

## 디지털 트랜스포메이션 전략 사례 연구

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# Study on Digital Transformation Strategies: Starbucks Case Study

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### [요 약]

디지털 트랜스포메이션(이하 DT)은 디지털 기술을 사용하여 다양한 채널로 부터 얻은 고객 경험과 관련한 데이터를 파악하고 분석하여 실시간으로 대응할 수 있는 운영 프로세스를 갖추고, 변화에 강한 조직과 수행 능력을 갖추어야 한다. 이러한 변화를 성공적으로 수행한 기업은 기업의 위기를 극복하고 변화를 수용하여 성장하게 된다. 이와 관련한 성공적인 DT 전략을 검증하고, 핵심 요소를 도출하는 것은 학문적으로 의미있는 연구 주제이다. 본 논문은 사례연구로, 연구의 목적은 전 세계 금융위기 이후에 진행되어 온 스타벅스의 DT 과정을 Vial 이 정리한 여덟 가지 DT빌딩 블록을 일반적 기업의 DT와 비교 분석했으며, 스타벅스가 그 동안 진행해왔던 DT를 구성하는 요소로 디지털 기술 활용, IT비즈니스 및 경영 전략, 그리고 새로운 비즈니스의 가치 창출이라는 빌딩 블록의 구체적인 사례들을 제시 하고 또한 구성 요소들이 어떻게 상호 작용했는지를 분석했다. 이를 통해서 일반적 기업이나 산업에서 진행해 왔던 DT 와 비교해서 스타벅스의 DT 만의 고유한 특징을 밝힌다. 고객을 위한 디지털 기술로 고객과의 커뮤니케이션 접점을 넓히고, 비즈니스 경영을 위한 DT를 도입하였고, 개인화 등 맞춤형 서비스를 제공하는 온 디맨드(On Demand) 서비스, 옴니 채널의 활용, 빅데이터의 활용을 통한 고객의 니즈를 충족한 가치 창출을 통해 고객을 위한 DT 양상을 보였다. 경영진 리더십에서 주도한 IT를 활용한 DT의 사례 연구를 통한 함의점은 실무적 학문적 의의를 지닌다.

### [Abstract]

Digital transformation (DT) uses digital technology to understand and analyze data on customer experiences in various channels, has an operational process that can respond in real time, and seeks new business opportunities. Companies that have successfully implemented these changes are able to overcome crisis by willing to accept change. It is meaningful to research and verify successful DT strategies and derive the key elements. This case study compares Starbucks DT processes with Vial's eight building blocks of DT for general companies. The unique characteristics of Starbucks' DT are identified and compared to the DT that has been deployed by general companies or industries. Starbucks used digital technology to expand their contact point with customers and n their business management. The company examined use of on-demand services, omni channels, and big data to provide customized services based on an individual's GPS and their coffee preferences. The implications of Starbucks case study have academic and practical significance.

**색인어** : 디지털 트랜스포메이션, 디지털 혁신, 스타벅스, 개인화, 옴니채널

**Key word** : Digital transformation, Digital Innovation, Starbucks, Customization, Omni-Channel

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## I . Introduction

Digital Transformation (DT) is the use of digital technology to improve business processes or to enhance customer service. It is about replacing manual process with digital technology and digital processes. By making good use of digital technology, a company could succeed in disrupting the market. Those who fail to capitalize on the opportunity could end up being left behind by rapid technological change. Disruptive technologies have a great influence on the rise and fall of companies. Innovation provides the opportunity for companies to become the new market leaders. In this paper, I will discuss the digital transformation of Starbucks, a market leader in the coffee industry. In 2008, Starbucks was hit badly by the global financial crisis and shrinking sales due to excessive store expansion and competition from “Dunkin Donuts” and “McDonalds,” which had introduced cheap coffee. Faced with such a crisis, Howard Schultz returned to the position of CEO in 2008, with a strategy to refocus on the core values of Starbucks, ie. the essence of coffee, building of emotional bonds with customers and enhancing customer experience. Digital transformation strategies such as, digital flywheel, 'Reward', 'Personalization', 'Payment', and 'Ordering' were developed to enhance customer experience, convenience and sales growth as well. By successfully implementing digital transformation, it has reshaped the market. Consequently, the number of Starbucks stores worldwide in 2019 nearly doubled the 16,680 that were operating in 2008. (see Figure 1) and net profits generated worldwide also increased from US\$10.4 billion in 2008 to US\$26.5 billion in 2019 (Figure 2)

