

How to measure the
success of rapid
Workplace Digitization
through XLs?

TeXLA

TechM's eXperience
Level Framework

WHITEPAPER

Executive Summary

Organizations today are facing unique challenges in measuring end user experience while introducing digital transformation initiatives at a rapid pace, to retain competitive edge in the market.

eXperience Levels (XLs) have been acknowledged to be a radically different approach in measuring the same while providing granular insights and assisting organizations to be agile and successful.

This paper explains how Tech Mahindra's TeXLA Framework is implemented and operationalized while being cognizant of the common challenges and pitfalls encountered. Possible best-practices that can be adopted by leveraging TeXLA Framework (Tech Mahindra's XL Framework) have also been delved into.

We also look at how XL can become a self-sustaining loop of positive reinforcement enabling organizations to be truly agile and proactive in embracing workforce digitization in earnest.

Introduction

Changing Digital Workplace Landscape

Since the beginning of year 2020, the world has been witnessing devastating effects of Covid-19 pandemic. But what has stood out in this period, is the extraordinary human resilience aided by technology, to fight the pandemic against overwhelming odds.

The entire working model changed overnight; remote working became a norm where possible; and is slated to continue even after the pandemic is over. Technology became a key enabler. Most organizations were forced to embark upon a rapid transformation in their business models to cope up with changing times. Bulk of the onus fell on IT, which is often a key but overlooked support function, to help leapfrog the existing workforce, by empowering their users with a seamless remote IT experience, keeping end user productivity intact.

For CIOs, key questions staring at them were:

- How do I navigate the uncharted waters of digital transformation without impacting user experience?
- How do I address the business needs without compromising enterprise security?
- How do I balance user access and remote network access (VPN) on intranet vs public/hybrid cloud adoption?

It meant IT no longer had the luxury of time to implement the planned digital transformation initiatives, for which months and years were earmarked. They had to implement the initiatives fast and succeed or fail fast enough to make in-flight corrections to achieve the desired outcomes and succeed.

This called for newer ways and means to track and measure the success of digital transformation initiatives, spanning from speed of implementation, adoption, organizational change management to most importantly measuring end-to-end End-User Experience. Users are the most vocal change agents – both positive and negative. They constitute the “voice of customer” for any organization. Hence, it's imperative that they are heard early on, to make required changes, as part of the agile transformation process and make it as smooth as possible, completing the feedback loop.

Traditional SLA based IT models are ill-suited to meet the full spectrum of the demands required to measure success for such rapid digital transformation.

eXperience Levels (XL) held the key to bridge the chasm. This was not a new concept. But it gained momentum when it became apparent that measuring every end-user touch point with IT was the key to success for digital transformation initiatives. At the same time, cloud adoption, artificial intelligence, machine learning, big data analytics, predictive analytics, end-point automation, API driven bot frameworks dovetailed as part of overall digital transformation that made it possible for “user experience” to be catapulted as the lynchpin for measurement of successful outcomes.

To summarize, organizations are now looking forward to newer, comprehensive and innovative models of IT service delivery measurement, that beckons for a faster adoption of eXperience Levels going forward.

What is eXperience Level?

TechM defines eXperience Level Agreements, as a set of metrics that aims to measure user experience across the board, for any IT services being consumed by users, almost real-time, through IT outcomes, as a function.

There are a broad range of market definitions of XLs, but the common denominator for XLs to exist is the measurement of user experience for IT outcomes that IT delivers as a service.

Unlike SLAs, XLs have no set definitions of the metrics. They are dynamic in nature, that adapt to changing business and IT requirements, coupled with organizational appetite to map against digital dexterity vs digital literacy which has been touched upon separately.

Hence, it becomes a daunting challenge for any organization to adopt and implement the same without having the right knowledge and foresight, since the concept is still at its infancy. Having incorrect XL metrics defined poses a threat to the XL adoption right at the outset.

In addition, there are often questions about SLA vs XL, the relevance of replacing SLAs with XLs and conflict with respect to measurement methodologies.

