



# octara.com

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*Dear Reader,*

What a wonderfully eventful week we have just witnessed with patriotic fervor running high as the Pakistani leadership flexed its muscles in the United States of America, reaching out in person to a record setting number of overseas Pakistanis.

Pakistan's role as the region's, indeed the world's anchor is increasingly becoming manifest, and in this rapidly changing landscape our lead article this issue featuring Dr. Frank Peter carries a loud and clear message to Pakistani small and medium enterprises that continue to embrace the old ways that restrict them to the local marketplace when a simple and cost effective application to their businesses of digitalization could provide for them an Internet based global outreach, enabling an exponential increase in their businesses.

Omar Khan, Founder & Senior Partner of Sensei International, headquartered in New York, is a long time Octara Associate, and we carry his thoughts on a burning issue of the day, that of the need for managers to be leaders and leaders to be managers. Management is about improving today; leadership is about creating the future, says Omar. "So corporate leaders and national leaders alike have to manage today so it becomes a platform for tomorrow. Today's performance has to pave tomorrow's possibilities. We need great managers too." He speaks of roots and chains, and the urgent need to preserve the roots and shed the chains, citing global gurus in his support like Michael Porter, Tom Peters, Marshall Goldsmith, Ron Kaufman, Gary Hamel and CK Prahalad. A most enlightening blog indeed.

Blogger Zeenat Chaudhary has attended our international associate Dr. Frank Peter's training sessions on digital marketing and digital transformation, and provides a number of telling insights on improving your social media game.

Ali Janjua in his blog tackles Generation Z, the 'digital natives' born into the smartphone world and genuine global citizens even if they haven't physically stepped out of their towns and villages. Born after 1997, Ali's research shows that this cohort is expected to command purchasing power of over \$140 billion and will represent 40% of the world's population by 2020. Potent food for thought indeed.

That's a whole lot to chew on in this issue! Until the time we meet again, stay safe, and keep abreast with the world that's moving at a dizzying pace.

Happy Eid-ul-Azha 😊

Feedback: [info@octara.com](mailto:info@octara.com)

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# OCTARA TRAINING CALENDAR

## AUGUST - SEPTEMBER 2019



*Kanwal Akhtar*

**Email Etiquette & Email Writing Skills**

02 August - Karachi



*Alan Power*

**Strategic Quality Management**

26-27 August - Karachi

**Measuring Monitoring and Improving Customer Experiences**

28-29 August - Karachi



*Christopher Whittle*

**Enterprise Risk Management**

26-27 August - Karachi

29-30 August - Lahore



*Uzma Chishti*

**Competency Based Interviewing Skills**

28 August - Karachi



*Dr. Frank Peter*

**Digital Marketing Strategies for Finance Professionals**

16 September - Karachi

**Digital Transformation for HR People**

18 September - Lahore

**Digital Marketing Masterclass**

19-20 September - Lahore



*Ghaus A. Jafri*

**Corporate Etiquettes for Pharma Sales Professionals**

18 September - Karachi | 1:00 – 6:00 PM



*Omar Farooq*

**Communication**

24 September - Karachi

**Creativity & Innovation**

25 September - Karachi

# Pakistan SME's to Embrace Digital or be Sidelined



Many Small and Medium-sized Businesses (SMEs) in Pakistan keep on standing on the sidelines, watching the waves of technological advances race by at breakneck speed. They just stand there and look, somewhat scared of what is happening all around them, but in no hurry to take part. Until it's too late - the ones who ride the wave will get the business, the ones who just look will drown.

Some other SMEs have taken the plunge and have invested in digitalization. The ones who decided to ride the waves early are now being rewarded with improved productivity and improved returns. They have chosen to become more efficient and more competitive so they can grow their business far beyond the limitations of 'we have always done it like this'.

Digitalization of business is not about buying new shiny computers or other gadgets, these are just some tools to help in the process. Digitalization is all about a change in mindset, especially when it comes to company-internal processes, and adapting to an ever-changing customer.

Using technology to improve a company's efficiency and productivity does not require massive investments. A simple start could be to set-up a company-internal 'Social Network' for employees to easily share and communicate across departments. For example: often product development, marketing, and customer service do not talk to one another. Products are being developed because they seem to be a demand. Marketing pushes the products by highlighting its fancy features. On the other side, customer service gets the calls from users who don't know how the product works, or why it can't do what they need it for. An internal staff platform would enable this kind of information to be shared among all relevant parties. Based on customer feedback products can be improved, and marketing messages can address actual customer needs. A simple process like this will definitely improve productivity at very little cost. And that's just a start.

