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# SMART CITIES – CRITICAL FACTORS FOR CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

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## INTRODUCTION

The background for understanding engagement factors is social psychology, which studies how people relate in groups and explores how the dynamics of mass engagement of different communities occur in ventures with well-defined purposes. Understanding human group behavior is one of the most crucial things social media experts have to learn before developing digital marketing strategies (Mahoney & Tang, 2019). It must be noted here that the psychology of group behavior emerged in the 20th century and derives from traditional psychology that addresses the behavior of each individual. Although the importance of individual behavior is recognized, when in a group they change their behavior (Harari, 2017). The aim of a city transformation project is to change the behavior of groups, taking them from a position of resistance or indifference to the position of agents of change. Therefore, social psychology will be the focus and with an emphasis on the effectiveness of the leaders of these groups. It must be combined with social psychology:

- Marketing and the decisive use of digital social media in communication (planned to be an essential tool to accelerate group behavior change). In this work there is no emphasis on political marketing (also nowadays essentially digital). However, in political marketing lies the basis of the population's trust in the commitments made in campaigns and expectations generated by managers before they were democratically elected.

- The evolution and use of databases associated with digital intelligence tools to generate information about communities based on the intensive use of social media.

- Dynamic context analysis considering variables of external dimensions that may interact with the enterprise's variables.

To define the factors that lead to engagement, it is necessary to consider:

- The psychological aspects of mass engagement;

- How to maintain engagement, the importance of marketing, information generated and network communication and the power of context;

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### THE PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF MASS ENGAGEMENT

To cooperate in large numbers means having group behavior and not just individual behavior. Behavior is basically oriented towards achieving individuals' goals (Hersey & Blanchard, 1986). Goals are the motivators of behavior. The individual objective tends to prevail over the group objective, to the disadvantage of society. (Kock, 2014). Hersey and Blanchard also state that behavioral change in a group is achieved when each person in the group feels that the difficulty of achieving a goal alone is great and that this goal is also that of other people.

It is no coincidence that the word collaboration brings with it the composition of three words:

CO – Belief, together, shared;

LABOR – Competence, work, task, challenge;

ACTION – Attitude, movement, energy.

All together working in the same direction, towards the same direction, working towards the same goal and under the same purpose. (Gonçalves & Terentim, 2020)

Needs vary from person to person, community to community. It is up to managers to tune in with communities to the common needs among individuals, define the purpose

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of the enterprise and establish objectives for each group, each community. People must have a role in setting goals and must ultimately be listened to (Hersey & Blanchard, 1986). The objectives must be those of groups of people, the objectives must be those of each community in the city. It is essential that each community feels protagonist in the releases and iterations that are carried out.

From complexity theory, an already established city is a complex system and, therefore, tends to be self-organized (Kock, 2014). Self-organization into small specialized and mature groups to achieve results, according to this specialization, is an evolutionary advantage of the complex system. However, in a city of millions of inhabitants, if there is no public power present, the communities will organize themselves in another way and, often, under another power or leadership, whether this organization is for better or worse. In the case of Rio de Janeiro, it can be inferred that it was for the bad when we evaluate communities living under

organization imposed by power parallel to that of the state. Therefore, it is much better for managers to work together with communities on what they want to achieve (based on the definition of common purpose and objectives) and work together on motivating and engaging groups and people.

The individual goal tends to be subjugated to the collective when people develop feelings for each other. As interactions increase more positive feelings tend to develop between each other. The more positive feelings, the more people will tend to interact. (Hersey & Blanchard, 1986). To have this type of interaction we must work with small groups. The natural capacity of a cohesive group is just over 150 people (Kock, 2014), because up to this number everyone knows each other by name, above this number we will have great difficulty in having effective relationships

and positive feelings. This theory is widely used to evaluate the effectiveness of the business model of private organizations such as Microsoft, Google, among others. But unfortunately, little used for the effectiveness of public organizations and notably when in public undertakings. Human beings have a limited capacity to deal with a very large number of relationships at the same time. These small groups, interacting with other members and groups of a community, are more effective in communicating and carrying out, for example, an iteration of the enterprise. We need to inoculate the virus for a radical change in people's behavior in the city, bringing them from apathy or resistance to civic engagement.