Tech Mahindra’s XL Framework, TeXLA brings about a balanced view of the right XL metrics that should be onboarded and measured, at the right end-user touch-points with the right visibility and governance framework in place.

TeXLA | Tech Mahindra's XL Framework

Acknowledging that a critical gap exists in the industry, Tech Mahindra has pioneered a detailed XL Framework, TeXLA, to assist organizations in their XL journey.

Tech Mahindra's XL Framework, TeXLA, is a 5-stage process as follows:

1 Assess

The main aim is to understand customer's existing operational environment with regards to user experience management. One of the probing areas is to identify how the user experience is currently measured, action plans deployed and efficacy of the same; also, how end-users perceive IT today, provides key insights with regards to the areas that require improvement.

2 Identify

As part of the joint consultative approach, Tech Mahindra aims to understand customer's organizational vision for their digital workplace journey and how end users and their experience are placed as part of the process. Tech Mahindra's UX Heat Map plays an important role to determine organizational maturity with regards to user adoption of digital transformation initiatives by considering the user's digital dexterity vs digital literacy competency. This is a very important step that needs to be cautiously evaluated, since compassionate end user change management approach along with right organizational drive for end user education programme will play a key role in the overall success of XL implementation

3 Design

Inputs from the previous "Identify" step help locate the right end user touchpoints for IT services being deployed (both overt and covert). Subsequently, the right XL metrics are identified and mapped against each service. Once done, it is important to ensure that each XL metric is possible to be gathered real-time (as a lead indicator) and an underlying solution or tool can pass on the inputs to a centralized analytics platform running predefined algorithms.

4 Execute

Once all the solutions and XL indicators are in place, it is now time to start collating the XL metrics. Idea is to start small and increase and improve XL metrics over a period of time. The thresholds defined in the Identify and Design stage may require fine-tuning during the initial observation period.

In this stage, the operational, tactical and strategic governance layers are also set up. Each layer has dedicated SMEs and SPOCs identified and defined with clear charter and roles in place.

The operational SOPs are also defined at this stage for the UX functions to follow. Targeted workshops are run across the support organization to educate all about the new proactive and agile model of operations, including setting the right expectations and support expected from the eco-system, to improve and modify processes as needed.

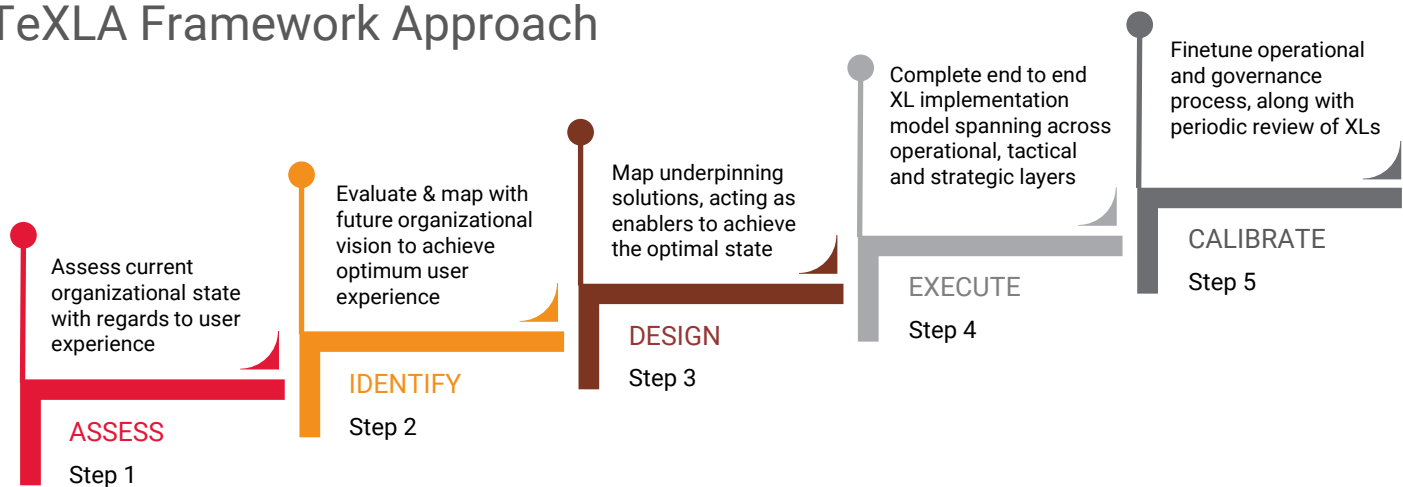
Digital signage is utilized to the maximum to provide visibility all across the board to underscore the importance of positive reinforcement as explained in the XL vs SLA chapter. If existing Digital Signage is not available, Tech Mahindra recommends areas to explore the possibility of introducing the same.