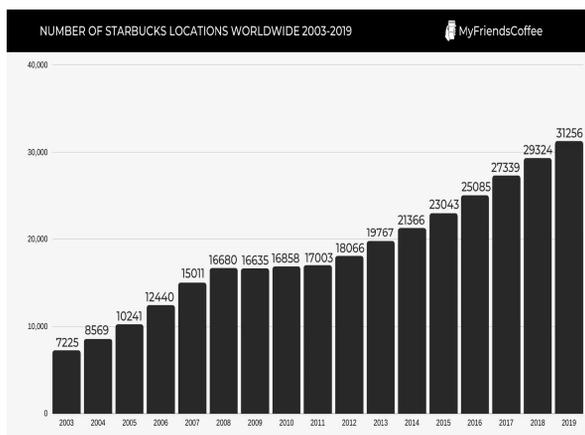


그림 1. 스타벅스의 전 세계 매장수 2003- 2019 (자료 출처: [1])  
 Fig. 1. The Number of Starbucks Locations Worldwide 2003-2019

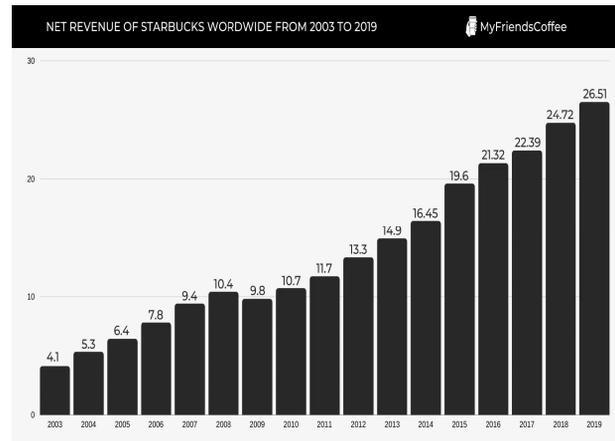


그림 2. 스타벅스의 전 세계 순수입 2003- 2019 (자료 출처: [1])  
 Fig. 2. Net Revenue of Starbucks Locations Worldwide 2003-2019

In this paper, I examine the digital transformation process implemented by Starbucks; a brand that is encountered every day. I will discuss their strategies while comparing it with general digital processes and the value that has been created. It is important to investigate the impact of digital transformation on customers, business management and on value creation. Starbucks' unique DT flow chart was derived through the use of big data, personalized service, omni-channel marketing, and commercialization of mobile pay etc based on a compilation of Vial's building blocks. This paper presents concrete examples of digital technology, IT business and management strategies, and value creation that comprise elements of the DT process implemented by Starbucks.

This paper analyzes the unique characteristics of Starbucks' DT process and compare it to the DT process that has been carried out in general companies or industries.

## II . Theoretical Background

Digital Transformation is the implementation of digital solutions or new technology in a business with the aim of improving operational processes and enhanced productivity within a business. Digital transformation is a business strategy that fundamentally changes a company's strategy, organization, process, business model, culture, communication, and system.

IDC[2] defined it as a continuous process that adapts to or promotes disruptive changes in customers and markets (external ecosystem) by utilizing digital capabilities to create new business models, products and services. A.T. Kearney[3] defined as a corporate activity that significantly increases the competitiveness of the current business or pursuing new growth opportunities by proactively responding to changes in the business environment

that is triggered by new digital technologies such as big data, AI, and IoT. [4]

Vial [4] reviewed the latest research on digital transformation and identified the interactions of eight building blocks.

Figure 3 is a compilation of Vial's building blocks that are related to this paper. Here, digital technologies represented by Social, Mobile, Analytic, Internet of Things, Platforms & ecosystem changed consumers' consumption behavior and expectations, influenced the competitive structure within an industry, and created Big Data.

To respond to these “disruptive” structural changes and survive in the new environment (Karami and Walter ) [5], companies need to adopt a digital IT business strategy and a digital transformation strategy. Embracing, digital transformation provides companies with opportunities to create new value.

In Figure 3, the white arrow represents the global trend (industrial or social), and the black arrow represents the digital transformation process of individual companies. The arrows do not represent statistical causal causality, but rather the relationships between individual building blocks described in the digital transformation literature.

