

Anglia Business Solutions

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SOFTWARE: CHANGING THE WAY IN WHICH WE WORK

There is little doubt that we are in the middle of a broad technological and economic shift where companies are using software to take over large swathes of the global economy. More and more industries are being run on software delivered as online services. We are six decades into the computer revolution, four decades into the invention of the microprocessor and two decades into the rise of the modern internet. This allows the technology required to transform industries through software to be widely delivered on a global scale.

A decade ago, 50 million people had access to broadband. Now, over two billion people use broadband internet. Over the next ten years, it is expected that five billion people worldwide will own a smartphone, giving these owners instant access to the full power of the internet 24/7. New software programming tools and internet-based services make it easy to launch software programmes without the need to invest in infrastructure.

These developments have already brought massive disruption to many industries. The publishing industry has been changed forever by companies such as Amazon. Search engines such as Google have changed the marketing industry, while digital cameras have transformed photography. In the food sector, the supermarkets are currently investing heavily in software to power their logistics and distribution capabilities. In agriculture, software is being used to carry out satellite analysis of soils linked to per-acre seed selection algorithms. What all of this means is that every industry needs to assume that a software revolution is coming which will affect every business.

The quest for relevant, timely and accurate information is at the core of this transition. The saying that knowledge is power has never been more relevant. Knowing how to use dynamic information to refine business models will separate the winners from the also rans in the new digital age. The challenge for today's management teams is to leverage the power of modern software technology to combat the stresses of operating under margin and time pressures. The objective is to create a competitive edge by reducing costs while improving customer service.

Of course this will change the way we work. Automation of administrative tasks will change people from producers to users of information. Production and distribution processes will be refined to reduce waste and improve efficiency, while transport will be optimised to conserve fuel. These changes represent both a challenge and an opportunity. But as many sectors have found, ignoring them is not an option. ■

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