

Digital Transformation: new entrepreneurial strategies and mindset

Recently, digital transformation has strongly modified the competitive environment and entrepreneurial models and strategies (Nambisan *et al.*, 2019). The rise of digital transformation is blurring the traditional architectures of entrepreneurship and business models bringing new challenges for management scholars (Nambisan, 2017; Nambisan *et al.*, 2019; Cusumano *et al.*, 2019). Of course, the impact of digital technologies on companies is not only limited to running online meetings, paperless offices, or social media communication. On the contrary, it encompasses a holistic approach to re-thinking strategies, business models, and activities (Jacobides *et al.*, 2018). This profound change in the business landscape and the pervasiveness of digital transformation in all the entrepreneurship-related aspects beg the question: Is digital transformation changing the nature of entrepreneurship?

Digital technologies are, *per se*, cross-domain, transforming the real nature of entrepreneurship in every sector and industry. The track aims to provide an eye-bird view of the opportunities offered by digital technologies by looking at three different trajectories. The first is related to the change of entrepreneurial mindset required to integrate new digital strategies (from linear to exponential thinking); the second is the opportunities offered by digitalization in engaging with customers, and finally, the change of paradigm stimulated by digital technologies in promoting more sustainable business models in crucial sectors such as, among others, the tourism industry.

First, digital transformation has opened up new innovation opportunities and challenges for companies and, thus, calling for new mindsets (Jacobides, 2019). Contemporary entrepreneurs, indeed, are required to “think digitally” to face the challenges and grasp the opportunity offered by new digital technologies to pursue long-term success and maintain a significant competitive advantage (Soltanifar *et al.*, 2021; Cutolo & Kenney, 2020).

Second, digital transformation led entrepreneurs to introduce technological developments (e.g., websites, e-commerce platforms, social networks) that offer enormous data and transform customers’ interactions and engagement (Checchinato, 2021). Data, information, and knowledge are the new factors of success that entrepreneurs must handle to open new market opportunities and adopt new business models. Moreover, the push that digital transformation is giving to consumer engagement is also amplified by the adoption of artificial intelligence- and virtual reality-powered tools. Accordingly, entrepreneurs offer new immersive experiences to customers by designing completely innovative marketing strategies that combine physical and digital dimensions in a unique multi-sensorial experience (Bolton *et al.*, 2018).

Finally, technological development in tourism has pushed consumers to change their behavior, stimulating the rise of new actors entering the industry by exploiting the opportunities offered by digitalization (Linton and Öberg, 2020). This, in turn, has resulted in new business strategies implemented, both for new entrants and consolidated firms, more inclined toward sustainable business models (the Triple Layer CANVAS is an example). Often, such models build on the principles of the circular economy (Sehnem *et al.*, 2021). As a result, scholars are gaining interest in developing a research stream that explores and contributes to bridging some significant gaps in such a rising domain still largely underexplored (Vargas-Sánchez, 2020).

Track main topics

Since these changes have increasingly attracted academic, practitioner and policy-maker interest, the track aims to contribute to the growing discussion of the changing context of entrepreneurship. We encourage the submission of contributions aiming to cover a wide range of topics such as (but not limited to):

- Digital technology as a driver for entrepreneurship and competitiveness;
- Digital technology as game-changer in entrepreneurial mindset;
- Digital technologies (e.g. artificial intelligence, IoT, i4.0), new ventures and business model innovation;
- Digital technology: from traditional to innovative entrepreneurial approaches;
- Value creation and appropriation in the data-driven economy;
- Entrepreneurial approaches in digital platforms and ecosystems;
- Digital technology and marketing strategies;
- Digitalization of consumer experience, the “phygital rebirth” of marketing strategies;
- Business implications of the combination of digital transformation and circular economy in tourism;
- Design and implementation of new circular digital business models and new entrepreneurial opportunities;
- The contribution of digital and circular economy initiatives within the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) policies domain;
- The creation of tools for evaluating the progress of circular economy initiatives within the smart tourism domain.

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Antonio Crupi is an Assistant Professor in Innovation Management at the University of Messina. He worked as Research Fellow at the Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna in Pisa from 2018 to 2021. He is also a Researcher Affiliated with the Strategic and Innovation Management Consortium (STIM) at the Institute of Manufacturing of the University of Cambridge. He serves on the Editorial Board of the Asian Business and Management Journal. Antonio's research focuses on innovation management, strategic management, intellectual property, and knowledge and technology transfer. Mainly he investigates the strategies that drive collaborations among different organizations in terms of open innovation and university-industry relationships. Moreover, his studies also aim to explore the dynamics behind digital transformation and ecosystems development. Antonio's studies mainly refer to the small-medium enterprises in the European context. He also reserves specific attention to the Asian economies.

Veronica Marozzo is Assistant Professor Business Economics and Management, Department of Economics at the University of Messina. She received a Ph.D. in Economics and Business Management from the University of Calabria. Her main research interest is in the field of consumer behavior with a focus on *Au-naturel* color and packaging, product authenticity and product sustainability, product personalization, front-of-package label (FoPL), communication of the creative process, smart tourism destination & disability.

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