

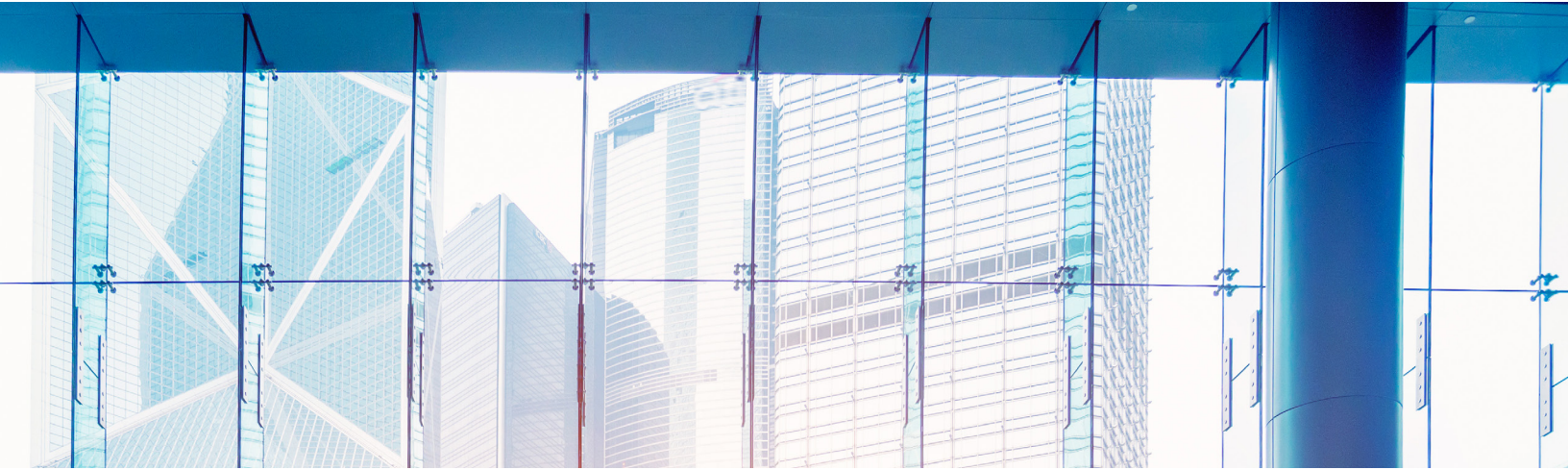


HOW TO USE TECHNOLOGY TO IMPROVE YOUR BOTTOM LINE

White Paper

The Path to Business Efficiency
and Profitability

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INTRODUCTION

Many discussions on technology, especially emerging technologies, focus on how inefficient human resources are and how machines and automation are poised to replace them.

We believe there's a more positive way to view the relationship between technology and humans.

Rather than seeing new technology as an opponent to the workforce, we believe that implementing the

right technologies can make existing employees be far more productive - and therefore add significantly to the company's bottom line.

There's no question that in today's world the key to profitability and competitive differentiation is to embrace technological change.

However, this change is moving at an unprecedented pace and it's extremely difficult for business and IT leaders to keep up.

- When is it appropriate to be a laggard and when to embrace "bleeding edge?"
- How do you know which areas to attack first?
- Which new applications might move the dial?
- What are other companies just like yours doing to compete?

This paper will share real world, practical information on four key technologies—business workflows, communications, data management, and IT infrastructure - that can change operations and impact your organization's bottom line today.

We've also included specific case study examples for each area, in order to help business leaders understand how some of these improvements have helped other existing companies.

Steven Freidkin, Founder and CEO Ntiva, Inc.



1. STREAMLINING BUSINESS WORKFLOWS

One of the simplest ways that technology can improve the bottom line is by eliminating unnecessary steps of business workflows.

There are many human tasks that are inefficient and costly and that can and should be streamlined with the right technology choices.

Note that “streamlining” does not necessarily mean a reduction in headcount. It can often free up employees to attack more important and strategic tasks that add real value to the business.

Let’s take a look at a specific example.

