve still got a long way to go.”

If we take a look at generative AI specifically, it is currently at its “peak of inflated expectations”, as per Gartner’s hype cycle for emerging technologies⁸. What’s impossible to ignore is the fact that the “trough of disillusionment” comes before the “plateau of productivity”. Yes, AI will deeply impact business and society⁹, but so much is uncertain.

Unpacking how to best deploy AI at scale without completely overhauling existing systems has become a key concern for enterprises. Use cases across almost every industry are evident, but their complexity presents challenges.



9 & 10 Gartner, 2023: <https://www.gartner.com/en/newsroom/press-releases/2023-08-16-gartner-places-generative-ai-on-the-peak-of-inflated-expectations-on-the-2023-hype-cycle-for-emerging-technologies>.

“PEOPLE WILL BECOME FAR MORE RESULTS-ORIENTED WHEN IT COMES TO IMPLEMENTING AI IN 2024,”

- CHRIS CRAMMOND, MANAGING PARTNER AT DEEPEND.

TREND 2

STOP PLAYING, START PILOTING WITH INTENT

For example:

In higher education¹¹ AI needs to be factored in across multiple facets: recruitment, retention, teaching, learning, assessment, and research. The sector also needs a digital ecosystem robust enough to improve administrative services and delivery to students while optimizing for cybersecurity, cloud platforms and data analytics.

In government¹² CIOs and CTOs must find ways to embed AI without compromising on their mission and eroding citizen trust. Overcoming a painful aversion to change and the slow decision-making processes typical of the sector are also major roadblocks.

In finance leaders¹³ continually scramble to stay on top of risks that persist from pandemic-induced remote working (and the tactical changes that become necessary as a result). Focus areas include AI engineering, cybersecurity mesh and privacy-enhancing computation.

To measure how successful the deployment of AI is within an organization, we also need to take a step back and reinvent metrics that help us understand its worth.

“WE’RE NOW LOOKING AT SPECIFIC USE CASES OF QUANTIFIABLE UPLIFT THAT INCLUDE IMPROVED OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY AND REDUCTION OF CHURN. ONLY ONCE THESE SMALL GAINS HAVE BEEN MADE, CAN WE LOOK FURTHER TO FUNDAMENTALLY RESHAPE AND DRIVE SUBSTANTIAL ADVANTAGE THROUGH SOPHISTICATED AI USE.”

- CHRIS CRAMMOND, MANAGING PARTNER AT DEEPEND.

¹¹ Gartner, 2023: <https://www.gartner.com/en/information-technology/insights/top-technology-trends/top-technology-trends-highered>.

¹² Gartner, 2023: <https://www.gartner.com/en/information-technology/insights/top-technology-trends/top-technology-trends-gov>.

¹³ Gartner, 2023: <https://www.gartner.com/en/finance/trends/finance-technology>.



TREND 2

STOP PLAYING, START PILOTING WITH INTENT

WHAT WE NEED TO DO

GET SPECIFIC ABOUT THE AI TOOLS YOU NEED RIGHT NOW

The rapid rise of generative AI tools has put a tonne of digital experience capabilities at our fingertips. But we mustn't forget that "generative AI" is an umbrella term. It refers to multiple tools and use cases – we must drill down and get specific when thinking about what is best for our needs.

To be successful in implementing any AI solutions, we need to first understand what they are and what they do. One particular facet of AI that is likely to have a huge impact is the development of Large-Language-Models (LLMs). There is an untapped opportunity in what they can do to enhance customer experience within complex service-led organizations.

Some examples of how LLMs might be used, include:

Replacing chatbots with a tool that offers greater context and personalization. Traditional chatbots often create a stilted experience and require a lot of work on behalf of the organization to maintain. The difference with LLMs is that you now don't have to anticipate questions and hope that they can be fulfilled with the same generic answer for all.

Offering intelligent call center support systems. These tools could be used to look up information on callers, using the specific needs of an individual rather than keywords.

