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### **Business development management tools in the digital economy**

**Abstract:** The peculiarities of the digital environment, which contribute to the rapid growth of instability in enterprises' activities, are highlighted. The need to refine certain aspects and tools of traditional strategic planning is substantiated. The essence of digital transformation as a strategic process of business change—based on client-centric principles, systemic innovation, business model adaptation, active data usage, and competency development—is defined. The problems facing Ukrainian companies in digital transformation are highlighted, including insufficient strategy development, organizational culture misalignment with necessary changes, a shortage of digital skills, outdated technologies, lack of coordination between old and new technologies, and the high costs of implementing innovations. The approach to the digital transformation strategy is viewed as a tool for setting priorities that provides businesses with competitive advantages in rapidly changing markets through the application of digital technologies to solve new business challenges. Potential directions for ensuring the flexibility of a digital strategy are highlighted, such as developing partnerships and cooperation, utilizing big data analysis and predictive analytics for real-time decision-making, and employing flexible technologies for both implementation and strategy development. A hypothesis about the feasibility of developing a minimally viable strategy is proposed. As an additional method for increasing the flexibility of the digital transformation strategy, a modular structure for its design is proposed, based on the concept of business architecture, establishing a close connection between enterprise strategy, business model, and IT architecture. A brief overview of digital business models is provided, indicating that ecosystem-type business models, including digital platforms, are the most successful in the digital environment. The stages of digital transformation are outlined, and additional tools for their implementation are considered, such as digital maturity assessment models, a system of key indicators, and a digital transformation road map. A generalized structure of the toolkit for strategic management of business development in the digital environment is proposed, particularly aligned with the stages of digital transformation implementation.

**Keywords:** *digital transformation, strategic planning, client-centricity, business model adaptation, digital skills shortage, organizational culture, predictive analytics, digital strategy flexibility, digital platforms.*

**JEL Classification:** M15, O33, L21, O32.

Formulas: 0; Figures: 2, Tables: 1

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**Introduction.** The need to develop new approaches and methods for managing business development arises from significant changes in business conditions. Previously, the methodology of strategic planning emerged as a response to the growing instability of the external environment. However, the current level of instability, associated with the spread of digital technologies and their corresponding business models, necessitates adjustments and developments in strategic management principles and tools. Today, this need is recognized by an increasing number of researchers [1-3].

A key factor in companies' competitiveness is their flexibility and speed of response to continuous and often unpredictable changes in the external environment. This results in traditional calendar planning losing its effectiveness. As the authors in [1] emphasize, strategy should not be confined to a fixed list of sequential steps implemented in a foreseeable future in an orderly manner; it should be considered a living, dynamic process.

Furthermore, strategies solely focused on increasing business efficiency through optimization and continuous process improvement are becoming significantly less effective. While these are necessary, they are not sufficient to ensure competitiveness. The spread of ecosystem-type network business models [4, 5] and "light" business models [6] enables businesses to rapidly and flexibly expand their resources by establishing partnership relationships.

All of this underscores the growing importance of adapting traditional methods and tools of strategic planning to modern conditions, identifying the stages of digital transformation, and determining the requirements for its implementation strategy. To achieve this, it is crucial to first understand the key characteristics of the digital environment and acknowledge the irreversible changes taking place. One of the most comprehensive and general descriptions of the digital environment's characteristics can be found in [7], where three groups of so-called "Big Shifts" are distinguished:

- Major shifts in the way we work: Flexibility and speed are becoming the new standards, the boundaries between business and information technology are blurring, and innovation ecosystems are gaining increasing importance.
- Big changes in technologies: Data processing algorithms are becoming the driving force behind business tasks, data analysis is transforming into a competitive advantage, cloud solutions are becoming a priority in IT provisioning, and there is a convergence of information and operational technologies, with a heightened focus on ensuring information security.
- Big shifts in resources: The shift toward digital technologies, data, artificial intelligence, and robotics is simultaneously creating new jobs and eliminating existing ones. Changing organizational ideas, values, and culture toward "creating digital DNA" is of great importance, requiring transformations in the mechanisms for financing innovations.

**Literature Review.** In recent years, researchers have focused on the critical role that digital transformation plays in modern businesses. Many companies have adopted new digital business models and network ecosystems [4, 5], which allow for the faster and more flexible scaling of resources through partnerships. For instance, "light" business models [6] have emerged as key components of digital transformation strategies.

