

How Public Speaking Can Keep You Ahead of the Competition

Effective communication skills are particularly valuable today in our tech-dominated world, where written communication has become our primary medium. As a result, being able to verbally communicate to others provides you with the ability to excel and stand out from the crowd. Public speaking adds value in the form of business-critical opportunities, such as building your brand, influencing prospects, and winning customers.

This is particularly true when getting on a stage and speaking to an audience full of people. This type of public speaking is one the quickest and most efficient ways of establishing your credibility, expanding your reputation, and deepening your reach. It is a highly-effective marketing strategy that gets you in front of potential clients to showcase your knowledge and share professional wisdom.

Utilizing public speaking has benefits within your own workplace as well. Besides providing you with the chance to present your knowledge and insight to your superiors, showcasing your ability to speak in front of an audience will set you apart from other employees. It is a skill that gives you a competitive edge, which can put you ahead of your peers for promotions and opportunities.



Streamline Business Processes by Automating Document Workflows

In the so-called 'Digital Age,' it's remarkable to think that so many businesses are still utilizing manual, redundant tasks in their operations. This is particularly curious when it comes to the continued use of paper documents in workflows. While documents remain an integral part of business processes, organizations continuing to work with them in paper form rather than digital or electronic versions are turning their back on technology and the upgrades to efficiency and productivity it offers us. By simply automating your workflows with the help of a document management solution, you can stop shuffling paper and streamline your business processes.

Let's face it, paper is hardly the most efficient medium for information. When in paper form, documents are easily misplaced or lost; must be physically handed off from person to person or department to department; and require employees to proactively move the workflow forward, rather than an automated process. All of this adds up to paper moving slowly and tediously through your office.

An automated document workflow streamlines your business processes, promoting efficiency, speed, and accuracy.

How to Track and Measure Employee Productivity

Measure performance, not time. There's no shortage of time tracking software available today that enables you to measure the amount of time it takes employees to complete a task. However, these tools are unable to measure the quality of their work. Performance should be measured by tasks completed and quality of work, not the amount of time it took to complete them.

Employ end-of-day updates. Instead of having employees log their activity and track their time, have them simply send an email at the end of each day updating you on their progress.

Focus on deadlines, and only deadlines. Rather than tracking time spent on particular tasks or projects, just keep track of deadlines. Your productivity chart needs only two columns: 'met deadline' and 'failed to meet deadline.'

Contact Us Today!
 Ph: 1-800-34-KELLY
 contact@kellyofficesolutions.com
 www.kellyofficesolutions.com



Grow Your Small Business with Cloud Services

For small- to medium-sized businesses (SMBs), building an information technology (IT) infrastructure can be a daunting task. Most SMBs have limited resources and a lack of expertise on-hand to implement the complex and ever-changing technologies that are needed to keep up in today's fast-paced business environments. Fortunately, cloud service offerings are available that can specifically help SMBs accomplish their IT-related goals. Here are a few of the cloud services developed for SMBs to manage your growing business.

Accounting software

Keeping a firm grip on finances is a common challenge for growing businesses. Cloud-based accounting software allows SMBs to integrate many different accounting solutions (payroll, CRM, payments, etc.) into one location. You can access financial data anytime from anywhere to get a clear view of how money flows in and out of your company.

Marketing automation software

Marketing is essential to business. But for SMBs with limited staff and resources, it's difficult to find the time to carry out your marketing strategies. Marketing automation software can scale your business marketing for you by automating your efforts. Predictable acquisition and follow-up workflows will free up your employees to tackle what they were hired to do. This software enables you to track results and make adjustments whenever necessary. It's a tool that works for you, while saving your staff hours of work.

E-commerce software

Instead of utilizing a basic shopping cart plug-in for your website, consider using cloud-based e-commerce software. If your business is growing rapidly, there are many customizable options available to help you deliver a positive online sales experience for your customers. It's a cloud service that you can deploy quickly, enabling your company to handle more customers as you grow.

CRM software

CRM software is one of the most essential cloud services available today for SMBs. As your list of clients grows, you need a secure, reliable place to store this invaluable information. CRM software will keep your information organized by storing leads and tracking sales. Authorized employees can access this data 24/7 from any location. Search functionalities allow for easy access to the information you need in a matter of seconds. It's a must-have addition to any SMB's IT infrastructure.

Today's cloud service solutions provide SMBs with the opportunity to facilitate growth and expansion. Contact us today to learn more about the exciting cloud-based platforms available for your IT infrastructure.



Based in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, Kelly Office Solutions is locally owned and operated, and has been servicing the Triad since 1947. Kelly Office Solutions is proud to offer a wide selection of copiers, printers, digital duplicators, fax machines, and multi-use systems. With three of the most reputable digital imaging companies backing us — Savin, Canon, and Konica Minolta — we can evaluate your needs and provide the solution that fits. Whether you are looking for a small black & white copier, or a full-scale networked color multi-use system, our sales team can show you how to get the most out of your digital imaging investment.



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Holiday Season Survival Guide for Small Businesses

While it's referred to as "the most wonderful time of the year," the holidays can be a very stressful season for many small businesses. Some companies, particularly those in retail, are inundated with customers during this time when people naturally spend more money, and can be easily overwhelmed trying to keep up with the holiday rush. Here are a few measures to help survive another hectic holiday season.

