

2021: Refresh the Agenda

POWERTALK GLOBAL SERIES

# Vision 2020 – The Pandemic Digital Tipping Point and What to Expect in 2021



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## INTRODUCTION

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This special PowerTalk Global Series provides boards and directors a head start on their priorities to chart a new course for the coming year. It gathers great minds from around the globe to unpack the shifting business trends and what you can do to give your companies an upswing in 2021. From oversight to foresight, boards are expected to refresh their agenda and explore new value drivers that can move their companies beyond current frontiers.

Businesses are constantly being disrupted by emerging trends and change as usual has become the new mantra. Businesses today need to identify the present opportunities to take advantage of the disruptions. Technology-driven digital transformation needs to be applied by businesses as digital disruptions have accelerated and is affecting the markets, companies, and consumer behaviour. However, organisations also need to have oversight over the risks such as the susceptibility of digital technology being hacked, phished, and breached and to strengthen its cybersecurity. The Covid-19 pandemic has seen the growth of e-commerce go through the roof as the consumers are no longer going to the physical stores, which also lead to changes in financial transactions such as cashless payments and digital currency. Multiple trends are emerging from different industries such as personalisation and digital ecosystems.

This executive summary captures the salient points presented by the speaker at the PowerTalk Global Series #5.

## KEY INSIGHTS & DISCUSSIONS

- 1 Businesses need to [embrace digital transformations](#) and [pivot their business](#) by changing their business model accordingly to the available resources and the digital channels that are being used. Adopting the [hybrid digital model](#) is one of the ways to support the organisations in maintaining the balance between the surge of customer demands and the ongoing crises.
- 2 The pandemic has caused the [growth of e-commerce to double in just 2 months vs what was previously achieved in 10 years](#). E-commerce transactions have accelerated and the biggest gainer for these growths are companies that are already doing e-commerce across different industries such as Amazon, Alibaba, and Domino's.
- 3 The *2021 Gartner's Board of Directors Survey* signals [funding shifts towards IT and technology](#) as a result of the pandemic. Companies across the world are seen to pivot their business from a [physical office](#) to one which is [home-based](#), providing employees with [tools such as laptops](#) and [technology such as cloud systems](#) and [Zoom platform](#) to equip and enable their employee to work from home.
- 4 [Cybersecurity](#) and [cyber risk](#) issues are keeping boards awake at night as organisations are now more susceptible to being hacked and breached at any time. On top of that, [data privacy issues](#) are also vital for board oversight. As businesses are going to be more digital and occupy more of cyberspace, boards need to ensure that the organisation's [business continuity plan](#) and [cyber resiliency](#) is up and running.
- 5 [Going cashless](#) is one of the trends that has accelerated due to the Covid-19 pandemic as people prefer to reduce contacts during transactions. It is not surprising that now goods and services are purchased using an app, credit cards, and cards from service providers like Starbucks cards.
- 6 [Digital currency](#) will be the next big trend and it will be in the form of digital tokens or digital money. It will be a [legal currency](#) and will be used as one of the payment methods. Facebook has announced a digital currency called Diem (DM), previously known as Libra, that will be available in its own standalone app, WhatsApp, and Facebook Messenger Platform. This [stablecoin](#) known as DM dollar is expected to be launched in 2021.
- 7 Digital ecosystem is one of the key trends for 2021. [The digital ecosystem is an interconnected information technology resource and collaboration between different industries](#). It includes the customers, suppliers, strategic partners, financial institutions, payment services like Venmo and PayPal to create a digital ecosystem that [enables transactions](#). For example, Domino's in the UK makes it possible for the customers to order pizza by voice using Alexa and to pay for the items using the customer's credit cards, banks, and financial providers.
- 8 [Data, digital, AI and digital delivery allow for personalisation](#). Businesses can create innovative products or personalise items if the demographic for such items has been identified. However, personalisation is not easy. Challenges faced by organisation include lack of appropriate customer experience strategy and issues related to collecting, managing and restoring customer's data. Organisations need to [pick their battles](#) and [pick the ones they wants to win](#), in order to successfully implement personalisation. They need to be [willing to disrupt the disrupted \(and the current disruptors\)](#) by [adopting the fail-fast approach to provide solutions, not just products](#).

## ACTIONABLE OUTCOMES MOVING FORWARD



**1** Increase your **cyber resilience** to ensure continuous improvements and to assess the organisation's cybersecurity progress.



**2** Explore **e-commerce platforms** to widen your market reach and gain higher revenue and profit margins.



**3** Adapt to new emerging trends, innovate and transform your business model according to the new norms.



**4** Adopt the **fail-fast system** to experiment and explore other markets. If it fails, cut the losses and move on.



**5** Explore **data** to obtain insights on customer behaviour or habits to improve marketing strategies and customer experience.



**6** Complement skills and qualifications with in-depth knowledge and experience to become a future-proof board.



**7** Identify the **skillsets needed** on the board to drive digital transformations in the organisation and have meaningful conversations around digital strategy.

“ You need to be able to pivot your business to where your customers are going, not to where you are going. That is one of the key differentiators of the successful companies. Here's the thing, this isn't for the big boys like Amazon and Alibaba. This is for everyone, if you're on social media posting your restaurants, or your family business, or merchandise offerings, you will get a following. ”

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