



THE DIGITAL LEADERSHIP DIVIDE

Why frontline executives are clashing
with Boards and CEOs

ABOUT SAVANNAH GROUP

 0203 781 7425
 enquiries@
savannah-group.com

Specialising in C-Suite and Director level appointments, Savannah's mission is to empower business leadership teams by helping them acquire executives that enable short-term and long-term transformation.

We always take the time to understand your company, your culture and your objectives to act as an extension of you within the market. Our partner-delivered model combines the quality, agility and dedication of a boutique firm, with the resources and capability of a larger search firm.

Find out more at
www.savannah-group.com

WHERE OUR DATA COMES FROM

Savannah Group in partnership with PA Consulting and Professor Venkat Venkatraman of Boston University Questrom School of Business, surveyed over 400 senior executives across a number of business functions and sectors within the UK's largest businesses to reveal how prepared organisations were for their digital future.

The purpose of the study was to understand better the progress of large UK businesses in pursuing digital transformation type initiatives. These broad findings with suggestions on areas of action can be accessed in our "**Transforming for Tomorrow**" report.



THE COMMUNICATION BREAKDOWN

THE DIVIDE BETWEEN THE BOARD AND THE LEADERSHIP TEAM

IN BRIEF:

- Why frontline HR, Finance and Tech executives are clashing with CEOs and Boards over current and future talent needs

Research across over 400 senior executives shows a substantial “digital divide” between the Board/CEO and the corporate functions (Technology/Digital/Finance/HR/Marketing/Sales) in understanding the talent and skills required to enable and embed digital transformation within the UK’s largest businesses.

The study sought to understand whether executives felt their business was:

1. adapting to the digital age in terms of their workforce and culture,
2. had the necessary digital skills and competencies in the leadership team,
3. had reframed the type of talent required in the organisation and,
4. whether they were winning the talent war against their competitors.

In each case, corporate functions were far less confident about the organisation’s progress than the Board/CEO. A significant proportion of corporate functions “strongly disagreed” that the progress required is being made.

Shared understanding through open communication at a senior leadership level is a critical factor in navigating effective change.

Developing or acquiring leaders with skills in collaboration, strategic thinking and influencing helps promote the exchange of knowledge and information across the board and senior leadership team. This subsequently cascades down into the rest of the organisation to create a culture and environment well suited to digital change.



IS YOUR LEADERSHIP TEAM ON THE SAME PAGE?

When it comes to digital transformation, much of the conversation focuses on strategy, systems, products and services, culture and processes with the goal of providing suggestions for what businesses should do in order to stay ahead of the curve. While consideration of those areas is clearly important there is an elephant in the room, or rather, the boardroom – a lack of a shared understanding about the talent and skills required to accelerate digital transition.

Any successful transformation programme is driven by people, not by technology or processes as highlighted by research from Google and Temporal. 71% of the C-Suite cite that the workforce is extremely important in supporting the digital transformation strategy and this cannot be done in a siloed way. Digital transformation can be a distraction for this reason however with many executives classifying 'digital' as owned by the technology side of the businesses and therefore not something they need to concern themselves with. In addition, the hype that technological breakthroughs get

– chat bots, AI, the Internet of Things – distract further. Regardless of the type of transformation, the talent sourced from within the organisation and supplemented from outside the organisation will make or break a business's successful transition to their digital future.

As a people business, we are always curious about leadership attitudes and views towards talent and skillsets within businesses. Our research study of over 400 senior executives found a divide between responses from the Board (CEOs, Chairman and Non-Executive Directors) and senior leaders in functions on the frontline of digital transformation including IT, HR, Finance and Digital about the current talent and skills capability within their organisation and future capabilities required. The CEO/Board tended to be overly optimistic about current people capabilities and digital adaption of the workforce whereas the frontline corporate functions tended to be more pessimistic about progress so far against what they saw as the talent and mindsets required to succeed.

“The biggest risk from the digital divide is the board and executive team not viewing the businesses opportunities and threats through the same lens and therefore deciding on action or inaction that could be costly in the medium to long term. In the same way that financials within a business are a widely accepted and understood way of assessing the businesses current performance, when discussing an organisation's digital future, organisations need to reach a shared view of where they currently stand so they can make the most objective decisions about how to move forwards. Nowhere is this more important than in the people and skills they decide they need to develop or acquire.”

