

The power of partnerships

Collaboration and ecosystems are reshaping business relationships for long-term success and sustainability.

In a recent report released by the IDC, the company revealed that by 2021 around 50% of Global 2000 firms will develop alliances with technology partners.

The goal? To drive innovation and growth while meeting market demand.

These alliances are being embedded into ecosystems that power innovation, using co-creation models to improve speed to market and competitiveness. The traditional models of working and developing solutions are no longer capable of keeping up with customer requirements, which are shifting to on-demand with immediate gratification and self-service. The change in market needs is dictating the need for speed and this is where partnerships can play a key role.

Seek out opportunities

Ushal Moonsamy, chief solutions officer at SqwidNet, states that organisations need to seek out collaborative opportunities that allow them to scale and pivot to deliver implementations that have long-term, sustainable value.



Ushal Moonsamy, chief solutions officer at SqwidNet

“In the past, companies have traditionally tried to do everything themselves, but technology is changing so rapidly that the Jack-of-all-trades company strategy can no longer deliver what the customer truly needs,” she explains.

“There’s been a progressive shift towards partnerships that allow for companies to improve their speed to market while co-creating and being part of a larger collaborative ecosystem that provides relevant solutions that are competitive and dynamic, with the goal of ultimately changing lives.”

In South Africa, many organisations remain rooted in the idea that a single entity needs to provide all the solutions. It’s known as a silo building mindset that evolved from technology implementations of the past when computer hardware was dropped off at the customers, without an understanding of what solutions they’d be used for, a far cry from the holistic mindset required today.

Now, with the -as-a-Service market and the explosion of emergent technology solutions and digital capability, it’s close to impossible for any single company to deliver a comprehensive solution. Instead, the value lies in honing expertise and skills in one area while creating relationships with other organisations that fill in the gaps.

Overcome traditional models

“The problem is that companies need to overcome the traditional impulse to compete rather than work together,” says Moonsamy.

“It’s hard. The old model played an important role in growing the business and shaping the industry. But today, leaders need to explore ecosystems that allow them to take advantage of new opportunities and markets while expanding their skillsets and their potential. Current business models need to be dissected into core business, peripheral business and growth areas to help business determine what should remain in-house and where they should rather partner. This is not to say that traditional is dead, but rather that it needs to adapt.”

The same IDC report found these alliances are being primarily driven by leaders that understand how the ecosystem model can drive opportunities and meet business requirements. The key to building these partnerships lies not just in recognising the benefits, but in leadership that’s capable of injecting this new way of thinking into the business.

Shared experience

“Ecosystems developed across the local and global level have enormous potential to solve business problems,” says Moonsamy. “Their shared expertise will give partners the ability to problem-solve and innovate across multiple touchpoints while creating the stickiness needed to retain the customer.”

These ecosystems not only offer the opportunity to create increasingly holistic and agile implementations, but they can also help bypass the skills crisis currently affecting the South African organisation. A lack of talent and training has meant that many companies are struggling to find, and retain, the talent they need to maintain, implement and develop robust IT solutions.

The severity of the situation is highlighted in the Microsoft IoT Signals report, a research paper that examines the global state of the IoT landscape and provides insights into how companies are coping with skills, growth, and technology. In the report, Microsoft found that 47% of companies that had already adopted the Internet of Things (IoT) didn't have enough skilled workers while 44% didn't have enough available resources to train employees to develop the necessary skills.

Get the right talent

“The knowledge economy has never been more important or relevant than it is right now,” says Moonsamy. “For organisations to offer comprehensive IoT solutions to the market they need to have the right talent on board, and this is becoming increasingly hard to find. By forging alliances with IoT experts and leaders in the field, companies can tap into a vast pool of skilled individuals that will bolster their capabilities and allow them to work on complex and market-leading IoT implementations that change lives. It really reinforces the need for collaboration.”

It's certainly a trend that's taking hold in 2020. In an Accenture Strategy report 'Cornerstone of Future Growth', the company found that 60% of executives would build ecosystems to disrupt their industry and that 75% believed that business models wouldn't be recognisable in the next five years.

This view is supported by PwC in an analysis that points out how ecosystems can be market differentiators that unlock business value. And by McKinsey in their Ecosystem Playbook, where the following quote defines the situation perfectly: “Traditional companies are facing an unprecedented threat to the way they do business.”

“Collaboration and partnerships are the way forward, especially in South Africa,” concludes Moonsamy. “As we move into everything digital, there has never been a better time to leverage the specialisation created within ecosystems. With an uncertain macro environment not only in South Africa but the rest of the world, a solid ecosystem will be critical in successfully driving innovation through IoT.”

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>