



# Demystifying Digital Transformation – Capturing New Advantages

The workplace today demands a different set of skills. The needed capabilities include the ability to leverage remote work as an advantage, increase information access and agility, and drive business results in new and more profitable ways. At the heart of this evolution is Digital Transformation, the removal of old ways of working and the embracement of new digital technologies and approaches to forge a more agile, more valued, and more effective business in terms of customer experience, competitive advantage, and corporate performance.

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## Escalated Demand for Digital Transformation

COVID-19 dramatically escalated an already ardent focus on digital transformation. According to a [study from Twilio](#), 97% of executives say the pandemic sped up their digital transformation. The C-Suite is looking for new ways to engage customers and they have increased their digital transformation budgets by 79% as a result. In some cases, that's been driven not only by newly necessary forms of client engagement but also by a massive shift in customer expectations. Consumers now expect touchless, online, and frictionless experiences when interacting with any company or service provider. Old ways of working are now antiquated, out-of-touch, and deemed insufficient by customers and clients everywhere.

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## Becoming Digital-First

But despite ongoing digitization, the truth is that a great deal of business still gets done on paper. This includes ad hoc and process-specific workflow for things like new account openings or customer onboarding, as well as in large-scale and fundamental activities like accounts payable, billing, or human resources. If this sounds like your organization, then you know the question: How do I get my arms around all of the paper content that is still at work in my organization and truly embrace a digital-first workflow?



## A Model for Transformation

That was the subject of a [recent three-part interview on AIIM On Air](#) with Cliff Madru, Vice President of Global Solutions for Iron Mountain. We examined a new five-phase digital transformation model from Iron Mountain that is designed to help us step through the best practices toward success. The steps are: *Identify, Scan, Store, Automate, and Unlock*. This article will explore the “scan” and “store” phases of the model.

## Digitize, Store, and More

Many people are familiar with the concepts of “digitize” and “store;” the ability to scan paper documents and store them in digital form. I asked Cliff to help us understand the important factors for success and essential considerations in the digitize and store phases of the model. “It’s really important to understand the desired outcome,” said Cliff. “What is the value that we’re producing by digitizing content? How ultimately is the business planning on using digital content specific to the operation? What are the scale and footprint required? It is important to have a streamlined implementation that allows you to have a very efficient approach, but also has the flexibility to meet that desired outcome.”

## Capturing New Advantages

The adoption of new and more advanced scanning and data capture techniques is prompting what may be called the second wave of capture. Innovations in mobile capture, multichannel input, and enhanced classification techniques are stimulating an upsurge of investment in capture solutions that go well beyond simply scanning paper. Many new solutions are more tightly integrated with key business processes and activities.



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I asked Cliff if scanning is something that everyone should do, or if it is better to do scanning and digitization in one central location. “There’s definitely a place for certain digitization to be done at remote locations. But I think for many applications, it is best to work with an expert and utilize centralized hubs,” said Cliff. “That tends to be the most economical way to get that kind of economy of scale. This approach also helps put you in a better position to be able to do more in terms of transformation and have greater capabilities in the future. In fact, we’re seeing this trend right now at Iron Mountain; organizations are moving to the cloud while leveraging service providers so that internal teams are more focused on the applications themselves.”

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## New Digital Formats on the Rise

Digital Transformation isn’t just about scanning paper, however. More and more organizations are working hard to ingest other forms of digital content – like video and sound files, for example – and include them in their efforts to innovate and improve. “We deal with this both in a legacy sense and physical format where they need to be digitized, but also in a modern sense where [these types of formats] must absolutely be considered in terms of an information management and information governance strategy,” says Cliff. “It’s actually one of the key components of the solutions that we build to ensure that we can handle any type of content. And over the next few years we’re only going to see more and more of this type of information management.”

## Moving Forward

What can you do to make the most of your scan-and-store efforts on your digital transformation journey? Cliff says to start with the end in mind. “There are the basics around just the scanning and digitization process. Quality becomes critical. Where you store content is critical. And of course, security, auditability, and chain of custody are all very important. Having a good understanding of the content itself and ensuring appropriate access are also examples of best practices. But it all comes back to understanding the desired business outcome. Once you understand the value of achieving that outcome it becomes pretty compelling to put together a strategy.”



[Listen to Part 2 of our interview with Cliff Madru here.](#)

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Iron Mountain Incorporated (NYSE: IRM), founded in 1951, is the global leader for storage and information management services. Trusted by more than 225,000 organizations around the world, and with a real estate network of more than 85 million square feet across more than 1,400 facilities in over 50 countries, Iron Mountain stores and protects billions of valued assets, including critical business information, highly sensitive data, and cultural and historical artifacts. Providing solutions that include [information management](#), [digital transformation](#), [secure storage](#), [secure destruction](#), as well as [data centers](#), [cloud services](#) and [art storage and logistics](#), Iron Mountain helps customers lower cost and risk, comply with regulations, recover from disaster, and enable a more digital way of working.

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