Automatically creating interactive guides that use natural language understanding to help customers find products or services best suited to their needs. Examples include assistance looking at government services - "what am I eligible for?" or "what prerequisites do I need?"



TREND 2

STOP PLAYING, START PILOTING WITH INTENT

WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR

GETTING STARTED: UTILIZE WHAT YOU ALREADY HAVE

Whether it's an LLM or other AI tool that works best for you, getting started will likely be the biggest hurdle.

Don't introduce something that will generate new data or require new content on your site. Find a new way to leverage what you already have.

There are multiple entry points and AI capabilities you could consider.

Some examples include:

Vector search. Match queries to content with similar meanings. Generate better search results that factor in misspellings, synonyms, and alternate phrasing.

Search summarization. Combine clusters of results at the top of your page. Avoid long lists of search results and create clear navigation for users.

Reducing manual tasks by implementing AI automated workflow into your organization.

HEARD THE ONE ABOUT THE SWEARING CHATBOT? AS FUNNY AS IT MIGHT SEEM TO READ HEADLINES ABOUT AI GONE WRONG, IT'S A REAL RISK FOR ANYONE IMPLEMENTING THE TECH WITHOUT THE RIGHT CHECKS IN PLACE.

TREND 2

STOP PLAYING, START PILOTING WITH INTENT

Before jumping into anything, there are four key areas to consider. These will help to ensure you not only benefit from AI but also avoid becoming the victim of an AI downfall:

ROI: Are you focusing experimentation efforts on the right areas and tools to generate the fastest ROI?

Risk: Are there guardrails on employee use of AI? Is there a risk of exposing confidential data or IP externally?

Relevance: How do you protect or manage against false information or "hallucinations" via AI tools used?

Ongoing management: Will chosen AI tools work well with existing tools and data sources?

DON'T BECOME THE NEXT AI DOWNFALL HEADLINE

Heard the one about the swearing chatbot? As funny as it might seem to read headlines about AI gone wrong, it's a real risk for anyone implementing the tech without the right checks in place.

A parcel delivery company found itself in hot water with its recently updated AI chatbot. The tool diligently followed instructions from a disgruntled customer and, as a result, swore and criticized the company's service. Not quite the image they were hoping to create!

Due to the vast range of data used by LLMs, it can be difficult to filter out unfavorable responses and language.

While the company had rules in place to avoid their chatbot going rogue, the update to the tool had somehow circumvented those rules.

It's a perfect lesson in the care and attention needed to introduce new tech – especially if it's going to interact directly with your customers.

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TREND 3

It's time to tame
the "Frankenstack"

Say goodbye to messy infrastructure and hello
to a higher-performing tech stack.

TWO-THIRDS OF CFOs BELIEVE THE SURGE IN DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION, CX AND MARTECH SPENDING HAS NOT MET COMPANY EXPECTATIONS.

TECH STACKS ARE GROWING BUT THEIR UTILIZATION IS FALLING, ACCORDING TO GARTNER DATA - MARTECH SYSTEMS HAVE SLUMPED FROM A 58 PER CENT UTILIZATION RATE IN 2020 TO 42 PER CENT LAST YEAR.

- MI3

TREND 3

IT'S TIME TO TAME THE "FRANKENSTACK"

WHAT WE NEED TO KNOW

At the height of experimenting with lots of different technologies, CIOs, CMOs and CTOs are getting pressure from CFOs to answer questions on ROI. Dreaded "Frankenstacks" are emerging and everyone is starting to wonder: are we reaping all the benefits that our digital ecosystems have to offer?

Depending on their size, organizations often use many different tools for multiple functions - each with varying degrees of success, and some with epic price tags.

"Modern digital stacks involve many products from many vendors. That's great when each tool is pulling its weight and well-integrated, but expensive, complicated and risky when they're not" says John-Paul Syriatowicz, Co-Founder and Chairman at Squiz.

