



Three Steps to Upgrade Your Tech with Confidence





As a small business trying to get ahead, your best bet for edging out the competition is learning how to do more with less.

Are your current workflows truly optimized for efficiency—or is there a better way you could be doing things?

The first step towards scalable growth is evaluating your current processes to identify all the places where weak spots exist and inefficiencies could be hiding. Communication, visibility, security and ergonomics are all areas that can cause significant downtime. By pinpointing your vulnerabilities, you'll be able to match them with the right modern, business-ready solution to successfully overcome them.

The Three Steps to Accelerate Growth

IDENTIFY WEAK SPOTS



MATCH WITH THE RIGHT TECHNOLOGY



PLAN AND IMPLEMENT WITH CONFIDENCE



STEP

1

Identify Weak Spots

Challenges Business Leaders Face Today

Global macro trends are impacting businesses of all sizes today—and small businesses are not immune. With the continuance of COVID-19, the war in Ukraine, China's Zero-COVID policy and upward inflation trends, the global supply chain remains under intense pressure. Before making any major decisions, it's important to be aware of all the things your business will be battling against.

The Four Trends Disrupting Small Businesses:



LABOR SHORTAGES

Today there are roughly 2x more job openings in the U.S. than unemployed workers available to fill them.¹

Result:

- Difficulty hiring
- Overburdened staff
- Labor retention problems



RISING INFLATION

As of June 2022, the annual inflation rate in the U.S. accelerated to 9.1%, the highest since November of 1981²:

Percentage increase in prices

- Energy 41.6%
- Gasoline 59.9%
- Fuel oil 98.5%
- Electricity 13.7%
- Natural gas 38.4%

Result:

- Higher cost of goods
- Increased delivery prices
- Squeezed wages



SUPPLY CHAIN DELAYS

Since 2019, supply chain disruptions have tripled worldwide.³

Result:

- Lack of necessary products
- Higher cost of goods
- Delayed deliveries



INCREASED CONSUMER DEMAND

U.S. consumers have spent:

- 18% more in 2022 than in 2019⁴
- 12% more than they were forecast to spend based on the pre-COVID-19 trajectory⁴

Result:

- Increased wait times
- Complex omnichannel responses
- Higher staff burden

Sources:

1. (2022) U.S. Chamber of Commerce Analysis, BIS Data
2. (2022) U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

3. (2022) Resilinc EventWatchAI Global Supply Chain Monitoring Service, Statista.
4. (2022) Consumer Pulse Survey, McKinsey & Company

The Four Main Challenges Holding Your Business Back Today



1. INEFFICIENT WORKFLOWS

With a smaller labor pool available to pull from today, the ability to maximize your existing staff's productivity has now become more important than ever. Inefficient workflows, such as manual paper processes, do more than just slow down business, they also tend to frustrate your workforce and lead to increased turnover.



2. POOR COMMUNICATION

Poor communication processes in your business, such as the inability to get timely answers, creates costly downtime and serves as a burden to employees who require real-time feedback to successfully meet performance quotas.



3. SECURITY CHALLENGES

While cybersecurity used to be seen simply as an enterprise concern, it's quickly emerging as a larger threat for organizations of all sizes. Now, small businesses must also be vigilant against outside and inside cybersecurity threats to prevent attacks that can lead to a major disruption in business continuity: such as ransom threats, malware and phishing attempts.



4. LACK OF VISIBILITY

Clear, real-time visibility is key to smooth operations. Without total and near-instant visibility into exactly what's going on, it's almost impossible to detect what's not working and where improvements are needed. But to get a clear and sufficient overview, you'll first need to gather some usable data and insights that can be presented in an organized view, such as a dashboard.



