



IT for the C-Suite - Quick Read Series

Modern Business Technology Education for the C-Level Executive

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Taking the Next Step Up to Becoming a Truly Digital Workplace

According to Gartner Research, 87% of business executives have set digitizing their businesses as the top priority in their organizations' growth strategies. That said, they also report that 66% of executives are concerned that their companies won't properly accomplish this, which will make them less competitive. They also find that failing to digitize properly makes the recruitment of top-level younger employees more difficult as millennials "love all things digital". While millennials are not the only ones who download apps to their ubiquitous smartphones, the fact that there were an estimated 197,000,000,000 mobile phone app downloads just in 2017 alone, with an expected 352,900,000,000 annually by 2021, should give you an idea into just how digitized our society has become.

Are You a Digital Business?

If you have ever wondered whether your business is a digital business, the answer is "Yes"! The real question is, how effectively have you accomplished this transformation and are you seeing its maximum benefits? If you are still questioning whether you qualify as a "digital business", ask yourself this: does every one of your employees (or at least most of them) use a computer, or, if in the field, a tablet? Is your accounting kept on accounting software or are you still using a pen (or quill) to make journal entries? How about productivity software? Are you using Google Docs or Microsoft Office (or

Office 365)? We bet you're also using email. Think about how different your business would be if someone took all these things away. So, yes, your business is a digital business. Most businesses are. Even if you live in a rural area, we will bet that your local blacksmith has a website and uses QuickBooks.

What makes you a digital business is that you are providing to your employees a bunch of technology-based solutions, applications, and various other tools to empower them and make them more productive in their jobs. And since most people would prefer to be productive, it also makes them happier and more engaged in their work. So, the question really

isn't whether or not you are a digital business, the question is, are you using the digitization available for the current workplace to your best advantage? The reality is, virtually every company in the USA has gone through a digital transformation that we might call "Phase 1". The thing is, if that's Phase 1, then "Phase 2" is here and companies that take advantage of the empowering developments available to them are way ahead of their competition.

Digitization: Phase 1 and Phase 2

Why is Phase 2 so important? All businesses face challenges. In today's workplace, some of your challenges may be:

- > A waning trust in leadership caused by a lack of direction in how to accomplish business goals.
- > Employees losing interest and becoming disengaged and, therefore, becoming less productive.
- > Individual employees becoming almost irreplaceable because vital company information exists only inside their heads.
- > Delays in project completions because teams spend more time in meetings talking about projects than being able to work on them.

Now go back and reread each of the above problems, and while doing so, think about this word: Communication. One of today's key business communications tools is an intranet. But today's high-end intranet is not the same as yesterday's intranet. The old intranet was created for two purposes:

- 1: A storehouse of company information, the maintenance of which required almost constant support from an IT services team that was likely already stretched thin.
- 2: A corporate "news channel" that was used to keep employees and other constituents up-to-date on company strategies, achievements, operations, and policies, usually with little or no input from anyone not on the management team.

The result was that, all too often, interest in this company

vehicle started at a moderate level, and headed straight down from there.

5 Characteristics of Change

People: If your business is like most small to mid-sized businesses, your most important asset is your people. If you are a high-end jeweler, or own expensive real estate, your **most valuable** assets may be diamonds or condos, but your **most important** asset is still your people. Your people need the tools to quickly and effectively connect them to other people within your organization, people who have the knowledge needed to help them quickly and effectively complete assigned tasks. Your communications tools need to be designed for your company, not for a generic business. They should also provide employees a channel to expound on their work and why they love working for you. They should give them the ability to create and share. When people become comfortable sharing, they also share ideas and expertise, a huge benefit for the organization.