The next step is to move documents that contain information useful for others from those ugly steel cabinets to a shared online platform. These documents can be digitized and

uploaded to a file-sharing platform, accessible to all or just to selected people. This is where cloud computing will help as all files can be accessed from anywhere in the company (or in the world for that matter) simply from an internet connection. This is relatively inexpensive. Small companies may get away with i.e. Google Drive, which is free for the first 15 GB of file storage and comes with a free word processor, spreadsheets, etc.

Streamlining internal processes takes some effort to get going, but it doesn't cost much to get started. The benefits clearly out way the effort. All it takes is a change in mindset and the breaking down of departmental barriers.

The second point I mentioned above was adapting to customer behavior. Consumers shop with their fingertips, including B-to-B customers (Alibaba is essentially a B-to-B platform). They compare prices and features online and read product reviews before making a purchase decision. Setting up a simple e-commerce website is easy to do even without any programming knowledge. There is no need for any SME to hire expensive web developers to do this, any company staff who is a bit technically inclined can do this with a bit of training and time. With an e-commerce presence, any business immediately becomes a global player, reaching potential customers in every part of the world. Again, this is easy and cheap to set-up and run, and again the benefits far outweigh the initial effort.

For those SMEs in Pakistan who still stand by the sideline, watching the waves go by there is no excuse not to get started, even if you have only a limited budget. Take the first steps, see how it works and scale up from there.



Article by: *Dr. Frank Peter, Ph.D.*  
*International Speaker & Corporate Trainer*  
*& Associate Partner to Octara for*  
*Digital Transformation Programs*  
*DrFrankPeter.com*

Source : <https://aurora.dawn.com/news/1143505/embrace-digital-or-be-sidelined>

# Generation Z: Adapting to a “mobile-first” generation

Blog by Ali Janjua



## Who is Generation Z?

These days, we hear a lot about “Generation Z.” However, there seems to be some confusion about who it is we are referring to when we use that term.

So who exactly is “Generation Z”?

The term “Gen Z” refers to anyone born after 1997. That means that the oldest members of this cohort are 23 years old, and that a large portion of today’s college students belong to this generation. By the year 2020, Generation Z will represent 40% of the world’s population. What’s more, this segment represents an ever-growing consumer base and will command over \$140 billion in spending power by that time.

“Something that differentiates us from other generations is our ability to use and bend technology.”

– Think with Google Survey Report on Generation Z

## The “Digital Natives

This generation is the first one to have lived their entire lives with the internet. As a result, they can be considered “digital natives.” They’ve never had to deal with dial-up internet or brick-shaped mobile phones. Rather, they’ve grown up with the knowledge that they can speak to

anyone around the world at a moment’s notice because that is what they’ve been doing their entire lives.

Everything they do is digital? — ?from connecting with friends to learning and entertainment. As a result, they are “welded to their devices,” as evidenced by the near-universal adoption of smartphones by this generation. In



fact, 97% of Gen Z own a smartphone and, on average, spend over 4 hours per day on their devices. That accounts for 52% of their time spent online.

This generation is the closest humans have gotten to technological symbiosis. The technological advances that may seem outlandish and unfathomable to other generations are a normal part of life for Generation Z.

Read this interesting blog from here  
<https://lahj.squarespace.com/generation-z>

# SUCCESS FOR PAKISTAN: LEADERS WHO CAN MANAGE ARE NEEDED!



- A blog by Omar Khan

Management is about improving today; leadership is about creating the future. This is the overwhelming consensus among practitioners, gurus, wits, and savants.

So the title makes the point: we need leaders first. But we need more than rhetoric-gushing futurists...grand visionary plans for the future are often far too abundant in developing countries – as they tend to conveniently distract from the nettlesome and more dispiriting realities facing us today.

So corporate leaders and national leaders alike have to manage today so it becomes a platform for tomorrow. Today's performance has to pave tomorrow's possibilities. We need great managers too.

## SEPARATING 'ROOTS' FROM 'CHAINS'

What does this mean pragmatically? First, we have to separate out "roots" and "chains". We are justly proud of our culture, our national culture, and in successful organizations, our organizational culture. We need to understand its fundamental strengths and preserve those zealously. As the landmark book on corporate vision, Built To Last extols, "preserve the core and change everything else".

