How CIOs Can Empower the Digital Workplace

3 Technologies that Improve Productivity, Communication and Collaboration

Introduction: The Changing Role of Today's CIO

The role of the CIO is more important than ever.

Today's CIOs no longer just oversee technology. They are now key strategists who guide their organizations and give them the tools they need to stay competitive. A study by Forbes Research stated that five years ago, a CIO's most critical skill was deploying technology. Now, the #1 way that CIOs provide value is by contributing to the corporate strategy, so they can advance business objectives and drive revenue.[1]

In particular, CEOs rely on the CIO for guidance around digital transformation. Organizations must transform how they operate and take advantage of new technologies to better engage customers and employees.

Digital transformation falls squarely on the shoulders of IT leaders. CIOs are under pressure to drive transformation – overcoming barriers such as cultures that are resistant to change, employees who want to upload files anywhere, and increased concerns about data security.

63% 63% of CEOs are likely to change the business model within the next three years.[2]

CEOs also expect CIOs to achieve results now. The longer you wait, the more likely you will fall behind your competitors and fail to catch up. With so much at stake, it's not surprising that CIOs are worried. According to a recent survey, 83 percent of IT leaders fear that they will be fired if their digital transformation efforts fail.[3]

Luckily, there are ways CIOs can transform their organization, while reducing their risks and boosting their chances of success.

1   Forbes Insights: The Ascent of the CIO, 2017
2   Gartner ID G00354612: Highlights of the 2018 CEO Survey: The Year of Disciplined Digital Deepening, April 24, 2018
3   Couchbase: Are Organizations Realizing Their Digital Revolutions? 2018

Information Mobility: The First Step to Digital Transformation

As an IT leader, you face more pressure than ever to transform the way employees work, communicate, and exchange information through technology. Information mobility – or giving employees access to data from any device and location – is the first step to digital transformation.

What is Information Mobility?
Information mobility gives workers easy access to the information they need – at the right time, from any location, in the desired file type.

According to a recent survey[4], organizations that focus on information mobility can achieve the following benefits:

- Improved team member collaboration

- Reduced reliance on paper documents

- Decreases in unexpected problems, likely due to the ability to better predict project outcomes

Improving your employee productivity creates a ripple effect across your organization. For example, when employees find information easily, they can respond to customers faster and provide higher levels of service. The quality of your service has a direct impact on your bottom line. Making your processes more efficient may also eliminate redundant steps and technologies – lowering your costs.

The Biggest Barrier to a Productive, Digital Workplace

Digital transformation requires worker transformation.[5]

You've likely run into bottlenecks in the past when you have tried to bring in new technology. In particular, the employees who may benefit the most from these tools may not be open to change and the adoption of new technology.

Digital transformation can succeed only if the entire organization, especially employees, embraces the new way of working. They must also receive the training and support to succeed in their workspace. Failure of a digital transformation project can cause an IT team to lose credibility while creating undue angst among organization leaders, other stakeholders, and employees.

According to Gartner, "Only 7% to 18% of organizations (depending on region) currently possess the digital dexterity to succeed with software and services requiring digitally enlightened workers."[6]

3 Ways to Get Your Organization On Board With Digital Transformation

> **"Change management" is now one of the top 5 professional skills for CIOs.**[7]

Change management is vital to ensure rapid adoption and to succeed in your digital transformation project. Here are three change management best practices that will help you get employees on board:

1. Show teams why they should change.

To hasten adoption, you must show employees why your new technology is better than what they currently use. But many employees won't care about all your cool, new features. Instead, they want to know how the technology will make their lives easier.

For example, will new conferencing systems give employees the ability to work from home and attend meetings remotely? Will new software reduce the number of steps that they must take to complete a task – saving them time and hassle? The more you focus on how technology will benefit others, the more you will improve your adoption rates.

2. Partner with executive and employee evangelists.

Evangelists can help you drive change in two directions – from the top down and the bottom up. They also hold a lot of power when it comes to influencing their peers.

Find an executive sponsor in each line of business. They can help you understand what each team needs and then champion any technology that will make their processes more efficient.

Also, engage employee evangelists. Look for at least one person in each team who is excited about your project. They can promote your new technology, answer questions, and help others overcome their objections.

