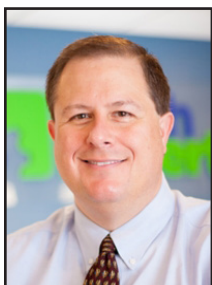# What Could Digital Transformation Do For Your Business?

Thomas Fox is president of Tech Experts, southeast Michigan's leading small business computer support company.

As an ambitious business owner, you're always looking for new ways to help your business develop, improve, and grow, no matter how successful it already is. You also want to improve the experience for your customers.

And of course, you'll be aware that your IT infrastructure plays a big part in this growth and the overall experience.

That works both ways. Sometimes, it's that same infrastructure that can limit how your business evolves. Running older systems, or perhaps systems that don't fully meet your needs, can hold back growth.

This is where digital IT transformation comes in. Maybe you've never heard that term before. Or perhaps the concept is new to you. Here's a one line explanation:

Digital IT transformation is about using modern technology to create or modify business processes, culture, and customer experiences.

It involves a complete reassessment and overhaul of your technology, with the goal of improving the effi-ciency and delivery of your products or services.

We can make this easier with a few case studies of how big businesses you've definitely heard of used digital IT transformation. Just because these are big names doesn't mean it isn't relevant to you - this is for all businesses, of all sizes.

Netflix

Are you old enough to remember when Netflix's business model was based on direct mail? They'd mail their customers a DVD. Customers would watch it, mail it back, then wait a few days for another DVD to arrive through their letterbox. Of course, Netflix led the way to the streaming world we enjoy today.

That was digital IT transformation. They used technology to flip their business model on its head.

This has not only improved the customer experience (now you wait seconds instead of days for a movie), but it's also increased customer loyalty too.

Lego

Believe it or not, in 2004, Lego was on the brink of bankruptcy. This pushed the company to start its digital IT transformation journey, which is still ongoing today.

First, Lego digitized its supply chain processes, which allowed it to gain more insight into production delays and manufacturing costs. Between 2008 and 2016, the company central-ized HR applications, moved to a digitized shop floor system, and stream-lined decision-making processes.

To improve customer experience, Lego added mobile apps, games and even movies to its products. The first Lego film generated an additional $467 million in revenue (off a production budget of $65 million).

Kodak

When you think of Kodak today, you think of a dead camera company. As the digital revolution took hold at the start of the century, cameras evolved from using film to storing photos digitally.

Kodak held firm with film (despite inventing the first digital camera!) under the impression that launching a digital camera would cannibalize its existing business.

Which we now know was not the case. Kodak's failure to digitally transform at the right time led to the company losing a lot of money, then bankruptcy in 2012. Eventually, after a big financial loss, Kodak took the step towards digital photography, but it was too late.

Of course, these are extreme cases and big businesses, but they highlight just what a difference embracing digital IT transformation (or failing to embrace it) can make to your business.

There are four main areas of

Of course, these are extreme cases and big businesses, but they highlight just what a difference embracing digital IT transformation (or failing to embrace it) can make to your business.

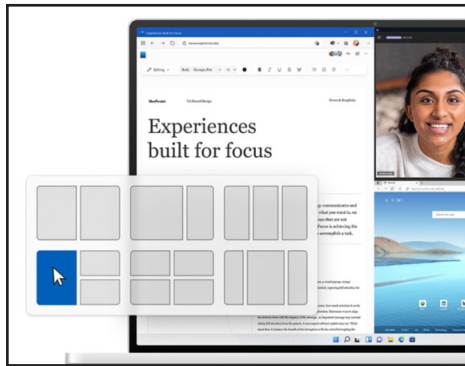# What Are The Most Helpful Features Of Windows 11?

One of the reasons that Windows 11 has been welcomed with open arms for both home and business computer upgrades is that it isn't dramatically different from Windows 10. This upgrade is mainly focused on helping users do tasks faster and find things more easily.

If you've been on the fence about whether or not to upgrade to Windows 11, we'll go through several of the most helpful features below that might make you want to upgrade sooner rather than later.

And if you have already upgraded your machine to Windows 11 or purchased a new PC with the OS installed, you'll want to look over these features to make sure you haven't been missing out on some productivity enhancers.