The concept of digital transformation as more than just the implementation of technology is crucial to understanding the process. Digital transformation requires new ways of thinking, new skills, organizational structures, and operational models [7, 8]. The key characteristics of the digital environment, as outlined by researchers [7], include the blurred boundaries between IT and business, the central role of data, and the increasing importance of innovation ecosystems.

**Purpose, Objectives, and Research Methods.** This study aims to explore and evaluate the strategic management tools that enable business development in the context of digital transformation. The study uses a qualitative research approach, analyzing existing academic

literature, consulting reports, and case studies of Ukrainian companies. Key objectives include identifying digital transformation stages, evaluating barriers to implementation, and exploring the tools used to facilitate successful transformation.

**Research Results.** Digital innovations must be financed outside the traditional IT budget and require a different approach to financial management—iterative, with shorter cycles, similar to venture financing mechanisms.

The process that ensures the competitiveness of enterprises and organizations in the digital environment is called digital transformation. Before exploring the stages and tools of its implementation, it is important to highlight several key points.

First, it concerns the essence of digital transformation. Initially, the primary focus was on the accelerated implementation of digital technologies in various aspects of enterprise activities. However, over time—confirmed by numerous empirical studies—there has been a realization that digital transformation is much more than just the adoption of new technologies. It also requires new ways of thinking, conducting business, new skills and competencies, as well as new organizational structures and operational models [8]. Summarizing research on the nature of digital transformation [7, 9], we can conclude that digital transformation is a strategic process of business change, grounded in the principles of client-centricity, systematic innovation, business model adaptation, extensive data usage, and competency development. The goal of transformation is to create an agile company that constantly evolves and is ready to continuously adapt to changing conditions through appropriate technology, organizational learning, and decision-making processes supported by high-quality data available in shorter time frames. The most frequently mentioned obstacles to successful digital transformation are the "soft" factors: traditional organizational culture, insufficient staff competencies and motivation, fear of change, and the lack of a comprehensive strategy for implementing digital transformation [10-12].

Secondly, although this process may seem straightforward, it is worth noting its length and complexity. Many managers, who have high hopes for digital transformations, are often overly optimistic about the time required for implementation. Additionally, the risks associated with digital transformation are significantly higher than those in traditional programs. A study by Bain & Company found that only 8% of global companies were able to achieve their desired business results from investments in digital technologies. Experts believe that only 8% of executives understand that the foundation of digital transformation is not just technology implementation, but also transforming the business itself—changing the way customers are attracted through new channels, simplifying business processes, and redesigning products or services. As a result, many large companies have begun to reduce funding for digital transformation projects.

Solving emerging problems and avoiding potential issues can be facilitated by analyzing errors that may occur during digital transformation. Such errors include:

- Insufficient understanding of how digital transformation can impact the business in the future, along with a lack of a clear strategy with measurable goals and outcomes.
- Loss of rationality in decision-making, often based solely on the successes of digital companies and "fashionable" trends. While benchmarking is an important tool, it should account for the specific characteristics of the enterprise and be aligned with its strategy, rather than simply copying other approaches.
- Weaknesses in the coordination between traditional and new technologies, as well as incomplete mechanisms for the cross-functional use of digital tools.
- Inadequacies in the company's organizational culture, including resistance from employees at all levels—from top managers to ordinary workers—a lack of digital competencies, and an inflexible organizational structure.

A general analysis of problems, prepared based on surveys from leading consulting companies such as Deloitte, KPMG, and PWC, highlights the most important challenges

encountered during digital transformations. These include insufficient maturity of business processes, a lack of necessary IT skills and knowledge, the absence of a digital strategy aligned with the business vision, inadequate funding, outdated technologies, poor integration of new and existing technologies, insufficient engagement from company leadership, and a deficient digital culture. Studies of digital transformation processes in Ukrainian enterprises also confirm that the absence of a digital strategy is one of the main factors hindering successful digitalization in medium- and high-tech industries [13, 14].

The enterprise strategy is the main tool and key component of strategic management. The scientific literature on strategic planning contains extensive material on the typology of strategies, as well as the stages and methods of their development. However, two main factors highlight the need for further research in this area.

