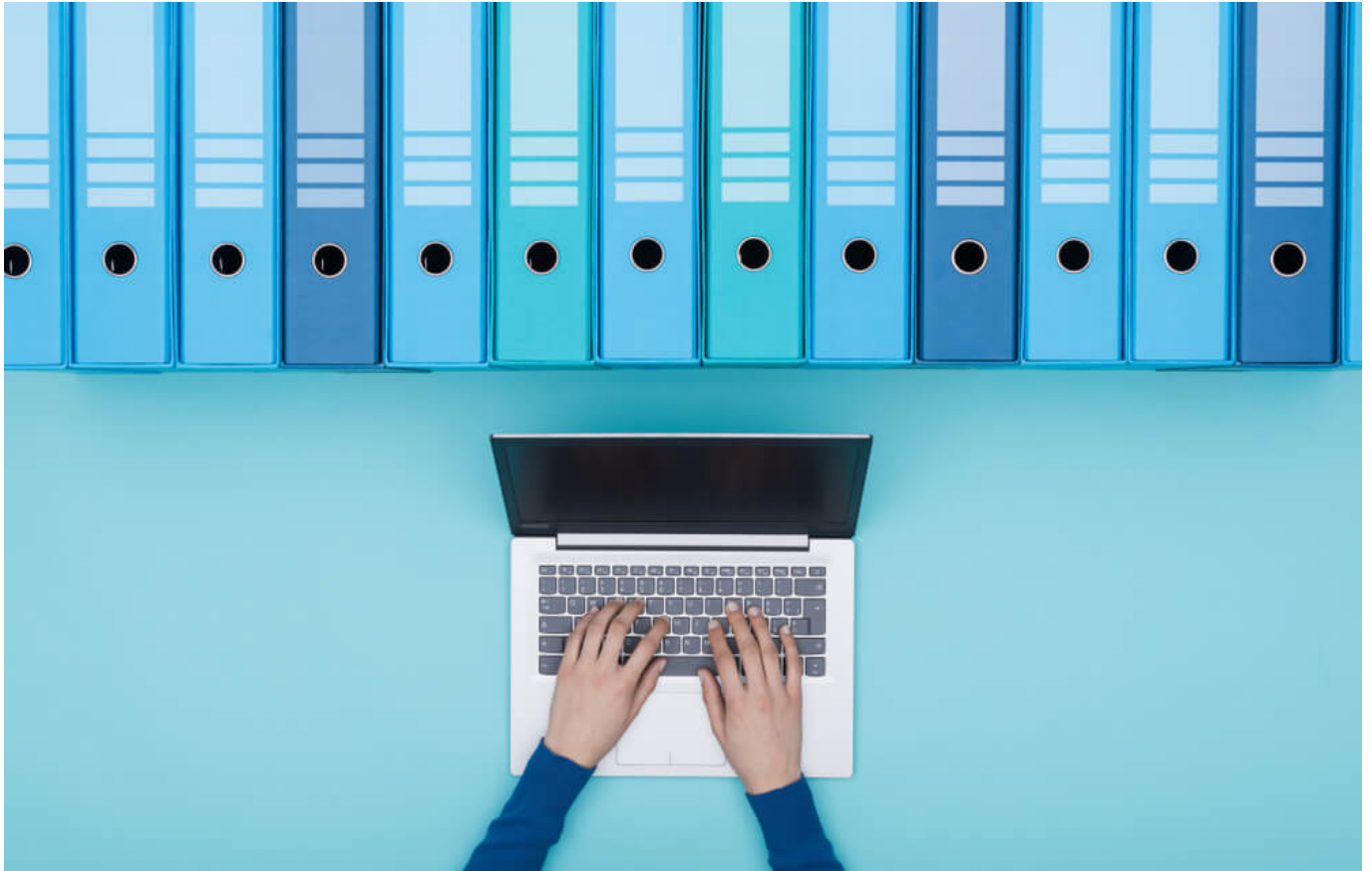




By: *Emre Alkin*

Going digital: it's not about money, it's about intentions



In today's world, where cause and effect relationships are more complex and less apparent, it is not easy to make the right decisions. Because you need accurate information to do that.

Even though economic activities are carried out by companies that must be selective when it comes to information, it is not the companies that organise these activities.

Parliaments, the state itself or the state-controlled regulatory authorities are the ones that make the regulations. These are mechanisms that do not need factors such as competition, profitability and efficiency to survive, yet they decide how these factors should be tackled.

From banking to energy markets, most regulatory authorities were privatised and made "autonomous" in the 1980s. But in the 21st century, they have all become inefficient and cumbersome, even arbitrary when exercising the power invested in them.

As years passed and economy grew, they grew too, but only in terms of the number of their employees and the size of the buildings in which they operate.

They began to overwhelm the economy with their ever-growing budgets, whereas they should have made sure that companies operated profitably and efficiently.

Because, success in the 21st century requires:

- Creativity
- Use of Technology
- Innovation
- Know-How

The mistake of the developing countries was that the decision makers at government level provided incentive and support to businesses without listening to the market carefully, nor considering the realities.

