

Importance of IT

Every company's IT department plays a pivotal role in its success. That's because so much of what companies do today requires computers and other smart devices connected to the internet and the programs and apps they run. Altogether, these technologies enable the incredible work and ways of working modern companies are capable of.

Maintaining and expanding that, while keeping an eye on what tomorrow's requirements might be, falls squarely on IT's shoulders.

This is a huge task, as computing technologies are moving at a lightning pace these days. Just five years ago, the notion of the cloud permeating everything businesses do was just an idea, and yet today, many companies depend on the cloud for their day-to-day productivity.

And while the cloud is really just someone else's data center if you think about it, accessed over the internet, the ability to spin up the services needed and only pay for what is used has revolutionized the working world.

It has not only removed the need to build, run, operate, and support private data centers (a huge historical expense), it has moved computing resources from a capital expenditure to an operational one while delivering the increased flexibility and adaptability businesses need from their IT infrastructure to do new and cool things for their clients at scale.

As a result, IT departments have moved from being a back-end support structure to the department business counts on for the technologies that deliver the competitive advantages that keep the money rolling in.

One surprising consequence of the ongoing computing revolution we're living through is that IT people are now more involved in marketing than ever before. This has been necessitated by IT's insight into how technology is being deployed and used, how that translates into strategic advantages, and how those can be effectively communicated to potential clients.

Accordingly, the roles IT staff play in business has changed. They've gone from just being network engineers and the people you call when your computer is giving

trouble, to the people who look into a crystal ball and try to plan for the as-yet-unknown business needs of the future. IT departments are thus now the drivers of innovation in any company. That's a huge shift in responsibility.

Of course, this has required changes in how IT staff are skilled up. Existing IT staff must now be retrained with an eye toward enabling and supporting the agility needed to keep up with changes in the IT space, and any new IT staff must be brought into the business with their expected roles made crystal clear.

Innovation breeds further innovation, and the rate of technological change is only going to accelerate. This means companies will rely more and more on their IT departments to lead the way into the future.