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Three Ways the Cloud Boosts Businesses



Thanks to the increasing capabilities of modern computing networks, businesses have been able to experience enhanced productivity. One such capability, cloud computing, has allowed businesses to reach outside of their physical location to conduct their operations. Here, we'll review some of cloud computing's other benefits.

Improved Team Collaboration

One of the cloud's best-known benefits is how useful it is to a...



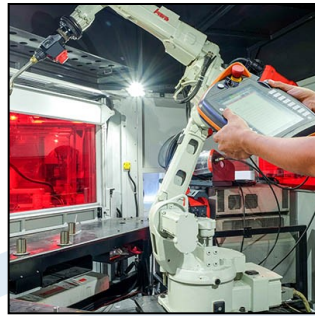
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Managed Services and Manufacturer's Information Systems



The business that manufactures products is first and foremost interested in efficiency. They need their processes to turn out product, be cost effective, and be repeatable. The aim of IT services for manufacturers is to help facilitate efficient and effective processes starting with procurement of resources through to the support of the goods.

The first thing you have to understand is that most manufacturers don't sell directly to the public. The ones that do typically do so through a retail arm of the same business; but, for the most part, the goods a manufacturer makes are sold to retail businesses at "wholesale" prices. For those that don't know wholesale is the act of buying in bulk so that you can slightly inflate the price your business charges for the goods.

The way IT fits in is substantial, especially since energy costs and payroll can threaten to squash the profit margins a manufacturer sees. In order to keep things running efficiently, the modern small manufacturer needs the following tools:

- **Supply Chain Management** - From procurement to managing outsourced contracts, a manufacturer needs a way to track its resources.
- **Production Control** - The physical production of the goods you sell, covering the management of your staff, machinery, and IT your business uses in this process.
- **Quality Control** - Testing the products is a must.

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Line of Business Software Is Improving Business



It's true that today's businesses rely on software to help them fill in the gaps. For certain businesses, however, not just any piece of software will do. If your business is reliant on specific software to properly run your business, or if your business functions in an industry rife with regulations, you might be looking for a line of business software.

Line of business software is made up of applications designed specifically for your needs, or close enough to your needs that you can adjust the way you use the software to fit your business. Either way, line of business software is some of the most crucial applications the modern business uses.

Examples of Line of Business Software

Line of business software is any software that is necessary for the specific needs of your business. A software that was built for businesses like yours in mind. As where your business may not be able to properly function without its word processor, or its email client, or its accounting software, these applications are used by many businesses in many industries and wouldn't be considered Line of Business solutions. Let's take a look at some line of business software you might find in different industries.

Finance

Finance is where you probably would find the most line of business software. Most elements in finance are regulated, which means that companies would be more apt to have

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Cybersecurity Awareness for Manufacturing



Manufacturers are interesting businesses. Not only do they depend on manpower and technology to produce goods, they also rely on IT to power processes, manage their supply chain, and enhance organizational efficiency. With October being Cybersecurity Awareness month, we thought we'd take a look at what a manufacturer's cybersecurity efforts look like.

Costs of a Data Breach

Before we go into depth about the manufacturers, we need to get across just how devastating a data breach can be for your business. Here are some interesting statistics from a study of 2018's data breaches conducted by IBM:

- The average cost of a data breach: \$3.86 million
- The average cost per lost or stolen record as a result of a data breach: \$148
- The average cost of lost business after a data breach: \$4.2 million
- The average cost of notifying individuals that their data has been compromised: \$740,000

With this information, you know that protecting your business' data and infrastructure is imperative to the long-term success of your business.

Manufacturing Cybersecurity

Manufacturing is the second most attacked industry. For the manufacturer it can get a little tricky since it seemingly depends on several different entities and departments to make the finished products. Here are four ways that modern manufacturers can go about guarding against today's cybersecurity threats.

Protect Your Company's Intellectual Property

Intellectual property is one of the most stolen entities in modern computing. As a result, companies looking to protect their property against outside threats need to do what many organizations would do while protecting personally identifiable information. The first would be to limit access. A comprehensive access control system will go a long way toward keeping knowledge on a need-to-know basis.