To carry out a revolution, number of people is not the main thing. Revolutions are generally led by a small network of agitators and doers who lead the masses. (Harari, 2017)

Culturally different individuals and groups tend to have different goals and compete with each other. (Kock, 2014). Another important reason to act with a focus on each community, that is, on homogeneous sociocultural groups.

A technological restriction about 10 years ago was that it was not possible to spread communication with the masses, with communities and at the same time allow interaction and free participation between people in these communities. This barrier has been entirely broken by digital social media that today horizontally integrate people and groups through various motivators, from banalities, entertainment, through education, politics, health, services and even provoking revolutions and also presidential elections. (Mahoney & Tang, 2019). Social media are critical success factors in the management of groups, in their integration with the community and of these communities with the city, as long as they are planned and structured for use as such.

Another aspect favorable to cooperation is the establishment of a culture oriented towards common objectives to the detriment of individual ones that shapes (or changes) the behavior of individuals. Communities with this associative profile and common vision are more effective in developing projects for the common good than others that are more individualistic. Rome conquered Greece not because of its greater intellectual and material capacity but, mainly, because of its ability to act collaboratively and with an organization of extremely cohesive groups. (Harari, 2017).

However, there is an intrinsic need for leaders in the human organization. In any group, if a formal leader is not established, or is weak, the group itself will establish an informal leader (Hersey & Blanchard, 1986). If you want to bring about change, don't ask "how many people will support my ideas". Instead ask "How many of my supporters are capable of effective collaboration" (Harari, 2017). Small groups with strong leadership and well-defined roles, when associated with a favorable context, implement great ideas and projects that revolutionize humanity, leading the discontinuity of established patterns. Leaders then have a fundamental role in transforming communities through collaboration and consequently in the effectiveness of the projects to be carried out.

Leaders must be trained and adapted to lead people in a constantly changing environment and adapt the enterprise using agile project and change management methods.

## HOW TO MAINTAIN ENGAGEMENT, THE IMPORTANCE OF MARKETING AND NETWORK COMMUNICATION AND THE POWER OF CONTEXT

Marketing usually ends up not being considered essential when it comes to motivation and civic engagement because it is closely associated with the consumption of goods and services. It is generally related to private companies or at most to direct propaganda disseminated by companies and public sectors. In social enterprises, profit results in benefits for the community. It is more of a social profit than an economic one, as can happen with public services and thus the Marketing vision applies (Vasconcellos, 1976). In today's supportive and integrated world, the separation between public and private becomes tenuous, especially when considering common objectives such as sustainability in its most comprehensive form. In addition to this finding, this is one of the areas of knowledge that most studies and applies psychology and social psychology, seeking to study the behavior of people and groups in the world. consumption of products, services, ideas, ideals. The fundamental objective of Marketing is to influence people's behavior to consume a certain product, at a specific price, buy a service, support ideas and ideals. (Rucker, Petty, & Briñol, 2015)

In short, marketers engage in the marketing of goods, services, experiences, events, people, places, properties, organizations, information and ideas. In fact, the goal of Marketing 3.0 is to make a better world. (Kotler, Kartajaya, & Setiawan, 2010)

The main premise in the communication strategy is to have the "consumer" trust in the issuers (managers) and, consequently, in the message issued. In the case of the Rio de Janeiro project, trust in managers and in the messages issued in campaign promises. If this trust is not there, it must be gained

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through bringing management closer to the community for the planning and execution of iterations of the enterprise. Based on trust, Marketing uses vertical communication strategies (dissemination of ideas, concepts, products, services, brands) and horizontal communication (participation, interaction between people, groups, populations – word of mouth) (Mahoney & Tang, 2019).

With the sophistication and reach of mass data analytical technology ("big data") with artificial intelligence ("A.I. Artificial Intelligence"), the message dissemination process has been improved, allowing individualized messages with knowledge of each individual's habits. This individualization makes diffusion and persuasion a much more effective and comprehensive process in current times. And with the unprecedented evolution of the potential of horizontal communication through digital social media, a range of options that have not yet been fully mapped out to Marketing have opened up for inducing the acceleration of large-scale behavioral changes.

Originally, broadcast communication techniques were created to be a very efficient government weapon used to persuade and dominate people's minds. The domination technique was called "Opinion Management" (Mattelart, 2000). This technique was very useful during the first and second wars, when communication focused on meeting mass adherence to the ideas and ideals of a government. Even today this technique is used everywhere, but it has become more sophisticated, taking on many different faces and guises, meeting the needs of a very complex society and using intensive means of information technology to access and analyze behavior, opinion and people's needs.

