

There's no I in team. And there's no Messi or Ronaldo left in the World Cup either!



On 14th June 2018 the World Cup kicked off in Russia. What was tipped to be a battle between Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo and Argentina's Lionel Messi has actually turned out to be arguably their biggest failures. And it's not just those two household names, Spain and Germany who were also front runners to win the competition, have prematurely crashed out, falling victim to their underdog opponents. If we go by The Daily Telegraph's most expensive world cup team rankings then out of the top ten, only six teams have made it past the knock out stages - and we're not done yet. And for once the fallen giants cannot blame poor refereeing or foul play. All teams who have exited earlier than anticipated have little ground to say they were hard done by - the teams who have progressed have won fair and square. The 2018 World Cup has so far been dominated by collective team performances, well executed game plans and led by managers who inspire energy, creativity and the will to win into their players.

If we imagine that the financial services industry is the sport of football, the individual banks and institutions are the teams and the players represent each of the different technologies - then yes there would definitely be more than 11 players in a team! But what we also learn is that no single solution or platform is the answer to all of the current technology transformation challenges. Nor does a high profile, expensive brand name guarantee success. Relying on your Cristiano Ronaldo golden bullet is a flawed strategy and in order to compete on a global scale then you need collaboration and cohesion from a myriad of best of breed technologies all of which share a common goal.



Statistics show that this year's World Cup first round has been the most competitive ever. 61.5% of games have been decided by a single goal and over 13% of all goals have been scored in stoppage time. This is over double that of any year previously! And guess what...the financial services technology arena is no different. With Symphony chasing down the high profile established providers, blockchain and crypto currency hype and new fintech solutions and service providers arriving by the day, if you're not bringing innovative solutions, delivering great service and investing in your relationships then the chances are you won't even qualify. You're only as good as your last match.

Whilst football and financial services are different ball games, the fundamentals are very much the same. Every team/bank sets out to gain the most supporters, win market share and ultimately triumph over their rivals. And what Russia's World Cup is showing us, that if all the technology players work cohesively together, with passion and creativity then success doesn't always come from the most expensive brands, the most exciting marketing campaigns or those who have the highest FIFA ranking.

We're half way through the World Cup with still everything to play for. As the competition hots up, no single man will prevail. 2018 won't be Ronaldo or Messi's year. Could it be England? Could it be Brazil? Who knows...but I can bet my bottom dollar it will be a well managed team who will bask in World Cup glory!

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For more information please contact:

Paul Watmough | paul.watmough@mdxtechnology.com | +44 (0) 7778 356657