

Digitalization is not only the indisputable future, but also the gateway to growth, longevity, and better business decisions.

Why go digital?

How important is **digital business in 2020**? Business owners and CFOs see the digital transformation all around them, but it's normal to wonder if it's worth the investment and time, and what your company will really gain from it. I'm here to tell you that not only is **digitalization the indisputable future**, but the gateway to growth, longevity, and better business decisions.

2020 has presented even more reasons to go digital. From reducing manual labor and cutting costs, to being able to manage your business from remote offices, digital business processes are more crucial than ever. Whether you start with **end-to-end digitalization** or a specific process such as accounts payable, I recommend you pick a process to start with and begin your journey now.



Manual processes: challenges and solutions

Just because we're accustomed to manual processes doesn't mean they aren't rife with challenges. You might recognize at least a few of these in your current processes:

- High resource-spend on invoice processing
- Low access to accurate invoice data
- Suppliers not fulfilling requirements
- Resources spent on scanning invoices
- Tedious three-way matching procedure

- Several EDI connections
- Multiple formats and communication methods
- Need for loads of IT resources

With truly digital business processes, you'll find solutions and immediate benefits to these obstacles.

To name a few:

- Cost savings on acquisitions and processing
- Minimized manual labor for increased accuracy and control
- Access to valuable transaction data and insights for decision making
- Maximum track and traceability for a full overview of transactions
- Complete visibility and control over company spending
- No more piles of paper lost documents or sifting through emails
- 100 percent secure, global business transactions

Digital business: 5 crucial factors in choosing a service provider

Now that you know why to digitalize, you must decide how. The best way is to find experts in digitalization that can connect to your **ERP** system. The right service provider will seemingly do magic and transition you into your new digital business processes with zero operational interruption.

The number of network or service providers might seem overwhelming, so here is some guidance on what to consider when making your choice.



1. Open Network

The objective of a digitalization project is to get as much digital traffic as possible and enable an easy way for your trading partners to connect. If your trading partners have chosen different service providers than you, you should still be able to connect those.

By choosing an **open network**, neither you nor your business partners are forced into using any certain solution. All parties can connect, communicate, and send business documents via a single platform.

2. Connection to your ERP system

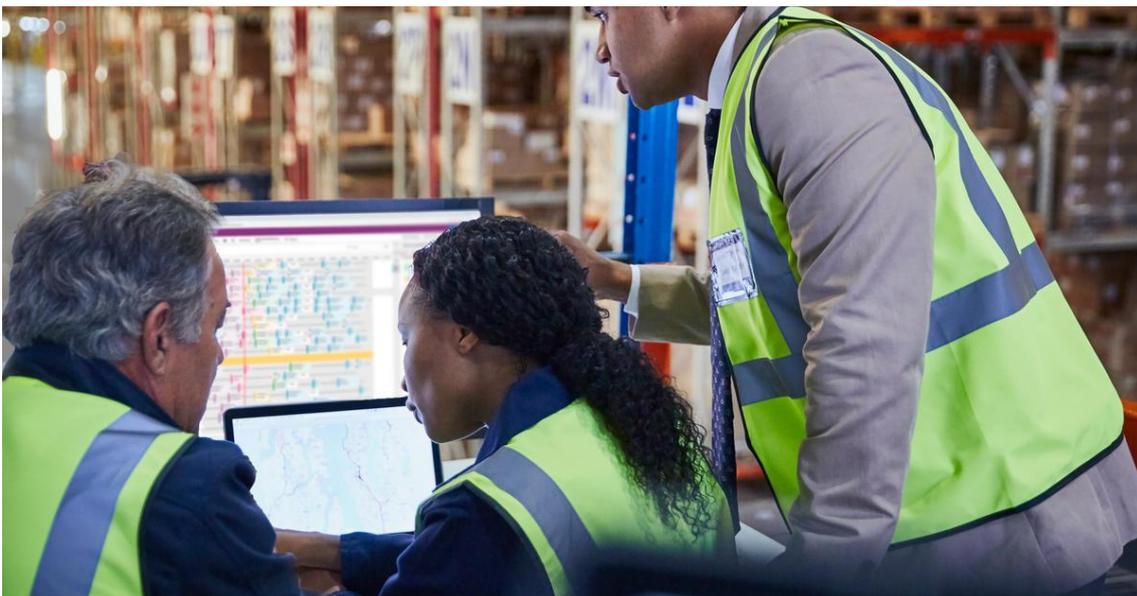
Make sure you find a service provider with knowledge about your ERP system. Your digital business processes should require no system or format changes.