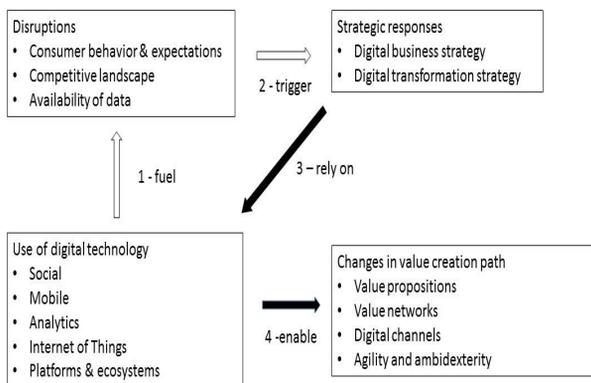


그림 3. Vial[4]에서 정리한 디지털 트랜스포메이션 과정의 빌딩블록.

Fig. 3. Building Block of Digital Transformation Process from Vial [4].

In this paper, through the case of Starbucks' digital transformation, I would like to examine how the building blocks of Starbucks' digital transformation process show interrelationships with previous studies.

### III. Howard Schultz's Digital Transformation

Starbucks, which started out as a small café in Seattle, USA, is

now a ‘global brand’. It operates over 29,000 stores in 78 markets around the world, has 200,000 employees, and more than 60 million customers visit the store every week. Global sales in 2018 amounted to 27 trillion won. However, from 2007 to 2008, Starbucks faced its worst crisis. The big problem was that they had lost their competitive edge. The company added stores too aggressively without much thought towards profitability. In the centre of New York it opened one store every 100m. Owing to this, overall global sales increased, but sales per store increased by only 5%, and consumers per store increased by only 1%. In the meantime, the US subprime mortgage crisis hit the world economy. Consumption stagnated amid economic hardships, and Starbucks shares plunged 42% that year. In January 2008, Howard Schultz, chairman of the board, returned as CEO.

For this exploratory case study, I modified Vial's DT flow chart to describe the elements of Starbucks's DT process. Information about Starbucks's DT were gathered from press interviews, company presentations and press articles. Then, I compare Starbucks's DT with Vial's DT flow chart for general companies and industries.

So, how did Starbucks turnaround its business?

Let me review the digital transformation strategies that Starbucks implemented after the 2008 crisis as outline in various media interview with its chief executive Howard Schultz and their chief digital officer. In a digital transformation survey conducted with 1559 senior executives ([6]) by MIT School Management Review and Capgemini Consulting in 2013, 78% of respondents believe that digital transformation will be a decisive factor for their organization in the next two years, 63% of respondents say that the development and application of technology in their organization is too slow.

The main reason was “lack of urgency.” Only 38% of respondents said that digital transformation is perceived as a clear goal by the CEOs of their organizations.

However, Starbucks' chief executive officer Howard Schultz view of digital transformation was different from most senior executives who took part in the survey. McKinsey Quarterly [7] in 2011 published an interview with Schultz [8] in which he described the stagnating growth he experienced in 2008 as "Carcenogen", Schultz presented seven transformation agendas. The company closed more than 600 stores in the U.S., which were not competitive, simplified the complex logistics system, started global expansion, initiated a reward card program for customers, and started Starbucks Shared Planet (Starbucks Shared) for social contribution. “Our plan is to create a distribution channel roll that can be viewed anywhere at Starbucks stores and link it with our current digital media and mobile programs,” said Howard Schulz. It was “to create an innovative growth platform tailored to our coffee

brand". However, Starbucks' chief executive Howard Schultz view of digital transformation was different from most senior executives who took part in the survey. In an interview with Schultz Schultz[8] published in McKinsey Quarterly[7] in 2011, he described the stagnating growth he experienced in 2008 as "Carcenogen". Schultz then presented seven transformation agendas. The company closed more than 600 stores in the U.S., which were not competitive, simplified the complex logistics system, started global expansion, initiated a reward card program for customers, and started Starbucks Shared Planet (Starbucks Shared) for social contribution. "Our plan is to create a distribution channel roll that can be viewed anywhere at Starbucks stores and link it with our current digital media and mobile programs," said Howard Schulz. It was "to create an innovative growth platform tailored to our coffee brand".

