



# Digital Business Britain **Manifesto**



**Digital Business Britain –  
a manifesto for a change in  
business mindset - a campaign  
started in March 2011 to create  
economic growth through  
digital awareness**

---

In partnership with:



## Digital Business Britain – a manifesto for a change in business mindset in 2011

**The role of the Digital Business Britain manifesto is to increase the economic output of the UK by encouraging individuals and businesses to embrace a Digital Mindset.**



**Greater and more effective use of digital tools and communities can help small and medium sized businesses achieve growth and increase their efficiency and competitive advantage. This is more than just about selling online. It's about such things as driving marketing through social media, increasing website exposure through search engine optimisation and procuring and enhancing supply chains through business to business web-based networks. Encouraging SMEs to think strategically about such issues and adopt strong digital approaches within their business model will better place them to meet the global competitive challenge in the digital age.**



**Supported by Mark Prisk, Minister for Business and Enterprise, May 2010 to September 2012**

### Introduction

At a time when the UK economy is facing tough challenges, educators, business leaders, business owners and those in Government need to do more to embrace the opportunities created by the digital revolution. Developing an understanding of the value of digital technology, digital networks and the tools they offer to business, will enable the UK economy to begin to thrive again. Digital Business needs to become a respected and recognised sector and skill set within UK business. Giving it such credence and focus will help to support more start-up businesses, create jobs, build business growth and ensure the UK has a strong reputation within the online global conversations that lead to profitable business. Britain's digital assets need to be nurtured and grown. Without them UK business will be poorer.

Individuals and businesses, regardless of their size, have much to learn about how to 'think digitally' in the execution of their day-to-day business. A lack of understanding of the digital world means that many individuals and businesses are missing out on valuable growth opportunities. At the moment the internet is used as a transactional tool to buy and sell products or raise awareness. Few truly understand the potential of the social internet and the positive impact it could have on their businesses. So there is an urgent need to teach business people how to embrace the digital and social business world.

Developing a **Digital Mindset** goes far beyond access, superfast broadband and internet marketing. By effectively engaging in social business networks and using the internet to its full potential, these same individuals and businesses have the opportunity to share best practice, challenge established ideas and thought processes, ask for help, identify new customers and suppliers, build trust, and collaborate with each other and their customers to accelerate their business development.

Now more than ever businesses need to engage with their customers. As trust develops so customers interact more with businesses, using a range of digital tools to open a dialogue of the kind only made possible by the digital revolution. The challenge businesses and individuals now face is the need to move their business behaviour from being Closed, Selective and Controlling (CSC), which doesn't work in the digital world, to becoming Open, Random and Supportive (ORS) in all their actions and intentions. This requires a new and very different mindset.

The Digital Business Britain Manifesto calls for the digital skills gap to be closed, encouraging UK businesses to develop a *Digital Mindset*, which will, in turn, enable them to leverage business growth opportunities through digital transformation, opening up new markets and new products.

## Digital Business Britain 8 Point Manifesto

### 1. Adopt a Digital Mindset and philosophy

Challenge both Government and industry to treat *Digital Business* as a critical growth sector within UK business. We must work together to secure the right infrastructure leadership behaviour and levels of investment, education, job creation and supportive legal frameworks.

### 2. Improve Britain's Digital trading future

Understand that the UK's digital future is synonymous with its trading future. Businesses and individuals need to invest the time and resources to understand their position in competitive global, national and local digital markets, and what that might mean to their business viability mid- to long-term.

### 3. Ensure national inclusion

Ensure that no geographical area is excluded from the digital economy. Innovative business ideas and creative individuals can be found across the UK. The joy of digital and social business is that it can be operated anywhere in the UK, allowing businesses to spring up everywhere. However, we should remember that competitors across the globe can do the same thing, so we need to act now to ensure that our digital assets are fully exploited to the benefit of UK business.

### 4. Provide digital and social business skills to all, offering individuals choice and a future that they can control

Give employees, and those seeking to commence, join or return to work, the opportunity to learn digital and social business skills. Offer them coaching and the encouragement to build trusted networks. In turn, this will assist them in building value both in the organisations for which they work, and in themselves.

