

SMEs embracing the new way of working



By [Brian Timperley](#)

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South African small to medium enterprises (SMEs) are warming up to working differently as they embrace the gradual move away from being secured to a physical desk. They're also allowing employees to use whatever devices they want and, secondly, ensuring that they're able to connect from anywhere.



Brian Timperley

The result is that the younger generation entering the workforce is no longer being indoctrinated into working in a specific way, but rather being more productive by using the latest technology available to them.

One of the primary benefits of embracing new ways of working is that small business owners are now able to capitalise on employees who want to work from home and need greater flexibility than working traditional office hours. For this process to succeed, business owners need to do two things: take a leap of faith, and embrace the new way of working.

Many people have been brainwashed into thinking that we all need to be tied to a desk, a device or a place of work; that's not the reality or the future way of working. Rather, we should be opening our eyes to the many alternatives currently available. We need to redefine the way we work and rather focus on being more collaborative with co-workers, sharing openly and accessing any application remotely.

Greater efficiency

By being able to access applications from anywhere, we're achieving two things: avoiding sitting in unproductive traffic congestion and doing more with the time that's available to us. By sharing documents and collaborating, for example, you're being more efficient because you're avoiding the need to send the same document back and forth multiple times.

There is absolutely no necessity for an SME to have a server on site. Not only is it one of the biggest costs associated with IT for small businesses, but it inevitably means that SMEs end up buying more storage and back-up in support of the server already acquired. Modern SMEs realise this and have elected to focus on what they do best, leaving the IT headache to the professionals.

We've been indoctrinated for 30 years into thinking that anything other than Microsoft's Windows operating system is not suited to business. In fact, there are so many options available to us these days that the Windows desktop has become increasingly irrelevant. For too long, people have assumed that Windows is the only business operating system and that Android and Apple Mac OS are suited only to consumers.

The intuitive response to using technology should be that you simply plug it in when you need to use it, access the applications you need (regardless of device) and unplug it when you're done. There's no longer a need to shut down a device when you're done with it.

All the basics to do your job already exist in the cloud, which includes the basics such as hosted email, back-up and storage. With this in mind, more SMEs are embracing the change that allows them to work more efficiently, from anywhere and on any device - and their bottom line doesn't suffer either, as using someone else's IT infrastructure is significantly more cost-effective than doing it themselves.

SMEs that have embraced the new way of working are the ones attracting and retaining real talent. It's time that corporates start embracing this trend or risk being labelled as unattractive places to work.

ABOUT BRIAN TIMPERLEY

Brian Timperley is managing director and co-founder of Turrito Networks and managing director of Dial a Nerd.

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