

Digitalization of Business as a Key Growth Factor in Uzbekistan.

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Abstract. This article analyses the relevance of digital technologies that play an important role in the development of Uzbekistan's economy. On the basis of the strategy "Digital Uzbekistan - 2030", the country is implementing initiatives that contribute to fundamental changes in the field of digital transformation and development of industries. Thanks to digital transformation of various industries, public sector and other spheres is already changing the life of every person and every company.

Keywords: digital transformation, business, growth, companies, forum, economy, industry, reforms, initiatives.

Introduction. In a globalized economy, most countries are investing in digital transformation strategies as part of strengthening their position and competitiveness in domestic and international markets.

Today, digital technologies and innovative business models are penetrating all spheres of economic life in society, affecting the very essence of the economy and forming qualitative structural changes in it, thus humanity is entering a new era of global change.

The digital economy is perceived by many as a panacea, and its accelerated development as a way to solve almost all existing problems. This is reflected in the growing interest in digital issues in socio-economic and humanitarian research, as well as in public discourse, including statements by influential politicians and reflected in government documents.

Research methodology: in writing the article we used scientific articles by Uzbek scholars on the study of the process of digital gender inequality, using the methods of analysis and synthesis.

Research results. But it should be realized that there is no "cure for all diseases", and the digital economy cannot solve all problems, especially social ones.

In the Republic of Uzbekistan, and in the world as a whole. Digital development, in our opinion, should be considered in the context of other transformations that modern society and the economy are experiencing in close connection with them. And for this purpose - it is necessary to study in more detail the tasks set and the possibilities of practical use of its tools.

Among the priority tasks that determine the directions of digital transformation of activities, we can include the following:

1) stimulating the creation and development of activities oriented to the digital economy. In Uzbekistan, we can highlight the largest of them - "IT-academy Astrum and LeBazar", UZUM and others.

2) additional support for small and medium-sized enterprises in the purchase and implementation of digital technologies, development and creation of platforms, and provision of digital services.

This can be achieved by providing certain incentives to relevant companies, e.g. for insurance payments, which develop on the basis of digital technologies, create healthy competition between such companies, providing them with orders and standards of new relationships, which the final product should meet;

3) formation and scaling of digital platforms in the main areas of the economy.

Now in Uzbekistan and many other countries there are portals for public services, payment platforms, tax authorities accept all electronic reporting online, the use of plastic cards for social payments has been introduced, etc.

4) Increase in the volume of IT specialists training;

To grow specialists, courses and professional development programmers are being used to improve digital skills in some HEIs, particularly for women. Such educational institutions include Tashkent University of Information Technologies, South Korean INHA University, Indian AMITI University, all located in Tashkent.

5) Formation of sectoral, regional and national cyber security systems.

Digital economy is a new type of economic relations, which is already present in all sectors of the world market and is actively developing. Its technologies are the leading segment, driver of growth and development of the economic system of Uzbekistan.

Analysis. The development of the economy and financial environment has provided growth opportunities for businesses, both public and private. This has led to a demand to improve the system and principles of management of large companies and, accordingly, required qualitative digital transformation and automation of processes in order to keep up with the times.

One of the first key factors on the way to digital transformation of the business environment in Uzbekistan was the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated 5 October 2020 № UP-6079 "On approval of the Strategy "Digital Uzbekistan-2030" and measures for its effective implementation". This decree increased the investment attractiveness of Uzbekistan, which became an indicator of the correctly chosen path.

As an example of active digital transformation of the economy of the republic is the business forum "SAP Discovery Day Tashkent 2023" held in June 2023. The forum gathered heads of various business areas and leading companies of the country. The participants discussed the importance of digitalization of business, considered the challenges that companies face today, discussed technologies and solutions that can effectively cope with these challenges, as well as familiarized themselves with successful practices of companies.

Each of the invitees noted in their speech about the digital transformation of the country's largest companies. At the heart of a successful company are technologies that play the role of a foundation, and the further development of the company depends on their reliability.