Case Study – Streamlining Workflows

A 70-person association in Arlington, Virginia approached Ntiva to help figure out how to make their internal operations more efficient. They had one major event a year, with a 12-person team that were mostly dedicated to this single initiative.

They were looking for ways to free up some of this team to focus on member outreach, a much-needed function for a successful association.

Although this team was delivering significant value to the company, it took months and months of work for a single event. There were many issues with their existing workflows. All of these team members had highly specific, tactical roles—gather member lists, collect money, set advertising budgets, organize name tags, etc.

Many of these tasks were extremely manual. For example, printing the name tags required verification across multiple tools and re-typing by multiple team members. It turned out that the team was actually working across five distinct, disconnected tools in support of this event.

In order to resolve this, we unified the workflows with one central “off-the-shelf” association management system. This software package was readily available – it was simply that no one internally had the time or had been tasked with exploring better technology options.

The new software was deployed in a cloud infrastructure as opposed to on premises, ensuring there was a single, centralized repository for the data. Additionally, we deployed virtual desktops, which meant that the team could access the information from anywhere, and be assured that they were all looking at the exact same up-to-date information.

This one improvement enabled the association to realign their employees to more meaningful tasks. Instead of having 12 people focus on a single event for the bulk of their year, they were able to re-assign people to one of their most important functions - member outreach.

Bottom line? Evaluating where to streamline processes and implementing a new technology solution boosted productivity and had a very positive impact on the company.

2. IMPROVING INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

Consumer preferences for communication have come to affect both internal and external business communications. Simple desk phones and legacy telephony systems aren't enough to maximize workforce productivity or sustain great customer experiences.

Today's employees and customers expect seamless access to modern tools—advanced email clients, instant messaging, videoconferencing, messaging tools and more.

Rather than trying to force outdated phone systems to work for the modern, mobile workforce, businesses can benefit by taking advantage of cloud-based “unified communications.”

At first glance, upgrading communications systems can seem like a negative to the bottom line. However, if you look closer and see how advanced communications helps employees work faster, make fewer mistakes and remain aligned to business goals, the benefits are clear.

Case Study: Improving Communications

A mid-sized financial firm headquartered in Washington, DC was expanding rapidly. This expansion included opening up additional offices across the region, including a few home offices.

They were not only dealing with an older phone system, but many employees had taken it upon themselves to use readily available free tools for internal chat, sharing content, video and more. Known as ‘shadow IT’, this is not only a nightmare for IT staff to manage, it can also pose serious security risks.

The company asked Ntiva to source a single communications solution that would offer integrated instant messaging, voice, video, conferencing, and content sharing. They also wanted the solution to be easily accessible from any laptop or mobile device, as remote working and travel were starting to be a huge part of the culture.

