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BUSINESS

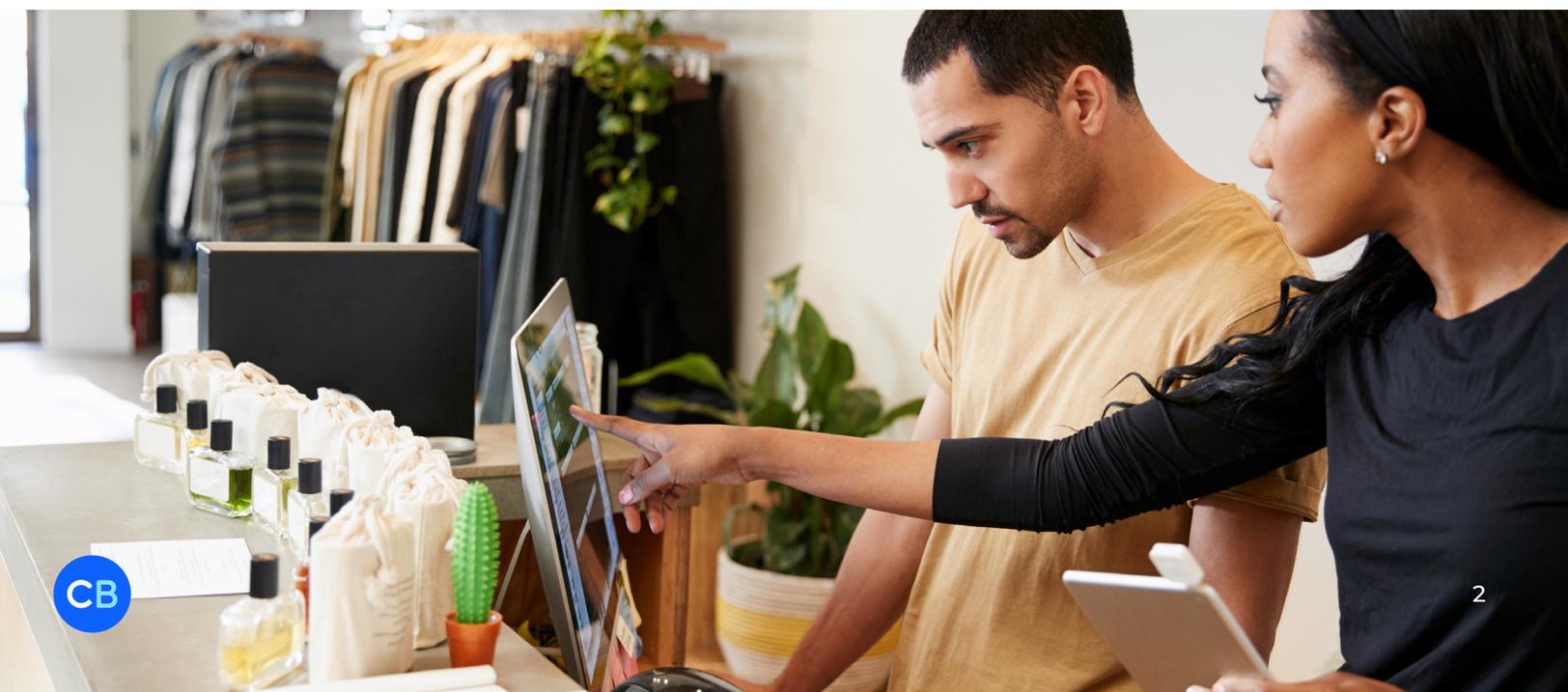
SMALL BUSINESS GUIDE

The Small Business Guide to Using Technology to Increase Productivity



Small business owners are always trying to balance growth and resources, but are emerging from the pandemic with a new set of challenges—and opportunities. While customer experience expectations have changed to fully embrace seamless, digital approaches to business and small business owners grapple with labor shortages and adapting to a distributed workforce, small businesses that have embraced their digital pivot are finding new paths to growth, productivity, customer loyalty, and success. By tapping into new tools and technologies, small businesses have found new ways of serving customers, improving processes, bolstering productivity, and taking advantage of a talent pool that in many cases isn't bound by locality.