In 2008, Starbucks devised seven overarching Big Moves to transform the company into one solid footing. Seven goals were as follows: 1. To be the leading authority on coffee 2. Engross and invigorate our partners 3. To engage with our customers emotionally 4. Expand our presence globally but with the goal of making each store the hub of the community 5. Maintain highest standards in ethical sourcing and impact on environment 6. Develop innovative platforms that will drive growth 7. Produce a sustainable business model [9].

In an interview with MIT Sloan Management Review [10] in 2013, Adam Brotman, then Chief Digital Officer (CDO), and Kurt Gamer, Chief Information Officer (CIO) described how open-minded Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz was about the so-called 'digital Starbucks'. For Starbucks, being digital is not just about having a website or a point-of-sale system; it is about the ability to connect with customers and changing and enhancing the customer's experience. Adam Brotman then went on to describe the digital projects that were in progress in 2012, "We are already working on improving payment-related matters such as mobile payment for customer satisfaction. In addition, we have improved our Loyalty system and Loyalty programs and developed related technologies. In this regard, Kurt Gamer said, "Currently, we are working on over 100 IT-related projects, of which 35 are related to customers or Starbucks partners. As a fast-growing company, through this digital transformation, we are increasing the efficiency and productivity of our work and reducing costs across the organization."

They also said, "Sometimes the good ideas we have come from outside the digital organization. For example, in meetings with many store managers, from the experiences they have had while communicating with customers, they get an idea of how digital technology can reduce direct conflicts with customers. We also get ideas from the company's CEO Howard Schultz and the

company's senior leadership team."

## IV. Starbucks's Digital Technology

According to the US digital market research agency "E-Marketer," the most common mobile payment application in the US was Starbucks. The following are specific examples of digital transformation developed by Starbucks and applied to real business.

### 4-1. Digital technology for customers

The following summarizes digital technologies applied by Starbucks to its business. Silent order is a service that allows customers to select a beverage using Starbucks Mobile and pay with a Starbucks card, and the order is then sent to the nearest store of your choice according to your phone's GPS.

By showing the customer the sequential process of order approval, beverage manufacturing, manufacturing completion, etc., when a beverage is completed, an alarm message can be received and confirmed automatically, so there is no need for waiting time. The My Starbucks Reward program accumulates points each time a drink is ordered, and when the membership level increases, price discounts or coupon benefits are provided. You can register your purchase or gift card to My Starbucks Rewards and use it in the mobile app.

In addition, Starbucks offers personalized products and services to customers visiting the store by combining the purchase history, location, date, and time of each customer. The personalized service is being used for the purpose of helping store staff with orders by displaying the existing purchase history on the POS when an order is placed at its Drive-Thru stores, and were introduced in 2400 stores throughout the United States. The personalized service was expanded to develop targeted marketing and could be provided on various devices.

To strengthen the mobile platform Digital Flywheel, data such as product, price, inventory, location, time, sales volume, and unit of sale are integrated and analyzed to provide a simpler and more personalized immediate customer experience. In using digital technology, Starbucks has dramatically increased its sales with mobile apps and is making efforts to expand contact points with customers through the introduction of new technologies such as artificial intelligent chatbots.

### 4-2. Digital technology for Business Management

Starbucks's operations consist of thousands of small-scale

business units scattered across the country. It is not a centralized operation. This characteristic makes business management such as employee training, logistics management, and store management, difficult, and for this reason, it was necessary to use digital technology to streamline operations. According to Hongsik Zhu [11], Starbucks utilized digital technologies for corporate personnel management, inventory management, store management and for business management. It is possible to view and write in-house emails using the mobile Blossom app. The proprietary mobile academy provides materials necessary for job performance within the store, management education as well as training and self-development contents for new partners. This has made it possible to transition from collective offline education to mobile education.

Store managers can use Management of Strategic Target (MOST) to create a business plan and manage business performance. Real time indicators of management performance can be viewed with the Store 365 app. In addition, it offers an automatic ordering system that allows each store to manage its inventory.

For customer management, it developed the Siren 119 app, which allows you to report and respond to various accidents in stores in real time, and the Starbucks Daily app, which automatically informs management about customer opinions posted on social media.

## V. Creating value via digital transformation

### 5-1. Personalized products or services

By analyzing the consumption patterns of individual consumers according to their mobile orders, Starbucks can identify customer preferences, make inferences based on similar customer choices, and adjust to customer reactions. Through this, it has become possible to tailor products or services for individual customers or for individual stores. For instance, if you use voice command or text message to give an order through the barista app which has artificial intelligence, the user feels like they are chatting with a real barista.