First, as mentioned at the beginning of the article, one of the key factors is the significant change in the conditions and rules governing companies' operations in the digital environment, leading to a sharp increase in instability. This necessitates the development of new principles and approaches to forming a company's strategy, which often becomes the strategy for its digital transformation.

Second, there are challenges associated with the successful implementation of strategy. The methodological and instrumental gap between strategic and operational aspects of the enterprise was largely addressed with the development and widespread implementation of the balanced scorecard methodology in management practice. However, with the increasing demands for faster decision-making, new challenges arise. Additionally, at a certain point in the development of strategic management, many theorists and practitioners began to equate strategy with a strategic plan. However, the founders of strategic planning, I. Ansoff and G. Mintzberg, defined strategy as a set of rules for decision-making that guides the enterprise in its activities or as a set of criteria that determines the trajectory towards the goal. The key task of strategic planning was to determine priorities—selecting areas of activity where the organization's limited resources should be directed to achieve the best market position. This approach, rather than rigid calendar planning, aligns with the current situation. According to studies, in the fast-paced digital world, strategy cannot be defined once every three to five years [7].

The study of modern concepts regarding the formation of a company's development strategy, including the strategy of digital transformation, reveals the absence of a unified approach, beginning with the definition of key concepts. Most authors consider the terms "digital strategy" and "digital transformation strategy" as interchangeable. The essence of a digital strategy is the use of digital technologies to provide a competitive advantage to a company in its industry, potentially even reshaping the industry itself. One of the primary requirements for this is the flexibility of strategy as a management tool.

The dilemma between permanence and adaptability has always been a key issue in strategic management. Currently, this challenge can be addressed through:

- Developing partnership and cooperation mechanisms, as well as creating and participating in ecosystems;
- Making operational decisions based on big data analysis and predictive analytics;
- Applying flexible (Agile) approaches not only in implementation but also in strategy development.

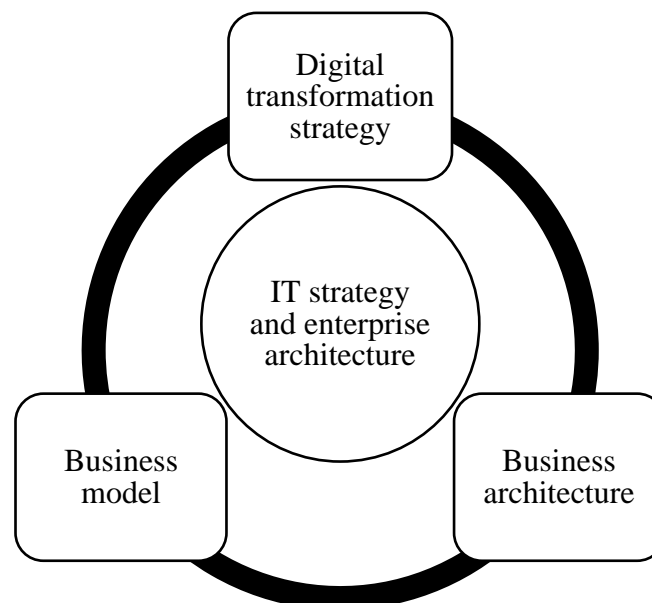
It can also be suggested that, in addition to the concept of a minimum viable product, to enhance flexibility, it is worth considering the concept of a "minimum viable strategy." However, further research is needed to test this hypothesis.

Flexibility can also be achieved by applying the modular principle. For example, in platform-type business models, there is a basic core with a mobile periphery, which helps balance the conflicting demands of stability and variability. The first step in distinguishing strategic

modules is defining three interrelated types of strategies: corporate, business, and functional strategies. Corporate strategies establish the enterprise's overall competitive strategy and its portfolio of activities, including human resources and change management. In light of modern conditions, this may be expanded to include a digital transformation strategy. Then, for each business area, the primary method of gaining competitive advantages is identified. To successfully implement corporate and business strategies, a set of relevant functional strategies—such as marketing, innovation, production, financial, and IT strategies—is developed. This set of functional strategies can be further supplemented based on the specifics of the company's activities.