And there's the rub. We have to separate out our "roots" from the manacles and inhibitions of dysfunctional paradigms. Backwardness should not be confused with values. It is not a "value" for example to underutilize or under-value women leaders – it's simply chauvinism and medievalism. Top down hierarchical leadership is arguably as un-Islamic in philosophy as it is unwise and unduly rigid in a global environment in which the metabolism of change is constantly speeding up.

## WEEDING OUT THE BAD STUFF

So what are our roots which we will preserve at all costs, and what are the chains which we will confront and transcend with the best of our imagination, courage and collective commitment? Let that be a seminal corporate or national exercise. Let's do a deep dive first, before soaring above the clouds looking for the next horizon.

Then, having identified all that we're willing to change, from feckless bureaucracy to misguided prejudices, from ossified procedures to retrograde human capital practices, from chest-beating charismatic leadership to shoddy corporate governance, from aberrant recognition policies that detach values from results to PR hype substituting for a true service culture, let's then tackle these armed with a few key reminders.

And here let's let gurus of various stripes help.

## DIFFERENTIATING FOR COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

Michael Porter can go first. His seminal insight is that all of strategy comes down to how you will differentiate, and in that area of differentiation how you will secure and sustain or perhaps even grow a competitive advantage. How will you dramatically differentiate? And don't just make this an internal exercise. Ask those that experience your company in action too.

## ROCK OF GIBRALTAR ON ROLLER BLADES

Tom Peters can go next. Practice "MBWA", management by wandering around. Customers matter, people matter. Leaders grow leaders, not followers, and leadership is a "contact sport". Connect, listen, engage, enroll, re-calibrate, course correct, and be out there. As someone observed, "Leaders today have to be the Rock of Gibraltar on Roller Blades."

## CAN'T SHRINK YOUR WAY TO GREATNESS

Gary Hamel and CK Prahalad follow by reminding us that cost effectiveness matters, but isn't enough. You can't shrink your way to greatness. Most red pencil "efficiency experts" would have you shrink the denominator...certainly it produces an immediate balance sheet bounce. But it can undermine competitiveness, and capital rarely goes to companies who just excel in corporate anorexia. You have to grow the numerator! Make sure your vision is about that... in exciting, purposeful, but relevant, tangible and measurable ways.

## BEHAVIORAL BLINKERS

Let's jump the queue and go to Marshall Goldsmith who reminds us that when you get to a certain level of leadership, the things that keep you from peak performance as a leader/manager aren't technical skills. After all, you wouldn't have scaled the corporate heights if you weren't technically skillful. Therefore, at that altitude, what holds us back are behavioral blinkers, how we act and interact. A coaching culture is needed of high accountability with active feedback (how we did in the recent past) and feed forward (future based expectations of behavior and performance).

Voice of the customer

Relative to customers, my friend Ron Kaufman is on hand to remind us that service can be a powerful source of differentiation and that companies need to set up listening posts and relay stations to keep the "voice of the customer" paramount in their business and to ensure we thrive at all key "moments of truth" or perception points. We need to climb the ladder from "basic" to "desired" to "unbelievable" and make that fully believable and a part of our promise.

## CATALYST FOR CREATIVITY

Come to me then. I've argued that companies liberate passion or become passion killers. Passion is how we convert talent into performance, it is oxygen to the fire, it is the catalyst for creativity, and it is the final report card for leadership. If our customers are passionate to partner with us, if our people volunteer their best commitment and offer their discretionary effort in synergy with each other, we will more than produce the results we are after. Become a student of passion liberators and passion killers.

Every one of these leadership distinctions and insights, by the way, could be applied at the national level if we chose to create, as Singapore has done, a culture of meritocracy and accountability from its civil service to its diplomatic service to what it requires of political leaders, Ministries and Departments — most of which are run on solid customer based and total quality principles.

We have to get today right certainly. We have to produce quick wins that build up momentum. We have to behave our way today to tomorrow's success. We need leaders who can manage, and managers who actually, actively and passionately lead! So let's root ourselves in the best of our traditions, break our chains, and build a future worthy of both our values and our dreams.

## PAKISTANI BY HERITAGE

Omar Khan – a Pakistani by heritage, now a US citizen. He is the Founder & Senior Partner of Sensei International, headquartered in New York. He is the author & keynote speaker; his latest book 'Liberating Passion – how the world's best leaders produce winning results' is currently available from Wiley press. He is the Top 25 Consultants 2010.



# 5 WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA GAME

International speaker Dr Frank Peter's tips on how to use social media successfully

International speaker and corporate trainer

Dr Frank Peter was in Karachi from July

3-6, 2019 to conduct training sessions on

digital marketing and digital transformation.