### 5-2. Utilizing Big Data

Utilizing big data means having an operational process that can respond in real time by grasping and analyzing data on customer experiences in various channels with digital technology, and thereby seeking new business opportunities. Big data records and

understands what customers search and observe. The best and most memorable user experience is one that is perceived as a personalized service. The power of data is realized when it is exploited to find ways to be useful and helpful to individuals, anticipate customer needs and provide insights into developing marketing strategies. In every industry and society, data has become a core essence of digital innovation.

### 5-3. Omni-Channel Marketing

In addition, a cyber-physical system that can artificial intelligently control the actual machine equipment and the manufacturing process is introduced to automate the existing physical manufacturing process. By analyzing data collected from smart products connected through IoT, it is possible to prevent failures and maintain them through remote services, and additional services can be extended and provided. As such, digital transformation transforms the industry in new ways by changing not only the existing business model but also the customer's experience and creating additional revenue streams. Consumers actively search and compare products across many online and offline channels. They are always seeking for low priced, high-quality, cost-effective products. It is the same with Starbucks customers and increases use of on-demand services which can track an individual's location and be proactive in providing a customized service. The latest digital technology is used to enable digital transformation, with mechanical equipment or production plant used in the physical manufacturing process connected to Internet of Things (IoT). And the big data generated through this is collected and analyzed with artificial intelligence. In addition, a cyber-physical system that can automatically and intelligently control the actual machine equipment and the manufacturing process in a virtual space has been introduced to automate the existing physical manufacturing process. By analyzing data collected from IoT connected smart devices, it is possible to prevent failures and maintain them remotely, and additional services can be extended and provided. As such, digital transformation transforms the industry in new ways by changing not only the existing business model but also the customer's experience and creating additional revenue streams.

### 5-4. Expanding into Financial Services with Digital Transformation

As a result of the successful application of digital transformation, Starbucks held an investment conference in December 2016 and announced that they had 2.5 million mobile order & pay members equal to 1/3 of Starbucks mobile payment customers in the U.S; and had increased reward program members by 18% over the past year 2015. Out of 16 million

Starbucks mobile app subscribers, an average of 6 million orders per month are made through mobile payments with 25% of total US sales (\$1.30 billion) generated through mobile apps. According to a report by Chain Partners, in the US alone, Starbucks has 25 million mobile payment users and have accumulated \$1 billion in customer deposits. Internationally, the number of Starbucks Rewards members exceeds 5 million.

Going forward, Starbucks plans to offer Bakkt Cash for its mobile payment customers, Bakkt cash is being developed by Bakkt, - a leading crypto futures exchange. Chain Partners said, "As Starbucks has already secured a sufficient level of mobile payment consumers and deposits, it will be the first company to lead the popularization of Bitcoin payments." 2022 could be the first year of the popularization of Bitcoin payments."

In fact, Starbucks' mobile payment has become more popular than Apple Pay, Google, and Samsung Pay. As a result Starbucks has become more than just a coffee company with the ability to offer financial services such as deposit taking and making simple payments [12,13].

## VI. Conclusion

Starbucks application of digital transformation processes and technologies can be largely divided into strategies for customers and strategies for business management. By expanding the personalized service, targeted marketing was developed, and the same personalized service was provided on various electronic devices. In order to strengthen the Flywheel mobile platform, data such as product, price, inventory, location, time, sales volume, and unit of sale are stored on the cloud, integrated and analyzed with artificial intelligence to provide a more personalized responsive customer experience. Starbucks's success in increasing sales via mobile apps, is making more efforts to expand contact points with customers through the introduction of new technologies such as artificial intelligent chat bots.

As the conclusion of this paper, Figure 4 summarizes the Starbucks digital transformation process. Leading digital companies are pursuing digital transformation by considering the competitive environment of industries and markets according to supply and demand and devising strategies according to the context of the company[14]. In other words, based on the understanding and analysis of the company's unique processes, they can optimize and reconstruct (rebuild) the business (operation) model by using the latest digital technology.

Starbucks confirms the usefulness of a digital transformation strategy with a two-track method that simultaneously considers business development and operational efficiency and executes on those strategies with mobile apps such as siren order, flywheel,

MOST and digital platforms.