This approach aligns with the recommendations for digital transformation developed by Deloitte. The first step before starting the transformation is to define not only the company's future vision but also its "winning drive"—a vision focused on consumers rather than products or finances. This allows the company to answer the question, "Where will we play?" which relates to corporate competitive strategy and defines the company's portfolio of activities. Next, it answers the question, "How do we win?" which reflects the value propositions and sources of competitive advantage associated with business strategies. Only then do questions arise, such as, "What capabilities do we need for this?" and "What management systems do we require?"—which correspond to the level of functional strategies. At this stage, specific digital technologies are selected, and closely related IT and operational (production) strategies are formed.

To better align business tasks with these functional strategies, it is recommended to use the concept of enterprise architecture. Enterprise architecture translates business vision and strategy into effective organizational change by creating, discussing, and refining key requirements, principles, and models that describe the company's future state and ensure its development. It outlines the organization's goals and the means to achieve them through business processes, as well as methods to improve efficiency using information technologies. According to the TOGAF standard, enterprise architecture encompasses business architecture, data architecture, application architecture, and technology architecture. Business architecture includes the business model, organizational structure, key business processes, and enterprise capabilities. The relationship between the company's strategy, business model, business, and IT architecture is shown in Fig. 1.



*Fig. 1. The relationship between the strategy, business model, and business and IT architecture of the enterprise*

The business model plays a key role in ensuring the competitiveness of an enterprise in the digital environment. Changing the business model has become an integral part of digital transformation. Recently, more attention has been paid to business models than to strategies. There are many templates for business model development (the most well-known being the Canvas model by A. Osterwalder and I. Pigneur, and the Lean Canvas model by E. Maurya, developed based on it), as well as collections of successful business models and guidelines for creating innovative business models. However, there are different viewpoints on the relationship between strategy and business models as management tools [10]. The most common view is that strategy development precedes the creation of a business model. This same approach determines the sequence of digital transformations as follows:

1. Development of a digital strategy;
2. Choosing a business model;
3. Identification of key factors (drivers) of digital transformations (enablers), including IT technologies and data analysis, operational models, organizational culture, talent management, and partnership models;
4. Orchestration – management and implementation of changes, scaling them in case of success, and managing digital processes. The name of this stage emphasizes the flexibility and dynamism of the process.

There are four main types of business models that ensure the successful functioning of companies, considering the specifics of the product and the market. Two key parameters are used to classify models in the digital environment (Fig. 2):

- Modularity: A characteristic reflecting the flexibility of the components of a product or service, as well as the flexibility of the companies involved in their creation, in terms of their ability to combine easily with one another.
- Need for coordination: Determined by the degree of control required by companies involved in the creation of a product or service.

<b>Modularity</b>	High	Open market model (Open market)	<b>Business Ecosystem</b>	
			The transaction ecosystem is a digital platform (Transaction Ecosystems)	Ecosystem of solutions (Solution Ecosystems)
	Low	Hierarchical supply chain (Hierarchical supply chain)	Vertically integrated organization (Vertically integrated organization)	
		Low	High	
<b>The need for coordination</b>				

Fig. 2. Typology of digital business models [11].

Source: prepared by the authors

One of the most successful types of business models in the digital environment is the business ecosystem [15,16]. Two main types of ecosystems are distinguished: flexible ecosystems, or ecosystems of solutions, and centralized ecosystems, or ecosystems of transactions, represented by digital platforms.

A digital platform is a business model that uses technology to bring together people, organizations, and resources in an interactive environment where value is created and shared for users. The features of digital platforms include [12,17]:

- Facilitating mutually beneficial interactions between a large number of users and consumers;

- Exhibiting network effects, where the value created depends on the number of platform users;
- Transforming the "value creation chain" into a "matrix," where value is jointly created in different ways and locations;
- Shifting the business focus from internal to external activities, where the main value is generated by the user community.

Other successful digital business models include "light" models [6], "on-demand" (freemium) models, subscription models, and the "hook and bait" model [13], as well as service-based business models. The service model is based on service contracts, which offer a comprehensive product along with related services, both at the time of sale and throughout the product's lifecycle [18,19]. In this model, the object of sale and consumption is not only the product itself but also the services provided to the user in connection with the product, such as maintenance, repair, etc.

