Finding Hidden Opportunity

Putting SaaS to Work in Your Business

Everyone can recall horror stories about mishaps that occur when workers aren't on the same page. Collaborating effectively to keep business running smoothly and productively. But, should collaboration break down the consequences can be serious.

Efficient collaboration is rarely simple and it can take many forms. Some needs are internally focused, for instance, keeping employees current on corporate policies and procedures. Others require collaboration with external constituents, such as partners, suppliers or customers. Some needs are short term, as when people need to come together to manage a project, while other requirements are ongoing, like when groups need to access, share and update documents, databases, calendars and directories. And, businesses may need to collaborate within one physical location, or with others at numerous locations around the world.

Because effective internal and external collaboration is vital to a successful business, larger businesses build or buy collaboration solutions that are managed in-house. While this model may work for some, these solutions rarely meet the needs of smaller businesses that often lack the resources necessary to deploy, manage and maintain them. The costs involved, for example, from up-front licenses, hardware and integration expenses, to ongoing expenses for maintenance, upgrades and support are often prohibitive for most small business owners.

Software-as-a-Service – The Small Business Alternative

SaaS allows businesses to subscribe to software over the Web and pay for it on a monthly basis. The services can be accessed online from anywhere with an Internet connection, so remote and mobile workers can always be connected to the home office. Furthermore, because the solutions are hosted, many of the upgrades and maintenance requirements can be automated – a big benefit for small businesses with limited IT resources.

Compared with a traditional licensed software model, software-as-a-service offers businesses many distinct advantages that are quickly driving adoption:

- <u>Rapid Deployment</u>: Rather than taking months to implement, businesses can be using the solution in a matter of minutes.
- <u>Less Expensive and More Predictable Costs</u>: Companies pay a set monthly or annual subscription fee, typically based on the number of users. In addition to drastically reducing up-front hardware and software purchases, SaaS also eliminates the need for specialized IT talent, and reduces ongoing costs for maintenance, upgrades and support.
- <u>Faster ROI</u>: By reducing deployment time as well as initial and ongoing capital investments and staffing costs, small business customers can reduce risk and achieve a faster return on investment.
- <u>Low or No Risk Trials</u>: Business can test-drive online services over the Internet, enabling a small business to try the application and see if it fits their needs before making a broader commitment.
- <u>Ease-of-Use</u>: Web-based applications use familiar Web interfaces that are easy for administrators and users to navigate, resulting in higher user adoption and reduced training costs.
- <u>More Responsive Service and Support</u>: Using a "one-to-many" model, SaaS providers can more easily support, manage and upgrade their solutions. They can see how customers use their services in real-time, get live feedback and fix problems once – for all the customers benefit.

The benefits of SaaS become even more apparent for applications specific to collaboration. Because users can access the service via any Web browser, access is not dependent on using a specific personal computer or mobile device. All users can access information from anytime, from different locations and desktops. And because the solutions are scalable and expandable, businesses can start collaborating right away, and then fine-tune processes and functionality as they learn what works and what doesn't.

So, where is the hidden opportunity? It is in the ability for your small and medium business to gain the power and functionality of collaborative technologies without the risk and costs normally associated with such solutions. It is the opportunity to see how the SMB Collaborator is your key to employee communication, keeping your customers satisfied, and running the business smoothly and more predictably.

The benefits of the SMB Collaborator are available through simple subscription and allow you to get started reaping the rewards of SaaS technologies today. Discover how you can start exploiting hidden opportunity and beating the competition with the SMB Collaborator by simply visiting www.getsmb.com or by calling 1-800-525-NEXT.