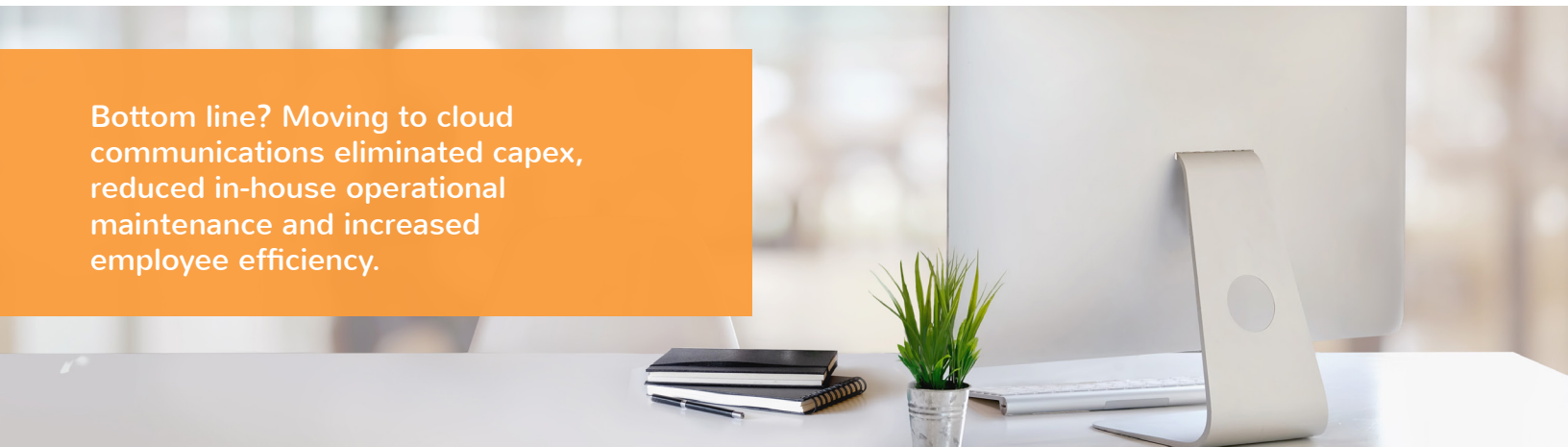
Ntiva proposed migrating to a

cloud-based communications and collaboration solution that offered all of the above and more. By moving to the cloud, employees could now access all the communication tools they needed from anywhere and any device.

Equally important, the entire employee base was now on the same secure system, making it simpler and faster to get in touch with colleagues and reduce a major headache for the internal IT team.

An unexpected but added bonus was that their new phone system integrated with Salesforce, their chosen CRM. A significant percentage of the company's resources were involved with attracting, monitoring and maintaining prospects and clients.

By taking advantage of embedded calling features along with integrated call and client histories, employees not only gained a more holistic picture of business performance, but their interactions with clients became much more streamlined and efficient.



Bottom line? Moving to cloud communications eliminated capex, reduced in-house operational maintenance and increased employee efficiency.

3. MAKING THE MOST OF BUSINESS DATA

Business leaders have more data than ever at their fingertips. So many connected systems now generate millions of new data points about everything from customer interactions to application behavior every day.

However, many businesses fall short when it comes to storing that data, analyzing all of it, and turning it into insights that boost the bottom line. Gut instincts can only go so far.

It's data that will confirm or dispute those instincts to help business leaders make more efficient and effective decisions.



Case Study: Improving Data Management

In one of our quarterly strategy sessions with a 100-person medical group located in the Northern Virginia area, we discovered that one of their biggest business challenges was negotiating reimbursements with insurance providers.

Over the years, they had developed very successful treatment plans for chronic pain with non-drug therapies. This resulted in patients healing faster and rarely returning for additional treatment, reducing the per patient cost to the insurance company.

Compared to their competitors who prescribed opioids for chronic pain, which turns into a host of long range problems, they should have been able to prove greater long-term value to insurers.

However, the medical group had not figured out a way to turn their data that was buried in various electronic health record (EHR) systems into leverage for negotiations.

Ntiva helped the medical group implement a new technology solution that unified data points from multiple EHR applications, removed all patient identification information, and generated reports that showed how quickly patients

go through their system.

By managing their data more effectively and showing these reports to their insurer, the medical group not only increased the amount of their reimbursements, but the insurers started referring more patients to their practice, knowing it would ultimately cost them less.

Bottom line? By utilizing an IT expert to implement a new line of business application integrated with new data storage solutions, the medical group created a win-win-win scenario—increased business results, cost savings for insurers, and better patient outcomes.



4. FINDING THE RIGHT IT INFRASTRUCTURE MIX

Uptime is everything for businesses today.

Just about every mission-critical system and process relies on network connectivity, which means a company's bottom line is significantly impacted by downtime. In fact, [an ITIC survey](#) found that 81% of organizations pay more than \$300,000 per hour of unplanned downtime.

By investing in the proper mix of IT hardware and software—networking components, end user devices, wireless access points, business applications, security solutions, etc.—business

leaders can ensure they've set themselves up for success.

Just as important, having the right team efficiently manage and monitor the environment - whether internal, external or a mix - is key to delivering the most significant impact possible.

Finding the proper mix of hardware and software isn't about purchasing every best-in-breed solution available. But it's not about cutting corners to save money, either. There's no one-size-fits-all approach to IT infrastructure.

