

Vodafone New Zealand launches Digital Vodafone 2021 transformation program in collaboration with IBM iX IBM Watson selected as preferred AI platform

AUCKLAND, New Zealand, July 19, 2018 /PRNewswire/ -- Vodafone New Zealand, a leading telecommunications services provider, and IBM (NYSE: IBM) today announced a partnership to deliver the Digital Vodafone 2021 program in New Zealand. The vision for Digital Vodafone 2021 is to create the most engaging digital customer experience by adopting agile as a way of working, embracing new technologies and simplifying business models. The program is supported by [IBM iX](#), one of the world's largest digital agencies and global business design partners.

By 2021 Vodafone anticipates up to half of customer transactions will take place through digital channels, and 60 percent of inbound inquiries will be serviced with the help of virtual assistants. The Digital Vodafone program will ensure customers benefit from the introduction of more self-service options, instant transactions and more frequent improvements to services. A Watson-powered chatbot experiment to help customers answer mobile roaming queries recently launched and has already proven successful, with 88 percent of queries completely resolved – leading Vodafone to select Watson as its preferred AI platform moving forward.

"Customer experience is at the forefront of Vodafone's growth strategy," says Vodafone New Zealand Digital Lead Luke Longney. "We're transitioning to be a total customer centric company and delivering small improvements quickly with more customer feedback along the way."

Vodafone is using IBM's Enterprise Design Thinking approach to ensure the company remains customer-driven and focused on the right goals. In addition, Vodafone is employing agile methodologies to empower cross-functional teams to be creative, flexible and design the best possible solution for the customer.

"We're adopting agile incrementally, learning from our experiences and scaling in the areas where it delivers the most benefit for customers and our business. This approach will allow the entire organisation to learn and adapt. The support of IBM's expert coaches has been instrumental in driving successful adoption and building our internal capability," says Longney.

"Telcos around the world are experiencing increasing data traffic and network costs, while stiff competition from startups and disruptors keeps pressure on pricing and revenue growth," says IBM iX Global Leader Matt Candy. "To thrive in this new era, companies like Vodafone need to entirely redesign workflows, enabling their teams to operate at an exponential pace. IBM iX specialises in design and digital reinvention, and has real world experience to support Vodafone's teams through its transformation."

The measures of success for Digital Vodafone 2021 will include increased customer satisfaction, revenue growth from new businesses and channels, as well as efficiencies from automation. The new ways of working will mean a more empowered workforce, greater employee satisfaction, and increased business agility through simplification and digital maturity. The biggest advantage is in building a learning organisation that's equipped to lead through the next wave of industry disruption.

About IBM iX

<http://ibm.com/ibmix>

About Vodafone NZ

Vodafone is a leading full service telecommunications company, with mobile and fixed networks helping

customers across the country to do their thing better. For more information, please visit:

<http://www.vodafone.co.nz>.

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