

Accelerating Digital Transformation in 2020: A Path Forward for Policymakers

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Societies around the world stand on a threshold. The COVID-19 outbreak has caused a global health emergency, shuttered schools and businesses and locked down huge swaths of the global economy. Millions are out of work while governments endeavor to respond to the unprecedented crisis. Technology, such as cloud computing and data analysis, has played a huge role in helping employees work from home, educating children and keeping people healthy by utilizing the power of tele-presence. But not everyone has been able to take advantage of technology. Millions of adults and children do not have access to technology or broadband, many rural areas are cut off from services and innovation, and many governmental services are outdated and inefficient.

As countries, communities and businesses struggle to recover while addressing the growing concerns around social injustice, it is a unique time in history to reimagine what a better world could look like. Governments at all levels should seize this opportunity and reimagine society and the critical role of technology in enabling human progress. As we all look to accelerate digital transformation, Dell Technologies outlines a view of a world of accelerating convergence of technology, innovation and new opportunities for all.



Charting a Path Forward: Respond, Recover and Reimagine

The current environment has shown the need for governments and businesses to innovate and organize themselves to adapt as well as respond rapidly to unforeseen external pressures. This moment has significantly accelerated what already was a growing trend of digital transformation – with working remotely, the use of artificial intelligence and machine learning, virtual and augmented reality, 5G, quantum computing, and more.

The disruption caused by the current environment offers policymakers around the world the unique opportunity to fully adopt and utilize digital technologies, such as tele-health, tele-work and remote learning solutions, and strengthen their resilience and competitive posture.

As Dell Technologies continues to develop and provide innovative and empowering technology solutions, we are mindful of both the opportunities and responsibilities that come with such powerful tools. In our 2018 [Realizing 2030 Policy Roadmap](#), we outlined how governments can responsibly use technology to achieve prosperity in the next

ten years by addressing trust (including privacy protection and cybersecurity), innovation, workforce readiness, and sustainable development.

Our insights and experience as a global leader in applying emerging technology solutions to improve lives have informed our view on how governments should approach their next steps in a path forward. We believe governments have a responsibility to boost digital infrastructure, as connectivity has become ever more vital for all of us – big businesses and entrepreneurs, universities and schools, families and individuals, in metropolises and rural communities – to continue to function at a distance. Governments also should work with the private sector to ensure privacy protection and cybersecurity, as new paths of communication and work environments during the crisis have highlighted increased risk of cyber-attacks. To enhance innovation, governments should foster an environment for businesses to create jobs, for entrepreneurs to create new opportunities, for a data-driven economy to realize its full potential, and for everyone to have access to education, healthcare and economic opportunity.



Policymakers and businesses are recognizing that this situation has three phases, each of which offer the opportunity for governments to make progress:

- **Respond** by adopting immediate relief measures to safeguard the economy and public health;
- **Recover** by developing medium-term measures to activate an economic rebound; and
- **Reimagine** by transforming how we work, learn, heal, create, and play.

We look forward to working with governments across the globe to assist in undertaking their digital transformation to address humanity's greatest challenges.

Respond

In facing COVID-19, the immediate objective of public authorities has been to protect public health while still maintaining critical economic activity. This has required all economic players – including governments, businesses, workers, and consumers – to develop and implement health and safety measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Taking such drastic health and safety measures has created severe financial pressure on many businesses, particularly small and medium

enterprises. Many businesses and even some business models are not expected to survive. And some governments have faced problems in being able to promptly assist their constituents due to outdated IT and the lack of internet connectivity.

To safeguard the economy and provide immediate support for businesses, we urge the public sector to work closely with the private sector to:

- **Maintain essential global supply chains** by ensuring that governmental measures are both targeted and proportionate, utilizing trade agreements and avoiding tariffs and export bans.
- **Recognize ICT as an essential business** and ICT professionals - including manufacturers, service providers, and technicians - as essential workers, critical to the work of front-line responders, government services, research, financial institutions, and other essential functions.
- **Provide immediate financial support and tax relief** for businesses, especially SMEs and start-ups.
- **Provide financing** for organizations to invest in equipment and services, including IT, that allow them to operate remotely.
- **Provide regulatory flexibility** to avoid having new standards or regulatory requirements unnecessarily impede critical operations.