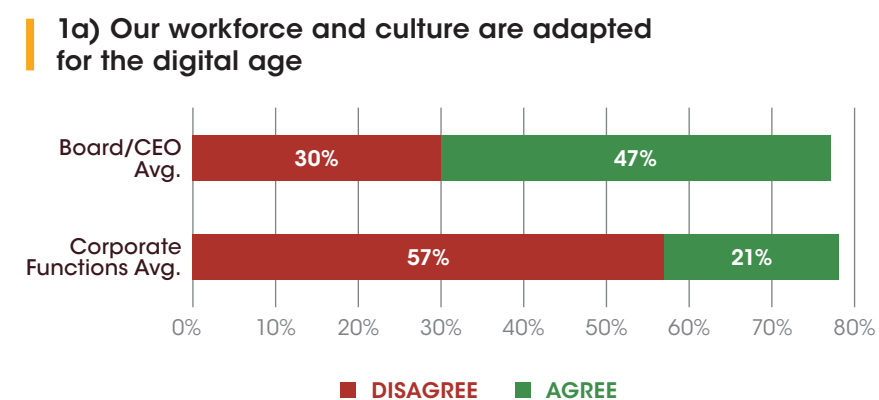


KERSTY BLETSO,
PARTNER, TECHNOLOGY, DIGITAL &
INNOVATION PRACTICE

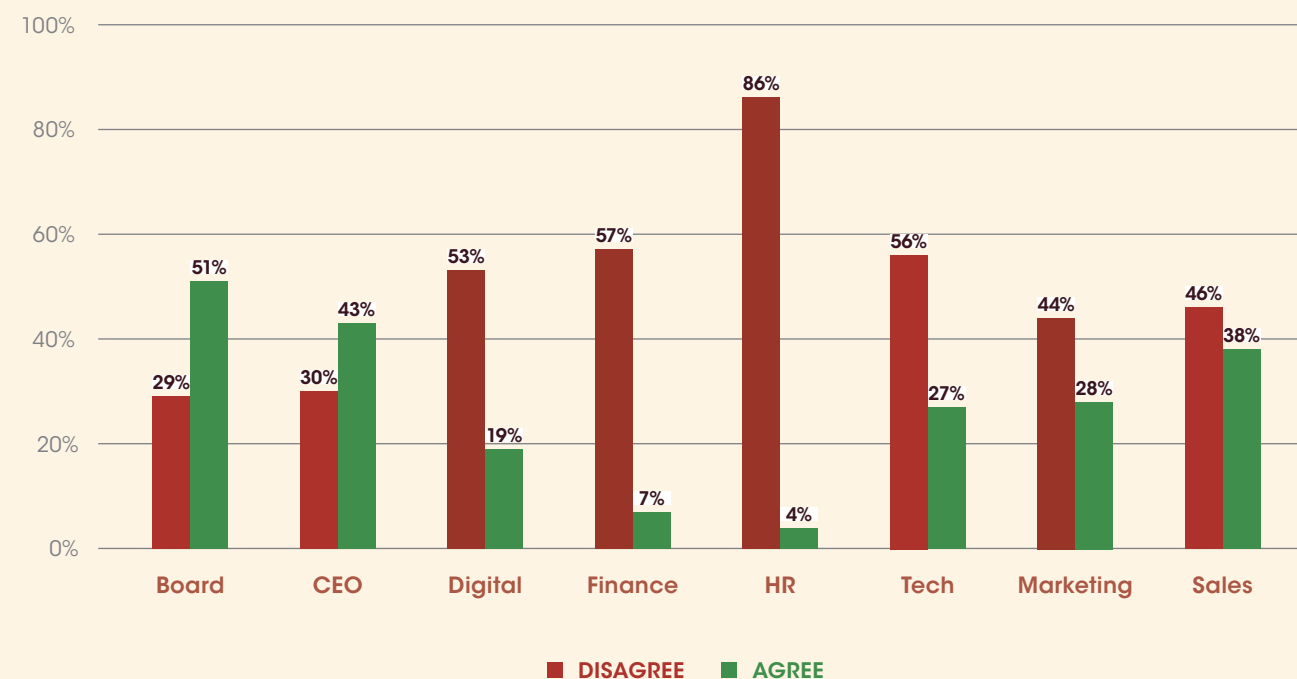
THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

If the executive team within a business doesn't have the same perception about their current organisational capability for digital transformation as measured by their people and skills, how will they be able to jointly decide on the best way to execute a strategy for the future?

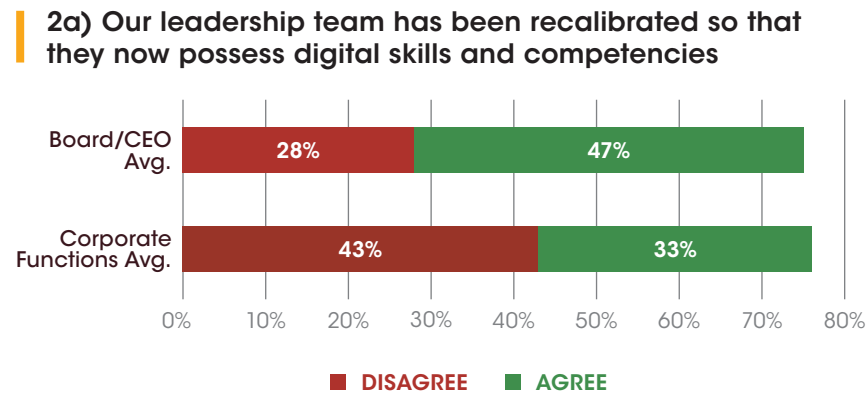
Regarding the readiness of the organisation to compete in a digital economy, 47% of Board and CEO respondents agreed that their organisation's workforce and culture were adapted for the digital age, however among the corporate functions including Digital, Finance, HR, Technology, Marketing and Sales, only 21% agreed with 57% disagreeing.



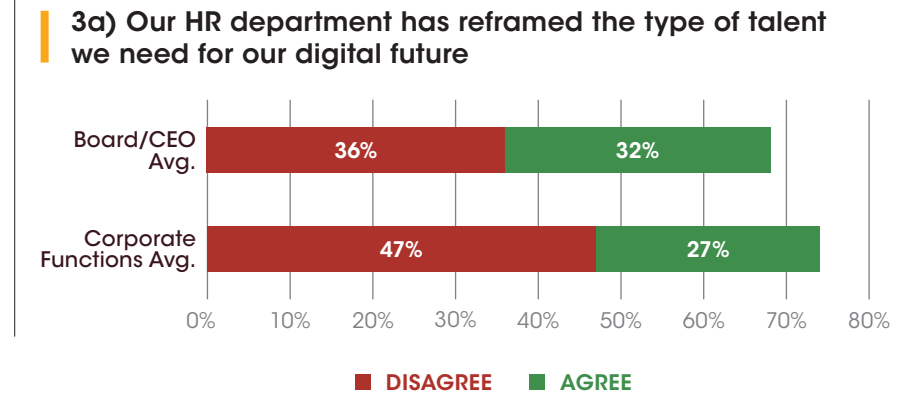
1b) Our workforce and culture are adapted for the digital age



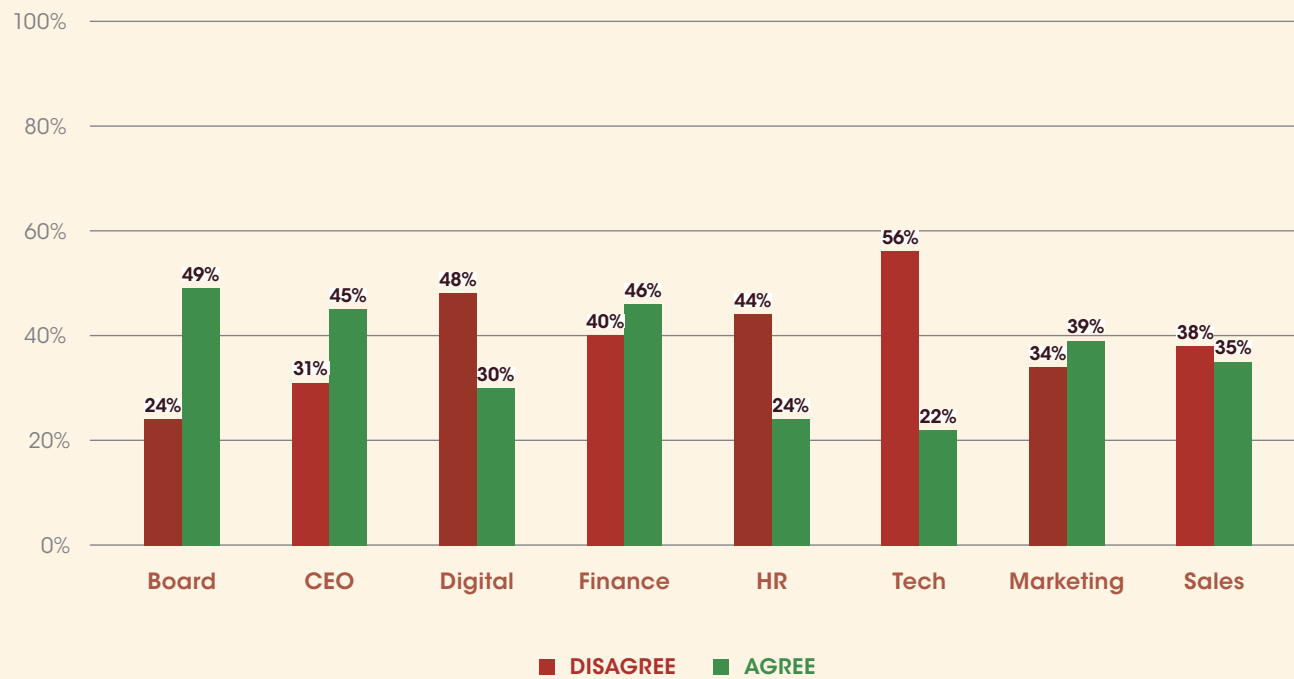
The research showed that there also wasn't much consensus about the state of digital skills and competencies at a senior leadership level. 47% of Boards & CEOs agreed that the leadership team had been recalibrated so that it now possessed digital skills and competencies, while only 33% of corporate functions respondents agreed with 43% disagreeing.



