



## COLLABORATING WITH DIGITAL AGENCIES USING A SHARED TECHNOLOGY PLATFORM

Are you struggling to coordinate with digital agencies and technology service providers for the execution of your digital initiatives? Then, you need a way to onboard them, frequently communicate and bring them into an environment where they can work with you, other digital agencies and service providers in an efficient way. Let's see how...

# WHITE PAPER

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# HCL

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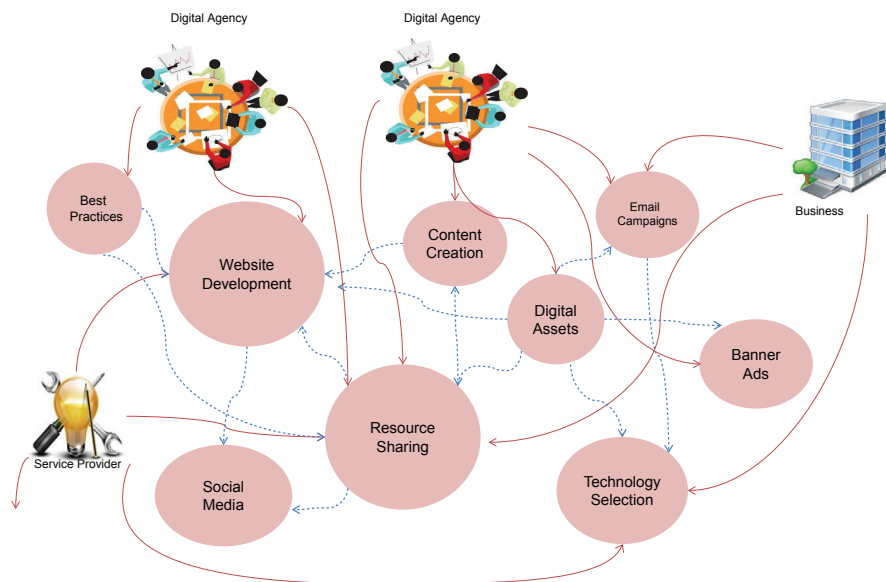
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## INTRODUCTION

Digital marketing has made a big impact on the overall marketing strategy of an organization. Today, organizations are investing heavily in digital technology to strengthen their digital presence and explore new ways of doing business. In fact, according to the Gartner report on digital marketing spend, approximately 25% of the total marketing budget is spent on digital marketing.

However, to establish a strong digital presence, a company has to deal with multiple stakeholders (both internal and external), especially when it comes to developing and managing web properties. One of the major challenges while setting up web channels is achieving synergy with digital agencies and technology service providers.

For example, one of HCL's customers was working with more than 30 digital agencies. Coordinating and interacting with such a large number was proving to be a challenge for the technology service provider and the organization. Moreover, it was becoming difficult to share responsibilities and distribute tasks since every agency had its own ways of working, resulting in conflicts, brand inconsistency and under-utilization of the technology platform.

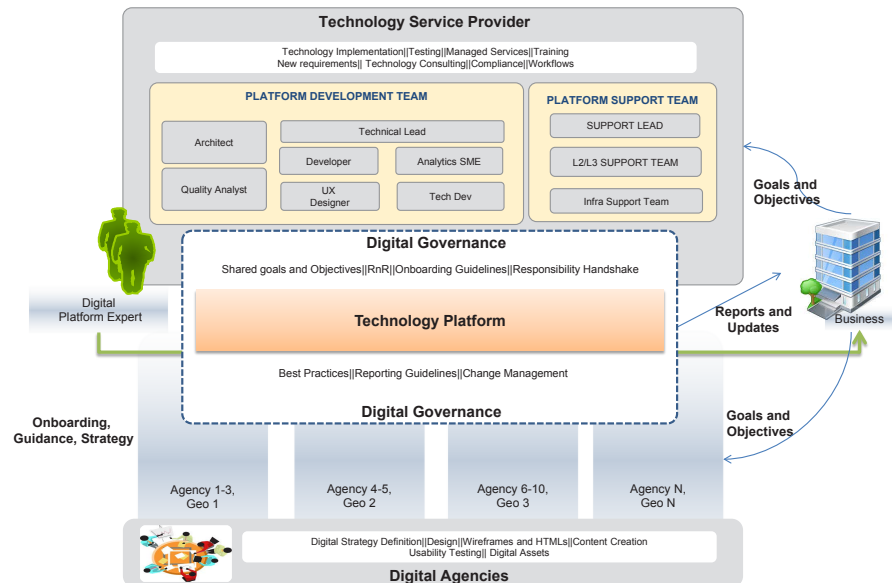


Day-to-day operations scenario

In this whitepaper, we are going to discuss how we can setup a collaborative environment between the organization, the technology service provider, and the digital agencies to optimize effort, resource sharing, reusability and communications.