Recover

As governments transition from their immediate responses to developing medium-term measures to re-activate their economies and community life while continuing to protect their citizens' health, we encourage governments to:

- **Facilitate remote work solutions**
 - Ensure that communities – including rural areas and disadvantaged neighborhoods have access to high-speed internet and basic technologies, such as end-user devices and essential software applications.
 - Fund the modernization of government IT infrastructure, including a smart mix of cloud-based solutions.
 - Remove regulatory barriers to the deployment of digital services, particularly in critical sectors such as remote health and education solutions.
 - Ensure data privacy and cybersecurity following a risk-based approach, including through customer education, guidance, and use of internationally recognized regulatory standards and certifications.
- **Facilitate research** into COVID-19 and potential vaccines through high-performance computing.
- **Facilitate testing, tracing and tracking solutions** for COVID-19 using technology solutions, such as mobile apps, while ensuring data privacy protection.

Reimagine

Our world needs technology now more than ever. The future of the economy and our communities depends on the ability of governments, business and stakeholders to address these many societal issues, and investing in digital transformation

should play an important role in such a successful strategy. Governments can help accelerate this transformation by boosting IT infrastructure, enhancing connectivity, investing in emerging technologies in health and education, supporting workforce readiness, and promoting sustainability.

To achieve this better world of human progress, governments should seize on this moment of opportunity, utilize the power of digital transformation, and:

- **Reimagine opportunity by**
 - Ensuring rural communities and disadvantaged neighborhoods have access to high-speed internet, 5G and emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence, blockchain, 6G and quantum computing.
 - Facilitating technology access and strengthening IT infrastructure to increase opportunities to scale business, create new jobs and enter global markets, as well as enable education and healthcare.
 - Improving diverse entrepreneurs' access to capital, with incentives to invest in startups, infrastructure and reducing scale-up costs.
 - Providing a favorable regulatory and procurement framework to foster new competition and innovative business models driven by emerging technologies.
 - Investing in R&D that explores emerging technologies while incentivizing the private sector to also invest.
 - Adopting competitive, fair and transparent tax policies that encourage businesses to invest in innovation, infrastructure and training.
 - Encouraging free and open trade while opposing tariffs and trade barriers.



- **Reimagine education and workforce readiness**, by:

- Adopting emerging technologies to personalize and enhance learning as well as provide more affordable, accessible and effective education.
- Ensuring all schools and students have access to high-speed internet and emerging technologies.
- Fostering integration of digital skills into school and skills curricula and promoting digital literacy among people of all ages.
- Developing and funding workforce reskilling to ensure digital competencies and future resilience.
- Fostering partnerships with the private sector for student mentoring, career guidance, apprenticeship, developing ongoing skills and retraining programs.
- Emphasizing STEM, critical thinking, communication and digital literacy in public education and training programs.
- Encouraging hiring, training, and promoting a more diverse and inclusive workforce and leadership, as well as fostering mobility for highly skilled workers.
- Developing emerging technologies to increase workforce diversity and inclusion and remove bias and discrimination.

- **Reimagine government** by:

- Implementing state-of-the art e-government solutions.
- Opening up government data to provide better and more transparent public policies and services, reduce red tape and enable efficient data-driven applications.
- Transferring more government IT operations to a smart mix of cloud solutions to perform real-time data analytics to understand key societal and business challenges as well as manage supply chain uncertainty.

- **Reimagine trust** by:

- Promoting innovation while ensuring data privacy and cybersecurity.
- Encouraging developers to adopt privacy-by-design approaches in their technology solutions.
- Implementing smart, open data platforms that allow government data to be shared and innovation to be fostered while still safeguarding privacy with mechanisms like anonymization/pseudonymization and decentralized data storage and processing.
- Fostering and funding R&D in technologies that could offer new security options, such as blockchain and quantum computing.

- **Reimagine healthcare** by:

- Promoting the use of tele-health initiatives with emerging technologies.
- Leveraging AI, ML and predictive analytics to promote smarter healthcare.

- **Reimagine sustainability** by:

- Leveraging AI, ML, predictive analytics to undertake smart/digital city master plans and develop smarter mobility options, safety, water consumption, renewable power generation and storage and water distribution.
- Adopting procurement policies that promote development, acquisition and use of sustainable goods, considering the whole product lifecycle and circular economy principles, using global standards.



What's Next?

As we look to reimagine countries, communities, and businesses around the world, now is the time for governments and the private sector to come together and build a new framework that embraces the full potential technology has to offer. From our home offices to home classrooms, to helping fight COVID-19, we see the power that technology can have to improve people's lives. Not everyone benefited and many were left out. Governments should use this time to connect all our communities and reimagine the future of everything.

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