How Moving to the Cloud Can Transform Your Business

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Even before the first executive walked into his or her office with a new iPhone nearly 10 years ago, mobile technology had been having a huge impact on how people worked. Armed with their Blackberry and Palm Treo mobile phones, enterprise employees could send and receive emails and check their calendars while binge-watching episodes of "Entourage" on DVDs mailed to their homes from Netflix. Those were heady days, friends.

Moving to the cloud can improve communications with colleagues and customers.

In truth, of course, that was all child's play compared to what's happening now. As business technology matures, enterprises are moving to the cloud to even better leverage its productivity benefits. Here are just a few examples of how forward-thinking digital enterprises are using cloud, mobile, and other technologies to transform their businesses:

Communicate and Collaborate with Colleagues, Wherever They Are

Mobile technology liberates employees from the office, but unfortunately, it can be difficult for a dispersed workforce to, well, work together. Older or limited conferencing platforms can be ill-equipped to handle mobile participants, making effective collaboration and even basic communications between office and mobile employees difficult, if not impossible at times.

By moving to the cloud and adopting cloud-based communications, enterprises allow employees working anywhere — and using any device — to participate in audio and video conference calls, message colleagues (even within other apps), and have fully functional connectivity to project collaboration software.

These cloud-based unified communications platforms can also help businesses scale. For example, Acrylic Tank Manufacturing (ATM), a maker of custom aquariums, was struggling with hypergrowth stemming from its higher profile as a star of Animal Planet's "Tanked" reality TV show. The company switched from its old phone system to a cloud-based system that included unified communications features. The new platform routes calls more efficiently, allows voice messages to be read or listened to from multiple devices, and enables video conferencing with third-party vendors making special parts for ATM's aquariums.

Access CRM Databases, Customer Histories, and More Business Information

It used to be that if you were on the road and needed customer information quickly (as in real-time), you were out of luck. Today, though, apps and services are easily available to authorized and authenticated users via the cloud.

For example, Handi-Ramp, a manufacturer of products for wheelchair accessibility and fall prevention that counts the White House and Statue of Liberty as clients, uses an enterprise Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) platform that powers the company's office phones, business applications, and softphones while providing full integration with employees' mobile devices.

In addition, the platform integrates Handi-Ramp's Google apps, including email, calendar, and contact software. Further, the company's sales force can use its mobile devices to connect automatically with a CRM system. The end result is more productive and effective sales and support teams, which results in higher revenue and greater customer satisfaction.

Gain Insights Into and Establish Personal Relationships with Customers

Mobile devices and apps are providing retailers and other businesses with unprecedented amounts of data about users' search, shopping, and physical habits, such as where they go and when. This allows retailers to understand and anticipate customer needs and personalize the shopping experience in a way that increases sales and brand loyalty.

Cosmetics and beauty products retailer Sephora uses geolocation data and personalized mobile app alerts for users who are close to one of its stores, informing the customer of special deals. Adweek reported that Sephora is also driving mobile sales by integrating a Tinder-like swipe feature that allows mobile and desktop users to navigate rapidly through makeup and beauty products, as well as an app that allows its Snapchat followers to make purchases by downloading a screenshot of the desired product.

With the help of cloud, mobile, and communications technologies, companies can better manage their internal and customer-facing processes to become more efficient, more flexible and more productive.

Is your business ready for transformation? Contact a Vonage Business representative to take the first steps toward increased productivity and customer engagement.