Prioritize Training

Every employee that has some type of access to your business' information systems have to be trained with the requisite knowledge necessary to properly protect the company's network and data. Some topics that...



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Managed Services and Manufacturer's Information Systems

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- **Customer Relationship Management** - From marketing to product support, a manufacturer needs to be able to manage their potential and existing relationships.

Being the core considerations of any manufacturing management team, these four elements are usually accomplished using computers. As a result, finding cost effective tools that will manage these processes (and any other they deem important) is essential. One tool that meets the needs for larger manufacturers is an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system. For smaller manufacturers, this platform may be overkill as it provides enterprise-level support to a business.

The tools used by most manufacturers are baked into the ERP; and, because of this, they can be pricey to run and maintain. The key to finding out if the ERP is right for your business is to ascertain if, by rolling out one of these

platforms, your business will see increased efficiency, productivity, and sales in order to take on this kind of major business overhaul. Let's take a look at how an ERP can solve a lot of the operational problems manufacturers run into.

Enterprise Resource Planning

The first thing you need to know about an ERP solution is that it will take some time to implement properly. In fact, if you don't have an idea about how your operations would be represented inside a computer system, having an expert to rely on becomes massively important. Our IT professionals can help you decide which system is right for your business, how to go about implementing the system, and how to get the most out of it through proper use and continued support.

The typical ERP has options to help manufacturers manage their business. Firstly, they have options to manage vendors and suppliers, ensuring the

procurement process is squared away efficiently. It has operational tools to help manage human resources, payroll, accounts receivable, scheduling, and productivity management, ensuring that your business is functioning in a manner commensurate with demand and on-hand supply.

Additionally, the ERP has options to handle both quantity and quality control, providing managers the information needed to scale production, human resources, and distribution systems as needed. A company that doesn't have strong quality control faces the risk of losing their market share to companies that don't need to have as much customer support. No matter how good a company's customer support is, producing useful and reliable products results in fewer resources...



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Line of Business Software Is Improving Business

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specific software created for them, or they would have open-sourced software altered with security as to meet the criteria of any compliance standards their company is beholden to. Some line of business software you might find in finance include:

- Consumer banking applications
- Wealth management applications
- Retail brokerage applications
- Insurance portal applications

Retail

The retail space is a major growth space

for software integration. Not only do businesses develop their own management software that integrates inventory management, staff scheduling, and point of sale systems, they also need to integrate those systems with their online ecommerce software. These custom software titles can carry huge up-front and recurring development costs.

Service

Companies that provide a service needs to have the basic elements that will allow them to sell, carry out the service, and support the service delivery. Many service businesses tend to need a

ticketing system, a scheduling system, with integrated payroll systems as the work is usually carried out by trained professionals. The professional services automation (PSA) software works well for the service industry as it gives a business' staff all the resources it needs to deliver service and support customers.

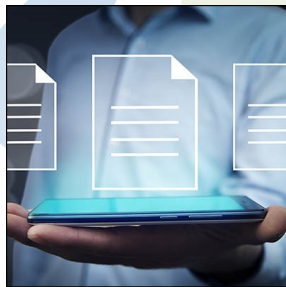
Medical

The medical field, much like finance, is...



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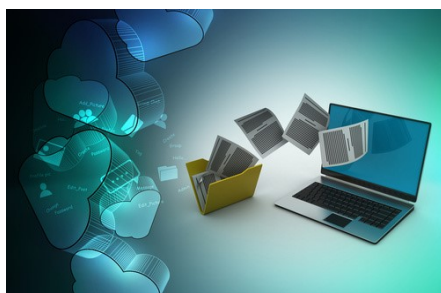
The Uses of Document Management in Manufacturing



Companies are always looking for a better way to manage their data. For the modern manufacturer, there is a

lot of data to manage. For some time, the best process was to fill up clanky file cabinets and pay people to oversee the process. This is no longer the case. With much of an organization's groundwork being done on computers, storing transactional and clerical data on digital systems only makes sense.

Introducing document management, a system that can file away all your business' data and provide you with easy data retrieval without the headache of depending on other people to physically get the data for you. If your business has been in operation for years (or decades), documents can go missing and create inefficiencies. With the



integration of a Document Management System, your business will immediately move faster.

What is Document Management?