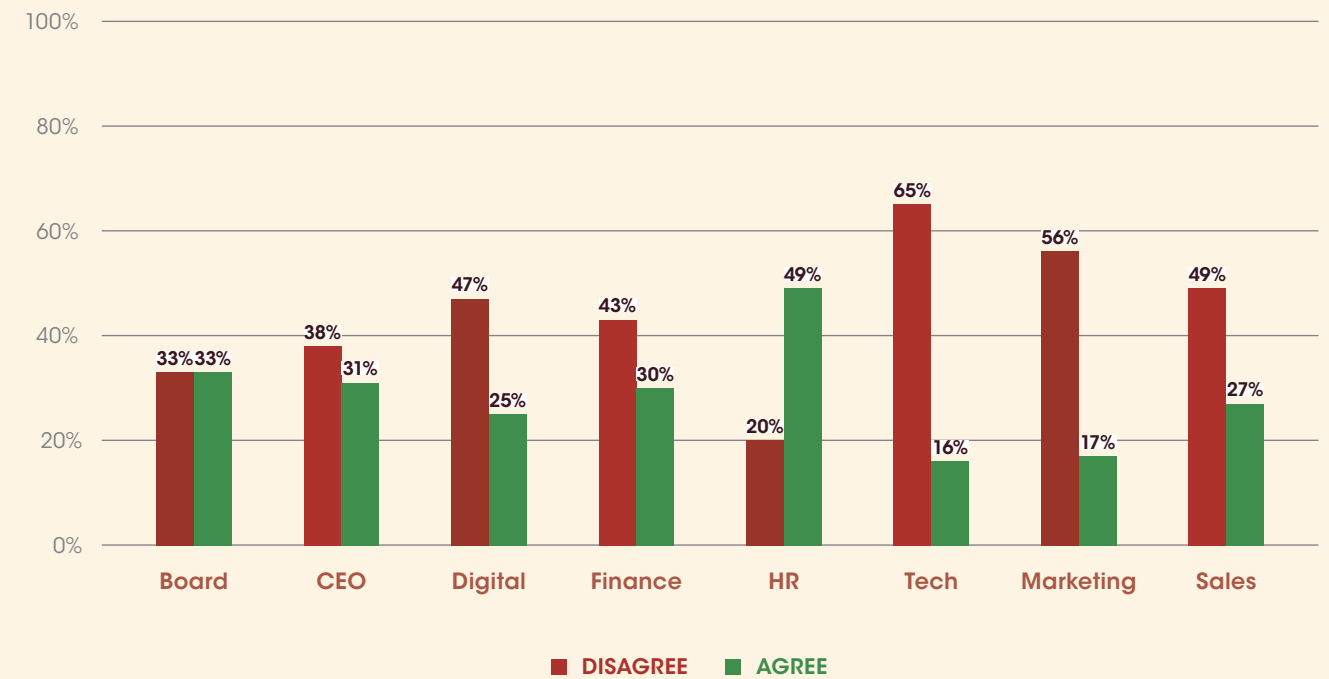
This pattern continued in other areas relating to the assessment of talent in the organisation. The Board and CEO respondents were significantly more confident that the HR Department had "reframed the type of talent we need for our digital future", and that their organisation was "winning the talent war against competitors".



2b) Our leadership team has been recalibrated so that they now possess digital skills and competencies



3b) Our HR department has reframed the type of talent we need for our digital future



Only 24% of HR directors – the professionals tasked with ensuring that there is appropriate capability throughout the organisation – agreed that their leadership team possess digital skills and competencies. The technology function was even more damning, with only 22% agreeing and 56% disagreeing that their leadership team has the necessary digital skills.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, HR directors were even more confident than the Board/CEO, when it came to marking their own homework – that the HR Department had successfully reframed the type of talent needed for the company's digital future. A view not shared by the Technology, Digital and Marketing functions.

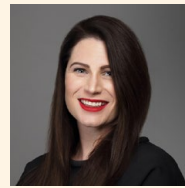
These findings are problematic for incumbent businesses for several reasons. For a start, to compete in the digital world organisations need a shared consensus of relative strengths and weaknesses – particularly when it comes to the quality and competence of their people. They may well use scenario planning,

foresight, design thinking, and other future planning tools in order to develop strategy and formulate new business models. But these efforts will only be effective if they have the people with the mindsets necessary to guide the organisation through the future planning, strategy development, and digital change process.

It is very difficult to set strategic direction, develop new business models, change culture and drive digital transformation, without shared understanding and open communication between senior leaders and management. Yet our research suggests that this understanding and communication is lacking in many incumbent businesses.