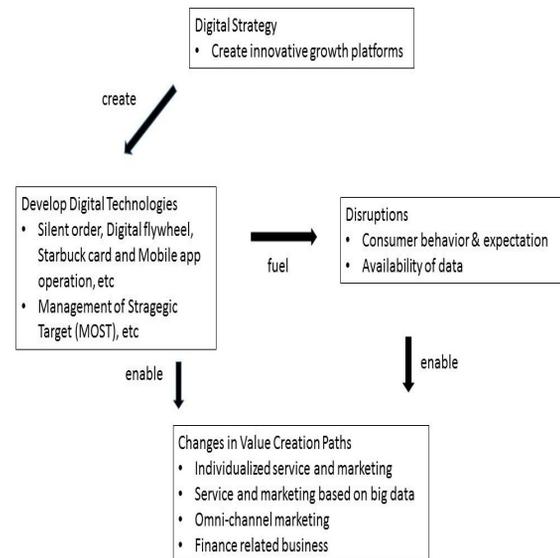


그림 4. 스타벅스의 디지털 트랜스포메이션 과정.  
Fig. 4. Starbucks Digital Transformation Process.

MOST and digital platforms.

The Starbucks case also confirms the digital transformation strategy that "the vision and target of digital transformation must be clearly set and executed according to the clear vision of the CEO." The core focus of digital transformation methodologies offered by various consulting companies is learning and analysing various channels, decision making, direction establishment, and expansion. Starbucks has online channels, offline channels, and drive-through channels to increase communication channel contact points with customers and improve consumer experience. For example, Starbucks combined license plate recognition and automatic payment system for its drive-through service. Deploying ICT for business model reorganization and ecosystem transformation is essential for digital transformation.

Starbucks also confirms the usefulness of digital transformation, "We always operate a strategic organization dedicated to planning and implementing digital transformation." Schulz formed Starbucks Digital Ventures (SDV) in 2008. SDV consists of an organization directly under the CEO. It was charged with communicating with customers, in-house engineers, marketers, designers, and other members to quickly implement the service. When comparing the agenda of the existing research discussed in the theoretical background, the most striking difference is that the digital-related strategy setting of a company is not a passive reaction to disruptive changes in the business management environment. Conversely the goal is to implement

active strategies that can create a new business environment for new growth. These active digital strategies have led to the development of new digital technologies tailored for companies, and these technologies have changed consumer behavior and expectations.

Starbucks used big data gathered from new digital technologies to provide personalized service and marketing through omni-channels. In addition, Starbucks card cash deposits were used to create financial business opportunities. Starbucks is a leader in incorporating core values, digital technologies, and sustainability into its business strategy. The core focus of Starbucks's business strategy is always about enhancing customer experience.

Now, no company can ignore digital transformation. Starbucks' digital transformation justifies the case that manufacturing, and consumer goods companies need to adopt ICT for digital transformation. Digital transformation is not only about adapting to change, it is a strategic inflection point in the trend towards the fourth industrial revolution. Depending on whether the strategies are well executed or not, It can elevate a company to be a market leader or it may perish. Starbucks DT mobile payment initiative is a key difference between general DT seen in other companies. The mobile App initiative has created significant value of the company generating up to 25% of all sales in the US (\$1.30 billion). The company's mobile payment service has accumulated \$1 billion in customer deposits and enable Starbucks to become a financial services company such as deposit taking and making simple payments. Going forward, Starbucks plans to offer Bakkt Cash, a crypto currency, for its mobile payment customers, Bakkt Cash is being developed by Bakkt, a leading crypto futures exchange.

Companies must develop a digital mindset and learn how to align digital technologies with their core values to achieve sustainable business goals.

These initiatives were driven by management leadership rather than a response to the external environment.

I found that the aspect of digital transformation for customers and business management and value creation. Starbucks' unique DT flow chart was derived through the use of big data, personalized service, omni-channel marketing, and commercialization of mobile pay etc. These initiatives were driven by management leadership rather than a response to the external environment. Starbucks introduced digital transformation for business management and customized services by analysing big data on individual location and tastes and from their omni channel interactions.

Starbucks develops and provides digital platforms based on digital transformation and digital acceleration technologies and

consequently, strengthened its capabilities to build and expand ecosystems to establish a leading position. It is an excellent example of a successful digital transformation that continues to grow.

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