

Agile Innovation in the Automotive Sector.

Thought Leadership

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An industry in transition

While digital transformation has been radically changing industries and reorganizing markets for several years, the automotive industry has been able to operate and grow for a long time, seemingly detached from the effects of technological disruptions. However, in the meantime, change is noticeable here, too, and the entire industry is undergoing a radical shift. Electromobility, autonomous driving or additional digital services are changing the picture of mobility, which has remained almost unchanged for decades. Even faster than the technological requirements, the peoples' needs and demands change. Future developments in the wake of this transformation are not always foreseeable.

However, one thing is sure: change is unstoppable. High product quality and excellent image alone will not be enough for companies to survive. More urgently than ever both manufacturers and suppliers need company-wide innovation and digitalization strategies, which makes the realignment possible and, above all, achievable in the shortest possible time.

It's not only about identifying emerging technologies and needs early. It is just as essential to react to it with the right processes and structures.

Speed as a factor of success

Speed becomes the decisive factor in the battle for market share and patents. Innovative solutions must be market ready as quickly as possible and integrated into the range of products and services, as the competition is growing and can no longer be found in only the automotive industry. Never before has the future of the automobile been so intertwined with technological advances in other areas. In the past, new vehicle models were presented. Today it is all about the possibilities of digital networking and communication, the provision of intelligent assistance systems or additional services.

Building new business models

The proven sales structures are also less secure than one could suspect a few years ago. Owning a car is no longer the basic requirement for mobility for many people. As a result of the sharing economy, more and more platforms for mobility are being set up that operate car sharing at attractive, economic and ecological conditions or that are committed to ensuring a seamless transition between different modes of transport. The car now acts less as a status symbol but defines itself more about its functionality and the most comfortable way to get from A to B. For car manufacturers this means restructuring companies into universal providers of mobility products and services.

The dilemma of success

Many established companies are still reluctant to venture into new areas with too much effort – often for fear of neglecting their core business. They focus on continually improving their product range incrementally. They bring vehicles to market that are more sophisticated regarding performance, safety or versatility. The pioneering work and the experimentation with innovative technologies are gladly left to start-ups, smaller companies or newcomers. The motto is to wait, to let others make the costly initial mistakes and observe what is successful – and then implement it yourself or buy it.

However, if they don't keep pace with new technologies, it is challenging to catch up, or it is just too expensive to acquire the required input externally.

This is particularly dangerous in an environment where the development of new technologies, such as electric drives or battery packs, is rapidly accelerating and continuously changing. Therefore, it is even more important to install structures in the company on time, which make it possible to identify and promote potential. So, they can gain experience and build competencies for the future.

Integrate the ecosystem

For a future-proof transformation of your company, the manufacturers must keep an eye on the stakeholders further up and down the value stream in their ecosystem in addition to their own structures. After all, automotive is an industry characterized by extensive and closely interlinked production and supply chains. These are systems with great interdependencies that must mesh perfectly to ensure a smooth and profitable production cycle. The big challenge will be to produce the necessary components for the newly developed, self-propelled electric cars together with the suppliers, to transfer them into reliable manufacturing processes and to convert the corresponding production facilities. Just as important as involving suppliers in innovation processes is the integration of customers at the other end of the scale. Especially in times when the affinity to new technologies is very high, but the trust is rather low, the users give valuable insights into which products meet their wishes and requirements.

Seize opportunities

The list of challenges facing the automotive industry can be continued endlessly. Be it the construction of infrastructure with charging stations for electric cars, the installation of the necessary hardware and software for autonomous driving or the creation of legal certainty regarding the new technology by the legislator. However, as numerous as the problems and risks are, as diverse are the solutions and opportunities. We'll show you how to tackle the challenges and turn them into successful business models, products or services. Discover the possibilities of our software and create a digital infrastructure to implement innovations quickly and agile.

The four principles of Agile Innovation

The innosabi technology is based on four principles, which form the basis for fast, flexible and open innovation processes. In the use cases of our software, we derive methods and processes from the principles that help companies minimize uncertainty and drive innovation forward.

Openness over Secrecy

Openness means stimulating a sustainable and transparent dialogue in a vast network of different people. These include customers, employees, partners, external specialists or even the general public. The selective opening of the innovation process enables innovations to be implemented better and faster.

Prototypes over Finality

Prototypes help to incorporate the needs and requirements of the customer in the development of new products and services. Flexible, iterative loops give all stakeholders the opportunity to provide feedback and participate directly in optimization. So, the end product is tailored to the wishes of the users.

Collaboration over Competition

Collaboration promotes the innovative power of an organization. First and foremost, this involves a partnership-based exchange of the company with its entire ecosystem and the networking of knowledge, skills, and experience. Thus, problems can be solved faster, and overall higher-quality results can be achieved.

Adaptation over Resistance

Adjustments make the innovation process open to new perspectives and help overcome unpredictable challenges more easily. It is about transforming rigid structures into flexible processes to react flexibly to changes. The added value for the company is reflected in more quality in output as well as in a crisis-proof innovation and corporate culture.

About

innosabi is for those who believe that better is always possible. Our Innovation Management Platform (IMP) enables seamless collaboration, adapts to your workflows, and scales with your needs. Companies like Coca-Cola, Danone, AstraZeneca, BASF, and Deutsche Telekom trust innosabi to accelerate progress and create lasting impact.

As part of the Questel Group, we go beyond innovation management – linking ideation, intellectual property, and commercialization to turn ideas into real value.

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