Their decisions were rather driven by the established concerns in the bureaucracy. That is the reason why the mechanisms imposed by Western democracies today do not work properly in developing countries. Because in these countries, the executives of autonomous organisations are loyal to those who appointed them rather than being responsible and dutiful.

The business world, which is aware of this flaw, manipulates politics to ensure that its demands are met by the government. Obviously, a business world that does not like competition at all and the principle of "creating value through competition" is an impossible match.

In a centralised decision-making system, no one dares to mention the potential harms of short-sighted and superficial solutions

"Turning ideas into reality" should be at the centre of all activities. But we should always remember that correct ideas are formed only through correct information. Reports prepared by speculation or by torturing mathematics lead to nothing but wrong decisions.

In a world where democracy and free will are gradually killed off by an appetite for "centralist decision-making", overambitious leaders who want to have control over everything do not have time to listen to anyone for more than 5 minutes.

So they make decisions based on the opinions of the people whom they see the most and talk to the most when they are at the office.

In a centralised decision-making system, which does not allow any matter to be discussed more than once - no one dares to mention the potential harms of short-sighted and superficial solutions.

Mistakes are sometimes avoided only by luck. You tell me how wise it is to let forces outside of your control determine the outcome of your decision?

As technological advances are trying to minimise human error, governments in developing countries insist on legislation that is too complex and too vague to be managed digitally.

The law does not make clear that who has what rights, it is not determined according to market realities, and, worst of all, it is at the discretion of decision makers most of the time.

Due to constantly changing legislation, the number of "intermediaries" grows and the cost of works increases due to informal payments. Therefore, digital transformation is a matter of intention rather than a matter of money.

The central administration uses high technology to monitor people, not to ensure productivity

In such countries, the central administration uses high technology to monitor people, not to ensure productivity. As I stated in my previous article, this monitoring is useful in rare examples such as China to measure the effectiveness of the decisions.

However, in countries that think elections alone are enough to make a democracy, digital technologies are used to monitor the activities of individuals, not to enable correct information flow, hence, correct decision-making. Because in these countries, misinformation and doubt are produced through digitalisation.

People are always confused about what information is correct. Things now tend to get to such a point that people no longer believe the things they see with their own eyes. And it becomes quite easier for governments to manipulate the confused masses .

According to a study by Statista, Turks, Mexicans and Brazilians rank in the first three spots thinking they are exposed to false news.

Their media industries also buy television series from each other to sell lives that do not exist in their countries to their people. Anyone

who watches these television series might believe that's the way the life is in these three countries.

In that survey, Turkey, Mexico and Brazil are followed by the US, South Korea, Spain, Australia, Canada, Japan, France and Germany, which goes to show scepticism and paranoia have reached their peak all around the world.

This situation in developed countries kills hope for the citizens of developing countries. How could they be expected to behave normally and reasonably while thinking that the information economy, which is based on a very large and capable digital backbone, is fed by false information.

The regulatory authorities that emerged before the digital age and claim to be "autonomous", yet operate as instructed by governments, need to be restructured

In joint research I have participated in previously, we established that digitalisation could help increase the estimated GDP by a minimum 15%. However, predicting the future is not easy.

You have to be able to guess which institutions will cease to exist in the future, and which new ones will appear.

As I mentioned above, the regulatory authorities that emerged before the digital age and claim to be "autonomous", yet operate as instructed by governments, need to be restructured.

Some of them need to cease their activities, and need to establish new institutions that are free from politics. Of course, after a while, these new institutions too will inevitably become politicised.

As Michel Foucault said in a debate with Noam Chomsky in the 1970s, "civil society eventually gets involved in politics or produces its own politics, preferring power over truth". For

further insight, you should watch "power over justice" on YouTube.

People who now feel freer thanks to technology do not see that they are actually becoming more and more controlled by governments

Clearly, digitalisation will complement this inflation-fed tendency of humanity, whose intellectual level is slowly declining and whose primary desire is to make money.

However, people who now feel freer thanks to technology do not see that they are actually becoming more and more controlled by governments.

The largest portion of the human population lives in developing countries, and the governments of these countries do not intend to grant that much freedom to their citizens.

As long as people in developing countries use their talents to run their businesses there will be no problem, but the moment they become interested in politics and start criticising the administrators, is when the punishment begins. This phenomenon is explained in detail in Aldous Huxley's "Brave New World Revisited" (1958).

Any solution specifically targeted at the economy will not solve the problems in developing countries. Since digitalisation, technology, branding and efficiency are controlled by the government, their fate will not change unless the politics change.

Civil society thinks that they will have a fully modern and civilised country when economic problems are solved.

If top management of an organisation makes contradictory decisions about a same problem, or if the responsibility for handling a problem issue is assigned to multiple persons, then employees begin to behave as they wish.

Even the most sophisticated digital architecture cannot prevent the terrible

consequences. The same thing is observed today between the government and the citizens.

As Socrates said 2,400 years ago: "when governments give instructions instead of performing, citizens cannot be expected to follow the rules."