



The 3 things Professional Services companies really want from digital transformation

And how to get them.



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The world of Professional Services is changing. Are you?

Over the past few years, no industry has escaped the impact of digital transformation. For those in Professional Services – a field still dominated by traditional client-facing operations and processes – pressure is mounting to build sustainable digital plans for the future, and adapt to changing client and market expectations.

You've likely heard and read more than your fair share of stories about how Professional Services companies need to become 'experience' providers, and how those that fail to adapt risk falling into obscurity in an increasingly digitally-driven market. But really, that's not what transformation is all about.

Neither of those things are untrue, but they detract from what should be an extremely exciting prospect.

Digital transformation isn't a threat, it's a huge opportunity – an opportunity to break through the barriers that have slowed your organisation down and embrace a new, more efficient way of working.

From significantly lower costs, to more time in your day to focus on serving clients directly, there are some huge opportunities on the table.

In this eBook we'll guide you through them, and help you better understand how making the right digital decisions today can help you reach the traditional business goals you've been working towards for decades.



Why transform? That's for you to decide

The stage is set for digital change, but what that change looks like will ultimately depend on what your business wants to gain. Every successful digital change project starts with a clear idea of what you want to achieve – not just at a technology level, but in terms of business impacts.

You don't need to sculpt a grand vision of a brighter digital future. You don't need to pick arbitrary new digital goals for your company. You just need to know what it is your business needs more of to deliver the best results.

Ultimately, what most Professional Services companies really want to get from digital transformation is:

- More time to focus on value-adding and client-facing work
- Reduced costs and management complexity
- Peace of mind (from a security and compliance perspective).

¹ https://www.harveynash.com/group/mediacentre/HarveyNashKPMG_CIOSurvey2016.pdf



61% of businesses consider improving business processes to be their number one digital priority.¹



Key driver #1

More time to focus on
client facing work.



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Gaining more time to focus on value-adding and client-facing work

Whether you're a law firm with a large portfolio of demanding clients, or a growing accountancy firm, every Professional Services company wishes there was more time in the day to focus on client-facing work.

If executed properly, digital transformation can give your team more of its most valuable resource – time in the day. You can streamline and remove many of the time-consuming processes that keep your people away from value-adding work.

Here's how...



Reducing management workloads using managed and cloud-based services

Whatever aspect of your operations you're looking to improve, most digital transformation projects today will involve managed or cloud-based services of some kind – and for good reason.

The 'as-a-service' acquisition model makes sense for Professional Services companies. They don't want to have to become digital experts overnight, they want to be empowered with the best tools and tech, without having to worry about dedicating entire teams to managing them.

By acquiring technology and solutions as services, pressure is taken off internal IT teams. Routine management tasks are handled by the vendor, delivering expert assistance and support as required. Plus, you gain the added benefits of having your systems regularly upgraded by experts – ensuring that you stay up to date with new capabilities and fixes, without putting extra pressure on your IT team.

For your team, that adds up to more time in the day to focus on value-adding activities, and often, faster support that keeps every person productive.

82% of managers think it will be challenging to get their staff up to speed on new technologies.²



² <https://www.cpapracticeadvisor.com/payroll/news/21084833/half-of-workers-think-ai-and-automation-wont-affect-their-job>

Streamlining slow business processes

Every business has its bottlenecks. Maybe it's a department with a huge workload, a process that takes days to complete, or just an outdated workflow that isn't fit for the way business is done today. Digital transformation is a chance to stop those bottlenecks, and improve the flow of work across your organisation.

By applying technology in exciting new ways, you can empower each of your people to do more. Enable them to help themselves to shared internal services, give them the means to complete important paperwork remotely and processes digitally, and buy everyone more time in their day by ensuring there are no clogs in the flow of operations across your company.



Improving communication and collaboration between teams and clients

Sometimes in Professional Services, there's no substitute for a face-to-face meeting. But meeting overload is one of the most common causes of lost productivity in the sector.

Using digital communication and collaboration tools like Cisco HCS or Avaya IX Workplace, you can change the way teams and clients communicate, and complete important conversations in a fraction of the time they took previously. With the basic routine conversations taken care of digitally, your team will have more time to focus on the face-to-face meetings that really matter.

Other tools like private file sharing technology such as Box and SharePoint, and real-time document collaboration tools like Google Docs and Microsoft Office 365 can even help you engage with clients in exciting new ways. You can provide them with documentation in an instant, collaborate with them in real-time and walk them through important data or contracts, and close the conversation loop so they always have a convenient way to reach you with non-urgent questions.

