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The Success of Computer Usage in Small-scale Business

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ABSTRACT: Small-scale businesses in India are essential for expanding the country's economy. These companies must compete fiercely on a local, national, and international level in the liberalization period. Businesses have used computers for their daily operations to maintain their position intact and sustained over the long term. This is a result of the wealth and availability of information online, which enables them to connect virtually with anyone globally. So, in this paper, we will discuss the impact and usage of computers in small-scale businesses in addition to the best software for these businesses and essential computer skills that drive their growth to get an overview of how these businesses can attain success.

KEYWORDS: Small-scale businesses, Liberalization, Availability of information online, Usage of computers in small-scale businesses

I. INTRODUCTION

Small businesses (Akpan, Udoh, & Adebisi, 2022) cannot be viewed as scaled-down counterparts of large businesses due to differences in organizational structure, management style, business practices, and information systems. However, the information currently available on the size-efficiency link suggests a positive correlation between firm size and technical efficiency and significant and long-lasting productivity gaps across enterprises of various sizes.

Small businesses are integral to every economy and are regarded as adaptable, flexible entities. These businesses are growing in importance across the entire global economy. E-commerce is widely acknowledged to aid in the development of these companies in emerging nations. Such businesses employ a sizeable number of individuals, and many more are launching their businesses. These businesses occasionally serve as launching pads for future industry behemoths.

The decision-making process relies more on intuition than accurate, exact, and certain information. In particular, innovative business concepts (Petersen, Townsend, & Onak, 2020) ask people to base their decisions on scant information. Still, small businesses typically need to catch up to medium and big businesses when it comes to embracing and implementing computerization. Because of major financial resource limitations, a lack of internal competence, and a short-term managerial viewpoint forced by a volatile competitive market, this is the case. Small, new, and creative businesses frequently have a murky financial status since most potential lenders need more knowledge about managerial skills or investment chances. They get the most from being closely watched in a home bank relationship.

On the other hand, small businesses have a high environmental change adaptation level. Instead of using computers to make decisions or to make the company more flexible and acquire a competitive edge (Karunaratne, Peiris, & Hansson, 2018), they automate already-existing operations. Large organizations are capital and equipment-intensive, but labor-intensive small businesses perhaps boost productivity and value to services via enhanced computerization and digitalization.

1. Individual businesses can benefit from the environment created by global communications technology like the World Wide Web. Small businesses benefit greatly from the commercial potential of the internet, which permits them to serve customers globally at little cost and open their doors 24 hours a day. Businesses, even those in rural locations, have a unique opportunity to transition from conventional and regional to global due to expanding access to markets worldwide (Küfeoglu, Liu, Anaya, & Pollitt, 2019). Computers and the internet, whether or not a business transacts with customers online, can benefit businesses by raising their profile by enabling them to communicate with potential clients and offering an additional channel for brand development, advertising, and marketing.

II. USAGE OF COMPUTERS BY SMALL BUSINESSES

Computers play a key role in improving the efficiency of small enterprises and do more than assist companies in producing polished slides and printing sales figures. Software developers produce programs that address a range of issues since computers can frequently automate time-consuming operations that humans conduct. Whether one is a sole proprietor engaged in manufacturing or a worldwide giant like Sony, one would definitely gain by learning computers to manage their firm.



Source: Adapted from "Forecast analysis: Small-and-midsize-business external IT spending, worldwide, 2011-2017, 1Q13 update," Gartner, June 28, 2013

Graphic: Deloitte University Press | DUPress.com

Fig. 1 Forecasted analysis of small-and-midsize companies' external IT spending globally of CAGR (2011-2017).

- **DataManagement**

Many of the actions firms carry out are built on data management activities. Companies can efficiently organize and manage vast amounts of information owing to computers. While larger firms may use several SQL Server databases (Ritz, Wolf, &McQuitty, 2019) to manage data operations, smaller enterprises may use the data manipulation features in programs like Microsoft Access. Most businesses use information, and they all need to preserve it for later use. Commercial websites frequently use database software to allow customers to join their sites and purchase things. Setting up data management software or engaging a professional to handle a company website is essential.