"I believe 2024 is all about using new techniques to identify the tools that aren't working optimally and then finding ways to get rid of them or use them better. Simplifying and optimizing your digital landscape promises a high return on investment."

The challenge, in today's landscape, is that leaders won't have the time and resources to audit and refresh their entire tech stack fast enough.

Greg Sherwood, Chief Technology Officer at Squiz says, "Many organizations are worrying that their attempts to consolidate tech have failed. It's not working. It's costing too much money. It's actually more difficult than they thought. I think there's an opportunity to look at things differently. It's okay to have these tools in place if they're working. The thing you're missing is not so much the single source of truth for one massive system, it's the ability for individual tools to work together."

Knowing what tech to keep, dump or live with, requires oversight. You need to be able to see everything in one place. To understand how each tool performs with the rest of your stack and achieve the outcomes you're looking for.

¹⁴ MI3, 2023: <https://www.mi-3.com.au/12-06-2023/Dude-where-s-my-ROI-Finance-sets-blowtorch-on-martech-dumpstacks-incoming>.

TREND 3

24

IT'S TIME TO TAME THE "FRANKENSTACK"



WHAT WE NEED TO DO

REASSESS, REALIZE, RATIONALIZE...REPEAT

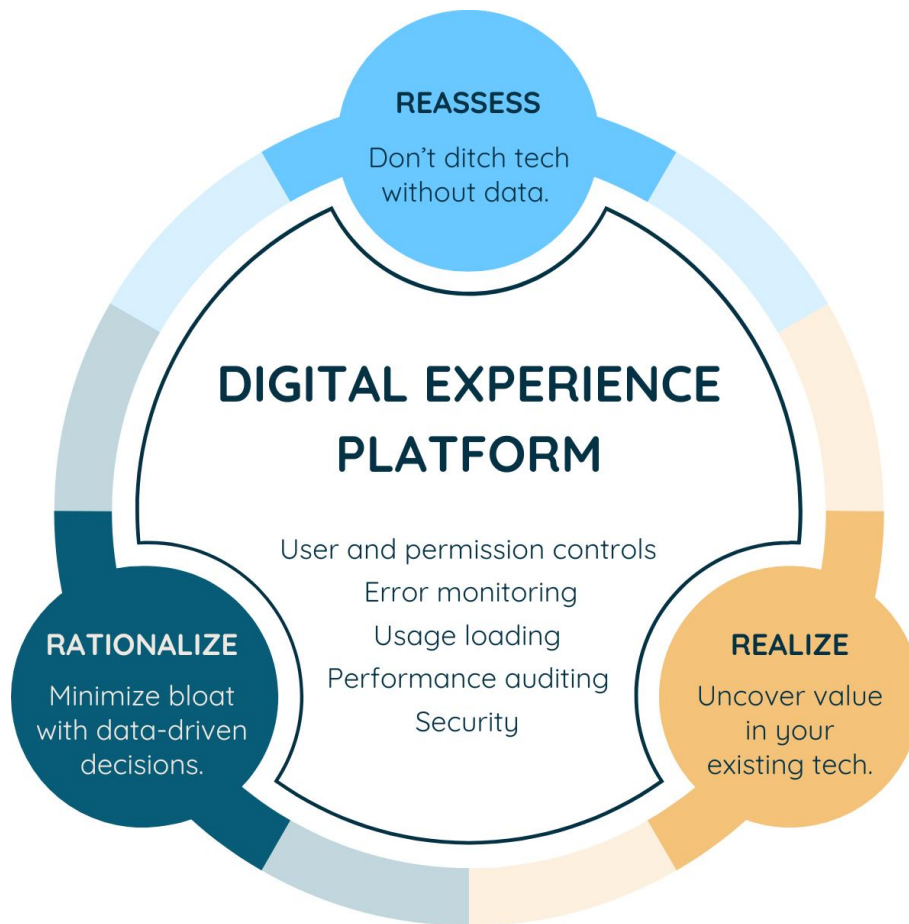
Tech consolidation needs to become a continual cycle. It's not a one-off, rip-and-replace project, it's an incremental effort.