Be sure to stock up on inventory. Careful analysis of previous years' sales will help you identify the items and quantities you'll need on hand, ensuring they are in stock before your customers buy them.

Hire part-time employees to supplement your staff. Besides not having the inventory you need, not having enough employees on hand to help you during the holiday rush can be debilitating. Thankfully, many people need extra money during the holidays and are eager to take on work temporarily this time of year.

Extend your business hours. Another easy way to accommodate all of the additional business this time of year is to simply keep your doors open longer. Even an extra hour each day can make it possible to adequately serve your customers during the holiday rush.



Do You Know How Much Your SMB Spends on IT?

IT is a critical component of business, and companies are devoting a large portion of their budgets toward it. This trend is expected to grow as we become increasingly reliant on technology in the workplace. This anticipated growth is not limited to large companies—a new update of the Worldwide Semiannual Small and Medium Business Spending Guide from International Data Corporation (IDC) forecasts that total IT spending by small- and medium-size businesses (SMBs) will approach \$568 billion during 2017. Moreover, this number will increase by more than \$100 billion to exceed \$676 billion by 2021. These statistics show that SMBs recognize the value of IT, with IT hardware, software, and services helping them to improve productivity and keep up with the competition.

However, unlike larger corporations, many smaller organizations simply don't have the room in their budgets to keep these IT expenditures in-house. That's why SMBs are increasingly outsourcing the management of the IT environments to Managed Services Providers (MSPs). If your SMB is struggling under the weight of a costly in-house IT staff or unable to afford the IT resources you need to keep up with your competitors, outsourcing the management of your IT environment to an MSP could be the answer to your technology problems. Contact us today to learn more about our Managed Services solution!

Give Back

Charitable Initiatives: How Giving Back Benefits Your Business

Here are some of the ways charitable initiatives are a win-win proposition and how your company will benefit from getting involved.

Increase employee morale – Corporate giving increases engagement within employees, as people are likely to respect leaders who actively try to make positive changes in the lives of others. By encouraging employees to participate in charitable work, they'll experience the rewarding feeling of making a difference in your community.

Improve brand reputation – Clients, vendors, and prospects are more likely to think highly of a business that supports charities or causes in their community. The boost in reputation that comes along with showing your company cares about others will make you more attractive to potential customers.

Build stronger partnerships – Charitable giving provides executives with a unique opportunity to network with other business leaders. Encouraging other area businesses to join in your charitable efforts can create lasting, mutually-beneficial partnerships.

Why Businesses Entrust VoIP for Their Phone Systems

Why is it that companies are eschewing traditional phone systems in favor of VoIP systems, making it an industry standard?

Lower Costs

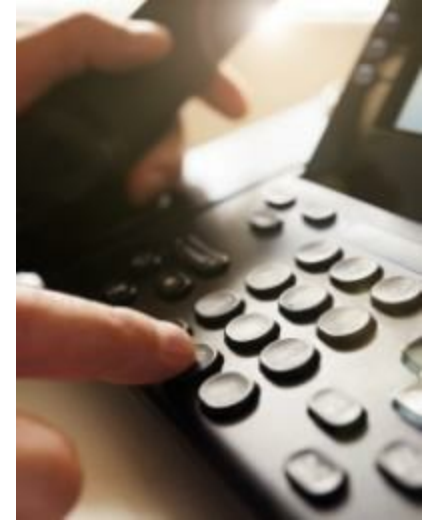
VoIP systems are much more cost effective, as there is no need to invest in expensive hardware. Your cost-per-call is significantly reduced, with even long distance phone calls costing you less.

Less-complicated Infrastructure

VoIP's easy scalability eliminates the need for you to predict how many employees you'll have a year from now. Lines can easily be added, reassigned, or removed, ensuring you always have exactly as many phone lines as you need and aren't paying for ones you don't use.

Increased Flexibility

VoIP phones enable you to access your business phone system from wherever you are as long as you have an Internet connection. You can connect a cellular phone to your office phone or plug a physical VoIP phone in at your home office.



Hot Products

Operation Christmas Child

Kelly Office Solutions Staff decided not to host their usual gift exchange this year. Instead, they filled shoe boxes for Samaritan's Purse "Operation Christmas Child." Picture L-R: Tina Wiggins, Barbara Boyter, Michelle Washam, Helen Groce, Mady Long, Kim Thomas, Trea McLean, Sidney Fredrick, Laura Wolverton, Michelle Ancell, Donna Cranfill, Kim Craig.



Open House & Ribbon Cutting

On December 6, we held an Open House and Ribbon Cutting ceremony at our new location on East Wendover Ave. in Greensboro. New and existing customers and community leaders mingled to see demonstrations of the many amazing "office solutions" we offer.

More from the Open House

Top: Attendees at the Open House enjoyed product demonstrations while discussing new systems and technology with colleagues and customers.



Bottom: Cutting the ribbon for our newest location are, L-R: Ezra Ethridge, Peter Kelly, Tim Renegar, Ron Fairhurst, Kathleen Donohue (Director, Member Engagement Chamber of Commerce), Heidi Merrill.