Case Study: Improving IT Infrastructure

Ntiva was hired to resolve ongoing downtime issues in a small veterinarian practice. As is typical for small businesses, as well as non-profits and other organizations with small IT budgets, they were operating with decades-old IT solutions that barely covered the modern basics.

It was clear that this equipment had been unable to scale as the business grew from 8 people to over 20. For starters, the wiring in the office was causing latency problems as well as call quality issues across the office – not ideal for providing quality customer service!

They also had outdated software applications which were not being maintained, causing employees to waste time as they struggled with slow systems that crashed

frequently.

Further, they had not even thought about doing regular backups to protect all the client data they had been gathering over the years. Luckily, they had not yet experienced any sort of catastrophic failure that literally would have put them out of business, as they had no way to recover their data.

For starters, we split their voice and data networks, wired the office properly, installed business-grade switches, implemented new monitoring solutions, and made sure there was a quality backup and data recovery system in place.

All of these infrastructure improvements cost less than \$10,000, and just \$1,000 per month to totally take the burden of IT maintenance off their shoulders, by signing up for monthly recurring IT managed services.

We typically find the exact opposite situation in larger organizations. Rather than outdated solutions, they often suffer from a drastically overly-complicated infrastructure with too many “best-of-breed” solutions all layered on top of each other. Managing an infrastructure such as this is complicated and costly. Often the company ends up investing in more and more headcount just to keep everything up and running.

Case in point - a 500-person organization we worked with had a whopping budget of \$3 million per year to maintain a very complicated infrastructure, which required highly-specialized engineers and network managers.

By streamlining and consolidating many of these applications and services, including migrating to more cost-effective cloud solutions, we were able to cut their infrastructure management costs in half.



Were IT employees let go? No.

Some of the team was re-aligned to focus on far more valuable tasks that would end up improving productivity, and thus the bottom line, for the company. In this case, attention was turned to workflow and application assessments for different departments who had long been neglected.

Improving the infrastructure that keeps a business up and running isn't just a one-time investment. It takes strategic planning and ongoing care to ensure the business remains efficient and profitable.

Bottom line? Working with a managed IT services provider doesn't just ensure infrastructure is brought up to date – it can also help the business discover improved technologies that can improve the bottom line.

PREPARING FOR NEW WAVES OF TECHNOLOGY THAT IMPACT THE BOTTOM LINE

It's easy for business leaders to get caught up in the promises of new technology.

While not as flashy as emerging technologies such as AI, block chain and others, streamlining workflows, improving data management, upgrading communications and making sure your infrastructure is up-to-date can positively affect your bottom line in a big way.

As we've seen from the case studies in this paper, while there is certainly a time and place for bringing in new technologies, working with a qualified IT consultant can help you understand what makes sense right now to set the stage for future technological growth.

For example, at Ntiva we've been investigating how AI can help our operations, starting with our managed services offerings. By pulling data together from alerts, monitoring solutions, security reports, and ticket trends with the help of AI tools, we can now proactively identify underlying infrastructure problems more effectively.

This ultimately helps us ensure our clients networks are always up to date and secure, making sure that 'right infrastructure mix' is always available and significantly reducing downtime.

Regardless of your current state of technology usage, we maintain a mindset of "as you grow, we grow." Our role is to help you continuously stay on top of the trends and find new opportunities that will make your business more efficient.

From attacking the basics of getting the right infrastructure in place, to enhancing your security posture or bringing in sophisticated data reporting tools, we're ready to help you increase your business efficiency and profitability.

Get in touch with us today and learn how we can help your business grow!



ABOUT NTIVA

Ntiva is a trusted Managed IT and Cloud Services Provider that offers IT services and support to businesses of all types, building and maintaining infrastructure, securing networks, and providing strategic technology expertise. Our team of world-class talent genuinely cares about the relationships we build and understands that response and precision are fundamental keys to a successful partnership. Ntiva's ultimate objective is to help our clients leverage their technology investments to improve overall business performance.