## SETTING UP A COLLABORATIVE ENVIRONMENT

In order to setup an effective collaborative environment, establish the desired level of collaboration and manage the digital agencies and the service provider efficiently, all the major stakeholders (organization, service provider and digital agencies) have to work together as described below:



### An effective collaborative environment setup

There are 7 essential pillars that are required to be implemented to setup this environment:

1. Shared technology platform
2. Sharing of goals and objectives
3. Roles and responsibility definition
4. Clear responsibility handshake with each digital agency
5. Platform training for the digital agencies
6. Operations workflows
7. Reports and updates

Let's take a look at each of them in detail:

### 1. SHARED TECHNOLOGY PLATFORM

To coordinate with multiple digital agencies, it is necessary to establish a common technology platform, which is robust, highly scalable and accessible from different channels. It will be used by the agencies to create digital assets, share and review work, assign tasks, and report status, productivity and other statistics. In addition, the stakeholders can leverage the platform to manage activities and receive status updates and alerts. Similarly, the service provider will employ it to support the digital agencies.

## 2. SHARING OF GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The organization should share its digital experience management goals and objectives with all the digital agencies involved, irrespective of the responsibilities assigned to them. This would help them to understand the overall digital scenario and work accordingly to align with them at a higher level. Similarly, it should also be communicated to the technology partners in detail so that they will recognize the bigger picture and the stakeholders involved, and formulate a strategy in line with the organizational goals and objectives.

## 3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES DEFINITION

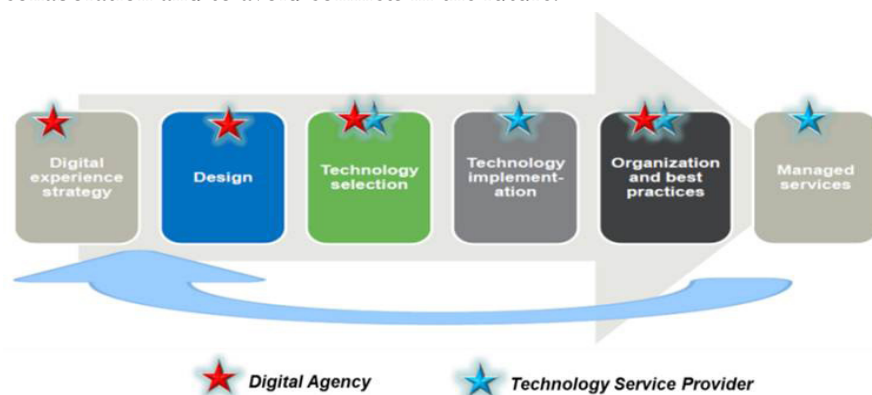
Defining roles and responsibilities is a very critical step for effective collaboration. Each digital agency should have an established team structure (content creator, approver, strategist, designer, program manager etc.) with a SPOC (Single Point of Contact) to connect with the technology service provider. Similarly, the technology partner must form its team and communicate it to other stakeholders.

The technology partner must have a digital platform expert who can contribute at a strategic level and understand the digital marketing trends of each geographical area. In addition, the person should have the ability to explain the business requirements to the technology team.

Correspondingly, the organization should identify the business users who will manage the service provider and the digital agencies, define, and configure their roles on the technology platform with appropriate access levels.

## 4. CLEAR RESPONSIBILITY HANDSHAKE WITH EACH DIGITAL AGENCY

While working with multiple digital agencies, there should be clear delineation of responsibilities between them and the technology service provider. The agencies should be given the responsibility at a geographic level and it should be further distributed among the agencies in that region. The tasks and responsibilities of each digital agency should be stated in detail to ensure transparency, seamless collaboration and to avoid conflicts in the future.



A typical digital agency – technology service provider responsibility handshake scenario

<b>R-Responsible</b> <b>A-Accountable</b> <b>C-Consulted</b> <b>I-Informed</b>	<b>Technology Service Provider/ SI</b>	<b>Digital Agency 1</b>	<b>Digital Agency 2</b>	<b>Digital Agency N</b>	<b>Client's Business Team</b>
SOW sign- off and stakeholder identification	<b>R</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>A</b>
Digital experience strategy	<b>C,I</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>R, A</b>
Training/ Onboarding of users	<b>A</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>C,I</b>
UX design	<b>I</b>	<b>R, A</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>C,I</b>
Wireframes and HTML design	<b>C,I</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>I</b>
Technology selection	<b>R</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>A</b>
Technology implementation	<b>R</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>A</b>
Usability testing	<b>C</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>I</b>
Review and sign-off on all deliverables	<b>I</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>R</b>
Content creation	<b>C, I</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>A,I</b>
Managed services and support	<b>R</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>A</b>

A Sample RACI matrix for stakeholders' participation

## 5. PLATFORM TRAINING FOR THE DIGITAL AGENCIES

Onboarding multiple digital agencies from across the globe onto a common technology platform is a major challenge. Therefore, the digital agencies must be trained thoroughly on the technology platform including:

- Platform features and its capabilities
- Access and authorization process
- Storing and retrieving content, digital assets from/ to personal and shared workspace
- Share and reuse mechanism
- Managing information for the content/ assets created
- Workflows for tasks, approvals, review and publishing
- Security and compliance
- Reports creation

Once the onboarding is done, the service provider must continue to guide the digital agencies on the platform and assist them to ensure effective collaboration, sharing and optimum utilization of the platform capabilities.