Finally, reports are published and circulated at each of the governance levels based on the frequency defined. It is acceptable to have missed few targets, but what should be ensured is the process and tools integrations are working seamlessly to provide the right visibility with the right set of stakeholders.

This stage ensures that the XLs are successfully adopted across the organization. Consultants from Tech Mahindra and customer jointly review the XL metrics for the initial weeks to validate that the right touchpoints were identified, and none were missed, and it met all the pre-requisites to be part of the XL metric. Metric thresholds are also finetuned before being frozen. Operational SOPs are reviewed and finetuned further. At the end of this stage, UX function becomes a fully independent body working cohesively across all support teams proactively. Governance framework becomes fully operational. Operations team now fully drive the XLs in a new operating model incorporating agile workplace transformation in day to day activities.

UX function going forward, can include new metrics, modify existing ones or retire metric as per SOP defined based on business and IT needs, as part of evergreen process optimization.

TeXLA Framework Approach



XL metrics

Tech Mahindra's XL Framework, TeXLA, classifies XL metrics into following categories:

- Pyramid of Satisfaction
- Buckets of Gratification

Pyramid of Satisfaction

At Tech Mahindra, we have developed End-Users' hierarchy of IT service consumption satisfaction, referred to as "Pyramid of Satisfaction" modelled on Maslow's hierarchy of needs. It is essentially a means to segregate the XLs identified during the Design and Execute phase of TeXLA Framework and allocate weightage based on business and IT needs, especially taking into account the outcome of UX HeatMap assessment and customer's vision for digital transformation.

The 3 levels are categorized into:

