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Leveraging technology: Welcome it, or be left in the dust

By Anthony Licate

Remember how things used to be? Wireless Internet access was not even a thought to most people. The standard cell phone simply called and received calls. Super fast Internet access was expensive and only an option for companies, not the average user at home.

In today's world, technology has altered every facet of our lives. We are able to send and receive pictures, videos, documents, and instant text messages through the standard model cell phone with any wireless phone carrier. It's not unusual to expect wireless Internet access in hotel rooms and coffee shops. Online banking has become 'the norm'. Even children have transformed the way they live. As a matter of fact, children ages 2-11 viewed 106% more web pages in October 2004 than in October of 2002 as reported by Nielsen/NetRatings.

Yes, times have changed and businesses have been forced to adapt to these technical transformations effecting business communications...like it or not. People expect products to ship faster and communications to happen quicker. On-Demand business processes have taken on a whole new shape. How many deals can you say your company has gained due to your speed to turn products and services around quicker than that of the competition?

I once ran into a company that used to reward their employees with new office pcs if they performed well; I never quite understood this. The methodology seemed equivalent to giving a traveling salesperson a company phone for bringing in a high level of sales. Computers are not an expense...they make companies money and empower their employees. Technology increases productivity and the quality of life for employees, which ultimately equates to more money for the company.

What is it worth to have the ability to be within emails-reach of any person you do work for at any given time? What is it worth to know that you will not need to race home after going out to a dinner or a movie to type out a couple one-line emails to your clients expecting your response?

Technology is here to stay. It will continue to alter the way we live and the way we work. It's been projected that 8% of revenue will be spent in technology in 2005 per company (Information Week Magazine, Jan. 05). Is your company spending enough? And if it is, does your technical business process need a second look to determine whether your technical answers five years ago are the answers for your business today? We should learn from what the children of today have unknowingly realized: Welcome technology or be left in the dust.

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