App development changing the way business works

Every company today is a software business and now every company today is also an app company.

Quinton Pienaar

"We're in the middle of an app revolution and the implications for business are huge, even if you don't think of yourself as an app business," says Quinton Pienaar, CEO of Agilitude, a Salesforce reseller and customer evangelist. He says that thanks to cloud computing new business processes are improved almost daily. The technology is easier to master and makes it possible for every company to be an app company, and every person to be an app person.

The app-defined business is not just about fun, but rather business-focused apps that even non-IT users can create and use to drive operations in the front and back offices, changing the way businesses work and the way they engage with customers. "Apps are a big part of an omnichannel customer strategy and vital to the focus on customers first", says Pienaar.

Driving the revolution

He says that Salesforce has identified three forces that have driven this revolution: technology, people and strategic leadership.

From a technology perspective it all starts with the humble business process. In the old days, business software didn't change much and upgrades were infrequent. Today you need the agility to respond daily to the changing needs of your customers. In effect, software lifecycles are now counted in days, not years. This intensive new model has brought about the democratisation of business technology. More employees are using technology platforms to make their lives easier, and they're doing it for themselves.

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"The people remain critical as they are the ones using the technology. While CRM technology makes collaboration possible, ultimately it's about the people.
With an easy-to-use platform, anyone can get involved in app development. It is useful to have a business analyst's perspective and finally developing an app that is streamlined for the benefit of the business," says Pienaar.

To thrive in an app-friendly environment, you need the right leadership and a commitment and focus on customer engagement. Making things simple is never simple. It takes a lot of planning and buy-in from everyone, spearheaded by a committed leadership.

"It's about actively choosing to disrupt, which is never easy, but something that needs to be done if you want to succeed," says Pienaar. "Technology can aid and assist with a disruptive strategy, making the leap worth taking."