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## What type of Chief Digital Officer does your company need? From the ‘Progressive Thinker’ to the ‘Universalist’: Strategy& defines five archetypes of a CDO

As companies move to catch up with the digital future, they are taking a close look at what kind of executive they need to lead the way. In a new report, [*The Right CDO for Your Company’s Future*](http://www.strategyand.pwc.com/reports/cdo-companys-future), [Strategy&,](http://www.strategyand.pwc.com) PwC’s strategy consulting business defines five Chief Digital Officer (CDO) “archetypes” – descriptions of typical roles CDOs might play within an organization.

**The Five Archetypes of a Chief Digital Officer:**

1. ***The Progressive Thinker*** - This executive’s mission is to think imaginatively about how the business could be transformed through digitization, and to provide the inspiration as the company moves to a fully digital strategy and operating model.

**Who should hire them?** Industrial companies and others in more traditional industries, such as chemicals, oil and gas, and mining, which already have a stable and strong set of differentiating capabilities but have yet to benefit fully from digitization, should consider hiring a progressive thinker.

1. ***The Creative Disruptor*** – Unlike the progressive thinker, the creative disrupter has a more hands-on approach to developing new digital technologies and business models.

**Who should hire them?** A creative disrupter can be especially valuable in companies facing severe changes as a result of digitization in consumer-oriented industries, such as publishing and retail.

1. ***The Customer Advocate*** – These executives, who typically report to the CMO and head of sales — or could even replace them — are mainly market-driven and customer satisfaction oriented. The customer advocate focuses on the development of a convenient, engaging, and seamless customer experience using design thinking across all channels, digital and physical.

***Who should hire them****?* This *type* is best suited for companies in customer-facing industries such as retail, banking, and travel, particularly if digital thinking has not yet penetrated the daily lives of their sales and marketing people.

1. ***The Innovative Technologist***– Much like a highly innovative and business-focused CIO or chief technology officer (CTO), this CDO promotes the use of new digital technologies to transform the company’s entire value chain, providing the technological groundwork for new digital business models through technologies such as the Internet of Things (IoT), mobility, social media, and analytics, while improving internal efficiency and finding ways to cut costs.

**Who should hire them?** Companies in manufacturing industries, for example, should consider turning to these executives to further optimize their supply chains and bring digital technologies to factories and to key production steps such as design and prototyping.

1. ***The Universalist*** – This CDO’s mission is typically to manage all aspects of a complete digital transformation. The most visionary of the five archetypes, the universalist can succeed only by having a forceful mandate from the CEO and full power to execute on it.

**Who should hire them?** The change leader is especially well suited to companies in any industry that find themselves behind the curve in their efforts to adapt to the digital world, and therefore need an executive who can carry out rapid and comprehensive transformational change.

“The demand for CDOs is rising and the competition for the best ones will only intensify,” says Roman Friedrich, a leading practitioner of strategic technology-based transformation for Strategy&, PwC’s strategy consulting business. “However many companies remain unsure of what they want or need in a digital leader. The five archetypes provide both a guide to help define who that CDO should be and a deeper understanding of how the person hired can best carry out his or her role.”

“Each of these archetypes fulfills a specific need, depending largely on the company’s current ambitions and digital strategy, says Michael Pachmajer, a director with PwC Germany who focuses on digital strategy and transformation for medium-size and family owned enterprises. “Companies should first make sure they have top level commitment to the digital strategy and a roadmap. And the CDO is given full authority on all digital topics.”

**End Notes**

To learn more, visit [www.strategyand.pwc.com/reports/cdo-companys-future](http://www.strategyand.pwc.com/reports/cdo-companys-future). A copy of the paper *The Right CDO for Your Company’s Future: The Five Archetypes of a Chief Digital Officer*is available from the media contact. Additional multi-media assets including graphics and images are also available.

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