Your executive and employee sponsors can also help you identify new areas that need improvement. This gives your IT team further opportunities to drive value within your organization.

3. Train users on any new tools and processes.

Before you implement new technology, make sure that you have a training plan for both new hires and existing employees. Your current employees may require more comprehensive training, as they are used to doing things the old way and may need to see evidence of how adopting these new technologies will improve their productivity and work environment.

You can provide a variety of training options, depending on how your employees like to learn. Here are some ideas:

• In-person training led by a consultant

• Online videos and tutorials

• A knowledge base and discussion board

• Lunch-and learn-sessions (either webinars or in-person)

• One-on-one sessions with a manager or internal champion

• Additional support via email or chat

Be sure to ask your vendors if they offer training packages, as this will alleviate the educational burden from your in-house team.

How CIOs Can Improve Employee Productivity and Information Mobility

Digital transformation requires you to give employees user-friendly tools that make it easy for them to collaborate and communicate – whether they are working in the office or from anywhere around the world.

Meanwhile, you can minimize IT's involvement by choosing tools that are easy to implement and don't require much effort to maintain. For example, your new technology should integrate seamlessly with your existing IT infrastructure and processes. This will not only reduce the burden on your IT team, but also reduce disruptions to how people like to work.

You should also allow employees to keep using their preferred tools or give them ones that are similar. The more familiar employees are with their tools, the less likely they will call your help desk for support.

1. Provide employees with anywhere, on-demand access to files.

Today's employees need information mobility. If they can't seamlessly move information between devices and applications, they will go around IT to get the tools that they need to work efficiently. According to research, 98 percent of enterprise cloud services are shadow IT.

> **30-50%** | Enterprises spend 30-50% of their IT budgets on shadow IT.[8]

Here are three technologies that will give employees faster access to information while reducing their need for shadow IT:

Enterprise content and document management
Giving employees on-demand access to information – from any device or location – is vital to improving their productivity. Enterprise content and document management solutions make it easy for employees to find what they need, when they need it.

For example, if information is buried in filing cabinets or offsite storage facilities, it's useless until someone can retrieve it. Even if you have digital information, you may still struggle to manage it. For example, you may keep data in siloed applications that employees can't access from their mobile devices. Enterprise content and document management digitizes your records and stores them in one central, secure data repository. This allows employees to quickly find information – whether they are using their office desktop or a mobile device.

Digitizing your paper documents also allows you to get rid of clunky filing cabinets and expensive, off-site storage. It can significantly reduce your operating costs, while saving you real estate that you can better utilize to grow your business.

Digital rights management

Employees often put sensitive data in personal clouds that don't meet your company's security standards. Digital rights management (DRM) allows you to apply authentication and access controls around your files, so you can keep your data secure no matter where it resides.

With DRM, you can protect your data as it travels across devices and clouds. Your DRM solution should keep your security policies in place – even after files leave your network. That way, you can prevent unauthorized users from viewing or sharing your organization's sensitive content. Your solution should also give you real-time reporting on who accesses your data and alert you if someone tries to break one of your policies.

Ideally, your DRM tool won't impact your user interface. Employees shouldn't realize that you've put new security systems in place until they try to perform an action that they don't have the authority to perform.

Business process automation

Once you have digitized your documents and data, you are in a place where you can make your information work for you.

Business process automation (BPA) integrates all of your people, technology, and processes. This drives efficiencies, provides you with greater transparency, and facilitates compliance for repeatable processes. With BPA, you can streamline your workflows to reduce bottlenecks and make your entire organization more efficient. This minimizes errors and repetitive tasks – allowing you to be more agile and achieve your business goals faster.

BPA may require your IT team to spend time on implementation and testing. However, once you are up and running, BPA will reduce the burden on IT. Most BPA processes are user friendly. You can also set up self-service, online help for employees who have questions.

2. Make meetings more productive.

50% | Almost 50 percent of Canadian employees work remotely.[9]

According to a study by Regus Canada, 47 percent of Canadian employees work outside of their primary office for half of the week or more. Of these employees, 54 percent said that they work remotely to remain productive while travelling to and from meetings.