In Marketing 2.0 and 3.0, diffusion for persuasion is considered for the first time in conjunction with the participation technique for service solutions that serve the common good of society (Kotler, Kartajaya, & Setiawan, 2010). However, in non-democratic environments it can give social/political legitimacy to the constituted power or legitimize any thirst for power, consumption and can influence evolution or even social and anthropological involution. (Mattelart, 2000) and (Kotler, Kartajaya, & Setiawan, 2010).

The theory of communication for development refers to the application of communication strategies in the developing world towards the establishment of democracy, increasing levels of education, productivity and longevity of a given population (Mahoney & Tang, 2019). Researchers in communication for development are interested in large-scale behavior change among populations in need to engage them in implementing solutions to their problems.

For large-scale behavior change to occur, social, cultural norms and structural inequalities must be taken into consideration, and therefore the focus is on the community as a unit of change and not the entire population (Mahoney & Tang, 2019). This point reinforces the critical success factors to be considered in social psychology and derives from them.

As seen, social media can expand the possibility of mass participation in the planning, execution and control processes of projects to an unimaginable reach, it can accelerate engagement, but also resistance and indifference, if misused.

Digital social media has brought countless opportunities to public sector organizations including, but not limited to, democratic participation, engagement, co-production, co-creation and even crowdsourcing of solutions. Social media can help organizations improve dialogue and give voice to communities and develop service solutions in co-creation and co-production with communities, involving public servants and citizens. It can even

serve as a virtual crownsourcing space where multiple actors (citizens, managers, academia, private sector, among others) are invited to develop innovative solutions to local problems. (Lovari & Chiara, 2019)

In fact, participation theory is based on a concept widely used in social media that is collective intelligence, which is defined as the ability of a group to solve problems better than each member, acting individually (Hersey & Blanchard, 1986) and (Mahoney & Tang, 2019).

The thinker Paulo Freire suggests that the individual is capable of actively intervening in their evolutionary process of becoming aware of their reality so that they can act to change it. Dialogue is the basis of this social awareness and commitment to change and are key elements of participation. This possibility of dialogue remained in theory as an ideological component in 1969 and today with social media it becomes practical and viable and used in Marketing! (Mahoney & Tang, 2019)

The political culture here in Brazil often does not encourage the participation of communities in discussion and referral groups, development of solutions to problems common to all its inhabitants (as occurs, for example, in the American and Australian cases) and the population, in turn, time, it is not in the habit of being an active participant in community discussions, notably in large urban conglomerates, such as Rio and São Paulo, even if this takes place in small condominiums where people live. In the case of the city of Rio, the current situation is worse considering the discredit and apathy of the majority of the population with dozens of years of comings and goings and a city that is seen as morally and economically decadent. In this case, media companies must also be part of the effort to disseminate achievements and not just highlight problems and defeats.

Effective communication with the community is a requirement and is therefore the first step towards re-establishing a link between the public and private sectors with people and their needs and from there generating solutions to the specific problems of each community considering the releases and iterations of the enterprise.

A basic definition of communication is "who says what, to whom and with what effect" (Griffin, 2011). However, with digital social media, the speed of message proliferation associated with the number of recipients it can reach (including not only diffusion but also the participatory exchange of opinions between people) can bring an immeasurable and unexpected impact, shortly after its release. shipping. This dissemination potential is exponential (Mahoney & Tang, 2019). Digital social media are powerful tools for disseminating information, whether false or true, and can have positive or negative effects on people's engagement. If used only as communication tools, this communication must be configured and planned to plant the seeds of behavior change and civic engagement in the community. Planting the seed is essential as the level of maturity in the use of digital media by the Brazilian public sector is still low, considering the objective of use to increase civic engagement.

Regardless of the level of maturity of use, it is necessary to know how to explore the potential of social media and not make mistakes in building the basic elements so that we can reach the turning point, that is, changing the behavior of the communities involved in the project. The term turning point was used by Malcolm Gladwell in his Marketing best seller, "The Turning Point". For the turning point to occur, regardless of the use or not of digital social media, attention must be paid to the presence in the communication process of the following elements:

## THE MESSAGE

This must be sincere in its objective/content, contagious and unforgettable. Sincere because it comes from someone, or from a transmitter that people trust (Mahoney & Tang, 2019). Contagious because it must reach as many people as possible, without being altered in its word-of-mouth transmission. But the difficult thing about communication It's like making sure the message doesn't go in one ear and out the other. The message must then make an impact, it must be unforgettable and it must stick (Gladwell, 2009).