To adapt and make the most of this unique moment, small business owners need to find ways to be even more productive and take advantage of new business solutions. This small business guide lays out key insights and takeaways for small business owners to be more productive with technologies and solutions like automation, connectivity, mobile tech, cybersecurity, and automatic back-up.





Automate everywhere

Automation isn't just for big business anymore. Small businesses are tapping into business process automation to cut down on the number of manual tasks that can so quickly fill a day.



Present a polished image

Automate email responses to “contact us” buttons on your website to ensure a fast and seamless response and use automated voice attendants to provide a seamless experience when a customer calls, routing them to the right person effortlessly, whether in the office or on the road.



Automatically connect the dots

Leverage automated appointment reminders—as well as self-serve scheduling and cancellation functionality—to prevent gaps in your schedule. Or send lead inquiries directly to sales teams when they come in through lead generation forms.



Collect and provide data in the moment

Send customer feedback surveys after a purchase or encounter, allowing for easy data collection and ongoing experience optimization. Likewise, use social media automation tools to fill out your feeds with helpful information about your business.



Get mobile

These days, most business doesn't happen in the office or at a desk. It happens on the road, at home, or anywhere in between. With more employees relying on mobile devices to do their jobs, a business-grade mobile network isn't just a nice-to-have—it's essential.



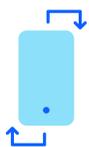
Work at the speed of 5G

Business moves fast. Ensure that you work with a mobile provider that's built for speed and is powered by a fast, reliable network with nationwide 5G coverage. With download speeds up to 20 times faster than 4G, 5G coverage can help you receive documents, presentations, images and more—when you're on the go.



Find a plan that works for you

There are lots of variables that affect what kind of plan you need from a business mobile provider. How often are your employees on WiFi vs. relying on cellular data? How data-hungry is your day-to-day business? Assess your needs and pick a plan that's right for you. If your team is mostly in the office or on-site, coerced by a WiFi network, consider buying by the Gig. If they're on the road and using lots of cellular data, an unlimited data option may be your best bet.



Align with a provider you already work with for a seamless experience

Your connectivity provider is already aligned with the needs of your organization. Working with an existing provider not only benefits you in terms of a seamless experience—you can also save money, too.

Keep employees connected

Many small businesses rely on a workforce that may or may not be in one central location. Employee flexibility can be a critical element in the success of any small business, as the ability to react to and address customer needs is paramount. Businesses need to be able to support employees and their devices no matter where they are.

Get WiFi that's fast—and smart

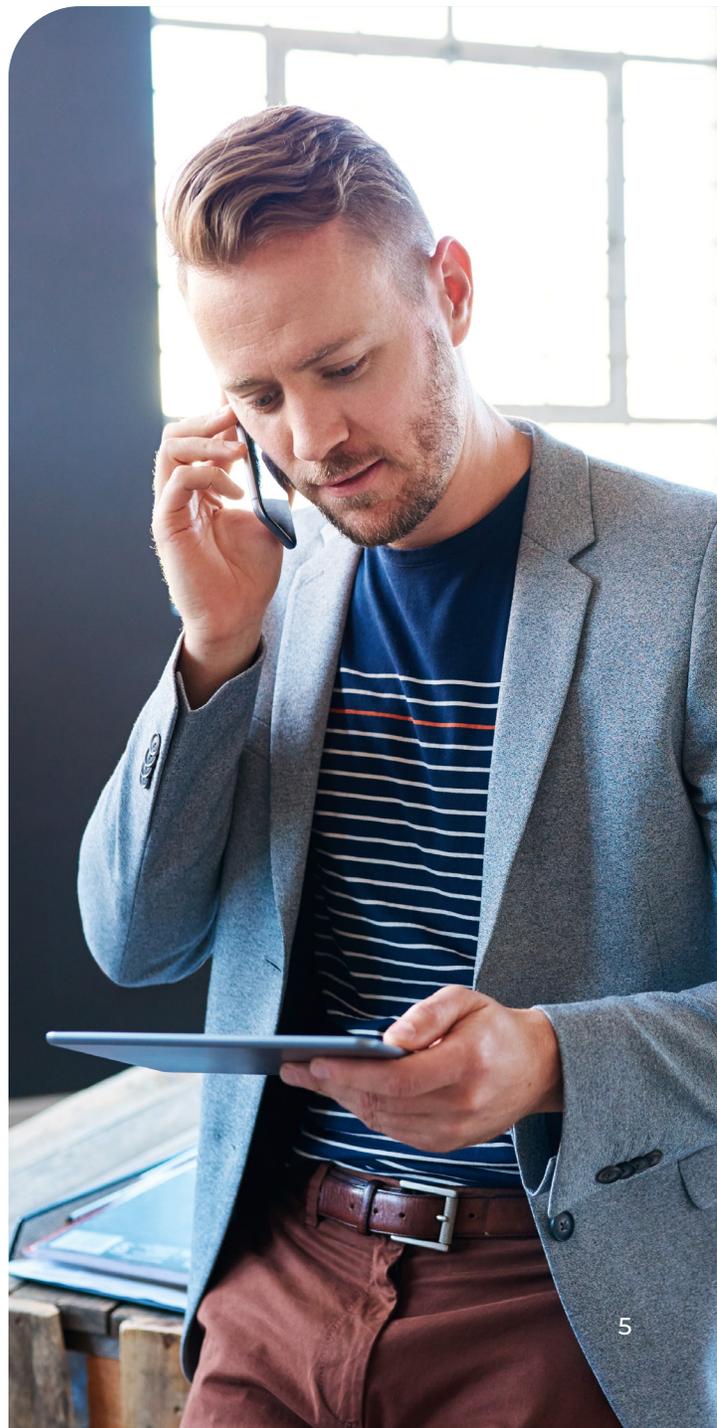
On-premise businesses need to keep employees and customers connected. Whether that's to power a tablet in the hands of a restaurant server or an associate taking inventory, or to provide guest WiFi, pick a solution that allows for separate networks for front- and back-of-house, analytics, and splash page customization and personalization.

