



Dynamics Matters
Podcast

The importance of innovation

With Brian Hynes, Senior Engagement Manager, HSO

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“There’s a way to do it better – find it” – Thomas Edison

Humans have been innovating long since they’d learned it was easier to crack the shell of a nut open by bashing it with a flat rock. And likely before even then. A combination of more people, more minds, more tools, more time, and an unlimited imagination has meant innovation continues apace. We see it all the time. And not the life changing Uber, BitCoin or Airbnb type innovations either, no, often innovation comes under the radar. But for its intended audience, it’s no less important.



All innovations great and small

Many years ago, the actor Christopher Timothy played vet James Herriot in the series all creatures great and small. It was set in the fictional village of Darroby, Yorkshire. You would find Dr. Herriot regularly travelling to some far flung and remote locations in the middle of nowhere. Battling the elements as he tries to overcome the situation he finds himself. In one episode he fashions what must have been the worlds first sheep sled in order to move an incapacitated birthing ewe back to the farm. That's innovation right there.

The thing with innovation is you don't need to invent a space rocket that can right and land itself for it to be considered so. Innovation isn't always big bang. Sometimes the smallest of innovations can drive the biggest change. Let's face it, we're not all going to come up with the next Apple, Tesla, or Amazon – but changes in technology today means we have more of the tools needed to take make simple ideas reality. For example, tools like Power Apps enables you to build the very technology you have in your mind. The availability of such tools means our only limitation is our imagination.

You *can* make a difference

When Michael Dell began shifting PCs, he was up against two massive companies who dominated the marketplace. They maintained a very traditional role and route to market. They had been very successful. But Dell came with a completely new and innovative way of building a PC to specification. It changed the marketplace. If you consider the idea itself, it's relatively simple. It just looks at things in a different way. Present a menu of choices, give people the freedom to choose, and then deliver a PC that fits those specific needs. Commodity computing

Sir Clive Woodward is famous for saying that improving 100 things 1% is easier and delivers more value than improving 1 thing 100%. He was a fantastic innovator, and advocated making small changes, but making lots of them.

With today's tools, businesses have a great opportunity to adapt and transform. To understand their customers and to harness the power of technology to create new products, services, and experiences. All it requires is the right strategy, leadership, investment, and, most importantly, guts, to move forward where others haven't. There's just one thing to watch out for.

Avoid the danger of over-innovation. HSOs Senior Engagement Manager, Brian Hynes, has some important advice when it comes to this: "The challenge in a business perspective, if you innovate and you make lots of changes, is that it's often hard to know which new change actually worked. So you've got to innovate in a well-managed manner."





When it comes to innovation, where do you start?

Perhaps you're one of those organisations with a well-known product. It's your cash cow. But you realise there's a danger you're going to be overtaken by competitors. Or perhaps customers' needs are evolving away from the value delivered by your product. Making incremental innovations can help you evolve your product and offerings and remain ahead of changing needs.

It helps to understand your marketplace and your customers wants and needs. When a customer engages with you, are you able to follow the interaction of that journey? It's important to have the information in a centralised format and available in a timely manner. Preferably in a business application that delivers the customer insight you need, because if you understand what customers want, and where the market's going, then your approach to innovation is more likely to succeed.

Having information about the customer and market and being able to analyse it centrally at a strategic level is important and a key starting point.

Innovation is largely about trying to understand in detail what exactly your customers are doing, what they want, and then trying to predict what they're going to need. If your idea is able to answer a clear and obvious need, then you may well be on to something.

Blog: [Why companies should push themselves over the technology tipping point to succeed](#)

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