To keep moving, you need a platform that underpins your entire tech stack, regardless of vendor. With this tech-agnostic platform, you should be able to:

- Manage access and permission controls
- Detect errors and the originating source so fixes are rapid
- Monitor activity logs
- Audit performance to pinpoint optimization opportunities
- Allow non-technical users to work across products

Having this level of visibility and management over your composed tech stack enables you to maximize your return on investment. Armed with this insight, you should be able to continuously assess and iterate your tech stack as needed to avoid creeping functional bloat or cost inefficiencies.

IT'S TIME TO TAME THE "FRANKENSTACK"



REASSESS
Reassess the tech you don't like and accept that you are better off sticking with some of it in the short term. Identify those you will need to live with but ask, "How can you minimize the drag they place on other digital initiatives?"

RATIONALIZE
Use your shorter pilot projects to learn what works and rationalize your tech investments. Use data to consolidate your tools and justify the removal of tech that isn't working for you. Stop the tech stack bloat.

REALIZE
Planning for the 'future' is dead. You need to work towards impacting immediate timeframes. Use pilot projects. Test and learn to make incremental improvements and generate more value from the tech you already have.

REPEAT
It's time to reassess again. How is your tech stack looking now? What gaps need to be filled and what is still/now creating bloat? What tech will you need to just live with, in the short term?

IT'S TIME TO TAME THE “FRANKENSTACK”

WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR

NOT ALL PLATFORMS ARE CREATED EQUAL

Be smart about the platform you choose.

The rise in digital experience platforms (DXPs) has come about to deal with expanded governance and orchestration of complex, multi-channel digital experiences.

There are many vendors to choose from, and choosing a composable DXP is critical to making this work.

Composability offers the ability to adapt to change, without the trade-offs. You get all the benefits of an all-in-one vendor, without compromising on the freedom to build your own stack of choice.

An “all in one” platform offers governance across the tools within their suite. However, they offer little visibility, control or security of any third-party apps you integrate with.

Building your own ecosystem with different tools requires integrations. Being able to make systems and tools talk to each other, is not the same as having them work like one solution. This often results in a disjointed customer experience.

And, if an integration fails, your entire experience crumbles while you try to pinpoint the source of the problem. Governing a single experience across the stack is nigh impossible.

True composability should offer the best of both worlds, with none of the downsides. Choose best-of-need tools you want, from any vendor. Make them work as one solution, govern them as one brand, protect your customers from every angle.

A photograph of a modern office environment. In the foreground, a woman with her hair in a bun is seen from behind, sitting at a long white desk. The desk is equipped with a laptop, a desk lamp, a coffee cup, and some papers. In the background, other employees are working at their desks, some looking at their laptops. Large windows on the right side of the room let in bright natural light. The overall atmosphere is professional and collaborative.

TREND 4

Welcome to the era of
professional independence

Say goodbye to cross-functional dependency and
hello to self-sufficiency.

TO DATE, A LACK OF TIME AND ENERGY HAS BEEN CITED AS A KEY FACTOR INHIBITING DIGITAL PROGRESS. THE DEMOCRATIZATION OF AI NOW ENABLES US TO ACCELERATE PRODUCTIVITY BY 31% WHILE REDUCING HEADCOUNT FOR BUSINESSES BY 16%.

- MICROSOFT¹⁵

TREND 4

WELCOME TO THE ERA OF PROFESSIONAL INDEPENDENCE

WHAT WE NEED TO KNOW

Once you have a clear idea of the tech you need now, and the iterative steps you will take to change it, people can become more self-sufficient with the tools you introduce.

We are shifting into a new normal where employees can establish some professional independence at work. The democratization of AI has enabled workers to take more ownership of their work without needing outside support from other teams. The key is finding tools that marry ease-of-use with decent functionality.