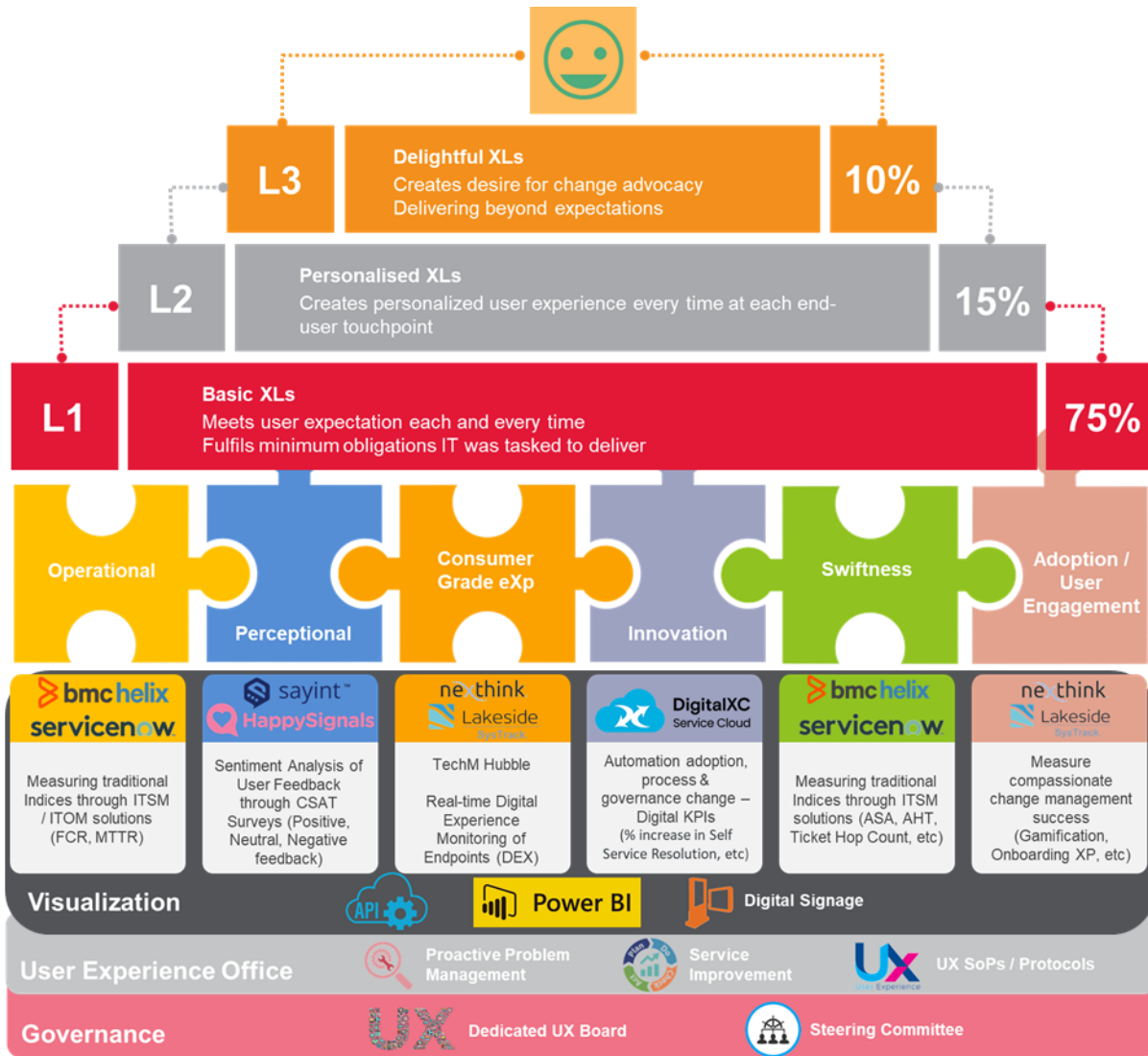
L1: Basic XLs – These are expected to be fulfilled each and every time at identified end-user touchpoints without fail. Hence, they usually carry a higher weightage.

L2: Personalized XLs – These metrics identify and measure user experience specific to user needs. They can be specific to certain user groups as well.

L3: Delightful XLs – These are metrics that fulfil the true goal of digital transformation by providing an exceptional user experience as an outcome of the initiatives implemented.

The weightages allocated as depicted in the picture are for illustrative purposes only; but can vary depending on customer scenarios. General rule of thumb being a higher weight allocated to L1 and gradually decreasing weights as you move up the pyramid. It is also important to understand here that Pyramid of Satisfaction is vertical in nature that cuts across the horizontal Buckets of Gratification as explained later in this chapter. Tech Mahindra's XL Framework, TeXLA, has also devised a complex algorithm that automates the entire process of visualization real-time.

TeXLA™ Framework



Buckets of Gratification

There are 6 buckets identified as part of XL metrics. They are categorized as follows:

Operational XLS: Traditional lead indicators which maybe part of existing SLAs

Perceptual XLS: End user feedback gathered either through traditional or non-traditional mode, at each user touchpoints.

Consumer Grade Experience (CGX) XLS: Measured through proactive analytics, predominantly captured through Tech Mahindra's IP service offering Hubble measuring DEX (Digital EXperience metrics)

Digital XLS: These are modern metrics focusing on new age KPIs around efficacy of automation and self-service transformations

Swiftiness XLS: Measures the speed of service delivered without negatively impacting user experience

Adoption XLS: Measures end users' experience for engagement, gamification and adoption of new services.

