

THE A-Z OF THE DIGITAL JOURNEY

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. It would be helpful to know time to market in some of the cases that you are working on.

Ash Bijoor - Most work we do is in the form of projects based on specific customer requirements, rather than as a generic platform or product. If you have any specific need then we will be happy to provide a timeline for implementation. However, about the specific examples we gave, we have already deployed implementations of marketing / sentiment analysis and in the process of deploying the retail POS data analytics. The other two projects are yet in research stage where we are working on the validation of the initial models. The typical implementation timelines for the above projects are in the range of 12 to 18 months.

2. The quality of the programmer is judged usually through an interview process, but what process can a company adopt to judge the quality of an AI?

William Higgins - It's outcome-based. An organisation will agree a customer commitment/outcome e.g. timeliness around account opening or making a payment or accuracy around changing an address. If the AI is operating correctly, and the rules are accepted, then the outcome will occur. Quality should be measured and if perfect it would be 100%.

3. ...also useful to know of a methodology as waterfall method is almost certainly not appropriate. Agile maybe?

Ash Bijoor - Yes absolutely. The development methodology is surely agile. We follow SCRUM and all the work uses automated testing exhaustively with continuous integration / deployment. The reason we cannot really follow waterfall is because in most cases it is difficult to project the effort required for a given problem, because we do not manually create the business rules.

4. Given the increasingly complex nature of deep machine learning and neural-network type AI, how can companies be sure they have the correct level of control and oversight over their systems?

William Higgins - Every rule that is offered up by the AI software must be approved. It is important that it is not blindly accepted. The inventory of approved rules must also then be reviewed on a quarterly/half-yearly/yearly basis.

5. For the Digital Direction component, where do the companies start - that seems to be the biggest hurdle in the organisations I've been exposed to? There seems to be a general acknowledgement that this is the crucial point from which the success for the rest of the lanes would rise and fall. But defining the strategy is something that never really seems to get off of the ground.

Chris Archibald - We'd agree that a sound digital strategy provides the basis for all other digital initiatives. When helping clients with this, we go back to first principles and clarify what 'digital' means to them; this varies widely based on the organisation's business, its sector, technology maturity, etc, etc. Having agreed a digital definition, we develop our understanding of the client's circumstances, with the assistance of a decision-making framework that seeks to establish the organisation's position on a range of different dimensions, ranging from technical, through commercial, to operational. This allows us to pinpoint the ultimate end-point, or digital destination. The depth to which we go in determining a client's digital aspirations varies according to their specific situation and requirements, but a little time invested here pays dividends when assessing progress later on.

6. What are the attributes of a successful implementation of AI?

Chris Archibald - We described Machine Learning as where Artificial Intelligence meets Big Data. To put this another way, with Big Data, 'you know what you don't know', whereas with AI 'you don't know what you don't know'. The advent of such technological leaps forward such as the Internet of Things heralds an exponential growth in data volumes; the processing of which isn't possible without machine learning and AI. On the assumption that computers can learn more quickly than (most) humans, an AI implementation needs to be carefully monitored and interpreted (by humans!) so that benefits from unexpected findings or insights can be harvested.