Greg Sherwood, Chief Technology Officer at Squiz says, "The ability to reclaim control and self-sufficiency is allowing people to think wow, I can do this myself. I can get on with my job and I don't have to wait on someone else to do it for me."

There are, for example, interesting cases of developers using AI not just for writing code, but for learning how to write code in a different programming language.

Greg continues, "These AI-based tools will lower barriers to entry and level the playing field because all of the knowledge that's been in a senior developer's head is all of a sudden available. This will be a game-changer for development teams. It means we can support junior developers in their upskilling and allow them to work on tasks typically carried out with more experienced team members."

¹⁵ Microsoft, 2023: <https://news.microsoft.com/en-gb/features/ai-promises-to-unleash-creativity-and-productivity-by-lifting-the-weight-of-work/>

TREND 4

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WELCOME TO THE ERA OF PROFESSIONAL INDEPENDENCE



This move from the knowledge worker to the assistive worker being able to make the most impact in a business isn't limited to the 'trades' of tech, like coders. The benefits can also be harnessed by marketers.

Due to pressing economic conditions, marketers are now being pushed to do more with less¹⁶. This is where generative AI provides valuable, practical solutions.

For example:

LLMs empower marketers to bypass copywriters if they want to produce newsletters or blog articles.

Design platforms empower marketers to bypass designers if they want to create assets such as prospectuses and social media posts.

A/B testing empowers marketers to bypass data analysts if they want to develop and test new campaigns.

Intuitive CMSs empower marketers to bypass HTML developers if they want to make updates to their company website.

TREND 4

WELCOME TO THE ERA OF PROFESSIONAL INDEPENDENCE

WHAT WE NEED TO DO

INVEST IN PEOPLE AS MUCH AS OPERATIONS

The democratization of AI and “tech realization” mean nothing if you don’t have a workforce that knows how to use new tools. If enterprises want staff to employ new tech to its full capability, support needs to come from top-down¹⁷.

While there are some great success stories of workers being able to move quicker than ever before, it can add risk to a project. As an example, software developers pushed to deliver in a fast-paced environment can get greater efficiency through generated code, but they need to be experienced enough to know if that code is secure, functional and covers all appropriate requirements. Without this knowledge, generative AI can become a faster way to failure.

As referenced in this report on generative AI by Accenture¹⁸:

“Companies will need to radically rethink how work gets done. The focus must be on evolving operations and training people as much as on technology.

We can also expect a large number of new tasks for people to perform, such as ensuring the accurate and responsible use of generative AI systems. It’s why organizations that invest in training people to work alongside generative AI will have a significant advantage.”

WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR

THE DEVIL IS IN THE DETAILS

CMSwire states that the use of ChatGPT in marketing will create issues with content authenticity¹⁹. Marketing professionals must not lose sight of ‘creativity as king’ – they must recognize that AI-curated responses are not to be copied and pasted without careful consideration of both the brand and customer. AI does not replace human ingenuity.

The era of professional independence also increases cybersecurity risk. Companies are now sending lots of code to third-party tools, but may not really know who the vendors are. Are they trustworthy? How do you know? What’s their data retention policy? What are the T&Cs of the contract you have with them?

One small step towards tackling cybersecurity risk is encouraging innovation rather than hindering it. Leaders can do this by giving staff a safe sandpit to play in (because, let’s face it, people are going to use AI anyway).

In line with advice from Gartner²⁰: “We recommend you create a company policy around rather than block ChatGPT. Your knowledge workers are likely already using it, and an outright ban may lead to “shadow” ChatGPT usage, while only providing the organization with a false sense of compliance.

A sensible approach is to monitor usage and encourage innovation, but ensure that the technology is only used to augment internal work and with properly qualified data, rather than in an unfiltered way with customers and partners.”

