

3 ways businesses can rise to the challenge in 2022

By  Helen Ludwig

21 Jan 2022

2022 will bring forward more challenges in the ways of running a business. But there are ways to make sure that you rise above these challenges.



Integration

In 2022, businesses continue to face the challenge of bringing digital and analogue together in a more flexible and effective CX. They're also working on blending work-from-home and a degree of office life. Marketing and sales teams are increasingly melding brand and commerce. Everywhere you look, hybrid models are all the rage.

Far from being a passing fad, this shift in customer and employee expectations is here to stay. But it's also fraught with complexities e.g. integration of legacy systems into new technology, asynchronous communication across workforces, and siloed departments tasked with working as an agile, unified team.



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The blue sky vision of integration can feel overwhelming, often appearing to require an almost unachievable level of enterprise-wide digital transformation and change management. But progress needn't require tackling the mountain all at once. A piecemeal approach that prioritises the areas that will have the biggest impact is often a more practical and effective approach.

A helpful question for us at Wonder is: what's the 20% of integration work that will deliver 80% of the results?

Resilience

One thing we know for sure is that change is a constant. Whether it's led by a paradigm shift in technology, changing customer attitudes, surprise competitors or a black swan event businesses can comfortably expect to face sudden and unexpected change ahead. With change inevitably comes the challenge; how do you turn change you didn't choose into an opportunity to grow?

It really comes down to resilience. And resilience is about culture: mindful leadership and embedding a flexible, growth mindset in your business. It's about realistic optimism: facing reality but believing in the possibility for finding a way forward, and then taking practical steps to deal with what is.

My invitation in 2022 is when change presents a shock, don't ask: how can we bounce back? Ask: how can we bounce higher?

Responsibility

The demand for businesses to adopt more responsible practices and to be more accountable for the impact of their operations is accelerating. As Gartner mentions in a recent report, investors, regulators and customers are all concerned about what impact, positive or negative, companies have on the world at large. Add employees to that list and it's apparent that responsibility is a key success, even hygiene, factor for businesses wishing to grow.

Responsibility applies across the board - from delivering against purpose to building sustainable operations reflected in a triple bottom line to responsible data management to supportive working conditions. The opportunity here of course is to rise to the challenge with business models and approaches that move people, profits and the planet forward. Easier said sometimes than done. But at Wonder, we believe it's business-critical.



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The question I invite you to ask yourself is: What might my customers demand of my business sooner than I think? And my employees?

ABOUT HELEN LUDWIG

Helen is a highly regarded business-building strategist, coach and leader. She's worked with blue-chip clients across multiple categories, connecting businesses to their customers across SA, Africa and the Middle East. She's successfully driven strategy for clients of all sizes, from start-ups to multimillion-rand corporates covering the full spectrum of B2B and B2C activity. She is passionate about growing purpose-driven businesses so we can build a world where everyone thrives.

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