## THE COMMUNICATOR

The communicator is a profile of those special people who know a lot of people, above the common average, have a passion for relationships with these people, are attentive to the details of the people they interact with, attract everyone to get together. They are the figures that everyone likes, everyone wants to be around, everyone listens to. They are born informal leaders. These profiles must be located in the communities and actually be part of them. The communicator is the voice that guarantees the sincerity of the message, leverages contagion or directs it. In the case of social media, they are influencers. And not necessarily social influencers. (Gladwell, 2009)

## THE SPECIALIST

They are the people we trust for information on subjects we do not understand. They are those people who guarantee correct information to people on subjects that they do not understand, such as Education, Health, Energy, Water and who are able to explain the message to reach the expected target audience. The expert accumulates knowledge and ensures that the message sticks and that it does not go in one ear and out the other. Ensures the consistency of the message so that there can be convergence of objectives (Gladwell, 2009)

## THE SELLER

People, even with all the effort put into the message, by communicators and experts, will not believe it. For those who don't believe it, you must have the seller's profile. Salespeople manage to convince those who do not believe what they are hearing, locate those who are resistant and complement what the communicator and the specialist say. In this process, it isolates the resisters in the mass as a silent minority.

The profiles of the communicator, specialist and seller can be present in a single person or in a group of activists and/or community leaders. What matters is that we know the target audience and that interlocutors with these profiles are located in each community. These profiles are message catalysts and agents of change.

The profiles above are essential in preparing the message, identifying the target audience and in the communication plan and execution. Note that message, communicator, specialist and salesperson are elements of communication and marketing and are independent of the media used.

Digital social media guarantees dialogue between managers, people and communities, through communicators, specialists and salespeople. Therefore, an excellent communication plan is necessary.

Civic engagement with the enterprise occurs based on a fixed message within the community, disseminated by managers, disseminated by communicators, guaranteed by specialists and salespeople. From fixation, using the collaboration and democratic participation characteristic of social media, the cycle of behavioral change begins.

However, for this cycle to be effective there is another central element to be considered,

the power of context.

## THE POWER OF CONTEXT

In general, when it comes to interpreting the behavior of others, human beings fail to overestimate the importance of fundamental character traits and underestimate the importance of context. We always seek an emotional explanation for events rather than a contextual one. (Gladwell, 2009)

Small changes in context within the release cycle and iterations of an enterprise can lead to big changes in behavior. Clean places tend to be kept clean by people (Examples from the Metrô Rio project, in the favelas of Medellin in Colombia and others). One or two cases of police violence without investigation, or with a biased investigation, favoring the guilty, can affect the image of the entire corporation and its positive work with communities, regardless of whether this work is good, even if statistically proven. Another current and radical example is the new normal, caused by the context of the COVID pandemic. Several services and products that were traditionally not provided electronically have quickly migrated to the web.

Remote work or home office has proliferated without almost any barriers, breaking down resistance, changing the behavior of people, groups and entire communities.

In history we have countless examples where the turning point was reached by a detail in the context. In the 1980s, graffiti on the NY subway was a symbol of the collapse of the system and the rise of gang crime in the city, who traveled for free on the trains and spread terror among passengers. A tireless cleaning of graffiti and painting on trains, integrated with an effort to punish those responsible and hunt down those who traveled for free, leaving them handcuffed in plain view on the platforms, triggered unprecedented support from the train user population and the conclusion that 80% of Arrested deadbeats were in fact criminals with extensive prison terms and still with impunity. In 1994 Giuliani was elected the same techniques were applied in general to NY, firstly in urban disorder and as a consequence attacking all the militias that were behind serious criminal events. This was the turning point for NY to dominate organized crime. (Gladwell, 2009)

Any similarities with today's Rio de Janeiro?

However, in times of transformation and digital media, the power and impact of contexts considering the various dimensions, with their variables interacting together, has a much greater speed of change and, therefore, requires agile analysis to allow adaptations in releases, iterations or even in the enterprise in an interactive way with communities.