It is also important to note here that each of the bucket can be deployed independently. As part of Tech Mahindra's TeXLA Framework, it is possible that some or all of the buckets are deployed in any customer, depending on the digital transformation initiatives at play, which are customized for every customer.

Operationalizing XLS

Tech Mahindra's XL Framework, TeXLA, stresses upon successful operationalization of the XLS. Implementing XLS as part of measurement metric caters to easier design, constituting first half of the exercise. The critical second half relates to real-time consumption of the same based on actionable insights along with operational and governance framework.

Tech Mahindra conceives XL operationalization at each of the 3 layers

- Operational
- Tactical
- Strategic

Operational Layer

This layer primarily constitutes the UX function that calls for a modern, non-traditional operational model catering to end-user needs proactively based on the identified gaps, as real-time as possible. What aids in the process are real time visualization through customized dashboards supported by big data analytics, based on pre-defined algorithms that Tech Mahindra has invested as IP. In addition, specific SOPs are defined & implemented to empower the UX function to act actively. Digital signage plays a key role for positive reinforcement as explained earlier.

UX function works hand in hand with all other support functions under the ambit of traditional ITIL processes, dedicatedly focusing on user experience and being proactive where possible.

The UX team is responsible for generating and publishing the XL metric reports as per defined scheduled with all stakeholders for their consumption.

Tactical Layer

At the tactical level, Tech Mahindra recommends a dedicated UX board to be constituted which reviews the XL reports published by the UX function. In addition, they are responsible for

- Validating if the existing XL metrics are fulfilling the user experience measurement
- Planning and identifying new metrics as required based on upcoming digital transformation initiatives
- Working hand in hand with change management team to ensure that UX function is receiving the necessary support. Both are interdependent to complete the feedback loop.
- Acting as a triage for UX function and removing roadblocks if any.

Strategic Layer

They are the ones who sponsor the entire XL program within the organization. Their main aim should be to ensure that the XL framework is able to effectively measure, gauge and align with regards to the larger IT and transformation vision of the organization. They are responsible to provide the necessary feedback to tactical and operational layers to align where required, as they have a broad view of all technology touchpoints with end-users at play. Business Managers and stakeholders are also encouraged to share transparent feedback on end-user perception of IT as part of this forum.

TeXLA Framework recommends existing customer IT steering committee to include XL Framework review as part of their agenda as per set frequency.

Conclusion

The key traits of digitally evolved organizations will be defined by how well they have been able to adopt and adapt XLs for measuring success of digital transformations in the face of rapidly evolving demands and remain agile in the process. Well governed and well implemented XLs will be a game-changer for early adopters. Walking the talk can be challenging, given how the XLs are at a nascent stage & still evolving.

Tech Mahindra's XL Framework, TeXLA, precisely aims to demystify the subject and bring in best-in-class technologies, best practices and framework for our customers to leverage & succeed.

Underpinning Tech Mahindra Propositions delivering TeXLA

Hubble

Hubble is Tech Mahindra's proactive user experience management service offering for endpoints, aimed at identifying end user issues proactively and resolve the same. Customized Digital Experience Scores (DeX) developed is platform agnostic and forms a key lever for Tech Mahindra's XL Framework, TeXLA.

GAiA™ Automation Platform

GAiA™ is the enterprise AI/ML platform offering from Tech Mahindra built upon the open-source Acumos™ platform for an enhanced end-to-end CX. Acumos™ is an open source AI lifecycle management platform, Co-created by Tech Mahindra & AT&T in collaboration with Linux Foundation. It offers a ready-made framework for building cognitive applications widely applicable across IT operations. In-built capabilities such as NLP, Machine Learning, Advanced Data Analysis and Visualization, GAiA™ enables the use of AI and cognitive computing to provide actionable intelligence and insights from operations data.

Workspace NXT

Workspace NXT from Tech Mahindra is a unified Digital Workspace Platform that enables a personalized, seamless and secure environment for your employees anywhere, anytime, on any device. The future-proof platform offers an open architecture that is feature rich, extensible and scalable. With a secure working environment at the heart of the platform, is developed to deliver best end-user experience in an economical way.