To help your remote employees succeed, you must make it easy for them to access files and collaborate with others. Here are four technologies that improve collaboration between both on-site and remote employees:

- **Video conferencing**
  Today's video conferencing solutions make it easy for you to hold productive meetings from any location. They improve your communications, so you can make decisions faster, go to market sooner, and reduce your travel expenses.

For example, you can schedule a quick video chat with a colleague – saving you the back and forth of email. You can also join larger meetings and collaborate in person. During meetings, remote participants will see both the presentation and the live feed of everyone in the room without needing to jump between screens.

Look for a video conferencing solution that doesn't require complicated architecture or a complete overhaul of your existing technologies. This will help you immediately boost employee productivity – without placing an additional burden on your IT team.

- **Interactive Whiteboards or Interactive Flat Panel Displays (IFPDs)**
  Whiteboards have come a long way and are no longer glorified chalkboards. Today's digital, interactive whiteboards or Interactive Flat Panel Displays (IFPD's) encourage hands-on collaboration between your on-site and remote employees. For example, participants can write directly on the screen, save their notes, and share them with others. Interactive whiteboards also include video conferencing tools that allow presenters and attendees to join your sessions remotely.

9 Benefits Canada: 47% of Canadian employees work remotely: survey, March 2017

3. Automate your meeting room scheduling.

The "simple" task of booking a meeting room can become an ordeal when you rely on manual processes and siloed systems. For example, an employee may put a meeting in their calendar but fail to note the booking in a central database. Then, someone else can double-book the space. People may also reserve rooms that they have no intention of using.

40% | Almost 40 percent of booked meeting rooms aren't used.[10]

Smart technology can simplify your meeting-room booking processes and give you real-time visibility into how people are using your office and conference room space.

When you automate your meeting-room scheduling you can:

- Improve space allocation while reducing costs.

- Eliminate meeting room bottlenecks.

- Quickly and easily book space – from any device or location.

- Install digital touchscreens outside your meeting rooms so that employees can view room availability in real time.

- Enhance employee productivity and collaboration.

- Ensure that employees, remote workers and visitors always have the required conference and desk space – without needing to expand your office real estate.

SUCCESS STORY:

How a Consulting Firm Streamlined Its Meeting Room Bookings and Made Employees More Productive

A leading Canadian consulting firm had 65 conference rooms, but no space for meetings.

While the firm had lots of space, they didn't have a painless way of booking it. Employees reserved rooms manually, which led to double bookings. People would also hold conference rooms "just in case" and then never use them. Employees grew frustrated and wanted to know why they couldn't find space even though so many rooms were empty.

The consulting firm worked with a partner to pinpoint the inefficiencies in their manual, room-booking process. Then, they purchased a room-booking solution to improve meeting room utilization and partnered with the vendor to efficiently implement and integrate this solution into their existing office infrastructure. The vendor trained stakeholders within the firm, who then showed others how to use the new system.

Employees now use the software to find and book space in just seconds. They can make reservations from their desktops, their mobile devices and the digital display screens located outside each meeting room. Since the room-booking software integrates with Microsoft Outlook, employees can also schedule meetings and reserve space directly from their calendars.

After an employee books a room, the system updates in real time. This prevents double bookings and improves meeting room utilization. If a meeting doesn't happen, the system automatically cancels the booking, freeing up the meeting space for someone else to use.

The new system maximizes internal resources, reduces employee frustration, and supports the impromptu collaborative conversations that drive projects forward. The consulting firm now has happier employees, as they can devote meetings to solving challenges for their clients, instead of looking for space.

TOP TAKEAWAYS

Here are five ways CIOs can empower their digital workplace:

1. **Show employees the benefits of new technologies and processes to boost adoption rates.**

2. **Improve access to information by digitizing your paper records and storing them in one central, secure location.**

3. **Apply security and governance around your data with an enterprise file sync-and-share solution.**

4. **Make meetings accessible to remote employees with interactive whiteboards and video conferencing tools.**

5. **Eliminate meeting bottlenecks by automating your room scheduling.**

DISCOVER how other Canadian organizations are changing the way they connect, communicate, and collaborate.

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