Risk analysis that used to be static must now be dynamic (Jain, Fritz, Poppenslecker, & White, 2021). Unexpected risks or great opportunities (like turning points) come from contextual variations.

Behavioral analysis of context variables is not new to business administration, being part of, for example:

- Traditional strategic planning methodologies, such as SWOT Matrix (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats). The Strengths and Weaknesses come from the internal organization of the enterprise (its Governance, for example) and the Opportunities and Threats come from the external dimensions of the enterprise.

- Complexity analysis methodologies in projects such as "Managing Complex Projects (Hass, 2009), Aspects of Complexity: Managing Projects in a Complex World (Cooke - Davies, Loch, & Payne, 2011), Cynefin Handbook: An Introduction to Complexity and the Cynefin Framework" (Brougham,

2015)

- Analysis methodology to influence change in consumer behavior such as Ethnography for Marketers – A Guide to Consumer Immersion (Mariampolski, 2006)

And several other proposals present methods for analyzing the impact of contextual variables. And these methods are not simple to apply to meet the current dynamism of context changes in a large city transformation project. Many of these methods contain artificial intelligence algorithms that allow us, from an immense mass of structured or unstructured data, to ("big data"), generate some interesting probabilistic results. However, artificial intelligence and "big data" are not yet present in the reality of Brazilian city management for immediate use, but must be an object for the near future.

So, a question that arises is the more complex the system is, the simpler the approach to managing this system must be, since in this domain there is no deterministic cause and effect relationship between events (Brougham, 2015). And small events can have big impacts (Gladwell, 2009). Zero tolerance for graffiti on the New York subway started a movement that culminated in a drastic reduction in crime in the city. Therefore, we must not only analyze the context, but dynamically take advantage of the probabilities of having a turning point, which the contextual variables give us! The opportunities to be leveraged are those with the greatest probability of causing changes in behavior, preparing an exponential evolution in society, thus seeking the turning point (Gladwell, 2009).

The self-organization of a complex environment can be favorable if managers pay attention to the variations in context that could cause a change. After the turnaround, the system acquires a new behavior and all other iterations will be facilitated.

Here again, people, communities and communication networks are the central engine of change. Therefore, the simplest way to perceive the turning points will be to be close to people, communities, their daily lives and other actors involved with the dimensions of the city. The basis, as seen above, is to get closer to communities, understand their needs, have an effective communication plan and make pragmatic use of social media, within the communication strategy. Engagement always occurs through the participation process.

Subtle context changes, but with great impact, are only perceived when the roles of communicators, experts and salespeople are active in communities (Gladwell, 2009).

Subtle changes can also mean a minimum sustainable change over time, meeting the community's objectives, generating the lowest level of resistance possible so that a virtuous cycle of changes can be initiated, creating an environment of psychic security and trust for other changes to be implemented. (Gonçalves & Terentim, 2020). In other words, plant the seed.

In practice, collaboration takes place to meet the needs of communities. The needs of communities are contained in the implementation, maintenance or improvement of services to the population, including an effective and rapid process of communication and adaptation. Implement, maintain or

improving services in a city, making them intelligent and adaptable to new contexts, means dynamically analyzing and evaluating the impact of the interactions of the variables contained in the primary dimensions of governance and urbanism with the other variables contained in the other dimensions. From this assessment, the main opportunities are identified and potential environmental risks are mitigated or eliminated. This assessment is a real analysis of the feasibility

of meeting the needs prioritized over time with the communities and will give meaning or not to the planned solutions, decisively supporting the communication process with the communities with transparency and facts.

Therefore, governance must be collaborative and carried out at different levels, from central administration to the administration of each family's home. Everyone is equally responsible for making the city humanized. To be intelligent, the governance dimension (including urban planning) must have quantitative and qualitative indicators for measuring all service generation processes. Transparency in the public disclosure of these indicators will be key in the city's evolution to become humanized and intelligent. (Capelli, Reis, Bernardes, Cortese, & Nunes, 2020)

The dimensions of governance and urbanism, if evaluated jointly and continuously, give managers the certainty of what will be the best initial scope for the city's transformation, considering each community. From this assessment, we can start with more confidence to define what interactions will be with the other dimensions that will actually be important as opportunities or risks for the transformation.