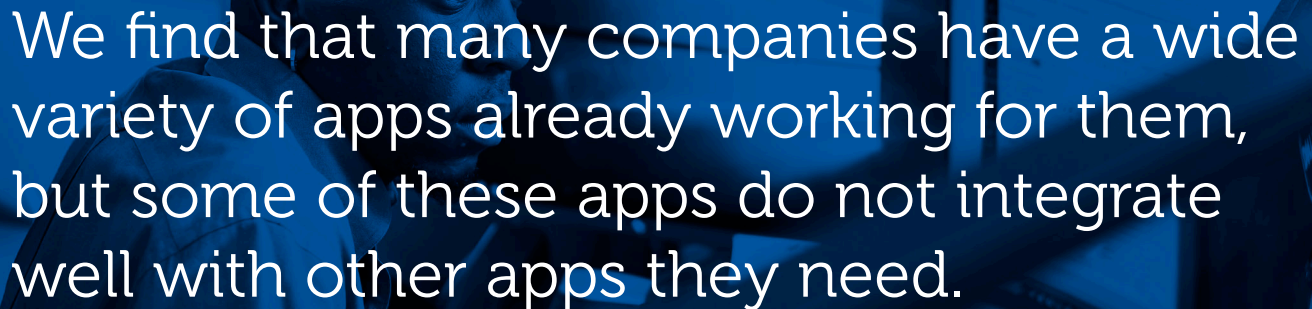
The Workplace: A digital workplace helps people work better. It doesn't necessarily change the way people are doing things, rather it offers the opportunity to automate processes and make people more productive, which makes your company more profitable.

Business-Friendliness: Not everyone who works in your company has the same company objectives so your digital platform has to be flexible.

- > **Cloud-based --** Being in the cloud, all the work involved in installation, patching and updating is done for you. And because your people are probably continually on the move, working on the road, in clients' offices, at home, and even while on vacation, it must be mobile-friendly.
- > **Scalable –** Businesses grow and, yes, they shrink. If you need your platforms to grow, they must do that quickly and effortlessly. You also want to be able to scale back to save money when appropriate.



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- > **Security** – While security is a whole other subject unto itself, for now, let's just agree that an extremely high-level of security is non-negotiable.

Business Challenges: Every business, including yours, faces challenges every day. This can include high employee turnover, inconsistent branding, or employees who are unaware of critical information necessary to properly perform their jobs. Selecting the right digital platforms can help with these and many other obstacles you face.

Choosing Features You Need Instead of One-Size-Fits-All:

Let's start by understanding your goals and what you need to accomplish to get there. Where are your pain points? How will you determine the ROI on the investment you will be making to rise to this level of digitization? This includes reviewing the digital tools you already possess to see if and how they will work with new tools you bring onboard. Start with the people who best understand your current workplace – employees and execs who can serve as advocates for the various functions within your company. Then examine the various tools at your disposal, keeping in mind that you may have some of these already in your toolbox, some of which may be perfect and others that may not work well within your new scenario. We find that many companies have a wide variety of apps already working for them, but some of these apps do not integrate well with other apps they need, and it sometimes makes sense to replace them.

Apps to Consider

File Sharing: Collaboration has become a key component in many businesses. "Two heads are better than one." Management often finds that two people working together can accomplish more than each working separately. $1 + 1 = 3$. Many companies also find that creating teams to handle major

projects accomplishes far more than assigning separate tasks within that project to people who are essentially disconnected from each other. For teams to be most effective, they need to be able to view and work on files together, especially when one or more team members are out of the office.

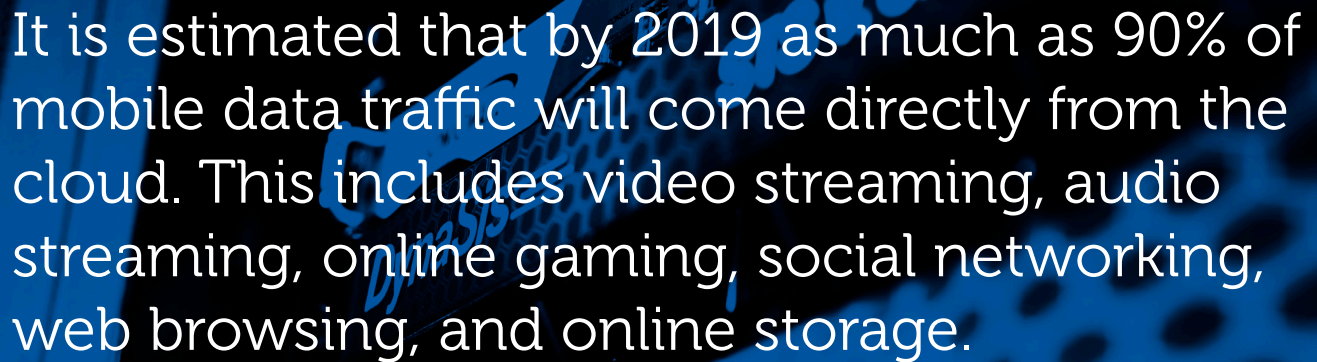
Calendars: Yes, everyone already has a calendar, but can they see their co-workers' schedules? Can they use their calendars to set up meetings with their team members without making innumerable phone calls, emails, or texts? Can they see which conference rooms are available to meet with the team, with management or with clients?