- **Office and SupplyManagement**

Businesses earn from the purchases and sales of goods and use computers (Attaran, & Woods, 2019) to effectively manage their inventories and resources. These businesses employ advanced inventory management software systems to keep goods accessible in shops when customers need them. Smaller firms can track and manage essential supplies like pencils, water cooler cups, and more with the aid of computers.

- **PeopleManagement**

Arranging and running meetings with employees who live in different states can be difficult, yet to connect with them, businesses can hold online meetings virtually through computer software, making it feasible for all employees to see the same calendar. Some businesses track how often people use computers to boost productivity. Businesses can measure billable hours by monitoring and spotting potential unprofitable activities. Software for organizing meetings and keeping track of time is useful.

- **Supports Customer and PartnerRelationships**



Given the impact computers (Obschonka&Audretsch, 2020) have had on managing client and partner relationships, they play a crucial role in business. Customers or partners can quickly send an email or message to the company with any of their questions. They could get a response right away. Speed is a crucial component of customer service, which technology helps to facilitate.

Technology makes it feasible to collaborate with business partners (Tian, Wang, Liu, Qiao, & Li, 2020) located across different continents. Organizations can expand their business, increase customer satisfaction, access new markets, and improve product quality by collaborating and communicating with them using computer technology.

- **Record Keeping and Accounting**

A firm can be ready for tax season by having access to (Nwosu & Amahi, 2019) computerized financial records maintained throughout the year. Accounting software aids in resource management, budget creation, sales tracking, and money management. Products like QuickBooks, Quicken, and NetSuite provide accounting solutions for businesses of all sizes. Additionally, spreadsheet applications can be used for everything from tracking payroll to preparing time sheets.

THE IMPACT OF COMPUTERS ON SMALL BUSINESSES

Since computers and internet connections make it simpler to establish a small business like blogging or buying and selling goods that can begin from one's own house, business through the use of computers has grown during the past ten years. The effects of these computers on small businesses have been as follows:

Sr. No.	Influencing factors	Frequency	Percentages
1	Adoption of IT and e-commerce by competitors	77	61.6%
2	Continuous access by customers through online	93	74.4%
3	Market competition	120	96.0
4	Decision making ability	89	71.2%
5	Adequate and many resources of information available through Information Technology	108	86.4%

Fig. 2 Major factors for a small business adopting IT and e-commerce tools

Mobility

Computers provide increased opportunities (Chatterjee & Kar, 2020) for where the business can be operated. A business can be conducted anywhere with a laptop or computer with wireless Internet capability. This type of mobility also means that business operations are not limited to typical business hours, allowing for greater flexibility.

- **Productivity**

Computers can affect the productivity of small businesses in both good and bad ways. The availability of the internet around the clock (Papadopoulos, Baltas, & Balta, 2020) boosts the number of work hours, and instant messaging and email services simplify communication. Nevertheless, the urge to browse instead of work means that the internet may also be a distraction for employees.

- **Need for Training**

The success of computer use in small enterprises (Haseeb, Hussain, Ślusarczyk, & Jermsittiparsert, 2019) depends on proper training in computer system applications and usage. Because of this, company owners or staff who struggle to master a new computer system or are reluctant to apply it could need further training or coaching. The business's efficiency and level of service may momentarily suffer due to this learning curve.

- **Employee Flexibility**

The amount of work (Tobing, Afifuddin, Rahmanta, Pandiangan, & Muda, 2019) that can be performed from home has increased as a result of advancements in computer technology. Providing the option of telecommuting can give a small business owner, a direct rival of larger organizations in terms of talented personnel, a competitive advantage in the hiring and retention of staff.