The Republic has always attracted the attention of SAP both in terms of investments and in attracting experts to work with clients. Over the past few years, SAP has invested significant resources to ensure the availability of its flagship solutions for small and medium-sized businesses in Uzbekistan. The company is now also planning further business development and support, but already in the regions of Uzbekistan.

"The country is actively developing the sphere of digital technologies, and SAP, as a global technology company, tries to support the state's desire for innovation as much as possible. At present, we can say that SAP's portfolio includes solutions that successfully solve a significant part of the tasks defined by the strategy "Digital Uzbekistan - 2030", - said Chief Operating Officer of SAP Uzbekistan Hasan Shoikramov.

In the modern world, digital technologies play an increasingly important role in the development of the economy. Uzbekistan is not an exception: the country is implementing the strategy "Digital Uzbekistan - 2030", which leads to significant transformation and development of industries. SAP actively supports Uzbekistan's digital initiatives.

Some of our customers are just starting their journey in digital transformation. However, there has already been significant progress in business development in the country. This is facilitated not only by the support of the government and investors, but also by the great potential in human resources.

He also noted that automation and digitalization of business processes have become key success factors for large companies. For successful development and investment attraction, it is necessary to have effective financial and commercial management accounting systems.

One of the speakers of the event, Abdulla Azizov, Deputy Chairman of the Board for Digitalization, Almalyk Mining and Metallurgical Company JSC, shared his experience in implementing SAP solutions and outlined the prerequisites for transition to an ERP system.

Abdulla Azizov said that in JSC "Almalyk MMC" there are more than 50 subdivisions and 35,000 employees. The company faced difficulties in exchanging information between different divisions, delays in providing information and tasks related to a large volume of paper documents. These were clear signals that management processes needed to be optimized.

Taking into account the international market research and experience of other companies, Almalyk MMC JSC made a well-founded decision to implement SAP system for more efficient management of all business processes.

Azat Nizamov, CEO of TerraLink group of companies, in his speech noted that Uzbekistan has formed favorable conditions for transformation of industries and state organizations. He emphasized that Uzbekistan has reached the stage when it can become a centre of regional technological development. This success is due to the support of the state on the one hand, and the unique entrepreneurial culture and diligence of the people of Uzbekistan on the other. It is this symbiosis that has formed a solid platform for further growth.

Digital transformation involves not only the automation of certain processes, but also the revision of all approaches, as well as the development of digital platforms that will unite all parties that make up the ecosystem. Experts from TerraLink expressed great interest in Uzbekistan's participation in the digital transformation process and readiness to share their knowledge and experience.

Despite the breakthrough in the sphere of information technologies in Uzbekistan, the issue of human resources development remains extremely important and topical in the country. In this regard, SAP, as a backbone player in the IT market, pays great attention to co-operation with universities to provide IT specialists in the market. Currently, eight universities in Uzbekistan are members of the SAP University Alliance.

Universities of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Armenia, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan and Tashkent are members of the Alliance. 35 universities are members of the Alliance, 6 of which are in Uzbekistan, in particular INHA University (IUT) and International Westminster University (WUIT).

Students are offered courses where they learn SAP solutions and master working with the innovative SAP S/4HANA platform.

As part of these courses, students are provided with:

- free access to practical assignments;
- documentation;
- system design.

This provides students with a unique opportunity to acquire practical skills in working with IT systems, which ultimately contributes to the development of highly qualified IT specialists and supports the dynamic development of the IT industry in the country.

Another representative of digital transformation in Uzbekistan, Huawei is strengthening its partner ecosystem in Uzbekistan to accelerate digital transformation.

Tashkent hosted Partner Summit 2023 on 24 August, which was organised by Huawei together with CA Distribution and Marvel Uzbekistan. At the event, experts discussed global and local ICT trends and prospects of partner business development.

The partnership summit, held under the motto Grow Together - Win the Future, has become a permanent platform for interaction with local IT market players to implement joint digital projects.