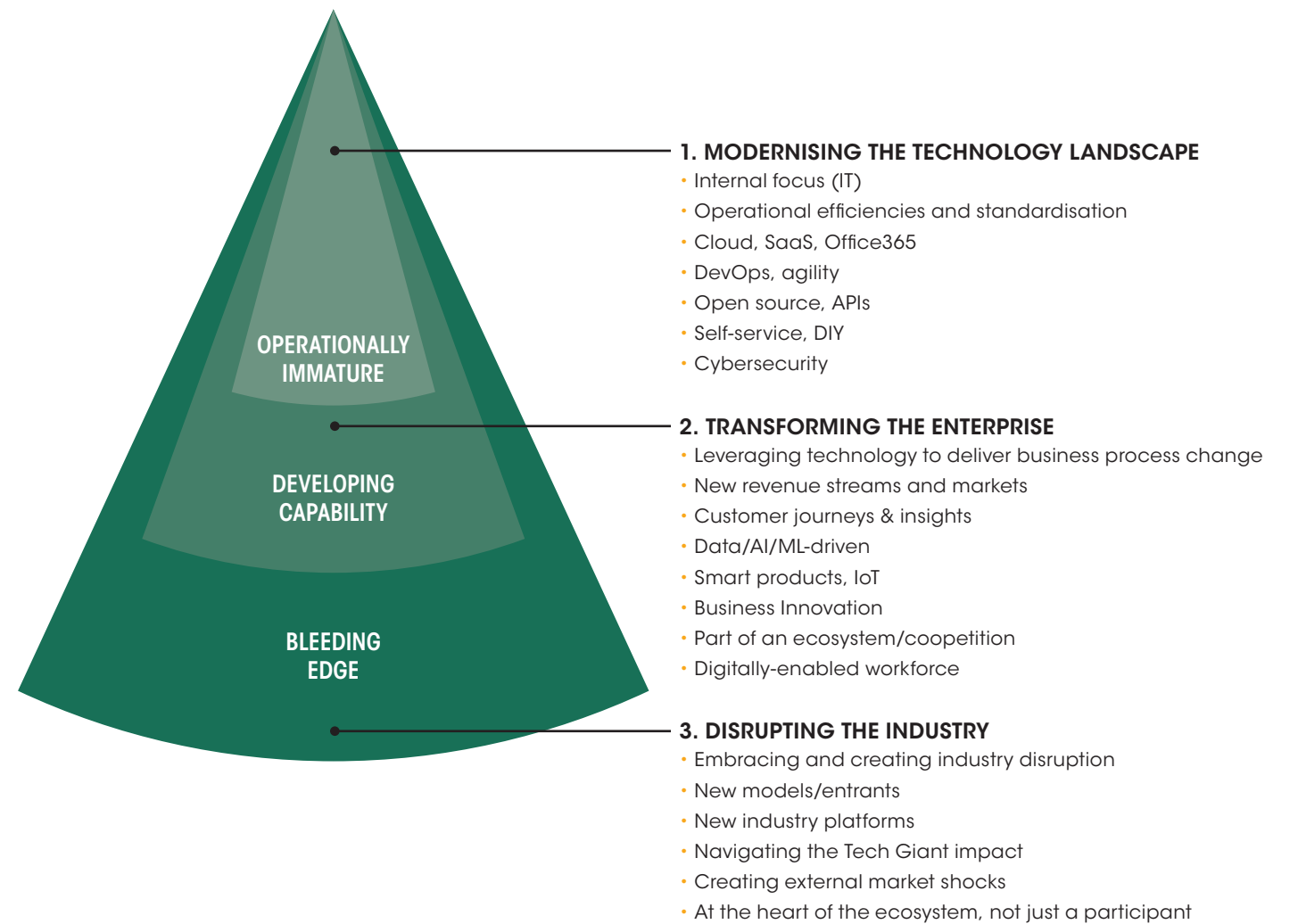
If there is a significant gap in perception and understanding – a “digital divide”- between the Board/ CEO and Digital/IT directors in incumbent firms, as our evidence shows, digital transformation is likely to be difficult at best.

“Being closer to the front line means these functions will likely take a more realistic, and often pessimistic, view of their own capabilities in these emerging fields. On the other hand, being one or more steps removed from these functions may cause CEOs, Chairs and NEDs to be overly optimistic in their assessment of their business’s current talent levels and their adaptability to the digital age.”



HEATHER BARNES,
PARTNER, TECHNOLOGY, DIGITAL &
INNOVATION PRACTICE

4) How digital is your organisation?



“The Executive team needs to be brave and accept that individually it is likely no single person is able to view and understand the whole digital picture. Collectively, however, they are much better placed. While diagnostics can go some way towards measuring the current state of the business, critically, businesses need executives with the skills and competencies to break down the invisible barriers within the organisation, to shift mindsets and encourage an open environment which accepts gaps in individual knowledge.”



PETER CRAIG-COOPER,
SENIOR ADVISOR,
ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION?

Digital transformation means different things to different people. Undoubtedly this is one of the reasons a perception gap exists. Through our work helping many top organisations acquire senior technology leaders we have seen a wide gap between how different organisations define ‘digital’. Figure four (How digital is your organisation?) expands upon three broad classifications for how we compare the remit of technology leaders and the maturity of the organisation they work within. As an organisation moves through these three stages, the focus moves from purchasing and integrating technology products, to using technology to deliver business process change and unlock new revenue streams and finally onto building ecosystems and platforms that redefine industry boundaries.

Each stage requires a rethink of the people and skills required within the organisation, both from within the executive leadership team and across the wider business as a whole. Leadership teams can use models like this to reach agreement on the digital sophistication of their organisation at the moment.

LOOKING AHEAD

The evidence suggests that siloed thinking and operation is a significant barrier to collective action and change. Senior leaders need sufficient strength of character and self-awareness to challenge leadership culture at the top of the company. And to do that in an objective, rather than subjective manner. Do the senior leaders have the attributes and behaviours required to foster the necessary openness to compete in the new digital environment? If not, then they may need to look outside of the organisation in order to bring in talent who can.

Developing or acquiring leaders with skills in collaboration, strategic thinking and influencing helps promote the exchange of knowledge and information across the board and senior leadership team which subsequently cascades down into the rest of the organisation to create a culture and environment well suited to digital change.

BREAKING DOWN

THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

HELPING ORGANISATIONS ACQUIRE LEADERS TO SPARK A DIGITAL REVOLUTION WITHIN THEIR BUSINESSES

Savannah Group works with leading businesses around the world helping them plan for and acquire the leadership they need to progress their digital journey. Each business is unique so there will never be a one size fits all approach.

We have hand-picked some examples of large organisations with a rich history in their industry who are reinventing themselves with digital at the core, paying particular focus to the type of digital enablement they were seeking from an executive hire, the competencies and skills required within the successful candidate and the search strategy we used to find them.

Global Head of Conversational AI to build a bank for the digital age

Placing the Global Head of Conversational AI for a global challenger bank in order to use data and technology to revolutionise financial services.

An interim CTO to transform a Financial Services business into a FinTech

Placing the interim CTO within an established financial services business that wanted to become digital but due to technical debt and the wrong CTO in place were finding it difficult to make the transition.

Global Head of Design to reimagine the MedTech ecosystem

Placing the Global Head of Design for an international healthcare group to develop and scale innovative new tech-led propositions.

CTO to embed digital innovation at a magic circle law firm

Placing the Chief Technology Officer to position innovative digital technologies as a competitive advantage.

Chief Content Officer to monetise media at a major football club

Placing one of the first Chief Content Officers at a major football club that wanted to establish itself as a media organisation by monetising content.

CCO to deliver a compelling, community centric, omni-channel customer experience

We placed the Chief Commercial Officer for a UK market leader in the retail gaming market to navigate a landscape reshaped by new technologies.

An Interim Marketing leader to drive new customer acquisition and revenue growth

Placing the Interim Global Head of Social Media Brand Building at a FTSE 100 consumer packaged goods business to drive new customer acquisition and revenue growth.

Technology Director to define a digital business model

Placing a Technology Director for a FTSE 100 international distribution and outsourcing group that wanted to leverage the power of its data.

