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YOUR GUIDE TO DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

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It's an undisputed fact that technology is changing the workplace — and you shouldn't resist these changes any longer. Embracing digital transformation will change the way you and your staff experiences work every day. If you're unsure how to digitally transform your business, check out this guide.

Digital transformation is one of the biggest buzz phrases going around the business community right now. In fact, a majority of CEOs have been focusing on digital transformation for years.

Are you falling behind?

It's simply the way the world is moving, and for good reason. The business workplace is being drastically altered by technology as each year goes by — if you don't embrace it, then you'll miss out on all the benefits it has to offer.

What Is Digital Transformation?

You can define this term as:

“The integration of digital technologies into all areas of your business, resulting in fundamental changes to how your business operates.”

In other words, it's the initiative to use technology for better business outcomes. That's rather general though, isn't it?

To understand it, it may be more effective to look at the way technology is changing the workplace, such as that...

- ▶ 80% of the workforce operates at least in part from outside the office.

- ▶ A vast majority (up to 80%) of IT budgets are directed towards “business as usual”.

The fact is that, whether you embrace technology or not, the people you interact with (your customers and employees) will expect you to. If you don't, they'll work with someone else who does.

That's why you need to make an effort to understand how technology can affect positive change in the work that you do. From customer experience to workflow optimization, technology is playing a big role in the way businesses operate.

What Are The Objectives Of Digital Transformation?

Digital transformation can do a lot for your business if you take the time to carry it out strategically:

- ▶ **Attract New Business:** If you make it easier for clients and customers to work with you the way they prefer to, then they're more likely to work with you.
 - 75% of consumers say they're more likely to buy from you if you know their name, purchase history and can recommend products/services based on that info.
 - Marketers feel that few companies deliver customer experiences that truly fulfill the brand promise.
- ▶ **Attract Better Talent:** Younger and more modern workers will be more interested in joining your team if you're using solutions that they're used to, and that allow them to work in the way they prefer.
 - 38% of millennial staff members state that outdated collaboration tools have a negative effect on innovation.
 - According to findings from the digital business global executive study and research report, 71% of digitally maturing companies say they are able to attract new talent based on their use of digital technologies.
- ▶ **Generate Better ROI:** By using technology to eliminate redundancies, speed up time frames, and provide greater access to products and services, you can get a greater return on the resources you invest in your business.
 - Companies get results when they invest more in digital marketing



How Do You Do Digital Transformation?

Let's look at it in the abstract first — no matter where you are in terms of digital transformation, it's important to understand where it began and where it has led to...

▶ Conventional IT

- Employees use a single, business-owned device
- Corporate network & legacy applications
- Manual workflow processes
- Reactive support

Then you compare that with the most digitally transformed businesses today...

▶ Modern IT

- Employees use multiple devices, a combination and self- and business-owned
- Data is hosted and deployed from the cloud, and via SaaS applications
- Processes are automated
- Support is proactive

If you think that you have more in common with Conventional IT than Modern IT, how can you bridge the gap? Next, let's look at some specific ways to achieve digital transformation...



6 Examples Of Digital Transformation

In order to bring your business forward with technology, you need to set a few key priorities for the way your IT staff or outsourced IT company develops your infrastructure and processes:

1. Work Remotely

The continuation of the coronavirus pandemic has caused countless businesses to send their employees home to keep them healthy and prevent further transmission of the virus. These businesses are finding out how easy it can be to launch a remote working model — that is, if they have the right technologies in place.

The most direct way to maintain business continuity is to deploy remote access. When needed (i.e., during a quarantine), users can access corporate data and applications via a secure VPN. Once logged in, the user can make use of the software, access and modify data, and more, all without having to be at the office.

2. Personalize Your Systems

Don't settle for a one-size-fits-all build. Your IT company should be able to deliver a customized build, that promotes self-service among your staff (automated support, self-enrollment of mobile devices, etc.).

3. Encourage Mobility

Implement Mobile Device Management and Bring Your Own Device policies that allow employees to use their own devices in combination with the business' — be sure to equally prioritize the convenience of access with security.

And don't limit yourself to desktops, laptops, and phones – there's more out there for you to take advantage of. Have you considered what the Internet of Things and wearable devices can do for workplace efficiency? Now's the time to get on board – up to 20.4 billion IoT devices were estimated to be online by the end of last year.

4. Harness The Cloud

Increase collaboration and simplify management by hosting your data and applications through the cloud – again, prioritizing security in line with the access given to staff members. It shouldn't have to be said at this point, but just in case you're still in the past – get rid of your on-site hardware!

Before the cloud, onsite servers were a must for any business that wanted to succeed, but no longer. Today, you don't need to purchase, install and maintain onsite servers – with the cloud, you outsource it all to a data center instead.

By choosing a cloud solution instead of conventional infrastructure, you will enjoy all the benefits of an up to date and optimized IT infrastructure, without having to pay more than your monthly service fee.

This is so basic in today's modern business world that to continue purchasing and maintaining costly onsite hardware is essentially fiscal negligence.

5. Use Data To Your Advantage

With the right information, each choice you make can have attainable and expected positive results for your business; without that information, you may as well be gambling with the future of your company.

Business intelligence is the collection and analysis of data collected such as department productivity, overall growth, sales trends, and customer behavior. Applications of this data can range from something as simple as Spreadsheets for the organization, and storage of data to Online Analytical Processing or Reporting and Querying software. Each has a specific use and offers various benefits to your small business.

Reporting and querying software extracts, sorts, summarizes, and presents selected data. This data could range from sale reports of specific items to a measurement of the efficiency of marketing plans.

6. Automate And Evolve Your Cybersecurity

These advanced types of cybersecurity software (firewalls, antivirus, antimalware) use artificial intelligence to better predict, identify and eliminate harmful malware.

Security based on advanced algorithms that can adapt and learn creates a system that can become familiar with the normal patterns associated with each user and device, detecting anomalies in those patterns quickly.

Essentially, something known as a neural net can be used in cybersecurity efforts. Based on a robust algorithm, the neural net can "learn" to spot patterns of data associated with previously identified and classified spear-phishing emails.

By incorporating this technology into an email client's spam filter, the filter will be able to spot fraudulent incoming emails and eliminate them before they reach the recipient.

One of the best parts about neural nets is that they continue to learn and improve the more that they are used. With increasingly more data to draw from, this Artificial Intelligence will become more and more accurate in doing its job.

Obstacles To Digital Transformation

Business leaders are realizing just how powerful new technology can be, especially as the coronavirus pandemic keeps their employees at home and forces them to adopt a remote work model.

However, undergoing digital transformation is easier said than done. There are two primary obstacles that commonly prevent businesses from embracing digital transformation:

- ▶ **Lack Of Strategy:** Unfortunately, it's not as simple as just saying you want to "digitally transform" your business. It takes an understanding of available technologies and how they can be applied to your work, along with a clear vision of how this can help you achieve your business goals.
- ▶ **Fear Of Potential Risks:** Many are hesitant to adopt new technologies because of what it could mean for data security. Usually, this comes down to the nature of the cloud – whether it's the Internet of Things, or enhanced mobile device use in the workplace, managers and owners worry about how greater access to work data will affect the security of that work data.

Need Expert Assistance With Digital Transformation?

In the end, modernizing your office doesn't have to be a massive restructuring of the way you do business. Step by step you can affect these changes, either by talking to your staff about mobile device use for work or consulting with your IT company about how to automate more of your daily tasks.

The key? You have to be willing to start.

Need assistance harnessing new technologies to transform your business? Our end-to-end, integrated portfolio of solutions will give you everything you need to improve the way you do business through technological solutions.



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