- **Reducing Human Errors**

Computer applications (Nagy, Oláh, Erdei, Máté, & Popp, 2018) reduce the amount of human error. Word processing software such as Microsoft Word can catch simple things such as spelling and grammar mistakes. This aids the enterprise in appearing more authoritative to partners and collaborators.

IV. BEST SOFTWARE FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

Many small businesses (Saeed, Jhanjhi, Naqvi, & Humayun, 2019) have been able to modify their business management procedures to fit this situation, attributable to software technology and automation. Mobile payments, online ordering, and contactless purchases have already become commonplace and will only become more so. It is important to fathom how small business software can assist severe difficulties and major goals — but without a huge cost — for smaller organizations attempting to save expenses and retain consumers. The top five software tools for small enterprises to handle a variety of crucial, daily operations are listed below:

- **Accounting Software**

Accounting is imperative in running any enterprise (Umah & Nwokike, 2018). However, there are numerous varieties of accounting software that meet a wide range of requirements. The finest accounting software for small businesses helps track cash flow, expenses, tax filing, and other crucial business data while also helping them use their time more effectively. Small businesses can benefit from simplified, simple-to-use accounting software like Xero, QuickBooks, and FreshBooks. Keeping books of accounts accurate and current is essential to efficient business operations.

- **Time Tracking Software**

Due to the thorough performance record (Li, Hinnov, & Kump, 2019) on various activities provided by time tracking software, users can practice good time management. Such software enables companies to measure how much of this priceless resource they utilize more accurately. Making the best use of time can help a company identify areas where employees might struggle to concentrate. Small firms can gather detailed information about their time management using software like MinuteDock, which helps them better understand where they can improve their usage of time for on-time project completion.

- **Project Management Software**

The greatest project management tools (Chen, Howard, Godage, & Sengupta, 2019) may be priceless logistical assets for any firm. This kind of software allows customers to split complicated projects into specific task-based groups while enabling a comprehensive overall view of the project. Companies like Trello help break down tasks into different divisions, achieving efficiency by simplifying the organization of large projects. Such free project management software will guarantee that a corporation is aware of precisely how, where, and why resources are being used to complete a particular project.

- **Customer Relationship Management Software**

A CRM software application (Festic, Büchi, & Latzer, 2021) is a useful technique to understand client relationships better and spur corporate success by understanding how a company interacts with its customer base. In order to help small business owners better understand their business relationships, retain more customers, and boost sales, Zoho software offers users a simple interface and presents data in a meaningful way. CRM software adds immeasurable value to the operations of small businesses since they detect important data trends within various contact channels.

- **Communication Software**

Any small firm must effectively communicate with its stakeholders to operate successfully. In order to increase the effectiveness of company interactions (Zhao & Duan, 2019), it is crucial to choose and deploy reliable workflow software. A team can connect and work together more efficiently on all projects with the help of communication technologies like Skype and Slack, enabling businesses to engage with clients and staff members wherever they may be. It is nearly unimaginable that a current small business could interact with global markets using contemporary communication technology. Workflow and communication software can help businesses reach new markets, organize their teams, and communicate with one another more effectively than any other program on our list.

V. ESSENTIAL COMPUTER SKILLS FOR SUCCESS OF SMALL-SCALE BUSINESS

Computer skills are a valuable addition (Birkel, Veile, Müller, Hartmann, & Voigt, 2019) to a small-scale business's portfolio. Upskilling and polishing computer literacy can greatly increase a candidate's desirability to employers. This is the perfect opportunity for these candidates to take on new roles. As an employer, motivating the hired candidates means guiding them in their growth and simultaneously business development while staving off problems that can cost time and significant amounts of money.

Many small-scale companies have started to depend upon computerized technology to get work done, which is why computer skills have become increasingly important. Having the necessary computer course knowledge will put a candidate ahead of others. For this reason, many schools and tertiary institutions encourage students to complete basic computer studies.