This quick approach to Marketing and the Power of Context highlights the focus on a communication plan for the analyzed target audience (with defined leaders) using digital marketing/social media, a feasible achievement plan, monitored according to the measurement of the evolution of iterations, dynamic adjustments of plans and dynamic analysis of contextual variables.

## CONCLUSIONS

A complex undertaking in times of accelerated digital transformation is a challenge to traditional management methodologies. Constant variations in context over time cause changes in interactions between the various dimensions of the enterprise and the environment that surrounds it. To perceive these variations in context and react in time, taking advantage of opportunities and mitigating or eliminating risks and restrictions in the environment, change managers must be adaptive (agile according to the market term). To be adaptive, the focus must be on ensuring the engagement of project participants, of all the actors, of all the people. Everyone must have the same purpose and the same vision for the enterprise. To guarantee the same purpose and vision for all participants, you must have a communication plan based on concepts, methods and tools from Social Psychology, Marketing and Digital Marketing. The communication project must be adapted to use dissemination and participation processes via social media, according to the target audience analyzed, that is, for each community or homogeneous socio-cultural group. To know the target audience, you must be close to communities or socio-cultural groups (or they have sufficient, consistent and current information). To achieve proximity, it is essential for managers to identify, in each target audience, people or groups with the roles of communicator, specialist and salesperson, that is, truly strong leaders. Engaged leadership represents the first and decisive step in engaging communities or socio-cultural groups. These roles are essential to guarantee the effectiveness of the communication process, word of mouth and, mainly, to timely identify turning points caused by changes in context. Turning points can accelerate the change in behavior of the target audience, moving from indifference or resistance to proactive change agents, accelerating them.

Expectations about the enterprise will vary according to each community or socio-cultural group and, therefore, iterations must be planned for specific assistance, being

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changed and communicated whenever any variation in context occurs. In addition to being planned, iterations must be monitored and controlled according to market standard indicators related to the objectives to be met. Therefore, collaboration between managers and all actors, through leaders, is the essence of the power of transformation. The responsibility now belongs to everyone and no longer just to managers. In this collaborative process, it is essential for the manager to have control over all variables in the governance dimension that interact with the enterprise and other dimensions external to it and its environment. This analysis of variables must be dynamic, agile and not just a static tactical-strategic element of the venture initiation process.

Therefore, obtaining and maintaining participant engagement in complex projects depends on the dynamic and effective completion of the cycle:
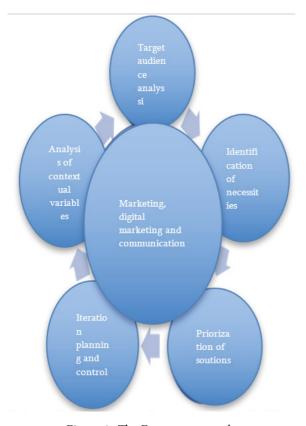


Figure 1- The Engagement cycle

The center of balance in this cycle is given by the correct use of Marketing concepts, methods and tools, Digital Marketing to execute a communication plan, using primarily social media, which adapts to variations in context in time and that reaches communities or sociocultural groups quickly. The activists of this plan are the managers, acting collaboratively with communicators, specialists and salespeople.

When looking at the enterprise of transforming a city, like Rio de Janeiro, into a humanized and intelligent one, the first task is definitely to really know who the people who inhabit the communities are and how they behave in groups, regardless of whether this community is or not in the 21st century. The planned activation of a modern, agile and effective communication process must make use of Marketing concepts, methods and tools not mastered by public managers, but already in common use in the private sector. The key to engagement will be collaboration between all actors and communities feeling involved in each iteration of the enterprise that involves them. For collaboration, strong leadership must be activated through the roles of communicator, specialist and salesperson. Social media, with the correct message to be disseminated, must prioritize people's participation and feedback processes. Proximity to communities, integration with other actors, a real view of contextual variables, their interactions and the agility of the communication process will make it easier to find opportunities for evolution or carry out actions to mitigate or avoid risks or restrictions arising from contextual variations. Positive or negative reactions may come from communities during context variations. However, they will always be taken advantage of or mitigated through proximity and agility. And therein lies the great chance for Rio de Janeiro to take advantage of many

turning points, leveraging leaps forward, with solutions, often simple, applied within a complex enterprise. Certainly, being able to be a humanized city, it will be certain to always evolve in an intelligent way using digital transformation in favor of people and according to the most different needs.

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