Unified Communications

A cloud-based unified communications and collaboration system is a must for small businesses, whether in centralized or distributed locations. Such systems can keep employees connected anywhere with one business number for both their desktop phone and their mobile device, and offer features such as auto attendant to ensure calls are answered at any time.

Don't forget about voice

Ensure landline calls are attended to and answered and employees can stay connected to you—and each other—with a VoIP system that allows for easy transfers and call routing, automated attendants, and more.



Back it up—in more ways than one

A work stoppage due to an Internet or power outage, or, even worse, can impact your business.



Help stay connected, even when the power's out

Don't let a downed power line or thunderstorm knock you out of commission. Leverage automated backup for communication outages. Solutions like 4G LTE Internet backup can help you stay online and available to customers even when the power goes out.



Use automated file back-up

Backing up files shouldn't be a manual process—not only is it needlessly time-consuming, it will invariably get pushed to the bottom of the priority list. Most operating systems have automatic back-up processes at regular intervals—ensure they're on and enabled. At the same time, third-party cloud-based file sharing and office applications, available from a number of online providers, are good tools for back-up redundancy in case primary systems fail or you lose access.



Help prevent a breach—with ease

Small businesses may not have the resources of a full-sized security team, but they face the same risks. To remain productive and secure, small businesses should look to implement a multifaceted cybersecurity strategy that entails:



01.

Educate users

When hacking attempts succeed, it's often through the targeting of unsuspecting end users. Keeping employees trained on an ever-evolving slate of security threats is one of the strongest lines of defense for small businesses.

02.

Make monitoring automatic

Use threat monitoring tools that actively scan and intervene to help stop threats like malware, ransomware, phishing, and botnets. Threat monitoring and mitigation can also prevent employees and guests from accessing sites that are unsafe or inappropriate.

03.

Make smart passwords mandatory

One user with a weak system of passwords can compromise your entire business. Easy-to-use password management tools can make the task of creating—and remembering—strong passwords much easier.

04.

Enact strong cybersecurity policies and directives

It's one thing to put the technology in place to help prevent a breach, but technology isn't enough on its own. It's important that you put policies in place—like patch management, data encryption, rules around back-up, and more—in place to set standards of expected behavior. What's more, policies should be easy to understand and easily accessible for everyone in the company.



Every day in business is a big day. And given the challenges faced by small businesses everywhere, it's important for them to make the most of each and every day. To help stay productive and ready for what's next, small businesses should turn to a mix of management and process tweaks, tools that can help boost productivity and enable growth, and powerful network connectivity to power it all.

**See how Comcast
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