## 6. OPERATIONS WORKFLOWS

Workflows should be setup to create and assign new tasks, review and finalize the work product, and publish content. It must include the business users from the client's team to review the work product and provide feedback. Similarly, the workflows must be implemented at a global level so that all the digital agencies follow the same process while creating and managing assets. In addition, the digital agencies must incorporate the organization's best practices to ensure brand consistency and minimize rework.

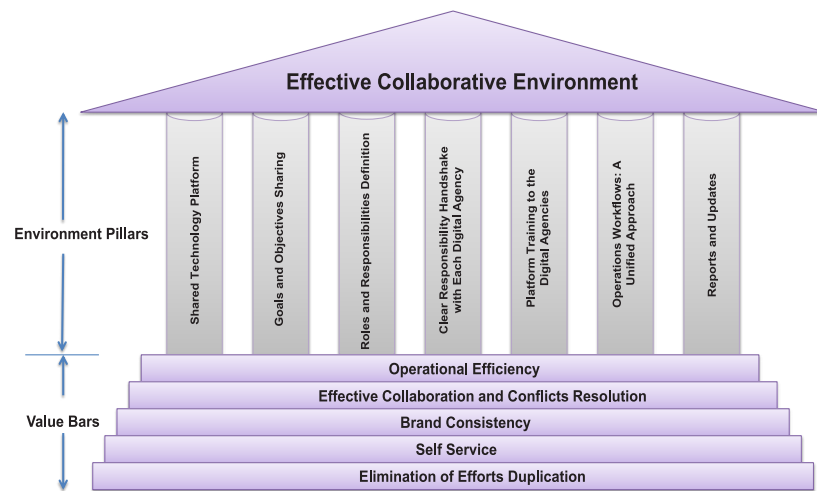
## 7. REPORTS AND UPDATES

The organization needs various reports from the digital agencies and service provider to assess agency utilization, work progress status, issues, roadblocks etc. Hence, it is important to have a reporting template/ structure common to all the digital agencies for easy comparison of reports. The service provider should also provide periodic reports and updates on the progress, efficiency, cost and any anticipated issues etc.

## BENEFITS

Having an effective collaborative environment benefits an organization in many ways. The most important among them is listed below:

- Operational efficiency
- Effective collaboration and conflicts reduction
- Brand consistency
- Self-service enablement
- Elimination of effort duplication



## CONCLUSION

Our research has shown that if an organization recognizes the need for an effective collaborative environment in the early stages of the digital transformation journey, it becomes easier to establish one. The seven environment pillars stated above are crucial to a collaborative environment. Once established, it is easier for an organization to manage the service provider and the digital agencies. In the same way, it also facilitates collaboration between the service provider and the agencies thereby benefitting the organization by improving operational efficiency and brand consistency and allowing self-service. This results in faster time to market for all digital marketing requests, elimination of duplicative efforts and lower cost to company.



## REFERENCES

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- KPMG - Active Standards Insight - Digital marketing governance

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



### **Vishwa P. Mahanta**

Vishwa P. Mahanta is a web experience management consultant with more than 5 years' experience in business analysis, project management and consulting. He is a thought leader and helps clients in assessing their digital maturity, formulating strategy and selecting the right technology product.

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### About HCL Technologies

HCL Technologies is a leading global IT services company working with clients in the areas that impact and redefine the core of their businesses. Since its emergence on global landscape after its IPO in 1999, HCL has focused on 'transformational outsourcing', underlined by innovation and value creation, offering an integrated portfolio of services including software-led IT solutions, remote infrastructure management, engineering and R&D services and Business services. HCL leverages its extensive global offshore infrastructure and network of offices in 31 countries to provide holistic, multi-service delivery in key industry verticals including Financial Services, Manufacturing, Consumer Services, Public Services and Healthcare & Life sciences. HCL takes pride in its philosophy of 'Employees First, Customers Second' which empowers its 88,332 transformers to create real value for the customers. HCL Technologies, along with its subsidiaries, had consolidated revenues of US\$ 5.0 billion, as on 31st December 2013 (on LTM basis). For more information, please visit [www.hcltech.com](http://www.hcltech.com)

### About HCL Enterprise

HCL is a \$6.4 billion leading global technology and IT enterprise comprising two companies listed in India – HCL Technologies and HCL Infosystems. Founded in 1976, HCL is one of India's original IT garage start-ups. A pioneer of modern computing, HCL is a global transformational enterprise today. Its range of offerings includes product engineering, custom & package applications, BPO, IT infrastructure services, IT hardware, systems integration, and distribution of information and communications technology (ICT) products across a wide range of focused industry verticals. The HCL team consists of over 91,000 professionals of diverse nationalities, who operate from 31 countries including over 505 points of presence in India. HCL has partnerships with several leading global 1000 firms, including leading IT and technology firms. For more information, please visit [www.hcl.com](http://www.hcl.com)