The Document Management system (DMS) is basically a structured repository for all of your organization's documents. It's a simple concept that seems difficult to implement, but with today's solutions, it's easy for your business can keep all of its crucial data in one secure location.

Here's How It Works

Once you decide that a Document Management System is right for you, you need to address some logistical problems. The first is where are you going to store all your information. You will need to procure file storage space inside your location or in the cloud. Next you will get all of your paper documents digitized. Using either scan-to-storage or data imaging, the DMS you choose will capture a document as an image and file it away in a pre-defined location.

When scanned, the images of the new documents are saved as PDF files, it provides users a way to search the DMS for keywords and metadata found on that document. With a DMS you will never have to have another filing cabinet. All of your data is stored digitally and searchable through the DMS.

What are the Benefits?

The benefits of a DMS are substantial for manufacturers. Business moves fast and no large (or small) manufacturer can afford to deal with downtime. With a DMS, business moves faster. Some DMS solutions integrate with document signing applications providing built-in contract management. This keeps the supply chain constantly working for your company, and keeps it from working against it.

A full list of benefits includes:

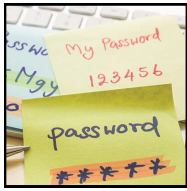
- Reduction in physical space needed for storage
- Enhanced security with encryption
- Improved compliance with regulations
- Easy and fast retrieval of documents
- Remote retrieval for enhanced collaboration
- Easier redundancy for your organization's business continuity efforts

If you are a manufacturer that is searching for a way to centralize all of your documents in a reliable and secure document management system, call the experts at ShowTech Solutions today at (813) 793-4700.



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Can Apps Provide Secure Password Management?



Do you use different passwords on every account you've created? Are these passwords sufficiently complex? Chances are at some point you have used a repeating password. Remembering 35 different logins for 35 different applications is hard enough, so it's not surprising that the majority of people will use the same password for many applications. Bad password practices are all too common. So, how can you fix this?



The solution is implementing a password management system. A password manager is ideal for any business, providing an array of features which can further enhance your password practices. First, let's talk about what a Password Management System is.

Password Management Business Solutions

Password management is exactly what it sounds like -- a program that stores passwords for you. By storing passwords, it allows users to create custom passwords without the worry of

forgetting them. What's worse than forgetting passwords? Storing passwords in an unsecure document. Therefore, for any business owner password management is the ideal solution. Password management systems do not compromise security in exchange for convenience.

These programs often contain tooling which assists in starting and maintaining excellent password practices.

Which Password Manager is Right for Me?

Although many different options are available when choosing a password management system, your business should select a system that maximizes not only security, but also productivity.

Security

Your business should never sacrifice security when choosing what is supposed to be a beneficial program. These programs remind you of best practices, giving the user an alert if passwords are too similar. They should require a multi-factor authenticator in order to be accessed.

Perhaps most importantly, these programs should store all but one password - the password to the program itself.

The hidden behind-the-scenes security should also be a major factor in choosing a program. Your password management system should be protected by role-based access, secure cloud storage, and encryption.

Without these security features, your password management system is nothing but an open document for anyone to view all of your passwords.

Storage Considerations

Like all things, there are pros and cons associated with choosing a storage method. Here are the two common methods passwords are stored: in the cloud or kept natively on your device. So, which one is right for you?

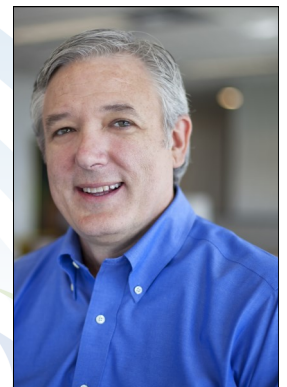
Storing passwords in the cloud gives businesses the ability to access these credentials on any device. This also means anyone unauthorized who gains access to the cloud, is also able to access these credentials. Likewise, storing passwords on an in-house device leaves businesses susceptible to device failure, or being burglarized.

The storage method is important to understand, but...



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We partner with many types of businesses in the area, and strive to eliminate IT issues before they cause expensive downtime, so you can continue to drive your business forward. Our dedicated staff loves seeing our clients succeed. Your success is our success, and as you grow, we grow.



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