

Why going paperless is the best thing for your business

Digitise your processes with a clear digital transformation strategy and your business will function that much more efficiently, while being more environmentally friendly.



Source: www.pexels.com

“Going paperless is far more than some trendy catchphrase,” says Willem Haarhoff cofounder of DoughGetters. When Haarhoff and Murray Barnetson founded DoughGetters, the idea was to break the ‘traditional’ accounting mould by crafting fully remote-working ecosystem that relies heavily on technology. A 100% paperless environment. Haarhoff and Barnetson have learned a lot over the past five years about the benefits of being ‘tech heavy and paper light’ (as they call it) in business, and they believe these lessons could be applied to all SME’s.

1. It promotes remote work

“We are a remote-working business but the trend of working remotely is catching on in many businesses,” Haarhoff says, explaining how not long ago, leading international accounting firm Deloitte announced that their employees could work fully remotely if they choose to do so.

“It is certainly not just for small businesses, what these big corporations are beginning to see is there are 100s of Apps in

the cloud which – if you use them in properly and set them up in a tech stack – you can create a fully digital work environment where 100s if not 1000s of employees can work in tandem,” says Haarhoff.

2. Increases efficiency and cost-effectiveness

According to Haarhoff, any company that goes fully digital will be infinitely more efficient in the way it operates. “In the cloud your overheads are significantly reduced,” he says, outlining how this pertains to everything from employee commutes to office space rentals.

“If your employees no longer have to spend time on the road (and in traffic) they will have more time to complete tasks efficiently, have more time for their own leisure and, your business’s overall carbon footprint will be greatly reduced” he says.

3. A better overall client experience

“Not only will your employees be happier, but so will your clients,” says Haarhoff. “The more routine tasks you do manually, the more expensive the process becomes and the longer it takes. Any business will be way more competitive if it takes full advantage of technology and automates processes.”

The point he brings to the fore here is that a business should make it as easy as possible for its customers to do business, with the least possible barriers to engagement. “Customers ultimately want an easy, hassle-free business experience. If you are stuck in a building somewhere and people have to travel to get to you, it’s going to become a barrier. The same goes for the archaic practice of sending a client countless forms to print out, fill in, sign, scan and send back, just to, say, get a working relationship going.”

“Using technology, we have cut down (what used to typically involve a 30-page document and week-long process of back-n-forth) to a matter of seconds. A client simply opens a link they receive on email, review it and, once happy, they digitally accept the terms. Once that is done, a virtual agreement has been signed. This is kept securely in the cloud, that is just one example,” Haarhoff explains.

4. Highly improved security

Saving these types of high profile documents in the cloud also adds an entirely new level of security. “If you are based in a building, you are tasked with keeping it all secure. There are all sorts of physical threats out there that could compromise the security of these documents and your business as a whole. It could be unauthorised access to your documents, water damage from a storm, whatever,” Haarhoff says, adding that with true paperless storage in the cloud one has access to infinitely better security at scale, at the same level banks do. “This at an absolute fraction of the cost, a similar level of security would be possible in physical terms.”

5. Better disaster recovery

Leading on from the previous point, if a business is operating technologically efficiently, there would be no need to have to worry about physical backups. “If my laptop crashes right now, or I spill coffee over it and fry the motherboard, I need only to go to a computer shop, reconnect and login. I don’t use paper so I don’t have to worry about files that might have been lost during a fire or stolen or anything, if something really dramatic happens I can just plug-n-play,” he says.

This goes a long way to future-proofing a business too. “The way I see it, it’s almost not a choice any more. I don’t think any business can survive or consider themselves a serious business, with genuine longevity aspirations, unless they have a clear digital transformation strategy in place and, in play.”

The key take out for SMEs about going truly paperless and digitising their operations is that ‘sustainability’ applies in an environmental sense – in terms of reducing carbon emissions and paper usage – as well as from a business perspective.

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