3. Data Accuracy

Once all your transactions are digital, you can start collecting **data**. For each order and invoice, there is so much more information stored than any one person or department might realize — trends, patterns, pricing insights, and buyer preferences are just the beginning.

You will get access to this invaluable data when you skip header level scanning and really focus on digging into all the data from your suppliers or buyers.

In 90 percent of cases, you already have the vital data that will eventually fuel your automated digital supply chain. The challenge is that it currently resides in physical documents that need to be scanned, OCR recognized, and manually input to business systems. This process is prone to data entry errors and usually limited to the header level of the document. All this inefficiency leads to losing real-time, quality, line-level granular data.



4. Onboarding of your business partners

When you take the dive into a digital business, you have decided to invest in modern technology, improved your internal process, and cleaned your data. The connection is set up and you are ready to start sending and receiving documents electronically. Great! Now you need to get your business partners on board.

For instance, if you want to begin receiving **e-invoices**, it's important for your suppliers to start sending the invoices digitally. This does not mean simply sending PDFs through email. You need them to be contacted and informed about your digitalization plans, as well as advised on the best solution for them to connect.

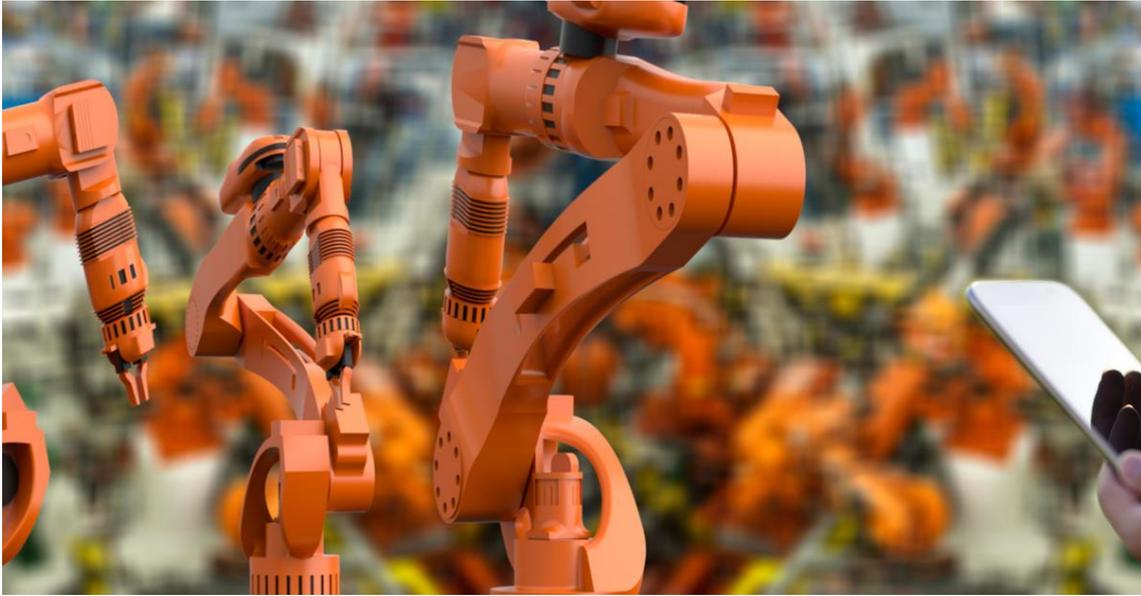
It is possible to start an onboarding project of your own, but that will require dedicated resources, training, and knowledge about the different networks and operators out there.

Choose a service provider that provides onboarding solutions that take this work out of your hands. They will contact your trade partners to layout and execute a plan for each of them, simplifying the process for everyone involved.

5. Global solution with local compliance

If you operate in more than one country, have plans to expand your business, or have business partners located in other countries, you need to consider a service provider with global reach and many **interoperability partners**.

Beyond extending your global reach, you must also consider the local regulations in each country where you operate. Compliance with local rules and requirements should come as part of the package without altering the connectivity and integration within your business group.



The solution: IFS and Pagero partnership

Together, **Pagero and IFS** offer a tried and true digital business solution. Our long-standing relationship has always been aimed at simplifying digitalization projects for our joint customer base and providing effective, efficient implementation services.

As you go about your day-to-day business in **IFS**, Pagero ensures a painless transition to digital incoming and outgoing processes. Our goal is to show you not only how quickly you can minimize manual processes but to truly make your work easier.

