

# CONNECTING DIGITAL ECOSYSTEMS

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## **Why did you want to join TM Forum's Digital Ecosystem Advisory Board?**

I wanted to help a traditional industry find its way in the age of rising AI, growing cybersecurity concerns and fast innovation in global technology ecosystems. I spent 10 years working for a telecommunications carrier and a semiconductor provider, and am very focus on cybersecurity and AI in my current role.

## **How does your current role complement your contribution to this advisory board?**

I am involved in development of the infrastructure and protocols for decentralized data markets. This is a countermovement to concentration of data and AI capabilities with 10 large companies in the US and China. I want to empower 90% of developers, which currently don't make money within these large companies' ecosystems. I also sit on corporate boards of public companies in the US, UK and Germany; my mission is to increase technology literacy in the international board rooms. AI literacy is important for telco operators in order not to suffer a next wave of disruption.

## **Is your company becoming a platform enabler to help partners develop marketplaces, or are you developing your own marketplace?**

I do not believe telecommunication providers are capable of delivering their marketplaces. So far, they haven't been successful with this. They need to systematically review what they want and can do with data, where this data is trapped in terms of IT silos, how to enable data cleansing and processing to build models. This will all enhance top and bottom line. They need to understand centralized versus decentralized AI approaches. They need to develop an ecosystem which is right for them, as opposed to copying the approach from top internet brands.

## **What role do APIs play in your digital ecosystem strategy?**

You need APIs to work with partners and scale. My client is City of San Diego. We do a lot of hackathons there, where the city provides its data, local companies deliver technologies via APIs, and software developers and startups use both to build new product and services. Every year the city gets new, real and stable pieces of technology to make life for communities better.

## **What are the key challenges to overcome in developing a digital ecosystem approach?**

Key challenges are technology illiteracy and lack of understanding about what top internet brands and mid-sized technology pioneers are doing. It is a lack of diversity at the C-level and on the executive floors of traditional businesses, hesitation to be exposed to different experiences and ways of thinking. The issue is deeply cultural, and therefore difficult to change.

## **How important are network virtualization, cloud technology and 5G to your digital ecosystem strategy?**

I can't imagine the world without network virtualization and cloud. 5G has very interesting opportunities, though it will increase cybersecurity risks due to the optimized latency.

## **In terms of the wider societal impact of digitization, what are you looking forward to over the next decade?**

I am looking for politicians to wake up and focus on education, starting with pre-school. I am looking for more non-profits developing technologies not because they are easy to commercialize, but because they are challenging and beneficial for humanity.

**Dr. Anastassia Lauterbach**

*Author & Entrepreneur,*

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