Snap layouts

One challenge that tends to be universal across multiple users is the struggle of trying to work in

more than one window at a time on your PC screen. You can end up spending time resizing the windows just right, then need to open a window to full size to reach a scroll bar and end up back at square one.

Many users will app-switch, meaning they switch between one app window that is fully open and another that isn't. This is also time-consuming.

In a study of user productivity, it was found that 56% of app users said that switching between apps makes it difficult to get essential work done and costs them at least 30 minutes per day.

Enter… snap layouts in Windows 11.

This feature is designed to solve this problem by providing the user with several options for window arrangements that snap windows into place. The view

is designed so you can reach all scroll bars and menu items in a particular app window.

This is one of the most time-saving features of the new operating system and it's very intuitive and easy to use.

Texting & video calls from Teams on the desktop

If you're one of those people that hates typing out texts on a tiny smartphone screen only to have it altered by a rogue auto-correction, then the new Teams integration in Windows 11 is going to be a welcome change.

Teams is now natively integrated on the taskbar, so there is no application you need to install. Setup only takes a few minutes and involves you putting in your name and a mobile phone number.

Using the Microsoft Teams icon from the desktop, you can instantly begin connecting to people via SMS or video/audio chat. You can even share a screen during your meetings.

The To Do widget

One of the new features in Windows 11 that doesn't look fully finished is the widgets panel. This feed

has a few basic applications in it at the moment, and more are expected to come, which will make it even more useful. You get to this panel through an icon on the taskbar, and the widget feed can be tailored with local weather, traffic, news, and more.
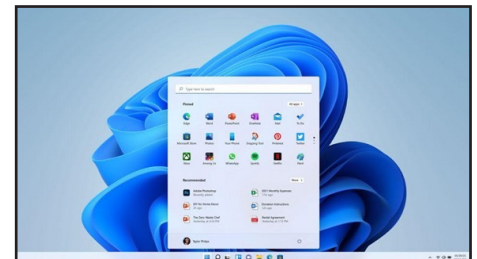
One of the helpful features you can use right now is the To Do widget. It allows you to quickly create a task list and check off those tasks without having to open another application.

The widget can be added in seconds to your panel and can be quite a time-saver because of the easy access right from your desktop.

Streamlined Start/Search Menu

If you're still using your File Explorer to search for documents, you can save a lot of time by using the Start/Search Menu instead. Click the Windows icon on the taskbar (which has now been moved to the middle instead of far left) and type your search keyword at the top.

This is a master search that will bring up documents, settings, applications, and even web pages. Searching using the Start Menu is faster than trying to find a file in the Explorer.

The newly streamlined interface also reduces the clutter of the old Windows Start Menu making it easier to get where you need to go and find the programs you use every day.

Task view

Task view is the virtual desktop feature that had been introduced in Windows 10. This remains a very handy feature for separating the different areas of your work to stay focused.

You can use the task view icon on the taskbar to create a different virtual desktop with different open applications and documents. For example, you could keep your email open on one virtual desktop and then use another when you're in a video call and sharing screens.

How Distributed Cloud Computing Enhances User Experience

As cloud technology is gaining popularity, businesses are encountering challenges such as security and reliability. This explains why the cloud market, edge computing, multi-cloud, and hybrid cloud are staging the ground for distributed cloud computing.

New generations are ready to move on from traditional methods and technologies to the cloud. This is possible once businesses access the distributed cloud computing technology to enhance user experience and other tasks.

What is distributed cloud computing?

Distributed cloud computing is a technology that provides businesses with better knowledge about the market to fulfill customers' needs with inexpensive IT systems. There are three origins of the distributed cloud:
• Public cloud
• Hybrid cloud
• Edge computing

Benefits of distributed cloud computing

Public cloud providers distribute services in different locations. The facilities are available to organizations that require low latency computational abilities.

This will help control the consistency in the location to manage the public and cloud infrastructure through a single channel.

Distributed cloud computing will provide major benefits with improved performance. This is possible after eliminating the latency problems and reducing the risk of control plane inefficiencies or global network outages.

With the distributed cloud, you can create cloud networks, storage, and compute in a shared environment. These storage networks are available in different zones. Some experts call these zones substations, which makes a lot of sense after understanding their qualities.

For instance, you can use the nearest branch of the local post office to avail their services.

