

# A New Take on Innovation Taking a responsible approach

By Alain Conrard, CEO of Prodware, Business Solution Provider

Everybody has got something to say about Innovation. It is a topic that sparks much debate and rightly so because innovation is everybody's business!

Some believe that innovation is a magic potion that can solve anything and everything. Some say that it is a real menace and threat to humanity with

looming risks of uberization. None of that is actually true, but then again, none of that is entirely false.

So to try and make sense of all of this, let's take a step back from the usual roadblocks. If most people settle for preconceived ideas on innovation and perfunctorily indulge in the usual banalities of this phenomenon, it is because it is extremely difficult to imagine or materialize something that has yet to take place. So we are basically appreciating a "futuristic tomorrow" through the knowledge we have today. And if whatever we have today is something we do not want to let go of, it is no wonder that we should feel deeply caught off guard by a system whose *modus operandi*, by design, is to render all things obsolete as soon as they surface. And yet, we need to embrace innovation because understanding innovation means being future-ready.

How about we stop worrying and start looking at the evolution of the world we live in with more enthusiasm and a whole new mindset, but without necessarily falling prey to fads and trends that may also come with that change? Of course, we may not want to embrace innovation and stick with what we have. But change, by definition, is disruptive: it disrupts order, certainties, habits etc. But today change is inevitable and is happening with or without us. So in order for all of this mobility and permanent change to not be a sometimes daunting experience, a different take on innovation is called for. Because we cannot roll back this change in motion, the only thing that we can definitely change though is the way we look at things.

**"Change then, considered as a factor of stability, is comforting"**



In short, a completely new take on innovation. In a world where, sooner or later, everything will eventually be affected by the relentless innovation dynamic, there is still something that will never change. As ironic as it may seem, change has become the only constant in today's world. Moreover, it has become the symbol of permanence and continuity. Change then,

considered as a factor of stability, is comforting. Seen this way, change and innovation need not be equated with rejection and concern.

If anything, innovation is what builds our trust both in the future and in the present. Innovation may fascinate and intrigue, but there is one thing for sure - there is "an after" and "a before". But we do hope that "after" is better than "before". This may reflect the whole philosophy behind innovation: its contribution to progress but also the risks and dangers it could spawn. Because innovation does not automatically bode well for a better standard of living. This is the risk issued by people like Bill Gates, Stephen Hawking or Elon Musk and we can't really suspect them of being technophobic. This is where the idea of responsibility takes on its full meaning with regard to innovation: measuring progress of innovation every step of the way, not only in terms of profit maximizing or efficiency, but also, and at the same time, in terms of human, ecological and civilizational progress. Any innovation has to be geared towards the betterment of all things. An endeavour that requires, above all, that we take the plunge. So let's take the plunge! And let us never forget, just as Seneca put it, *"it's not because things are difficult that we don't dare, it's because we don't dare that things are difficult."*

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