¹⁶ Icreon, 2023: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/what-your-marketing-budget-2024-should-look-like-icreon-0i9jc/>

¹⁷ Gartner, 2023: <https://www.gartner.com/en/articles/gartner-top-10-strategic-technology-trends-for-2024>

¹⁸ Accenture, 2023: <https://www.accenture.com/au-en/insights/technology/generative-ai>

¹⁹ CMSwire, 2023: <https://www.cmswire.com/digital-marketing/the-2024-ai-roadmap-for-marketers/>

²⁰ Gartner, 2023: <https://www.gartner.com/en/articles/your-7-biggest-chatgpt-questions-answered>



FINDING YOUR PERFECT DX PARTNER

This report highlights the inevitability of a new world characterized by accelerating change. Harnessing the power of any new tech to rapidly meet shifting customer demands will be your superpower.

This means being able to adapt your marketing and digital experience strategy as the need arises, by capitalizing on tools and trends that can help you serve customers better.

**“THE MOST SIGNIFICANT SOURCE OF
CHANGE AND DISRUPTION –
TECHNOLOGY – IS ALSO THE KEY TO
THIS STRUCTURAL CHANGE.**

WE BELIEVE THE COMPANIES THAT WILL SUCCEED IN
THE NEXT DECADE ARE THOSE THAT EMBRACE A
STRATEGY OF CONTINUOUSLY REINVENTING EVERY
PART OF THEIR BUSINESS USING TECHNOLOGY, DATA
AND AI, AND ENSURING THEIR PEOPLE ARE AT THE
CENTER OF THEIR TRANSFORMATIONS.”

– ACCENTURE

FINDING YOUR PERFECT DX PARTNER

TAKE THE LEAP... WITH CONFIDENCE

With more than 25 years' experience supporting organizations globally, we have seen the biggest blockers that arise when it comes to trying to adopt new tech and trends.

Our advice is to take a measured, governed approach that prioritizes agility.

BLOCKER	ACTION
Legacy software or all-in-one vendors that prevent you from adopting third-party innovations without disjointed workflows.	Adopt a modern, composable digital experience platform designed to incorporate any tool from any vendor and work like one solution.
Existing tech that makes introducing new tools too hard without having to rip and replace systems completely.	Maximize existing investments with complementary new tech, without having to re-platform until you are ready.
The challenge of making big tech investments without a predictable ROI to report on.	Pilot small initiatives fast, at a low cost. Leverage insights to inform your business case for a full tech review. Repeat continuously.
Security risks introduced by third-party tools without built-in threat protection.	Mitigate risk with centrally managed governance and built-in security across your entire tech stack, regardless of vendor.
An over-reliance on developers to maintain martech, and manage simple updates.	Adopt low and no-code tools for marketing and content editor teams to work independently, yet collaboratively, with developers.

BEING SUCCESSFUL IN ALL OF THIS, REQUIRES THE SUPPORT OF THE RIGHT DX PARTNER.

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FINDING YOUR PERFECT DX PARTNER

SQUIZ DIGITAL EXPERIENCES: FAST, FLEXIBLE AND WITHOUT FEAR

Squiz offers a Digital Experience Platform that enables customers to build, manage and orchestrate complex, digital experiences across websites, apps, portals and other digital channels.

To thrive in this new world, Squiz ensures customers can:

COME AS YOU ARE

Use and connect what works from your existing stack.
Pay only for the tech you use.

BUILD BRILLIANT EXPERIENCES, FAST

Design, integrate, and build with no-code/low-code
tools. No developers required.

EMBRACE CHANGE WITH CONFIDENCE

Respond to market changes and adopt innovations.
Test and adapt your strategy incrementally from one
platform with built-in security and governance.

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Squiz is a global Digital Experience Platform (DXP) company serving organizations globally in the government, higher education, financial services, insurance services, utilities and other service-driven sectors. Designed for complex organizations, Squiz helps lean teams build digital experiences fast. With our composable, Gartner-ranked DXP there is no vendor lock-in, you unify existing tech and embrace change with confidence.

GET IN TOUCH

[Book a call](#) with our experts or [send us an inquiry](#).

Gartner

Magic Quadrant for
Digital Experience
Platforms 2024