The **partnership** delivers a new generation of innovative, easy-to-use digitalization solutions for business digitalization that save you time and money through optimized, automated processes.

The future is now—it is time to go digital!

Want to find out more about IFS and Pagero? Visit our **partnership page** and let us find the best solution for your business today!

Many leading service organizations have been on a digital transformation journey for some time – those companies have been well-positioned to quickly build upon their efforts to react to these new and challenging circumstances. Other service businesses, however, have been dragging their feet a bit when it comes to embracing the potential that digital holds. Those laggards are now turning to digital transformation in an effort to survive the global pandemic and, in doing so, are breaking down barriers that have long been in place.

Whether these laggards had been avoiding [digital transformation](#) intentionally because they were happy “doing things the way we’ve always done,” or had fallen victim to the best of intentions that continued to be deprioritized among other urgent tasks, the force by which COVID-19 is spawning these companies toward digital adoption is making them realize the power and value that they’ve been missing – and helping them to see the potential in leveraging today’s technologies not only to weather this storm, but to set the stage for a strong recovery and immense future potential.

There are three particular areas in which we see digital transformation being accelerated as a result of [COVID-19](#), and I believe these areas – among others – will continue to grow and expand as recovery begins.



#1: Remote Collaboration

The use of augmented and merged reality solutions has exponentially increased since COVID-19 hit, and the value that these technologies have provided companies in terms of business continuity is immeasurable. Tools like remote assistance have several use cases that are enabling service organizations to persist despite the challenging circumstances.

These include using the technology for intra-company communications and sharing of expertise, for instance providing remote expertise and support to a remote facility with travel not possible. The technology can be used with customers, allowing service and support to be provided remotely with ease and a “hands-on” feel. And the technology provides a valuable remote training option for experienced workers to train and “ride along” newer employees, from a distance. [Munters](#) is a wonderful example of this – the company was able to adeptly speed its plans to adopt [IFS Remote Assistance](#) for business continuity. Use of this technology will expand and evolve as recovery begins, giving companies new ways to provide service, train employees, and share expertise.

#2: Utilization of Resources

We’ve never faced greater uncertainty in our lifetimes, resulting in great complexity for organizations looking to effectively leverage and manage their resources amidst the introduction of many new – and continually evolving – variables. In some industries, demand has skyrocketed while regulations around social distancing make service delivery tricky. In other industries, demand has sharply declined but will begin to ramp back up as recovery begins – presenting challenges of how to effectively scale down and back up resources.

Technologies that enable organizations to most effectively utilize resources and make real-time decisions as variables change have become even more valuable than before. Forward-thinking companies are not only working diligently to the storm of COVID-19 but are already putting effort into preparing for what will come as we find the new normal. Digital tools that can aid in planning for evolving capacity needs, exploring various recovery scenarios, all the while optimally scheduling the resources currently needed using complex criteria are necessary to make the turbulence of COVID-19 surmountable. [Cubic Transportation](#), for instance, has relied on its [IFS Planning & Scheduling Optimization](#) tool to be able to continue to deliver outcomes to its customers despite complex and quickly-changing criteria.



#3: Customer Engagement

The need to adapt to new methods of interacting with customers and ensuring communication remains consistent despite isolation needs is one of the most significant challenges brought forth by COVID-19. As safety has become paramount, customers have been looking for self-service alternatives and new options for communications. Many service organizations have seen significant spikes in online methods of contact, have had to look for new ways of interacting with and providing value to customers, and have had to become creative in how to meet the changing needs of their customer base.

Now more than ever, customers need you to be consistent, caring, and reassuring in your communications. They need to be able to get in touch with you easily and they need alternatives for service in situations where COVID-19 makes prior methods impossible or less than ideal. It's important now, and as recovery begins, to assess your methods for engaging your customers and determine if they are as effective as they should be given the restrictions now in place. There are a wealth of options available to you to improve customer engagement, from tools that make communication and self-service easier to technologies that may allow you to provide new offerings to your customers that are more relevant to their needs right now.

Digital adoption will continue to surge as a result of our collective COVID-19 experiences. Companies that have already been on this path are gaining valuable experiences to refine their use and build upon their successes, and those that have been slower to embrace these tools are learning now the power they hold. Employees who had resisted change are welcoming tools with open arms that allow them to continue working, and in doing so, are learning that

technology is a powerful enabler. These lessons and experiences will result in service organizations ready to embrace digital in a way they never have as we recover from this crisis.

The article was originally published on [Future of Field Service](#).