Global Head of Delivery in a one of the world's largest CPGs

Placing the Global Head of Delivery to drive the delivery of digital technology and systems adoption globally, enhance the customer experience and increase commercial advantage.

CTO to deliver a digital revolution in the insurance industry

Placing the Chief Technology & Operations Officer for a global leader in the wholesale insurance market to drive their digital revolution.

A CHIEF TECHNOLOGY OFFICER TO EMBED DIGITAL INNOVATION AT A MAGIC CIRCLE LAW FIRM

CASE STUDY

- **Placing the Chief Technology Officer at magic circle law firm to position innovative digital technologies as a competitive advantage.**

Machine learning and AI are disrupting the legal sector, providing new ways for practitioners to be more effective and add more value to clients. From a traditionally services-led environment, technology has become a strategic enabler critical to the success of the sector. Our client was reaching the culmination of a major transformation programme which had built the foundations for change and innovation.

Under the leadership of the CIO, the firm had invested heavily in technology over the past couple of years and now needed a CTO who could shape and build global digital capability to future-proof the business. The firm has a vision of making digital business-as-usual and needed an individual who could work with legal tech companies to architect, scale, adopt and optimise new ideas and technological innovation while bringing the leadership and wider workforce along on the journey.

PROFILE OF THE IDEAL CANDIDATE:

Following a series of meetings with key stakeholders in the business, the attributes identified as being key for this role were:

SKILL SET:

- **Technology leadership**
Capable of being the firm's foremost technical authority in an information rich, product-led environment. Able to navigate a complex technology landscape including the challenges that come with a legacy business.
- **Strategic thinking**
A commercially minded leader who can manage and influence a broad range of senior stakeholders at all levels of the business.
- **Technical excellence**
A strong technical knowledge of architectures and technologies including SaaS, Cloud, data analytics, data science amongst others.

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES:

- **Influencing**
A confident expert who enjoys intellectual challenge and who can quietly and considerately bring people along on the journey of culture change.
- **Collaborative**
A high EQ, low-ego leader who takes a consultative and collaborative approach. A leader with enthusiasm for innovation, stamina, and a willingness to inspire and educate.
- **Resilience**
Task-focused, pragmatic and tenacious, someone who can inspire and motivate through times of considerable change.



SEARCH STRATEGY

We searched for candidates outside the client's traditional talent pools, in industries and organisations where digital disruption has shaped rapid technology and business change. The ideal candidate needed to have experience of bringing products and software into a services-led environment and leading the transformation to a digitally driven business. Given that regulatory and cyber security concerns have a significant influence on the firm's technology landscape, the CTO needed experience of a regulated environment and managing sensitive data.

The CTO would need to be an agent of change, able to take a complex, global enterprise on a journey through exceptional

stakeholder management and authoritative knowledge of enterprise-wide technology architecture. Given the historic landscape, the CTO would also need to balance legacy systems with new cutting-edge technology while injecting energy into the technology team and generating excitement about the potential for the technology.

Our client selected a candidate who, as Head of Interactive Technology, had led the development of a high-profile internet streaming technology for a major national broadcaster. With experience of digitising traditional, institutional businesses, he is bringing new competencies to the leadership team and positioning technology as a strategic enabler within the business.

AN INTERIM CTO TO TRANSFORM A FINANCIAL SERVICES BUSINESS INTO A FINTECH

CASE STUDY

- Placing the interim CTO within an established financial services business that wanted to become digital but due to technical debt and the wrong CTO in place were finding it difficult to make the transition.

Many businesses are looking to become more digital but find that the technical debt they have hampers their capability to build products and services that enable the future of their business. However, bringing in a digitally native or digital pure play technology leader rarely has the desired impact as they haven't encountered the people or technology challenges of an organisation that needs to change versus one that is rapidly growing.

The CTO would need to understand the business strategy, goals and objectives and then translate that into the changes that would need to be made to the teams globally

and create a technology strategy that would deliver the outcomes needed for a "growth mindset" CIO to join the organisation 12-18 months later.



PROFILE OF THE IDEAL CANDIDATE:

Following a series of meetings with key stakeholders in the business, the attributes identified as being key for this role were:

SKILL SET:

- Commercial & Technology Strategy**
Able to develop and execute a technology strategy as part of a wider commercial strategy.
- Subject Matter Expert**
Experience transitioning from legacy systems while utilising new technologies.
- Technology Transformation**
Leading a technology transformation within a business where technology had lost credibility with the board, ExCo and broader business.

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES:

- Influencing**
Ability to sell a story and bring people on a journey.
- Collaborative**
A high EQ, low-ego leader who takes a consultative and collaborative approach but is willing to get things done.
- Resilience**
Task-focused, pragmatic and tenacious. Someone who can inspire and motivate through times of considerable change.

SEARCH STRATEGY

Initially our client wanted to bring in a CTO from one of the Digital giants. We persuaded them however that someone with experience of working with technical debt, integrating businesses, redefining the teams and setting the agenda for change would be a better fit. In addition, we felt the successful candidate would need experience of both traditional organisations and start-ups.

Our client came to us when their incumbent was still in post as they were concerned about the consequences of being without a leader in technology. This meant we had a couple of weeks to secure the right person prior to the incumbent being given notice. In that time, we were able to identify a number of options for the client that would be a good fit for their culture and with the capabilities to deliver at pace and with high levels of EQ.

We worked discreetly to ensure that the search was not leaked onto the market with all candidates under NDA and client interviews conducted in our offices. We were able to provide candidates who had worked across a number of different financial services organisations at different levels of maturity and varying levels of digital enablement. The successful candidate had worked for a number of large global banks and then spent a number of years in Fintech start-ups. The client secured them on a 12-month assignment.



AMSTERDAM

A CHIEF TECHNOLOGY OFFICER TO DEFINE AND CREATE A NEW DIGITAL BUSINESS MODEL

CASE STUDY

- **Placing a Technology Director for a FTSE 100 international distribution and outsourcing group that wanted to leverage the power of its data.**

Technology is the driver of future success in the distribution and outsourcing market. Leveraging its vast amount of data to deliver efficiencies and sustainability on a global scale would enable our client, a FTSE 100 business, to transform from a products business to a services business. Digital transformation requires a deep understanding of the customer journey, its pain points and the creation of a much more digital offering.

This organisation's highly decentralised model meant that markets can stay close to their customers; however in operating independently, opportunities for shared innovation, optimisation and control were lost. To lead the transformation, the CEO wanted to recruit a Chief Technology Officer to introduce a global tech platform that would facilitate new ways of working internally and enable the business to deliver new customer-focused solutions.

PROFILE OF THE IDEAL CANDIDATE:

Recognising that this was a pivotal point in the businesses journey, we encouraged the client to be ambitious in the type of person they recruited. The attributes identified as being key for this role were:

SKILL SET:

- **Leadership Skills**
Experience of leading and delivering key technology investment projects and programmes across European businesses.
- **Digital Transformation**
A strong technology leader with experience of digital transformation in a B2C environment including architecture and development experience.
- **Stakeholder Management**
Able to build strong relationships at every level of the organisation in a complex structure.