27% of companies put enabling the mobile workforce in their top three reasons for using cloud technology.³



³ https://www.harveynash.com/group/mediacentre/HarveyNashKPMG_CIOSurvey2016.pdf

Action points

If you want to use new technology to improve the amount of productive time in your team's day, the first thing you need to do is audit your workflows, and find out where your major productivity bottlenecks are. Once you've identified the big areas where you're losing time, it should become clear where your transformation needs to begin.

The actions you take from there will vary greatly, depending on the bottlenecks you discover. For example:

- If slow communication between key team members and clients is holding processes up, you might want to invest in a Unified Communications and Collaboration platform like WebEx Teams, Microsoft Office 365, or Slack
- If routine management of IT infrastructure is consuming a lot of your IT team's time, you might want to consider moving hardware into the cloud using Infrastructure and Software as a Service, then get expert ongoing support from your chosen cloud partners
- If print and scan processes are slow and inefficient, you could consider modernising your print, scan and document management infrastructure with the help of a Managed Print Services partner
- If legacy line-of-business tools like accounting platforms are limiting productivity, seek out faster, new alternatives deployed in the cloud and managed by a partner.





Key driver #2

Simplifying IT complexity.



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Reducing costs and IT management complexity

It's hard to imagine a business in any industry that's not interested in keeping its costs down and spending more of its money growing, innovating and improving performance. But opportunities to cut costs in a lasting, meaningful way without impacting operations negatively are few and far between.

When planned and managed properly, digital transformation is one of them.



Cutting down tasks that require a dedicated IT team

Over the last three decades, most large Professional Services companies have built up sizable IT teams to manage their expanding tech footprints. Those teams serve an extremely important purpose, but they also carry a significant cost.

Nobody wants to spend all of their money simply keeping the lights on. By using new technology you can shift more of the simple work that consumes your IT team's time to vendor-side experts – freeing up the IT team to focus on innovation and value-adding tasks.

65% of leading CIOs think more than 10% of their workforce could be replaced with AI/automated tools in the next five years.⁴



⁴ <https://assets.kpmg/content/dam/kpmg/xx/pdf/2019/06/harvey-nash-cio-survey-infographic.pdf>

Buying and managing less IT on-site

For organisations like law and accountancy firms, on-premises technology has historically been critical to their operations. It gives total control of data, helping organisations safeguard and secure it on their own terms.

But, maintaining your own data centre and solutions quickly consumes budgets that could be better spent on transformational new tools.

The cloud has matured. Today, cloud and managed services are often a lot more secure than their on-premises counterparts.

The reasons to stick with costly, monolithic on-premises IT are shrinking, while the laundry list of cloud benefits grows by the day.

Improving the efficiency of back-office processes

Complex back-office processes don't just slow your business down, they cost you money every single day. Digital transformation is an opportunity to rebuild those processes, streamline them with new technology and digital capabilities, and reduce the burden they put on your business.

What that looks like will depend entirely on the back-office challenges you're facing today. It could be anything from empowering people to file and manage their own expense claims digitally, to deploying an entirely new platform for finance management that simplifies complex processes across the department.



Action points

If reducing costs is one of your biggest reasons for exploring digital transformation, it makes sense to start with the areas of your business where costs are currently high. That doesn't just mean identifying large areas of spending, it also means identifying the slow workflows that are keeping you from getting the most from your team.

For example:

- If you're spending a lot of money just 'keeping the lights on' across your IT environment, it would be a good idea to explore how managed cloud solutions could help you cut costs – whether that's by reducing the amount of infrastructure you manage, or accessing new tools that require less maintenance
- If your print costs are high, and you find yourself frequently spending money on new print and scan hardware and supplies, explore managed options where experts optimise and maintain your print and scan technology for you
- If your team is limited by a legacy finance platform for example, explore the new, intuitive tools available and consider migrating to a leaner, modern solution.





Key driver #3

Peace of mind (from a security and compliance perspective).



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Gaining peace of mind

The security and compliance landscape is growing more complex every day, and what Professional Services companies really want is peace of mind, knowing that they're doing all they can to meet stringent regulations and protect their clients.

Digital transformation opens up a raft of opportunities to bolster security, improve data management, and gain greater control of everything – and everyone – you need to protect and safeguard today.



91% of CIOs agree that data privacy and trust will soon be as important to clients as their company's service offering.⁵



Improving data and application security

The need for strong data and application security has never been greater. Fortunately, robust security tools and secure services have never been easier for Professional Services companies to access.

Beyond simply acquiring new security solutions, moving software and data to the cloud can help secure it against malicious threats, by putting it in the hands of experts with extremely robust security.

