Mastering Platform Businesses

Project Scope

Headquartered in London, the LEF is a global research and thought leadership programme dedicated to helping clients reimagine their organizations and leadership for a tech-driven future. We serve as a strategic touchpoint for CXO Teams to provoke and challenge their thinking to help them win in the 21st century.

Project overview

More and more organizations are creating, participating in, or competing with platform businesses. Although it is not a completely new phenomenon, there is still much confusion about what a 'platform business' is, what roles you can play in a platform business, how to create one or participate in one, what capabilities are needed, and how to play to win in a platform business context. In this research, we will seek to move the story forward, giving businesses and their leaders guidelines for how to play and win in the Platform Business Game.

Research approach

We will combine interviews with leading platform players, existing external thought leadership and LEF's own analysis, plus an understanding from our clients and other leaders what role platform businesses are playing in their business models, and what issues they are wrestling with.

Project deliverables

- A research report that provides insight through case studies, tools and action plans, that we will use to explore platform business topics with our clients.

- A workshop that we will use to help clients analyze platform business issues in their specific context.

Our goal is to publish the research report, executive summary, presentation and related tools in April 2018.

Project team

Bill Murray, Senior Researcher/Advisor, Leading Edge Forum, is the lead researcher for this project. Bill's IT career spans over 30 years, providing strategic IT consulting services to many industry sectors. Bill has experience of developing digital and business technology strategies, business cases and change programmes.

Dave Aron, Global Research Director, Leading Edge Forum, will support Bill in this project. Dave's key areas of research include digital business, strategy and new business models. Previously, Dave spent more than 12 years at Gartner, as a Gartner Fellow, focusing on strategy and CIO leadership issues. Dave has more than 30 years' experience in the IT business, and has been writing, speaking and teaching on digital business, IT strategy and other topics around the world for more than a decade.

Participating in this research

We would love to talk to any private or public sector organizations who have a story to tell about experience with creating, participating or competing with a platform business. Participating in the research will involve a 60 minute telephone interview. **To participate, please contact Bill by email at bill.murray@leadingedgeforum.com**

Benefits

As a result of taking part in a 60-minute telephone research interview, you will benefit from early access to the findings and have your advanced practices showcased to a wide audience of senior global leaders. We also hope you will find the interview itself challenging and thought-provoking.

Candidate questions

Below are some candidate questions for the interview. A subset to focus on can be agreed with the sponsor beforehand.

- **Platform businesses:**

    - Do you have, or are you building, a platform business?
    - Which platform businesses do you do business with? What roles do you play?
    - Who else participates? What is the scope of the ecosystem?
    - How do you think about competition/competitive advantage in a platform world?

- **Digital platforms:**

    - Do you have, or are you building, a digital platform?
    - Which digital platforms do you do business with? What roles do you play?
    - Who else participates? What is the scope of the ecosystem?

- **Applicable to both:**

    - What is the role of your IT organization in your platform play(s)?
    - How do you make collaborative decisions about the platform with other participants?
    - How would describe the flows of value in the platform – who gets what?
    - What has the value impact of the platform been to your company/agency?
    - How does the architecture of the platform fit with your internal enterprise architecture?
    - Are there any types of skill/talent that you need more in a platform world?
    - Any technology specifics that have been important to the platform's success?
    - What has been most important to make the platform successful?
    - Any gotchas – things that you wouldn't do/would do differently if you did it again?