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES:

- **Influencing**
An energised, inspirational, individual who can evangelise the business benefits of new ways of thinking and working.
- **Strategic Thinking**
A high achiever who can show the business what good looks like and how the business might look in the future.
- **Dynamic**
A credible leader who can enthuse and excite both technology and business teams with their vision.

SEARCH STRATEGY

We undertook a search across Europe for a technology leader with a track record of consolidating a disparate group of technology functions. Our client's strategy of sustainability in service delivery meant we needed to find candidates with an understanding of the development of new digitised services based on data held on suppliers and customers. The Technology Director would need experience of building and leading world-class, high-performing teams and be able to advise key senior stakeholders on how technology can best be utilised to enhance business success.

The Technology Director should have the energy and enthusiasm to take the business to the next stage of its evolution. As a member of the senior executive team and reporting to the Group CIO, the ideal candidate would need to create a technology strategy and enterprise architecture that would enable the European businesses to succeed.

From our shortlist, the successful candidate had previously led the development of the online retail offering for a major supermarket chain. The candidate is a truly world-class leader who was excited enough by the challenge to make the move. The new Technology Director has effected a change in mindset across the business, providing the strategic leadership to transform the delivery of technology across the European business.



A GLOBAL HEAD OF CONVERSATIONAL AI TO BUILD A BANK FOR THE DIGITAL AGE

CASE STUDY

- **Placing the Global Head of Conversational AI for a global challenger bank based to use data and technology to revolutionise financial services.**

In the digital age, consumers expect all their online experiences, including banking, to be real time and intelligent. It's our client's belief that the winners in banking will have the mindset and capabilities of a world class software company and over the past six years they have invested in technological transformation, insourcing thousands of technology roles. Two years ago, this major international bank launched its chatbot that uses natural language processing to help manage a customer's finances in a conversational way.

Investment in the virtual assistant, which leverages artificial intelligence and machine learning, is being scaled up as part of the bank's transformation into a leading information-based technology company. The success of the virtual assistant will reduce the requirement for bank branches, therefore transforming the banking sector. The bank wanted to appoint a Global Head of Conversational AI to embed the most cutting-edge approaches to technology into how the bank works.

PROFILE OF THE IDEAL CANDIDATE:

Our client was clear from the outset that they needed someone with experience beyond major corporates to avoid collective groupthink. The attributes identified as being key for this role were:

SKILL SET:

- **UX Design**
Experience in AI, character development, UX and UI design, gaming, research, and operations.
- **Artificial Intelligence**
Ability to define and drive the quality and connectivity of conversational AI experience across all channels and to develop additional real-time, intelligent features.
- **Customer Experience**
Able to create dynamic ways of working by applying human-centered design principles and data-informed decision-making.

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES:

- **Influencing**
Can articulate a story with which people can identify and understand their role. Uses storytelling to define direction and priorities as technology scales into new experiences.
- **Dynamic**
An inspiring leader who can bring ingenuity, simplicity, and humanity to an industry ripe for change.
- **Strategic Thinking**
Able to think differently to design, evolve and co-create contextually relevant experiences. Communicate a vision and bring it to life.

SEARCH STRATEGY

Our search strategy spanned engineers, technology experts, product developers and creatives. Having reviewed a selection of profiles, the client decided they wanted a more creative set of competencies which would complement the existing team which includes UX and user interaction experts and even film producers. This is a leading-edge function of technologists, engineers, designers, product managers, and data scientists.

We searched in large organisations, not just in financial services but B2C including those in FMCG, FinTech, banking and insurance that are grappling with similar challenges. We also looked at high end design consulting firms where consultants build products and scale prototypes. Lastly, we looked at specific AI companies where designers work in an entrepreneurial environment.

From our shortlist, the client chose a candidate with a multifaceted background including MD corporate experience at a major bank and high-end creative design consultancy experience, as well as having started, scaled and exited two of her own businesses. The new Global Head of Conversational AI is playing a central role in building a bank for the digital age, taking the team on a journey to becoming a leading information-based technology company.

A GLOBAL HEAD OF DELIVERY IN A ONE OF THE WORLD'S LARGEST CPGs

CASE STUDY

- Placing the Global Head of Delivery to drive the delivery of digital technology and systems adoption globally, enhance the customer experience and increase commercial advantage.

Legacy businesses that have enjoyed huge success historically are now at risk of being disrupted by new market entrants. To combat external threats, our client was adding new business lines to its portfolio, with ever more complex R&D, manufacturing and supply chain requirements. In parallel, developing deeper brand loyalty and connectivity with its customers is imperative and therefore the use of digital technologies such as

RPA, AI/ML and sophisticated data capabilities are critical on all fronts so that the business can continue to grow and succeed in the years to come.

Under the leadership of the CIO, the business is investing heavily in its digital and technology strategy and needed a Global Head of Delivery who could execute the vision and build the global digital capabilities to future-proof the business.

PROFILE OF THE IDEAL CANDIDATE:

Following a series of meetings with key stakeholders in the business, the attributes identified as being key for this role were:

SKILL SET:

- **Business Transformation**
A track record of product/application & service development, resource planning and shaping solutions which deliver significant commercial value, gained in a complex, global customer-focused business.
- **Programme Management**
Experienced in the delivery of best practice process, delivery and governance structures including Six Sigma, PRINCE2, Agile, DevOps and Lean. Detailed knowledge of technology project lifecycles and portfolio management.
- **Technical & Digital Excellence**
A keen interest in new technologies and practices with an up-to-date understanding of the latest developments in information management and the digital agenda.

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES:

- **Communication**
An outstanding communicator with high levels of intellectual rigour and polish with the ability to articulate complex issues into simple and easily assimilated strategies and deliverables.
- **Stakeholder Management**
A visionary and outstanding leader who can inspire and motivate through times of considerable change. Able to quickly gain credibility and win trust and buy in from IT professionals, business leaders and a wide variety of internal and external stakeholders.
- **Decision Maker**
Decisive, someone who takes early decisions and uses data and rigour where necessary, but good instinct is vital, too.

KUALA LUMPUR



SEARCH STRATEGY

We searched for candidates outside the client's traditional talent pools, in industries and organisations where digital disruption has already had an impact and in traditional businesses that have gone from "analogue to digital". The ideal candidate needed to have experience of digital technologies, a complex manufacturing environment and leading transformation.

The Global Head of Delivery would need to be an agent of change, able to take a complex, global enterprise on a journey through exceptional stakeholder management and authoritative knowledge of digital technologies and their practical application. The candidate would also need to balance legacy systems with new cutting-edge technology while injecting energy into the technology team and generating excitement about the future.

