

## **PRACTICAL 9**

### **IMPOTANCE OF GOING PAPERLESS**

Technology has made going paperless easier than ever, yet many companies still haven't made the switch. Many are unaware of the incredible benefits that paper-free processes can provide; others are intimidated at the thought of switching to entirely new processes. However, there's no need to feel overwhelmed; the benefits of going paperless are substantial, and it's easier than ever to remove the paper from your workflows and processes.

**Eight Reasons your company should strongly consider going paperless.**

#### **1. Better organization :**

Manually organizing and keeping track of papers is time-consuming; a cluttered, messy stack of loose documents makes it take that much longer, especially if you're trying to find something specific. Disorganization can seriously hamper how much you can get done; the average person spends about 10 minute per day looking for lost items. That means that about six month of your year is spent looking for missing items.

Want to take back your time and redirect it to what matters? Start by opting for increased organization and streamlined processing for your paperwork. Going paperless will save you the headache of keeping up with the mess. You will also never have to fret about losing that *one* invoice that you need to get approved because it slipped through the cracks.

#### **2. Collaboration :**

Digitization of your paper-based processes means that your whole team has the necessary access to information at all times. A file left on someone's desk, a random note with important information, a filing system that only one person understands... These can spell trouble for your business.

If a crucial person calls in sick, or you need to be away from the office, your employees may struggle to find the information that they need. Paper-based processes can cause a loss of productivity and a potential drop in customer service.

You can avoid a breakdown in necessary information-sharing by going paperless. Files, instead of potentially becoming lost, become accessible from anywhere at any time, allowing your team easier access to the information that they need.

### **3. An office environment that sparks joy:**

When guests visit your office, what do you inadvertently let them know about your company? Whether you mean to or not, the appearance of your office tells your customers and employees a lot about your business.

A workspace filled with stacks of papers is a thing of the past. An uncluttered, paper-free office gives a more professional, modern appearance for your customers; it also provides a more relaxing environment for your employees to work.

This type of streamlined organizational setting has an economic benefit as well. As most business owners know, office space isn't cheap. Instead of wasting office space storing paperwork, digitized systems hold all the same information in a fraction of the area. You can use your workspace for work instead of as a glorified storage unit.

### **4. Increased efficiency :**

Efficiency is at the heart of any successful business. When you minimize time required to be spent on busywork, your team can repurpose that time to focus on critical, value-add tasks. Going paperless means less time spent on clerical work and more time doing what matters.

Completing, filing, organizing, and keeping track of paperwork can create a severe strain on your time; time spent on paperwork is cut down to a minimum after going paperless.

Filling out paperwork is also simpler with technology; digitally-captured data can be used to create rules to automatically generate applications. Automated systems allow you to not only fill out information quickly but reliably as well, as validation algorithms reduce errors and ensure complete data.

### **5. Reduced costs :**

Your organization saves more than just paper by adopting a paperless office. The money spent on printer upkeep, ink, toner, postage, physical storage, to name a few, will all significantly decrease as your reliance on paper diminishes. This is why companies save money when they make the switch to a paperless system.

Your company will save more than just the physical costs of printing and paper. Increasingly efficient offices will repurpose your spending as well. For example, you pay for your employees' time; the more that they spend their time doing value-add work, instead of manual paperwork, the more return you'll see on the investment in them.

#### **6. Enhanced security :**

Physical paper can be a significant liability for your company. Sensitive files can easily be compromised, and paperwork can be misfiled, destroyed, or stolen. Your customers' trust in you should depend on more than a locked filing cabinet and shredder.

A paperless approach offers a much higher level of security for your and your customers' sensitive data. Numerous safeguards, encryption, and banking-level security measure work together to protect your documents. In a paper-based office, everyone has access to all the information. In a paperless office, it is possible to give each employee only the specific access they require. For example, a medical office can limit the information a front desk receptionist can access but gives doctors complete access to medical history.

Cloud-based technology also provides back-up in case of an emergency. If your office is subject to a natural disaster, such as a flood or fire, you won't lose any vital information.

#### **7. Easier access :**

A paperless system allows you to access your information from anywhere at any time. Whether you're in discussion with your employee at the office or traveling out of town, cloud-based storage means that you maintain access to your necessary information. It also improves customer experience when you can answer questions by quickly accessing necessary information.

Customers also appreciate personalization. A targeted campaign, using relevant metrics and based on their needs, will be much more effective for lead generation, up-sell, and retention. For example, a targeted email campaign will be easier to track, analyze, and optimize, as opposed to mailing out general promotions.

#### **8. Compliance with regulations :**

Businesses are liable for the information that they keep on their customers. Regulations are in place to make sure that all information is kept secure from a potential breach. HIPPA and SOX regulations in America and GDPR in Europe all demand that companies save data with integrity. These regulations help uphold customer confidentiality and trust.

Complying with these regulations in a paper-based system is complicated. An open file on a desk, a customer that wanders into a confidential area, or a misplaced paper all hold risk of a potential violation and headache for you. Keeping sensitive information secure and up to compliance standards is much easier with built-in electronic protections and safeguards. You can easily create an audit trail to track your documents whenever you need.