

Collaboration

3 Ways to Turn Your Digital Workplace from a Beast into a Beauty



April 19, 2016 Written by: [Jacques Pavlenyi](#)

You're a savvy IT leader. You dream of being the Chief "Yes We Can" Officer. Of giving your teams the latest and greatest workplace collaboration tools that make them feel engaged and effective. So why does everyone still treat you like the "No We Can't" speedbump?

Your collaboration and team applications might be why. First there was Bring Your Own Device (BYOD), now it's Bring Your Own Apps. New [research](#) from IBM found that one-third of employees surveyed at Fortune 1000 companies are sharing and uploading corporate data on third-party cloud apps. Why? They're tired of workplace apps that don't perform like their personal apps: intuitively, on the go, and with some intelligence.

Saying "yes" might feel good to your teams, but it can also turn your infrastructure into a Beast. You don't know all the different apps being used, like file sharing or online meetings. Or how much they cost. Or if your content is safe and manageable. Can you give your teams what they want without getting trampled by the Beast?

Yes you can. You can transform the Beast into a Beauty. But you need to consider three critical ways to make that happen.

1. Beauty is well put together.

"Clothes make the man." Good looks are not enough. Great looks come from combining them with the right packaging.

Business collaboration works the same way. Apps can't just work well, they have to work well TOGETHER. Email and file sharing and team spaces and e-meetings have to make it easier to find and share the content and expertise. But if they force you to rekey information every time you switch apps, or have to remember which content is stored in which app, it gets ugly pretty fast.

It's estimated that the average professional can improve their productivity by 25 percent if they moved some conversations out of email and into enterprise social networks. But if the tools don't work seamlessly together, you won't get that productivity boost.

2. Beauty is not just pretty, but smart.

Productivity isn't enough anymore. No matter how many productivity hacks you try, there is simply no way you can keep up with every email, chat, text, status update, or request. Brawn and Beauty need to be smart, too; make it less about productivity and more about effectiveness.

Stephen Covey, in his book [The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People](#), talked about mapping all the things we do as "urgent vs. non-urgent" and "important vs. unimportant." Humans have a terrible habit of spending most of our time on the "urgent and unimportant." But really we should be spending most of our time on the "important" (whether urgent or not). It would be nice, then, to have collaboration apps to help you refocus on doing the right things at the right times, not just on what's urgent or at the top of your activity stream or email inbox. That's where advanced analytics and machine learning can help. Choose app vendors that seek to apply context, and to learn from your day-to-day use of the app itself. Then those apps will be able to start anticipating what you need, and even take care of the little things so you can focus on the big things.

3. Beauty comes from within.

A Beauty knows good physical conditioning is needed for long-term health and to age gracefully. The same goes for your infrastructure.

Make sure your collaboration tools are built and deployed on a full spectrum, industrial-grade, security-rich mobile and hybrid cloud platform so your data is everywhere it needs to be, and nowhere it's not. One that is built on open technologies so that it's easy to integrate with what you have now, and with what you'll have in the future.

If you can do these three things, the Beast isn't quite so beastly. Instead, you might just have a beautiful collaboration platform, one that can turn you from Dr. No into Captain Yes.

And to learn more where this industry is headed, [read industry analysts' predictions for the future of collaboration from IDC](#), a trusted source of global market intelligence.



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