Personnel Directories: A modern directory will not only let you call, email, or text a co-worker with a single click, it can also keep track of skills and expertise, making it easier for your employees, especially new ones, to quickly determine who to contact inside and outside your organization for the assistance they need.

Forums: Pose questions to your people and ask for answers and ideas. All too often, a person who may have the answers you need is unaware of the problem you are trying to solve. Even in a small company, your people have literally hundreds of years of collective knowledge and experience that shouldn't go to waste.

Blog: An internal blog can keep your employees up to date with company news. Keeping them aware of all that is happening within your organization is another way to trigger great ideas from people who would otherwise be in the dark. And don't forget to reward them, even if it is just a word of thanks or congratulations. Cash prizes or extra days off are even better when appropriate.

Tasks: Think of this on two levels: First, with proper task management tools, an individual employee who has a multitude



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of tasks for which she is responsible can keep better track of progress and schedule specific time blocks for specific tasks. Second, an employee placed in charge of a team project can lay out all the various tasks that make up this project and assign specific tasks to individuals, with all players having access to a visual representation of progress. This keeps people on their toes and also allows team members to pitch in when they see that someone on the team needs assistance.

Wikis: For companies that have detailed work processes, a wiki provides a place to keep detailed explanations and analyses. It is a repository of workplace knowledge that can now be easily accessed by new employees or by employees assigned new tasks.

Onboarding: A place to send new employees where they can access new employee policies, the company employee manual, read and sign appropriate documents, set up payroll information, access health plan information, etc. Everything that needs to be accomplished with and for a new employee is in one place and can be easily managed by your HR person.

Your Own Company App: Apps today are easy and relatively inexpensive to build and can be great sales and marketing

tools for companies of all types. It is estimated that by 2019 as much as 90% of mobile data traffic will come directly from the cloud. This includes video streaming, audio streaming, online gaming, social networking, web browsing, and online storage. While a full analysis of the advisability of an app for your business is outside the scope of this paper, looking at the potential an app designed specifically for your company can provide is something to consider.

Here at DynaSis, we have long been proponents of companies becoming digital workplaces. As you can see from the information above, there are many potential benefits. As a mid-sized company ourselves, with more than 60 IT professionals working around the clock for the benefit of our managed IT support clients, our own digitization, along with more than a quarter century of helping other small to mid-sized businesses here in Atlanta, has put us in a great position to help you accomplish your own goals. Give us a call today so we can help show you why DynaSis is the right choice for your IT support! 770.629.9615.

DynaSis is Atlanta's leading provider of outsourcing solutions. Our managed IT services and tech support services are designed to take the strain out of looking after an IT infrastructure. Our managed services are specifically suited to the needs of the small to mid-size businesses. These services include management of servers, storage, backups, networks, databases, security, and data centers. We work with more than 200 business customers across a broad range of industries.

At DynaSis, we strive to be more than an IT partner; we become a business partner to each and every one of our clients. Our goal is to take the IT management load from our business partners' shoulders, giving your business the ability to use technology optimally to build a competitive advantage. Technology, managed well, will lead to increased efficiency and productivity, with almost zero downtime, and, most importantly, cost savings.

Call us now at 770-629-9615 to see why **DynaSis** is the right choice for your IT Support!