Sayint

Sayint is a conversational analytics solution that helps companies make sense out of the enormous repositories of customer interaction data across various channels. This enables key stakeholders better understand and serve their customers and make decisions based on objectively scored data. From optimizing resource utilization to helping customers get faster and efficient support using RPA and bots, Sayint aims to be the foremost SaaS platform for Conversational Analytics.

HappySignals

Tech Mahindra has partnered with HappySignals to explore and measure happiness quotient of users in real-time, leveraging the power of semantic analytics and AI. This forms an important pillar to understand how user feedback is being received through traditional channels and help convert CSAT KPI from a lag to a lead indicator.

Visualytx™

Realtime visualization of XLs is the key. Tech Mahindra has invested in developing an integrated API driven visualization platform, Visualytx™ which provides a single pane for the UX and operations team to gain meaningful actionable insights based on the customized algorithms developed in-house. This forms a cornerstone for Tech Mahindra's TeXLA offering.

TeXLA Case-Study | Ahlstrom-Munksjö

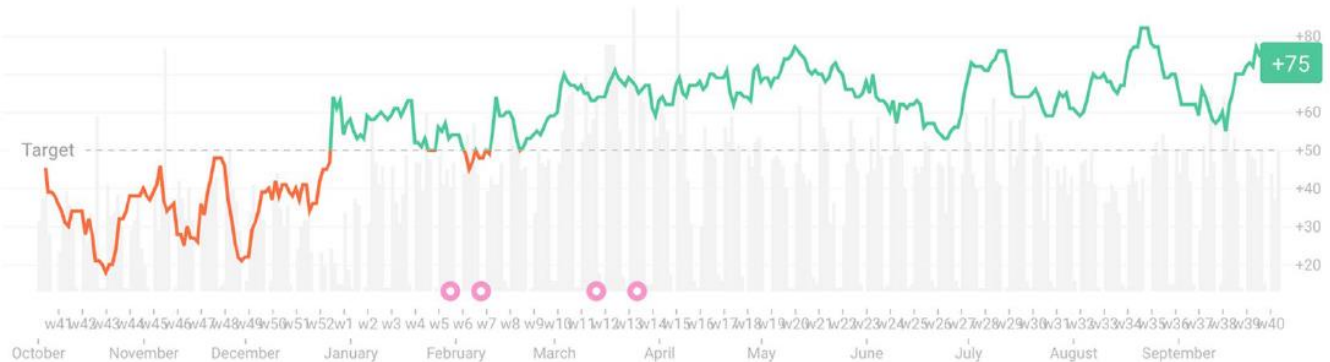
112% improvement in End-User Happiness

Ahlstrom-Munksjö is an existing marquee logo for Tech Mahindra. In 2017, Ahlstrom merged with Munksjö. They had a pointed use-case to measure XL and consume end user feedback. As part of Tech Mahindra's XL framework, TeXLA, we partnered with HappySignals to get feedback from their end-users. It was quickly found that they were in fact experiencing the Watermelon effect, where their SLA metrics reported positive and green results, while their end-users were not happy with IT services and seeing red.

Previously, Ahlstrom Munksjö had been conducting annual surveys, however combining this information with HappySignals experience data, Ahlstrom- Munksjö were able to work closely with our team in order to create an action plan to solve end-user satisfaction problems, through a continuous improvement program called 'Project Happy'..

Tech Mahinda leveraged HappySignals as part of TeXLA framework and enabled Ahlstrom Munksjö to immediately see results. The data is made transparent and accessible to all management and service owners. This has led to an increase in motivation for TechM's Service desk agents to deliver a high-quality service.

Happiness for Oct 2019 - Sep 2020 is +59 based on 9155 feedback.



From October 2019 to 2020, Ahlstrom Munksjo have seen a 120% increase in end-user happiness, as well as a 68% decrease in lost time for their end-users.

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