The support, innovation, and productivity will not change because the public cloud providers will be

responsible for managing distributed cloud substations.

Below, you will find some benefits of the distributed cloud:

Distributed cloud will increase compliance

This will ensure that the data is available in a specific location where customers can easily avail benefits.

The system will reduce the risk of network failure as the data is available in local and semi-local subnets. Different compute zones will be available with an increasing

number of locations.

Distributed cloud computing and enhancement of user experience

Distributed cloud computing tools enable businesses to process data in real-time. They can also manage their data and create a data foundation. They can enhance the user experience by driving new and innovative strategies with accuracy, consistency, and relevant data.

Distributed cloud computing solutions allow businesses to customize their solutions to develop long-term customer relationships and offer faster, seamless services.

With this advanced version of cloud computing, they can enhance their responses to discover customer preferences.

Distributed cloud computing and the future

Technology experts are planning the future of distributed cloud computing by keeping in mind the business sector's needs, interests, and similar industries. They focus more on cloud strategy, which concisely provides faster and better solutions to businesses.

Technology plays a vital role in enhancing business performance. However, businesses still need a solution so they can simplify their complicated IT structures. To drive better outcomes, businesses require an IT solution such as distributed cloud computing to simplify their tasks and activities and facilitate their customers with a better user experience.

"With the distributed cloud, you can create cloud networks, storage, and compute in a shared environment. These storage networks are available in different zones. Some experts call these zones substations, which makes a lot of sense after understanding their qualities."

Digital Business Transformation, continued

transformation that you need to consider:

Process transformation

This is most appropriate when a business needs a radical transformation. It can modernize your processes, integrate new technology, and save money.

Process transformation can result in the most drastic changes to your business. Before you begin, and to help decide whether it's the right step for you right now, you need to ask yourself what your goals are for transformation:

- Do you need to upgrade your systems?
- Will you need to bring in new technology?
- Will you change your processes to a new structure?

It's really important to set baseline metrics when deciding on process transformation. These will help you understand if the transformation is a success. You should involve your team in this process. Ask for feedback on how your current system is working, its benefits, and drawbacks.

Ask your team what they'd like to see in a new system. How can they see new processes improving their role and making them more productive?

This kind of feedback can give you the most valuable insight into how your systems should be working to make the biggest improvement.

And before you embark on process transformation, you should create an ideal workflow path. This will help you identify the areas that you need to focus on first and really un-

derstand both the system tasks that take place and the human element involved.

Business model transformation

As we saw in the case studies, it's possible to adapt or completely re-invent your current business model to open up new opportunities.

Never has this been more evident than in our post-pandemic society. Covid-19 really changed the way we think about customer experience and digitization of products and services.

As businesses, we were forced to make quick decisions and digitally transform practically overnight.

We learned a lot about the barriers that are actually in place to prohibit change and those that we place there ourselves - you just need to look at the way the healthcare industry quickly overcame privacy concerns when it shifted to virtual appointments.

Not every business model transformation needs to be at the level of Netflix. It could mean something as simple as using data to offer customers add-on products and services that complement what they already buy.

Domain transformation

This is not necessarily the most commonly used area of digital IT transformation, but it's worth your consideration.

New technologies have the ability to redefine your products or services in a big way.

A good example of this is the way Amazon moved into a new domain with AWS (Amazon Web Services).

AWS is now the most popular cloud service provider in the world.

While it wasn't an obvious move for Amazon to dip a toe into the cloud computing industry, it was able to leverage services it already used - in this case, massive storage capacity - to create a brand new offering to its customers.

Lego also did this with its expansion into film and gaming.

Think about the products and services you already offer. Is there anything that you currently use that could be leveraged to offer another product or service?

Organizational transformation

If your business spends time and money updating its technology and designing its processes and products, its internal values and behaviors need to evolve to mirror this change, too.

Failure to get buy-in from your people could result in the complete failure of your transformation, even if everything else is primed to work. Just a little resistance can mean adoption of your new technology is slower than it should be or, worse, abandoned entirely.

And you don't need us to point out that the result of this would be a loss of revenue, productivity, and potentially even your people.

Make the time to clearly communicate your vision for transformation. Do this regularly. Involve your people in the processes, and ask for – and importantly, listen to – their feedback along the way.

Everyone should understand the risk and why it's worth taking.