### 5. Create a more positive environment - creating great Digital Citizens

Adopt a *Digital 'Citizenship' Charter* designed to promote ethical and positive interactions online by providing a conduct framework for social networks and forum owners, along with guidance on social media policies for business owners.

### 6. Value the social capital created by individuals

The online reputation of a business has become critically important. Similarly, individuals need to develop digital equity/reputation, known as social capital. This capital represents a key asset which, when carefully nurtured, will benefit the equity/reputation of their business. So it is vital that they have access to digital networks and social channels to connect and transact efficiently

### 7. Ensure our business leaders, advisors, mentors and coaches understand digital and social business

Ensure business leaders, advisors, mentors and coaches embrace and understand the potential of a 'digital and social business's' to grow global networks and to reduce fixed costs and apply an 'outsourced / networked business model' throughout their organisation, encouraging the inclusion of small businesses and the self employed.

### 8. Recognise the value of home based, digitally connected business in the economy

Raise the status of home-based, networked businesses within large influential institutions, such as the banks, to ensure they understand that in the digital world, measurement of a successful business lies not in employee headcount, nor office size, nor overhead, but can be measured in terms of income, network size, influence and sentiment.



Digital  
Business  
Britain

## About the Authors



Penny Power - CEO, Penny Power Limited  
penny@pennypower.co.uk  
@pennypower



Bob Barker Director leadORS  
rjbarkerUK@gmail.com  
@bob\_barker

The Digital Business Britain Manifesto was co-created with Bob Barker, who previously chaired the Government's Information Age Partnership working party on UK ICT competitiveness. Penny and Bob worked together on many digital projects particularly around the 'skills' agenda helping Business Coaches and Business Leaders to adapt to the digital environment.

The shared intention of Penny and Bob is to ensure that businesses across the UK have access to skills and can plan and execute their digital strategy at Board level through to senior and middle management. Having worked within the digital arena from its early days in the mid 1990s, the skills agenda is now of increasing concern.

Bob and Penny met through Ecademy, a social business network for SMEs and entrepreneurs, founded in the UK by Penny Power in 1998. At a time when businesses were waking up to websites and the transactional opportunities offered by online technology, Penny recognised the collaborative and supportive nature of online business networking and realised that this could create the environment in which digital business could thrive and grow.

The skills agenda is key to the success of digital implementation and both Penny and Bob want to bring to market a solution to the need for great engagement and network thinking within UK business. Helping to achieve the desired result of growing the UK Digital Industry from 8.3% of the economy (contributing £121bn) to the UK Government's aspiration of £225bn by 2016. (source [https://www.bcgperspectives.com/content/articles/growth\\_innovation\\_connected\\_world\\_digital\\_manifesto/](https://www.bcgperspectives.com/content/articles/growth_innovation_connected_world_digital_manifesto/))

This Manifesto was first published on 10th March 2011. Following five months of intensive research and think-tanks, Penny wrote and published, (with the support of Fast Future Research), her White Paper recommending practical solutions that can be created for the implementation of the suggestions made in this Manifesto. Penny continues to raise this conversation at Local and National Government level to ensure the digital economy becomes a critical conversation for the growth agenda.

A copy of the White Paper 'Exploiting the Future Potential of Social Media within UK Small to Medium Enterprises can be downloaded as a PDF here <http://pennypower.co.uk/publish/white-paper.php>

## About our partners

**Digital Youth Academy** – Connecting the Born Digital Generation to business through community and work-based qualifications. Chaired by Janette Faherty OBE. [www.digitalyouthacademy.com](http://www.digitalyouthacademy.com)

**Frontier** – Bridging the digital gap. Frontier offers businesses a trusted coach on their journey to digitally and socially enable their business. Chaired by Chris Farrence. [www.frontiercoaching.com](http://www.frontiercoaching.com)

**leadORS** – Bringing to market an indicator, platform and coaching method to assist in the transformation of Institutional thinking (Closed Selective and Controlling CSC) to Network Thinking (Open, Random and Supportive – ORS). Chaired by Thomas Power. [www.leadORS.co](http://www.leadORS.co)

Join the conversation and let us know your thoughts: @DigBizBrit #DBBM

**Download the manifesto here :**  
<http://www.digitalbusinessbritain.com>