The next stage of digital transformation involves identifying the driving factors (drivers) of digital transformation. For each key strategic direction, a corresponding functional strategy is developed [20]. To identify the priority areas necessary to create a solid foundation for successful strategy implementation, models for assessing an enterprise's digital maturity are recommended [24]. Numerous models for assessing digital maturity exist today. The analysis allowed the identification of five key areas for assessing digital maturity: strategy and business model, consumers, organizational culture and personnel, operational processes, and information technologies. To determine the key directions of digital transformation within the chosen strategy, it is suggested to assess the gap between the current and desired levels of digital maturity, as well as to leverage the enterprise's existing competitive advantages and assess the consistency of the anticipated changes.

Finally, the last stage is orchestration. However, although this is considered the final stage, it is important to recognize that digital transformation is a continuous process—a path or journey [3,7]. An integral part of this process is managing organizational change, which is a separate and extensive field of research [25-27]. In the context of digital transformation, concepts and methods of change management should also be developed [27,28].

Orchestration involves the development of digital transformation plans, defining key process and result metrics, scaling successful practices, managing risks, concluding partnership agreements, working with investors, and much more. The main tools used during the orchestration phase are the scorecard and the roadmap.

Typically, a balanced scorecard (BSC) or an OKR system (Objectives and Key Results) is employed to build a system of key indicators. Numerous studies are currently being conducted on the structure and composition of such indicator systems, aiming to most accurately reflect the processes and results of digital transformation [29]. However, the generalization of results into a unified methodology has not yet been completed. Additionally, according to a survey conducted by McKinsey, only about 15% of companies are able to quantify the impact of their digital initiatives [30].

A roadmap is a visual representation of the tasks required to achieve desired long-term goals, showing the relationships between various tasks and departments over a specific time frame [31]. To ensure the necessary flexibility, the processes of mapping and monitoring key indicators should be integrated into the enterprise's ERP system.

Table 1 provides generalized recommendations for the use of strategic management tools at various stages of an enterprise's digital transformation.

Table 1. Strategic management tools at different stages of digital transformation

Stage of digital transformation	Tool	Development direction
1	2	3
1. Development of a digital strategy	Digital transformation strategy	Corporate strategies: overall competitive strategy, ecosystem development strategy, strategy human resources management, the strategy of forming a digital organizational culture. Business strategies: differentiation, cost leadership, optimal costs, focus. Functional strategies: operational (production) strategy, IT strategy, information security strategy, financial strategy, etc.
2. Choosing a business model	Business model	Business ecosystem (including digital platforms), open market model, hierarchical supply chain [21-23]. "Light" business models [6]. Service business model
3 Determination of drivers of transformations	Digital Maturity Model	IT technologies and data analysis, operational models, organizational culture and talent management, partnership implementation models [3]. Consumers, organizational culture and personnel, operational processes and information technologies [24].
4. Orchestration	Key indicators (KPI). Road map	Directions of KPI formation: - scale of transformation, customer experience, innovations, risk factors [29]; - focused on the quality of customer service, focused on internal processes, financial results [30].

Source: prepared by the authors

**Discussion.** The findings of this study on the strategic tools for managing business development in the context of digital transformation reveal several key insights. One of the primary results is the growing importance of flexibility in strategic planning, particularly in fast-evolving digital markets. This confirms the claims of Chaniasa et al. [2], who emphasized that digital transformation requires constant adjustment and adaptation of strategies to meet real-time challenges.

Moreover, the identified barriers to digital transformation, such as a lack of digital competencies and resistance to organizational change, are consistent with the results of studies by Pishchulina [7] and McKinsey & Company [4]. The present research reinforces the notion that successful digital transformation is not merely technological but deeply organizational, requiring a shift in both culture and operational processes.

The proposal for a modular structure in digital strategy design, based on the concept of business architecture, aligns with Arzumanyan's [23] recommendations for improving the integration between enterprise strategy and IT architecture. However, this study offers a novel perspective by suggesting the concept of a minimum viable strategy—an area that requires further exploration and empirical validation.

Additionally, while many studies focus on the technological aspects of digital transformation, this study underscores the critical role of human factors, such as employee engagement and change management. As discussed by Padmanabhan et al. [18], human resource strategies are integral to the success of digital initiatives, and this research extends that idea by proposing key performance indicators (KPIs) and roadmaps as tools to facilitate the orchestration phase.

Future studies could focus on exploring the specific conditions under which the minimum viable strategy concept is most effective, as well as conducting comparative analyses of different digital transformation models in various industry contexts.