STEP 1 | Identify
Weak Spots

TO OVERCOME TODAY'S MODERN PRESSURES, YOUR BUSINESS MUST FIRST BECOME MORE MODERN ITSELF

Three Ways Small Businesses Can Win Through Digital Transformation

1. REDUCE OPERATIONAL COSTS

Small businesses who digitally transform workflows save more money:

SMBs committed to organization-wide digital transformation experience a



cost reduction compared to "selective adopters" of digital transformation.⁵

2. INCREASE PRODUCTIVITY

They also experience higher productivity and revenues:

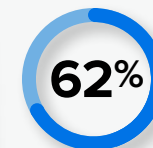
Businesses committed to organization wide digital transformation **have 1.4x higher productivity levels** than "selective adopters".⁵



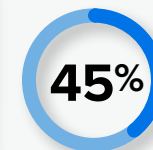
of "digital stragglers" businesses reported **decreased revenue** from 2019 to 2020, while only **38%** of the "digitally-savvy" SMBs said their revenues had dipped.⁶

3. PROTECT AGAINST CYBER THREATS

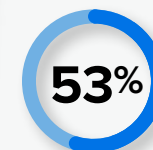
And they experience greater protection against cyberattacks versus those who allow staff to use personal devices to access business data:



of employees at SMBs use **smartphones for work purposes**.⁷



On average, **45% of devices** used in SMBs are **personal smartphones**.⁸



Fewer than 53% SMBs have any kind of device management solution in place, leaving a large number of **devices unprotected and unmanaged**.⁷

STEP 1 | Identify
Weak Spots

Defeat Today's Challenges to Take Your Business Ahead

Advancing your small business in this age requires more than just old-fashioned grit and know-how. It also takes optimized workflows, speedy communication and strong security to build a more solid foundation for sustainable business growth.



Sources:

5. (2020) Digital Transformation on the Radar of SMBS. TechAisle Worldwide Survey Research Data
6. (2021) Accenture Analysis. Global SMB Perceptions Study, May 2021
7. (2019) IDC's 2019 Enterprise and SMB Mobility Survey
8. (2021) Uncovering the Hidden Cost of Communications Barriers and Latency. SIS International Research



STEP

2

Match with The Right Technology

How Do Your People Work Now?

Are they constantly on the go, using pen and paper or personal smartphones to perform work tasks? If your small business is like most, the answer is likely yes. What if there was a better way to improve employee workflows so that they could be more productive and satisfied while you gain better security, visibility and manageability too? It's possible—it just requires a highly versatile mobile device made specifically for the type of work your employees do.

The Five Must-Have Features for Employee Mobile Devices:



1. VERSATILITY

The right device must be highly versatile for your workers' needs and job functions. It must allow for operation in both bright or low light, come with an ergonomic touchscreen that can be used with gloves, offer a keyboard for repetitive entry tasks and feature an intuitive design that fits any size hand. It also must be highly configurable for several different workflows, allowing workers to add on accessories such as a snap-on trigger handle for periods of intense scanning or a device strap for hands-free carrying.



2. RELIABLE CONNECTIVITY

A mobile device that fully empowers your workers must be capable of connecting them to everyone, everywhere, all the time. That means solid Wi-Fi and cellular both inside the four walls and in large outdoor spaces—consumer-grade connectivity will not cut it. You'll also need Bluetooth 5.0 and NFC to prevent downtime and ensure fast and easy connection to headsets, printers and more.



Over
50%
of SMB
employees
identify themselves
as mobile workers.⁸



48%
of employees
perform more
than one type of
mobile work.⁸

Sources:

1. (2022) U.S. Chamber of Commerce Analysis, BIS Data
2. (2022) U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

3. (2022) Resilinc EventWatchAI Global Supply Chain Monitoring Service. Statista.
4. (2022) Consumer Pulse Survey. McKinsey & Company

STEP 2

Match with The
Right Technology



3. PURPOSE-BUILT FUNCTIONALITY

A device truly purpose-built for business will serve you faithfully for years to come, which makes total cost of ownership a key factor to consider. For that type of longevity and ROI it must offer critical features like a dedicated scan engine for fast and comfortable barcode scanning and full-shift replaceable battery power. It must also be water-resistant, dustproof and drop proof to survive snow, rain, heat, and freezing cold. It needs to be able to handle everything that a consumer-grade mobile device traditionally cannot. But beyond hardware durability, a consumer device will not offer the type of smart software that optimizes everything from security upgrades to intense barcode scanning to fleet management. It also won't offer the benefits that come with enterprise lifecycle and support, including a minimum of 8 years of hardware availability, service and support.