Simplifying update processes

Out-of-date software and solutions are one of the biggest causes of security vulnerabilities. It's easy to understand why an organisation might delay a non-critical update, with the process often leading to downtime and requiring a significant time commitment from your IT team. However, that's all changing thanks to managed services.

When you use a managed service – whether it's a cloud service, or hardware managed by a partner – the experts take care of the update process. You stay up to date with the latest technology updates, without having to worry about managing and executing the changes yourself.



⁵ <https://assets.kpmg/content/dam/kpmg/xx/pdf/2019/06/harvey-nash-cio-survey-infographic.pdf>

Bringing data together in the cloud

The first step toward compliance with strict data retention regulations is improving data visibility and control. Once you can clearly see where your data is and access it quickly and reliably, regulatory requests become fast and simple to fulfil.

Integrated cloud services like Customer Relationship Management, Enterprise Resource Planning and Talent Management platforms help bring disparate data together, and put it in a single, secure place. This helps to ensure you can honour any requests made for information under new data protection regulations like GDPR. Plus, digital processes leave a clearly verifiable audit trail, helping make previously untraceable actions more visible across your organisation in the event of a breach or data loss.

More than 85% of enterprises now keep large volumes of sensitive data in the cloud.⁶



⁶ <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/85-of-enterprises-keeping-sensitive-data-in-the-cloud-70-very-or-extremely-concerned-about-it-according-to-2016-vormetric-data-threat-report--cloud-big-data-and-iot-edition-300225175.html>

Action points

Before acquiring any new tools, devices or services that could improve the reliability and security of your digital resources, we recommend you conduct a full assessment of where your biggest security vulnerabilities are.

In Professional Services, it's essential that sensitive internal and client data never falls into the wrong hands, so you need to understand all of the ways that can happen. By working with an external expert and conducting a detailed audit, you can uncover less considered areas of the security puzzle, such as print and scanning security.

From there, you can choose the right tools to fill your security gaps, such as:

- Managed network security tools that protect both your on-premises IT and your cloud environments
- Managed Print Services, where expert pre-sales technical consultants help you build a robust print security infrastructure that protects both the physical documents going into and coming out of printers and scanners, and your files while they reside in print and document management systems
- Line-of-business cloud tools such as Customer Relationship Management (for example Salesforce) or Enterprise Resource Planning platforms (like Sage Intacct) bring important data together in a single, visible place – helping you respond to regulatory data requests.





Don't overlook print



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Whatever your plans, don't overlook print

When you're planning a digital transformation project, it's easy to overlook your print and document management infrastructure. Often, it's seen as an ancillary area of an organisation's digital tapestry, but for those that factor it into their change plans and explore new approaches to document management, surprisingly significant benefits await.



Giving you the gift of time

Every time a printer goes down, runs out of toner or has a queue of people waiting at it, your business loses money. On their own, each case is ignorable. But together, they add up to a serious amount of lost productivity across your team.

There are also problems that demand attention from your own IT team – taking them away from the things they do best and costing you even more in the long run.

With Managed Print Services, that all goes away. Your expert partner will work with you to boost efficiency in your print environment, and take care of other important but time-consuming processes, such as toner recycling and routine service. They will deploy your physical machines, optimise your infrastructure and keep them running in a way that keeps everyone productive all day.



Future-proofing your business

Managed Print and Document Services don't just solve big problems today, they help set your company up for long-term success. Because your print infrastructure is acquired as a service, it's incredibly simple to change as your needs evolve. Plus, your entire print and scan fleet is consolidated, making it easier to make important changes in the future.

At Brother, we work closely with all of our managed service customers, keeping track of their changing business needs, and adapting their print infrastructures and technology in line with their organisation. We know that digital transformation is a journey, and it's as much about being ready for tomorrow's unknowns as it is about bringing your vision for a better digital future to life.



Providing peace of mind

If you're worried about print security and how it might impact your compliance efforts, Managed Print Services can take a huge weight off your shoulders.

Managed services can help you create a robust, secure print infrastructure – building in capabilities like pull printing solutions such as FollowMe and PaperCut to keep your documents from falling into the wrong hands. They can even monitor your operations remotely to help detect potential risks and issues, and provide proactive support before you even know there's a problem.

Plus, when you sign up for a managed service, your chosen partner will sign a Service Level Agreement guaranteeing you a high level of uptime and availability, and giving you total confidence in your print and scan infrastructure.

Brother currently maintains 99.6% uptime for all print equipment deployed with its managed services customers.⁷





Ready to change? Talk to us.

Wherever you are in your digital transformation journey, if you want to save time, cut costs and gain peace of mind, speak to Brother. Whatever your print and document management needs, we can help you build faster, leaner, more secure print and scan processes – delivered as a service, and managed by experts.

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