Our client selected a candidate who, as CIO for a large division of a global medical devices business, had led the business through a comparable transformation with great success. With experience of digitising a traditional, highly complex business, he has been able to bring new competencies to the leadership team and further help position technology as the strategic enabler within the business.

A CHIEF TECHNOLOGY OFFICER TO DELIVER A DIGITAL REVOLUTION IN THE INSURANCE INDUSTRY

CASE STUDY

- **Placing the Chief Technology & Operations Officer for a global leader in the wholesale insurance market to drive their digital revolution.**

At the vanguard of change in the insurance industry, our client, a Fortune 500 global leader in wholesale reinsurance, is disrupting the market with a fresh approach. Driving and embracing the digital revolution, the organisation's goal is to make insurance products simpler and more accessible by reaching out to customers online with transparent digital propositions and digital underwriting technologies that enable the business to disrupt without compromising their existing client base.

Proud of its evolving, exciting, entrepreneurial and pro-active culture, the CEO wanted to hire a CTO to design and shape new technology solutions and explore digital offerings and automation. The CTO would sit within a new and highly innovative business unit to spearhead the drive towards digitisation from a start-up style environment, but with the support of a major global organisation.

PROFILE OF THE IDEAL CANDIDATE:

Following a series of meetings with key stakeholders in the business, the attributes identified as being key for this role were:

SKILL SET:

- **Subject Matter Expertise**
An expert in customer-driven, digital technologies and architectures including cloud native design, APIs, RPA, AI, data modelling and analytics
- **Extensive Network**
Bring a wealth of knowledge and relationships from across the global technology community, including tech giants and the FinTech/ InsureTech space.
- **Stakeholder Management**
Using personal influence and relationship building to manage demanding and diverse stakeholders plus the energy and courage to challenge in a collaborative way.

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES:

- **Innovative**
An inspirational leader and influencer, nurturing new ideas, developing original solutions, shaping future roadmaps and delivering new technologies whilst building a cohesive culture.
- **Resilient**
A confident, personally resilient individual, able to withstand working under the pressure of a performance-driven culture.
- **Influencing**
Able to quickly build the confidence and trust of a highly qualified and intellectually powerful executive team.



SEARCH STRATEGY

We searched for technology leaders with experience of working for a dynamic, fast-paced organisation that was undergoing significant growth and transformation. The individual needed to come from an industry with a strong customer-focus, ideally the primary insurance industry, or a scalable, software-led, high transaction environment. The CTO would need to have experience of building and developing SaaS products, eCommerce or high availability platforms in a high-growth environment.

The candidate would need to be well networked in the digital ecosystem and understand how to bring the best of the new and different technology into a traditional business. This required the CTO to have both an entrepreneurial streak and be

able to influence in a corporate environment. Since the CTO would be leading the engagement with VCs and FinTech partners, the CTO needed experience of negotiating contracts and partnerships with third parties in the insurance space and bringing platforms together in a coherent customer proposition.

From our shortlist, our client appointed a candidate with a combination of corporate leadership in financial services and start-up experience. Entrepreneurial, but able to navigate a matrix environment, she was the first hire of this type for the organisation. Since joining, she has successfully supported a number of start-ups and scaled them within the business. This is the beginning of a journey into a technological and digital revolution for this insurance giant.

A GLOBAL HEAD OF DESIGN TO REIMAGINE THE MEDTECH ECOSYSTEM

CASE STUDY

- Placing the Global Head of Design for an international healthcare group to develop and scale innovative new tech-led propositions.

An approach to healthcare that helps people better manage their health by preventing illness, supporting patients after hospital stays and promoting a healthy lifestyle creates better outcomes for both patients and healthcare providers.

Our client, one of the best-known private healthcare groups in the world, has a vision to use MedTech to reimagine the entire experience for anyone who engages with their healthcare plan from their first interaction.

The senior leadership team wanted to recruit a Global Head of Design to build the business case and design and develop digital products and services to help people who may not be engaged with technology to take advantage of the digital world and new services. The remit of the role would span the design of new hospitals through to patient, visitor and staff experience.

PROFILE OF THE IDEAL CANDIDATE:

We advised our client, the CIO, on the type of transformational leader the business needed. The attributes identified as being key for this role were:

SKILL SET:

- Design leader**
Proven expertise in concept ideation and development, UX and UI design, CX while understanding design thinking and rapid prototyping.
- Customer centric thinking**
Thinks in customer centric design terms, is passionate about and driven by customer needs and enthusiastic about solving healthcare needs through technology.
- Digital thought-leader**
Can help develop a sound digital culture, is an evangelist for the art of the possible and is at the forefront of the latest technology and customer developments

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES:

- Influencing**
An inspired storyteller who can guide people on an emotional journey and empower a team so that they understand their role in the story.
- Collaborative**
Able to work in a collaborative and collegiate way, as well as a coach, in both start-up and corporate environments.
- Leadership Skills**
An energetic individual who is able to take a strong leadership role and represent the business to clients and customers.



LONDON

SEARCH STRATEGY

For this global role we searched in organisations that are innovating in customer experience in both large organisations and start-ups as the ideal candidate would have a mix of experience. The Global Head of Design would have an awareness of healthcare, technology and customer trends to be able to design the organisation's future customer interactions in terms of digital products and services and in terms of customer engagement.

The ideal candidate would be an expert in human centred design, UX and UI practices. The Global Head of Design would need to be able to grow the organisation's data capabilities, harnessing disruptive technologies including artificial intelligence. Plus, they would need to be a leader of

people, able to set the vision but also be hands-on, helping the team to deliver digital services as well as mentoring and developing them.

The successful candidate was a creative designer who, while working for a major creative agency, was involved in UX, building products and services for clients. She has brought the conversation about digital transformation to life and shaped the thinking of the senior team, acting as a catalyst for new ways of working and making human centred design a core constituent of the global organisation.

A CHIEF CONTENT OFFICER TO MONETISE MEDIA AT A MAJOR FOOTBALL CLUB

CASE STUDY

- Placing one of the first Chief Content Officer's at a major football club that wanted to establish itself as a media organisation by monetising content.

The vision of the new leadership team for our client was to become an established media organisation, competing on a global scale for share of voice and revenues. The club's history is rich with success and the club believed that the building of a global fan base would and vastly increase the value of the club. To achieve this, the club needed to become an increasingly content centric business.

The club asked Savannah Group to recruit a Chief Content Officer to focus on growing the global

fan base through the production of compelling content. The Chief Content Officer role is typically associated with media companies and so this would make the client one of the first football clubs to make such an appointment. The role would be central in the ongoing commercial success of the club though monetising content opportunities for partners and sponsors. This was a new role for the club, repositioning the business with content story telling at the centre of the organisation, driving indirect revenues for the club.

