3 REASONS *TO BE* STRATEGIC *WITH YOUR* BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY

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I t seems that the speed at which information technology (IT) shapes and reshapes the world of business is unparalleled. Keeping up with technology advances and trends is a time-consuming task that many business owners don't relish. But, allowing shortsightedness can be costly. Think about the shifts in how movies and music are sold, for example. When was the last time you went to a video store to rent a DVD? How do you think Blockbuster is doing these days?

The truth is, technology is powerful. Neglected, it can cost you — big time. But, when applied strategically, it can net you big savings.

3 Ways *Strategic IT Can Help Your Business Thrive*

1. **ELIMINATING UNNECESSARY COSTS**

   From product ordering to streamlining administrative tasks, well-applied technology solutions can save you money. In addition, properly implemented IT security measures reduce risks and subsequent costs associated with cyber threats and data loss. Knowing what options are out there as well as the risks associated with them is half the battle, while not knowing where to start can cause businesses to turn a blind eye. Implementing the wrong technology haphazardly in the beginning will end up costing you in the long run. Before you purchase, install or implement anything from your cable or DSL to tablets for your staff in the field, think long term: Is this the most cost-effective solution? Make sure you have access to experts who are looking at your business as a whole and can help guide you in the right direction.

2. **INCREASING EFFICIENCY**

   When your IT systems are streamlined and running well, and you have the right technology tools in place for the job at hand, your team is able to get more done in less time and with less interruption. For example, implementing the right mobile devices and wireless network solutions can allow employees to work from more locations and transfer data more quickly.

3. **REACHING GOALS MORE QUICKLY**

   Through the cost savings and increased efficiency provided by IT, companies can focus on their goals and reach those goals faster. Technology can also help increase scalability, allowing companies to expand more rapidly.

So this is great, but when your business isn't about technology, how do you stay on top of all of this? I think the first step is all about mindset. Starting out with the right mindset can really help, because technology will shape your business, whether you want to admit it or not. It will do so internally by making you effective and giving you a competitive edge, or it will do so externally by forcing you into a position where you are struggling to play catch-up to your competitors who already have a strategic mindset.

This may sound scary, but it doesn't have to be. It has been predicted that over the next two years, we will see more changes in information technology than we have in the last 15. The trick will be looking at technology not as a necessary evil but instead as a vital component to your business that can be used as leverage.

Wherever you are at in your business, take the time to evaluate your mindset in regards to your IT. Make sure your IT provider understands what your vision is for your company and works with you to get strategic. It's all about the strategy.

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