4. HIGHLY SECURE

A core staple of workforce device management today is strong security. The right enterprise-grade device will offer cybersecurity protection and upgrades for a multitude of years, as well as easy-to-use management applications to control and segment worker access to features, apps and business, information. Implementing a standardized device versus allowing employees to use their own unsecured personal phones makes a huge difference in protecting your business, and it also limits the number of opportunities hackers have to get in.



5. FUTURE-PROOF OPERATING SYSTEM

Buying technology that can last many years without being replaced is a key component of keeping operational costs low. This means that the operating system and processor you purchase the first time around is extremely important. It must be the most advanced and offer the latest operating system features so that you can comfortably upgrade software for years to come without losing speed or performance. Choosing a shared platform, such as Android, across your different device types will also simplify management as your business grows.



Empower Employees to Go Beyond with Better Technology

Initiating better workflows starts with implementing modern devices and systems that can support and accelerate the work your employees already perform, all while increasing the overall security and visibility of your business. It's not a hard task to do, but it does require some strategic planning to make sure you get that initial purchase right.



STEP

3

Plan and Implement with Confidence

Now that you've identified your vulnerabilities and what kind of technology might solve them, it's time to determine how you can plan a roadmap to implement your next investment with confidence. Often more important than the device itself is the support that comes with it. Purchasing tech with insufficient support can leave you stranded with even more downtime than before—which means support is a critical element to consider.

Three Ways to Avoid Deployment Downtime:



1. PICK AN EXPERIENCED PARTNER KNOWN FOR THEIR SERVICE AND SUPPORT

When looking for a partner, evaluate these criteria:

- Check out their customer reviews, history and longevity in the business
- Do they specialize in your vertical?
- Do they have experience with small businesses?
- How easy will it be to service devices or reach someone for support?
- What are the standard turnaround times for repair?



2. ENSURE OUT-OF-THE-BOX FUNCTIONALITY AND KITTING

Regarding setup, consider these questions:

- Does your purchase come with out-of-the-box functionality?
- What about device kitting?
- If neither, how much IT work will be required to get your devices fully secured, managed and deployed?



3. MAKE SURE DEVICE MANAGEMENT AND DIAGNOSTICS IS EASY

When evaluating ongoing support, make sure to ask:

- What is the service and support lifecycle?
- How many management tools come standard with the purchase—if any?
- Are there any tools to deploy updates to your fleet all at once?
- What tools are available to check security or run diagnostics when a device isn't working right or is lost?

Your road ahead has a lot of challenges—but it doesn't have to be difficult.

Getting the right device **and** partner is the first step. Consider choosing reliable enterprise mobile computers, like the small, business-friendly [MC2200](#) or [MC2700](#), to help you successfully overcome current challenges and modernize for long-term success. Delivering just the right features for the job at hand while maintaining an attractive price point, the MC2200 is the premier choice for growing operations.

Go Beyond the Technology

It's not just about the device—it's also about the support too. Choosing a supportive and experienced technology partner that has seen it all makes all the difference. With Zebra, you get an industry-leading innovator with over 50 years' experience, millions invested in R&D innovation and the trust and reliance of hundreds of the world's leading brands.

How do I grow with greater confidence?

The answer's in black and white.

Let us help guide you to your next best evolution.

[Speak to a Partner Today >](#)



NA and Corporate Headquarters
+1 800 423 0442
inquiry4@zebra.com

Asia-Pacific Headquarters
+65 6858 0722
contact.apac@zebra.com

EMEA Headquarters
zebra.com/locations
contact.emea@zebra.com

Latin America Headquarters
zebra.com/locations
la.contactme@zebra.com

ZEBRA and the stylized Zebra head are trademarks of Zebra Technologies Corp., registered in many jurisdictions worldwide. Android is a trademark of Google LLC. The Bluetooth® word mark and logos are registered trademarks owned by Bluetooth SIG, Inc. and any use of such marks by Zebra is under license. Wi-Fi™ is a trademark of Wi-Fi Alliance®. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. ©2023 Zebra Technologies Corp. and/or its affiliates. 07/2023.