PROFILE OF THE IDEAL CANDIDATE:

Following a series of meetings with key stakeholders in the business, the attributes identified as being key for this role were:

SKILL SET:

- Innovative**
Track record of ideation and innovation which has resulted in audience and revenue growth. Experience of building and monetising audiences through media and content.
- Content Creation**
A track record of driving the content strategy within a large consumer focused organisation plus an appreciation of football's commercial and international appeal.
- International**
Experience of working on international projects and an understanding how to create compelling and bespoke content for different international audiences.

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES:

- Strategic Thinking**
Able to bring fresh thinking to problem solving with high standards of delivery and working practices.
- Collaborative**
High IQ and EQ in equal measure. Persuasive, with the ability to change behaviours and challenge the status quo. Credible enough to develop positive relationships with senior stakeholders.
- Self Motivation**
Unintimidated by working for a challenger brand and be prepared to fail fast, learn and innovate.



SEARCH STRATEGY

This was a new role for the club, and a new role for the sport of football. The overall direction came from our client, but we helped the client to define the structure, how the role might fit within the leadership team, and where content creation and monetisation should sit in the club.

We undertook a global search including candidates in the US, Asia and Europe. This was a multi-sector search, outside the client's traditional talent pools mainly focused on high profile media organisations that had a strong understanding of how to engage with fans and consumers, and how to monetise digital relationships. The ideal candidate would have the ability to work in an

internationally orientated business, understanding different market situations and cultures.

The candidate selected from our shortlist had led the digital and content strategy for a major national broadcaster, launching new digital channels resulting in a digital audience growth of 120%. An entertainment specialist with experience ranging from sports to documentary to kids' TV, he has a strong understanding of how audiences consume media. A global citizen who has worked in many parts of the world, he has been able to ensure the club is positioned to become an innovative, accessible and agile challenger brand in world football.

A CHIEF COMMERCIAL OFFICER TO DELIVER A COMMUNITY CENTRIC, OMNI CHANNEL CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

CASE STUDY

- We placed the Chief Commercial Officer for a UK market leader in the retail gaming market to navigate a landscape reshaped by new technologies.

The threats and opportunities of digital transformation within the retail gaming market meant that one of the UK market leaders needed to protect its retail business while reaching out to new markets and segments by growing digital revenues.

This PE owned company had underperformed in the first 18 months of the investment period and a new CEO had recently been appointed to lead an ambitious change programme. The organisation recognised it needed a new CCO who could balance the transition from a traditional to a digital firm.

Part of the change was to become a data-driven business that uses customer insight to shape its offering. The business was also investing in an omnichannel proposition in which the brand's customer experience and community feel needed to be seamless across retail and online channels. Savannah Group was appointed to find a new Chief Commercial Officer who would be able to take the lead on creating a compelling, community centric and engaging customer experience and return the business to growth.



PROFILE OF THE IDEAL CANDIDATE:

Following a series of meetings with key stakeholders in the business, the attributes identified as being key for this role were:

SKILL SET:

- **Leadership Skills**
Capability to lead teams in an evolving culture through fast-moving change in a challenging market.
- **Commercial Acumen**
Digital and commercial skills that add new capabilities to the senior leadership team and improve the calibre of the marketing team.
- **Technology Expert**
An experienced decisionmaker for technology investments including CRM, marketing automation, ecommerce digital marketing and customer analytics.

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES:

- **Collaborative**
A collaborative, values-driven, hands-on people leader, able to bring people on the digital journey.
- **Resilient**
Tenacious and resilient in approach, able to stand their ground as a member of the Executive Board.

SEARCH STRATEGY

Our search strategy focused on individuals with experience in multi-channel, multi-site retail and digital environments. Given the transformation required, it was deemed essential that the individuals considered had experience of moving from an offline business to an omni-channel environment. In order to find a CCO able to bring people on the digital journey, we looked for candidates with first-hand knowledge of sectors that have similarities with the fast paced nature of gaming, retail and hospitality.

The CCO would need a strong commercial edge in order to significantly improve both top and bottom line results for the business and proven success in developing and building online and retail marketing campaigns that generated a return on investment. Given the pace of change required, the CCO needed an outstanding ability to drive innovation and change, with evidence of supporting businesses to become industry leaders.

From our shortlist, a candidate was selected who came from a major international travel organisation where he had led a digital transformation and market repositioning in a turnaround environment which was complex, underfunded and traditional in culture. The new CCO is leading transformation of the business from a focus of protecting today's revenue to an agile, digital organisation that is creating value for tomorrow.



PROFILE OF THE IDEAL CANDIDATE:

Our client was clear from the outset that they needed someone with experience beyond major corporates to avoid collective groupthink. The attributes identified as being key for this role were:

SKILL SET:

- **Marketing Strategy**
Able to develop a social media strategy around the wider objective of brand building.
- **Subject Matter Expert**
An expert in social media strategy, influencer marketing and execution.
- **Customer Acquisition**
A conversion specialist, able to increase new customer acquisition via social media channels.

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES:

- **Stakeholder Management**
Championing the role of social media internally. A confident expert who can engage and persuade at C-Suite and Board level.
- **Collaborative**
Willingness to engage with teams across international locations to understand current brand building strategies and work with them to hone and improve.

SEARCH STRATEGY

Our client came to us after being unable to identify a successful candidate through two previous recruitment partners who had been retained on this challenging brief. Time was of the essence and so we recommended looking at an interim to come in and establish the role. We advised that an interim would allow them access to a senior leader immediately, who could come in and establish the team, set the strategy and ultimately execute quickly in an environment where speed was absolutely essential.

Working with our extensive network of interim leaders Savannah delivered a shortlist of 3 candidates within 48 hours. The interim candidates underwent an accelerated but intense process and the client was able to appoint and have the candidates start within a matter of weeks. The successful candidate was an experienced interim CMO with significant consumer brands experience and who had run an agency focussed on social media as well having worked across a range of other sectors including media, telecoms, technology, and media.

The client was delighted with the interim appointment and offered the candidates an initial 6-month contract with a view that it would be extended if successful. Within a matter of weeks, the client asked Savannah to conduct a search for the permanent role, happy that they had a high-quality operator who could deliver over the 6 to 12-month period it might take them to hire the permanent successor.

AN INTERIM MARKETING LEADER TO DRIVE NEW CUSTOMER ACQUISITION AND REVENUE GROWTH

CASE STUDY

- **Placing the Interim Global Head of Social Media Brand Building at a FTSE 100 consumer packaged goods business to drive new customer acquisition and revenue growth.**

Social media is disrupting the market, it's changing the way consumers view brands, and it provides a huge opportunity for brands to take market share, acquire customers and increase revenues. A major consumer packaged goods business saw the opportunity that social media would provide and wanted to appoint a senior level marketer to build a social media function capable of growing their brand globally and at pace.

The new role would be responsible for creating, driving and executing the group level social media marketing strategy, in order to drive new customer acquisition and revenue growth. The scope would include all social media channels, international influencers and global partnerships. It would utilise new ideas and technological innovation while bringing the leadership and wider workforce along on the journey.

