

# Getting More Out of Your Employees

SMB Quick Reference Series

## On-line Collaboration Tools Drive Productivity

In these current economic times, it is important that you and your business find a competitive edge. Where you can communicate and deliver your products and services in a manner that is better than the competition. One of your largest strategic 'levers' for advantage is your employee. Increasing the productivity of your employees directly contributes to new opportunity and lowered costs – both of which drive advantage to your company.

How is this accomplished? Through the exploitation of technologies that drive communication and collaboration.

A recent study by CIO Magazine polled small and medium business owners to understand how and why collaboration technology is creating a competitive edge. Some of the results may surprise you:

- 56% of respondents strongly agree that on-demand accelerates business; and,
- 40% of businesses have made the leap from using collaboration technologies for individual gains to using it for business process acceleration.

Most intriguing is that the real value of collaboration technology comes from two key areas: enabling knowledge workers; and, interacting with external audiences. More than 75% of the survey respondents use collaborative tools in support of sales staff and other knowledge workers. This is due to these groups yielding the greatest economic return to the business. When interacting with external audiences, 72% collaborate with customers/clients; 41% with vendors/suppliers; and, 37% with peers in the industry.

Likewise, IDG has uncovered a trend worth noting. Businesses are turning to on-demand collaboration solutions rather than traditional licensed software applications for their collaborative technologies. Why are they doing this? 84% of respondents recognize that on-demand software benefits exceed that of traditional licensed collaborative applications due to:

- A substantial reduction in burden to the business and IT (44%)
- Reduced the cost of technology to the business (42%)
- Easy scalability to meet new user or application demand or need (41%)
- Significantly improved productivity and speed (40%)
- A desire to keep the business 'ahead of the technology curve' (26%)

What other benefits do small and medium businesses see when using on-demand collaborative solutions? A recent survey of 341 on-demand collaboration technology customers indicated that on-demand collaboration significantly and positively impacted their ability to:

- Get products to market faster
- Expand reach and meet with geographical teams more often
- Develop more effective and efficient sales teams
- Shorten sales cycles and preserve margin
- Improve customer satisfaction and loyalty
- Reduce costs by more easily training and supporting customers
- Protect the company by staying more compliant with policy and regulations
- Shorten approval cycles and times

All of this spells advantage to the small and medium business. Isn't it time you explored how on-demand collaborative technologies can significantly and positively impact your business and your employees productivity? The SMB Collaborator is your key to getting more out of your employees – today and tomorrow.

The benefits of the SMB Collaborator are available through a simple subscription that allows you to get started reaping the rewards of on-demand collaboration today. Discover how you can start getting more out of your employees with the SMB Collaborator by simply visiting [www.getsmb.com](http://www.getsmb.com) or by calling 1-800-525-NEXT.

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