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What can an enterprise software company teach you about the future of work?

The digital transformation of

Pega®

Welcome to the era of:

Game Changers

Pegasystems CTO: A Game Changer
Who Practices What He Preaches

Pegasystems is in the business of powering digital transformation with industry-leading software. Thousands of customers around the world use its platform and CRM applications to engage customers, streamline their operations and build more agility into their organizations.

Inside the company's own business, CTO Don Schuerman is pursuing the same kind of transformation projects Pegasystems does for its customers.

In the 20 years Schuerman has been with Cambridge, Mass.-based Pegasystems, he has seen the company transition its own technology platform several times—shifting from mainframes to minicomputers to client-server architectures. Today, Pega does most of its work in the cloud and on web and mobile channels.

"In a lot of ways, our customers expect us to be innovators," Schuerman said. "We're on the front line, thinking about how customer engagement is done, how process automation is driven. Given that a lot of our business is helping customers drive their transformation efforts, we have to 'drink our own champagne' and follow the same principles internally."

Pega Express

A key driver in Pega's own internal transformation is the use of "low-code," or in many cases "no-code," app development. Low-code has become a popular development method in recent years, substituting model-driven methodology for coding in an effort to build faster and reduce complexity. Pega created a program called Pega Express several years ago for customers to build low-code apps on its platform—and now the company is using it for its own operations.

Schuerman described how his team used Pega Express to create an app that automated the end-to-end launch process for new and updated Pega products.

"For many years, we didn't have a standard, repeatable process for launching new products," he said. "I brought someone in to help us standardize that process and make it more efficient, more effective. Even though he wasn't a programmer or coder, he was able to use Pega Express to turn that process into an app used by our marketing, product, and engineering teams. We do 20–30 launches a year, some small, some big, and this app helps us make sure we operate consistently and effectively."

The company has set up a process so business leaders don't have to wait for IT to create an internal app. If they need something for their department, they can add it to the "Playground" on the Pega cloud and follow instructions about how to create apps. The company has rolled out more than one dozen apps that manage internal processes such as the way in which the company manages charitable contributions.

"That used to be done with emails and a spreadsheet," Schuerman said. "Now we've got an app that helps people sign up to donate, choose what they're going to commit to donate, and get automatic reminders of when they have to bring in their gift bags or the things they're donating. We rolled that out quickly, and not only did we drive an improved process, we also enabled the company scale up our charitable impact."

Staying ahead of competitors

Pega's CTO said the company needs to constantly transform its own operations to compete with much larger players in the enterprise software market—everyone from IBM and Oracle to Salesforce and Microsoft.

With the organization now close to 4,500 employees world-wide, Schuerman said Pega's IT leaders are constantly looking for ways to improve productivity and help staff communicate better. This includes providing collaboration tools like messaging and video conferencing applications to help development teams across the U.S., India and Poland feel like they're in the same room. It also means designing internal apps to run on mobile platforms so employees can process everything from expense reports to time sheets to sales data on their phones.

"We have to win by being smarter, more innovative, more efficient, and faster," he said. "From a competitive perspective, that's really important. Also as a company that's growing really fast, we constantly have to think about how we scale up and improve operational margins. These kinds of transformations help drive that process."

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Schuerman said the company has done a good job using technology to transform its operations to become efficient and competitive.

"There are always opportunities to make technology better," he said. "But, as a company, we have moved pretty far along that track."

"There's been a big shift over the last few years for both our own employees and our customers—an expectation that the applications they use in business should be as easy to use as the applications they use in their personal lives," Schuerman said. "The days where they suffer through a hard-to-use app in their workday has gone away."

NAME:
Don Schuerman

COMPANY:
Pegasystems

TITLE:
Chief Information Officer

INDUSTRY:
Enterprise software

EMPLOYEE COUNT:
4,400

HOW HE CHANGED THE GAME:
Promoted technology that helps the company engage with customers, streamline operational efficiency, and build more agility into its own organization.

Visionary leaders are changing the game for the modern workforce.

Welcome to the era of:

Game Changers

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let work flow.