



Save Time and Money with Online Collaboration

Considering the financial forecast for the upcoming business year, it is unsurprising that small businesses are tightening their belts and purse strings. The unfortunate reality that most small businesses face is the fact that you have to spend money to make money. Fortunately, there are ways to spend less money and still realize a positive cash return. A great way to cut costs and save time is to reassess how meetings are handled.

Traditionally, the face-to-face meeting has been the most valued way to collaborate on projects of any nature. The primary drawbacks to in-person meetings are the rising costs and lost time due to travel. Another difficulty of in-person meeting is trying to find a convenient time for everyone to meet. While face-to-face meetings are still ideal, travel expenses and scheduling issues can be reduced if a business is flexible and utilizes online collaboration.

Online collaboration allows people to meet and work together by using the internet. Three popular solutions are document services, customer relationship management services, and web conferencing services. Google Docs and Box.net are document services that provide online office programs that simplify document sharing. Salesforce.com and Microsoft Dynamics are customer relationship management programs that keep track of information relating to clients in an online database. WebEx and Microsoft Office Live Meeting are web conference programs that allow participants to meet online in real-time.

Not only does online collaboration save time and money for small businesses, it also benefits the client. After initially contacting a prospective client, WebEx meetings can take the place of initial and follow-up sales calls. Sales calls are often difficult to schedule around everyone's calendars, but web conferencing provides near immediate gratification since meetings can be



set up quickly. Online meetings also save the small business and the client travel expenses and time. When the business saves money, the savings can be passed on to the client. A client that knows he is getting a fair rate for services is a happy client.

Also consider combining online collaboration with telecommuting. Document sharing is a terrific way to work with employees who do not make it into the office frequently. Anyone can create a project at their convenience and post it through Google Docs or Box.net and other teammates can comment and revise the work at their convenience. When collaborative sessions no longer require group scheduling, project completion times become shortened. Once again, saving time means saving money.

The benefits of saving time and money by using online collaboration solutions cannot be overstated. Various vendors offer programs that meet the needs of the small business. Every program offers increased productivity while saving time and money. Choosing to use an online collaboration program is an easy choice to make. Choosing which program is the best solution for your small business may not be so simple. Please contact All Covered and let an expert help you select the best online collaboration program to fit your small business needs and help you save time and money.

Contact All Covered Toll-Free Nationwide at (866) 446-1133 or at www.allcovered.com

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