Following is the list of skills that help an organization succeed:

1. Office Productivity

Any professional should be able to work productively to contribute significantly to the upliftment of an organization. Here is a list of other in-high-demand computer abilities for administrative or clerical professions.

- Microsoft Office
- Email Management
- Information Management
- Video Conferencing
- Workplace Chat
- Digital Calendars
- Social Media Management
- Video Conferencing

2. Digital Marketing

For a small firm (Tura, Hanski, Ahola, Stähle, Piiparinen, & Valkokari, 2019) to expand, it must constantly keep adding consumers. Customers are looking for solutions to their concerns online in increasing numbers. Digital marketing is currently the most successful and quantifiable form of marketing.

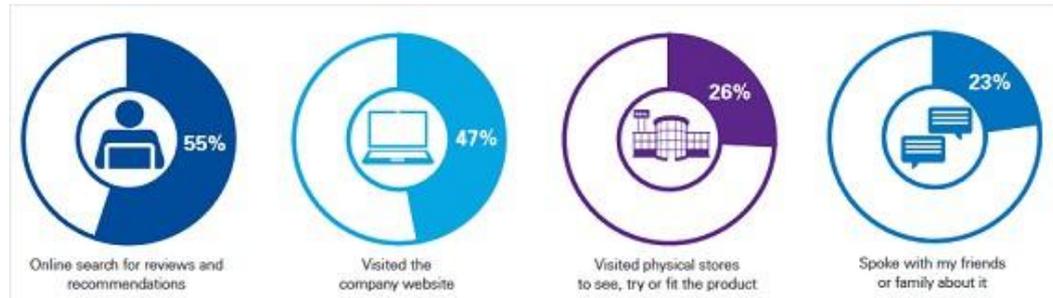


Fig. 3 Digital marketing is really imperative for a brand since customers engage with their favorite brand online.

- Cascading StyleSheets
- DigitalMedia
- Content Management Systems
- EmailMarketing
- DigitalMedia
- Search EngineOptimization

3. ComputerProgramming

Programming for computers entails (Li, Wang, Liu, Liu, He, & Huang, 2018) developing, launching, sustaining, and testing software and applications. Software development is a component of many distinct professions, including that of a software developer, programmer, software analyst, software architect, and others.

- C++
- AutomationSoftware
- SoftwareProgramming
- Embedded Processor HardwareDesign
- HTML
- Java

4. GraphicDesigning

Creating aesthetically appealing content for posters, documents, and slide presentations is a highly sought-after skill. The field of graphic design also encompasses editing videos and creating signs, among other things.

A trained professional must understand how all relevant programs operate and which are acceptable at each step of the project because a single project may very well go through numerous computer applications. There is an increasing need for the following graphic design skills:

- Adobe CreativeCloud
- AdobeInDesign
- Canva
- AdobePhotoshop
- DesktopPublishing

5. Databases andQueries

A good spreadsheet or database (Maksimov, Velikorossov, Khudaibergenov, Khachatryan, Akulinin, & Kameneva, 2020) not only stores information but also makes it easy to reorganize the information quickly to answer new questions or even conduct data analysis and processing. A spreadsheet can handle anything from payroll accounts to lists of all the characters (and all their characteristics) for a novel. Skills useful for spreadsheet and database management include:

- MicrosoftExcel
- DataAnalytics
- FileMakerPro

- Object-Oriented Database Management Systems(OODBMS)
- SQL

VI. CONCLUSION

Technology may greatly improve business productivity, which increases simultaneously with improved communication along with data and people management. Moreover, diligent staff performance monitoring and prompt employer responses strengthen and preserve business values and culture. Further, costs drop since less office space is needed. The hiring of personnel worldwide improves the culture. However, that is not all; technological advancements have also influenced how people learn. Online conferences and training can be organized by businesses more cheaply and effectively.

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