Organised by Octara, these sessions and

workshops were attended by employees from

various organisations in Pakistan including

Aman Foundation, EFU Insurance, HBL,

Mitsubishi Motors, Khaadi, Reckitt Benckiser

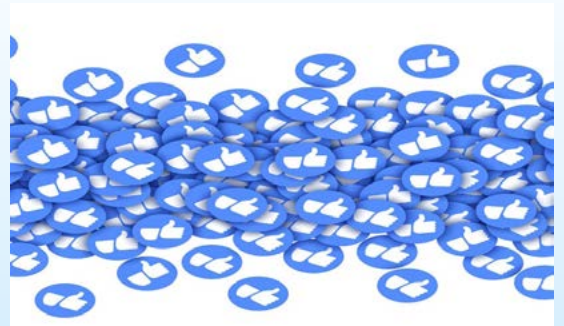
Pakistan and others.



Blog by Zeenat Chaudhary

## 1. 'Like' and 'Follow' are "vanity measures"

Don't use the number of followers on your social media platform as a metric to gauge how successful it is. Although you can get a high number of followers using paid media, these 'followers' will not necessarily engage with your page as honestly and passionately as a smaller, more targeted audience base will, which may consist of 3,000 fans as opposed to 10,000. Instead, use your Facebook, Instagram or LinkedIn handles as long-term communication platforms to establish your credibility as an authority in your respective field. Therefore, rather than spending \$500 on getting more "likes" via sponsored ads, build a reputation by responding to comments and queries in a timely and responsible manner.



## 2. Facebook should be used to educate rather than to sell

Most companies use social media as a tool for selling their products and services online, and telling the world how "great" they are. Dr Peter suggests that instead of constantly putting up posts that advertise your products to boost sales, or telling the world how great you are as a company, let consumers talk about how great you are. You can do this by gaining consumer trust – which can be achieved by establishing your expertise, interacting with potential customers, and actively listening to customer feedback on the platform. For instance, a new grocery store should focus on content that educates potential customers about who they are as a company and what makes them different (loyalty cards, affordable prices, the team behind the grocery store operations etc) rather than simply telling customers "We're new, visit our new outlet".



At the Social Media Tactics workshop (held on July 3), Dr Peter provided tips and tricks on how to successfully manage and analyse a business' social media pages. Here are five talking points from the session which were especially relevant.

### 3. Don't ignore your audience!

The whole point of creating social media pages is to provide customers with the opportunity to engage with your brand in real-time. Instead of constantly attracting new fans, pay attention to retaining your established fans by actively listening to what their needs are, and catering to them accordingly. For instance, if a customer complains about an issue they are facing and you message them privately telling them to call a customer service number, this may lead to the customer feeling frustrated and fed up; meanwhile, other customers will think that a complaint is being ignored. The correct way is to respond to the complaint publicly, letting the customer know that you will put them in touch with the relevant department, or offering a solution to the problem right there and then.



### 4. Harness the power of micro influencers, not celebrities

When you see a celebrity endorsing a product, you know they are being paid to do so. Therefore, opt for micro-influencers; they are able to interact with your audiences more frequently compared to celebrities and are also able to respond to questions/comments in a timely manner. For example, an up and coming shoe store could hire a local fashion blogger who has 1,000 followers interested in shoes, as opposed to opting for a fashion model with two million fans who are primarily interested in keeping up with her lifestyle.



### 5. Create a user persona and reach audiences effectively

Instead of trying to reach Facebook's or Instagram's entire user base, cater to a specific audience which will most likely be interested in your brand. Do this by creating a web/user persona, which is essentially a fictional description of a person (their characteristics, demographics, needs, motivations). For instance, if you own a fast food chain that specialises in premium-beef burgers, your target customer should not be someone who simply likes food. Instead, zero in on a specific audience type with the help of the following user persona: "Omar is a 29-year-old banker from Sec A, and stays up to date with the latest eateries in town. He finds out about new food places by following food bloggers on Instagram, or by talking to friends and co-workers. He prefers eating at a restaurant rather than ordering food to his home or office." Once you have outlined a user persona, use the tools available on each platform to reach your desired audience.



Article by: **Zeenat Chaudhry from Aurora**, she was also a participant of the workshop facilitated by Dr. Frank on July 3, 2019 in Karachi

Source : <https://aurora.dawn.com/news/1143482/5-ways-to-up-your-social-media-game>