At the event, representatives of Huawei's corporate division gave an overview of the latest products and technologies, broader industry trends and business prospects for national partners. The summit participants included IT managers and specialists, engineers, managers and owners of core companies engaged in building ICT infrastructure. Representatives of higher education institutions, being partners in training the digital workforce in the country, also attended the event.

In his opening speech, Chen Jiakai, General Director of Huawei in Uzbekistan, highlighted the company's achievements in building a favourable ecosystem and plans for business development in Uzbekistan. "By innovating digital infrastructure, continuously supporting the education sector, we work closely with customers and partners in Uzbekistan to deeply integrate ICT technologies with various industries. Our goal is to accelerate digital transformation and drive the development of the digital economy and create new value for all walks of life." - Chen Jiakai noted.

One of the main topics of the summit was the impact of digital transformation on making public services more people-centred.

Mr Hoon Yong Koh, Chief Public Sector Project Solutions Specialist of Huawei EBG Global Division, presented foreign experience of successful examples of digital strategies implementation, and also noted Uzbekistan's achievements in building a digital state in recent years, taking into account the improvement of its position in the UN global e-government development ranking (69th place). He emphasized that the success of digital transformation is influenced by many critical factors, which vary from country to country in areas such as politics, economic conditions, access to digital technologies and digital literacy.

Building an Uzbek "technological ecosystem" based on cloud computing, Artificial Intelligence, big data storage and processing systems, and advanced data transfer technologies is crucial.

Andrey Pak, General Manager of Marvel Uzbekistan, which has been a partner of Huawei and co-organizer of the joint summit for 3 years, spoke at the event. He noted that during the period of co-operation a number of projects have been implemented in various sectors of the markets of Uzbekistan, as well as in Mongolia and other countries of Central Asia and Transcaucasia.

"Together with Huawei we are involved in an active process of innovation. At first glance, an ordinary person may not notice the participation of various ecosystem players in these processes, but mutual support between our companies allows us to establish the process of promoting the latest technologies in the market of Uzbekistan to solve everyday problems of society," said Andrey Pak.

Mikhail Tsyplakov, Director of CA Distribution and co-organizer of the summit, shared in his speech that the company's priority for the coming years is to increase the volume of support for its partners in all areas:

- technical support for pre-sales and post sales teams;
- support in the implementation of joint marketing positioning and programmers;
- comprehensive training in core technologies for partner employees, customers and young specialists of the country;

- expanding the availability of demo samples of the latest products;
- stocking the most in-demand and critical equipment for quick deliveries.

"But we still consider the level of technical training of industry specialists to be the main task, and we will pay special attention to this area in the coming years together with our partners" - Mikhail Tsyplakov added.

To date, Huawei has relationships with more than 30,000 corporate partners worldwide, including:

- on trade,
- digital solutions,
- service operations,
- talent alliances,
- investment partners,
- financing,
- industry organizations
- and industry partners.

The company also places a strong emphasis on identifying local talent through its initiative «Seeds for the Future», implementing educational projects with local universities, holding competitions for ICT projects and providing training at the ICT Academy. Thus, in September 2023, the annual educational project Seeds for the Future 2023 was launched, with 15 students from 7 universities of Uzbekistan taking part in it, it was held in Doha, Qatar with the support of Huawei's regional office for the Middle East and Central Asia.

Conclusion. Our study shows that in the conditions of digital transformation of the economic system, sector and sphere of the national economy of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the role of the potential of digital technological solutions that contribute to achieving competitive advantages in the global economic market is increasing.

This approach implies not only modernization of technical equipment, software upgrades or intellectualization of production, but also fundamental changes in management processes, corporate culture and external communications.

It is important to note that in turn, the development of the digital economy contributes to the development of digital literacy of the population, the emergence of new digital tools, the optimal organization of communication processes in society based on the use of intelligent technologies, robotics, open and big data technology, blockchain, the development and implementation of various technological platforms. And investment partnerships with foreign companies such as SAS. Huawei allow us to accelerate digital transformation and improve the efficiency of all processes taking place in the country.

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