**Conclusion.** This study contributes to the growing body of literature on strategic management tools for business development in the digital economy. It emphasizes the need for flexibility in strategic planning, especially in the face of rapid technological advancements and market changes. By integrating digital technologies into business operations, companies can maintain a competitive advantage in an increasingly volatile environment.

The research highlights several key challenges faced by Ukrainian companies during digital transformation, such as a shortage of digital skills, outdated technologies, and organizational culture misalignment. These challenges mirror global trends and reinforce the need for a comprehensive digital transformation strategy that not only focuses on technological implementation but also prioritizes human resource development and organizational restructuring.

The study also proposes a novel approach to digital strategy design—emphasizing the importance of modular strategies and introducing the concept of a minimum viable strategy. This adds to the existing theoretical frameworks on business architecture and strategic management by suggesting that strategic flexibility can be achieved through smaller, iterative steps, similar to those used in product development methodologies.

From a practical standpoint, the findings offer clear guidelines for businesses embarking on digital transformation. Companies should focus on building partnerships, leveraging big data analytics, and adopting flexible technologies that can be adapted as business needs evolve. Furthermore, the use of key performance indicators (KPIs) and roadmaps provides a structured approach to managing and scaling digital initiatives.

Future research should explore the effectiveness of these tools across different industries and examine the impact of the proposed minimum viable strategy in real-world applications. Additionally, further work is needed to develop more precise digital maturity assessment models that can help organizations better gauge their readiness for digital transformation.

In conclusion, the successful management of digital transformation is a multifaceted challenge that requires a balance between technology, strategy, and human resources. Companies that adopt flexible, data-driven approaches will be better positioned to thrive in the digital economy.

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**Інструменти управління розвитком бізнесу в умовах цифрової економіки**

**Анотація.** Висвітлено особливості цифрового оточення, які сприяють стрімкому зростанню нестабільності у діяльності підприємств. Обґрунтовано необхідність конкретизації деяких аспектів та інструментів традиційного стратегічного планування. Визначено суть цифрової трансформації як стратегічного процесу зміни бізнесу, базованого на принципах клієнтоцентричності, системної інноваційної роботи та адаптації бізнес-моделей, активного використання даних і розвитку компетенцій. Висвітлюються проблеми цифрової трансформації українських компаній, серед яких недостатня розробка стратегії, невідповідність організаційної культури необхідним змінам, дефіцит цифрових навичок, застарілі технології, відсутність координації між старими та новими технологіями та високі витрати на впровадження нововведень. Розглянуто підхід до стратегії цифрової трансформації як до інструменту для установки пріоритетів, що забезпечує конкурентні переваги для бізнесу в умовах швидкозмінних ринків, через застосування цифрових технологій для вирішення нових бізнес-завдань. Виділено можливі напрями забезпечення гнучкості цифрової стратегії, такі як розвиток партнерства та співпраці, використання аналізу великих даних та предиктивної аналітики для реалізації рішень у реальному часі, та застосування гнучких технологій як для реалізації, так і для розробки стратегії. Сформульовано гіпотезу про доцільність розроблення мінімально життєздатної стратегії. Як додатковий метод підвищення гнучкості стратегії цифрової трансформації запропоновано модульну структуру її побудови, яка базується на концепції архітектури бізнесу та установлює тісний зв'язок між стратегією підприємства, бізнес-моделлю та ІТ-архітектурою. Надано короткий огляд цифрових бізнес-моделей, зазначено, що найбільш успішними у цифровому середовищі є бізнес-моделі екосистемного типу, включаючи цифрові платформи. Виокремлено етапи цифрової трансформації, розглянуто додаткові інструменти їх впровадження, такі як моделі оцінки цифрової зрілості, система ключових показників та дорожня карта цифрової трансформації. Запропоновано узагальнену структуру інструментарію стратегічного управління розвитком бізнесу у цифровому середовищі, зокрема за етапами здійснення цифрових перетворень.

**Ключові слова:** цифрова трансформація, стратегічне планування, клієнтоорієнтованість, адаптація бізнес-моделі, дефіцит цифрових навичок, організаційна культура, прогностична аналітика, гнучкість цифрової стратегії, цифрові платформи.

**Класифікація JEL:** M15, O33, L21, O32.

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