The SPOT Model for Digital Discovery

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The SPOT Model is a simple but powerful methodology for digitalizing your business with a clear outset in your business strategy. It brings out experienced pains and identified opportunities, and observes common themes found across these.

- **S**trategic objectives guiding your business
- **P**ains experienced by your organization
- **O**pportunities identified by your team
- **T**hemes observed across pains and opportunities

When you apply The SPOT Model to your digital discovery process, you get off to a good start on your Digitalization journey.

Strategic objectives

All activities in a business should take its outset in business strategy. If your business does not have a well-defined and broadly-communicated strategy, stop reading, go develop one, and tell your employees what it means.

Everyone involved in the digital discovery process must be aware of the context within which the process will be undertaken. Is your business, for example, planning to grow organically or through acquisitions? Are you expecting to expand geographically? Do you have cost-down initiatives in the making? Such strategic plans are important to discuss so all involved have a shared understanding of the industry, company, and market position.

Pains experienced

When you have pulled your people together and made sure that they fully understand the strategic context, it is time for them to discuss their everyday ways-of-working with a focus on things that are annoying, tasks that feel like a waste of time, processes that could be done smarter, and other pains. You can, for example, start the conversation by asking them "What is keeping you from being great?"

Although your people will likely find it easy to bring out areas that they are not happy about, it is important to maintain tight focus during this process. First of all, nitty gritty details should not be in focus; we are trying to see the bigger picture. Second of all, deficiencies in specific IT systems should not be in focus; we are trying to see weaknesses in our ways-of-working, not point out bugs or design errors in the system landscape. And third of all, individual people should not be in focus; we are trying to improve our company, not point fingers at our colleagues.

For each pain, make sure to write down enough details to allow others to understand where, when, and how the pain is experienced. Further down the road, others will have to consider the pains, understand their nature and severity, and find ways to deal with them, so be thorough in descriptions.

Opportunities identified

When pains have been discussed and documented, you must turn around 180 degrees and shift focus to opportunities. You can start this conversation by asking "What would you do if there were no limits?"

While finding pains usually comes easily, identifying opportunities is quite another thing. At its core, it requires people to see beyond the horizon and imagine what could be. If you have the chance, I would strongly recommend spending some time and effort stimulating your organization before asking them to think up new, innovative ideas. You can, for example, invite representatives from competitors or adjacent industries to present some of their more novel ways-of-working, if you can convince them to stop by. While they would, of course, not be willing to share all of their secrets, people are generally quite willing to share what they are passionate about, especially if they feel that you give something back.

As with pains, it is important that each identified opportunity is documented in detail to allow further work.

Themes observed

When your team has discussed and documented pains and opportunities, you will be left with a lot of information. It will be overwhelming. Even small companies should be able to identify 100+ pains and opportunities.

The last step in The SPOT Model for Digital Discovery is to group similar and/or related pains and opportunities into a manageable number of themes. Ideally, you should be able to get down to just five to seven themes or fewer. You *must* be able to prioritize across themes, which is difficult if there are too many.

After digital discovery: Prioritization, Delivery and Benefit Realization

When you have completed the digital discovery process and identified the options available to your organization, you are ready to move ahead in your digitalization process and implement the solutions that will support your business strategy:

1) Prioritize across the options available to make sure that you pursue the most value-adding options first
2) Choose how to deliver the prioritized solutions
3) Track implementation progress to make sure that the identified benefits are realized

That is it. That is the end of it. Quite straight forward, don't you think? There is really not much to it, if you keep a calm head and go about Digitalization the way you go about all other business activities: You begin with your business strategy and take it from there.

Good luck in your Digitalization endeavors.

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