Crow Canyon Software

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

**How Crow Canyon Software
Powers Up SharePoint & Office 365
to Drive Business Productivity and
Make Your Job Easier**

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DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION: How Crow Canyon Software Powers Up SharePoint & Office 365 to Drive Business Productivity and Make Your Job Easier

Introduction

"How can Office 365 be used to improve my business and help it run more smoothly? What processes and work flows can Office 365 automate so that we can provide better service and drive higher productivity? How do we get a substantial ROI out of Office 365? What can we do with it?"

People adopting Office 365 are asking these questions -- and they are questions that Crow Canyon Software addresses with its applications for SharePoint and Office 365.

With 18 years of experience building business applications, Crow Canyon knows what it takes to meet your goals of better service, higher profits, happier employees, and satisfied customers.

Read on to see how Crow Canyon drives adoption, automates workflows, and provides robust reporting to power Digital Transformation in your organization.

In this white paper, we take a closer look at Digital Transformation in terms of the unique NITRO™ technology layer from Crow Canyon Software. Specifically, we're going to explore how Crow Canyon's applications for SharePoint and Office 365 drive user adoption, automate workflows, and provide robust reporting to power digital transformation in your organization.

> **The Digital Transformation era is in full swing.**

First, what is Digital Transformation?

To say that the IT landscape of today is different from a few years ago is an understatement. Technology is accelerating at an unprecedented pace. It seems that nowadays everyone has a "device" of some kind, whether it's a smartphone, gaming console, or a graphics tablet. Technology has now advanced to the stage where it can be easily packaged, marketed, and delivered to the populace via mass-produced devices. Everyone is now connected. Call it the "Device Culture".

This proliferation of devices has given rise to what industry experts have termed Digital Transformation. So what is it? On the user side, Digital Transformation is characterized by making people's lives easier. What was once difficult or time-consuming is now straightforward. Fifteen years ago, buying a book meant visiting a retail outlet, baking a cake meant flipping through recipes from stacks of magazines, and preparing a business report meant using non-integrated apps from multiple vendors. Today, avid readers have Amazon, aspiring chefs have YouTube with user-ranked how-to videos, and IT enterprises have Microsoft and its family of tightly integrated solutions. The world is different now — the Digital Transformation era is in full swing.

SharePoint and Office 365: The Perfect Platforms for Digital Transformation

When it comes to implementing enterprise IT solutions, you can either leverage existing technology (use what you have), take a risk (procure a different platform), or re-invent the wheel (build it yourself). It seems obvious that the most cost-effective option is to leverage what you already have; after all, thousands of IT companies get burned every year purchasing solutions that just don't fit or dumping capital into DIY projects that never seem to have an end in sight. The smart decision is to learn from the mistakes of others and work with existing resources.

When it comes to "existing technology," the leading collaboration & productivity platform in IT is Microsoft SharePoint and Office 365. SharePoint has a huge footprint as the go-to content collaboration platform in business, with a 400% monthly active user growth and a 300% year-on-year content growth.

Office 365 is also entrenched in the IT scene, with 80% of Fortune 500 companies purchasing Office 365 in the last 12 months. With over $6.3 billion in revenue, Office 365 is Microsoft's fastest growing commercial product in its entire history.

Microsoft SharePoint and Office 365 are the perfect platforms to help you initiate digital transformation in your organization, Digital transformation is simply a way to make your work easier — boosting your business productivity, becoming more efficient, and finding ways to facilitate collaboration across the entire enterprise.

The big question, however, seems obvious: how can SharePoint and Office 365 contribute to your company's digital transformation?

80% of Fortune 500 companies have purchased Office 365 in the last 12 months

$6.3 Billion Annual revenue run rate

Office 365 is Microsoft's **fastest growing** commercial product ever

Crow Canyon Software's "Three Pillars" Framework

With over 18 years of experience, Crow Canyon is dedicated to creating software that facilitates your success. All those years of experience have led us to some useful conclusions about how to develop applications that engage users, streamline processes, and provide reporting that drives continual service improvement.

Steeped in a history of ITSM and ITIL methodologies, we have codified those conclusions into a development approach that we call the Three Pillars of Application Design. This Three Pillar Approach is the driving force behind our unique NITRO™ technology layer that powers up SharePoint and Office 365 to become true business application platforms.

THE THREE PILLARS OF APPLICATION DESIGN ARE:

1. UI/UX: Used to drive user adoption;

2. Workflows: Used to automate underlying processes; and,

3. Reporting & Analytics: Provides robust reporting and drives continual service improvement.

Let's have a closer look at each of these design approaches.

1. User Interface & Experience (UI/UX) to Engage Users

When developing applications, we look at the big picture. At the application level, UI and UX is all about understanding functionality and how users interact with a digital environment. Our goal is to balance an intuitive design with powerful functionality. At the business level, the goal of UI/UX is to drive user adoption across the enterprise.

In a digitally transformed world, users want:

- Ease-of-Use: We want users to quickly start using our applications without a long ramp-up time. This means simple usability, but does not imply simple functionality;

- Connectivity: Digital transformation is all about accessibility — being able to securely connect to an app from any device in an environment that is familiar; and,

- Mobility: Today's proliferation of devices means that people engage with applications using tools that work for them. Functionality needs to be easily available no matter what the screen size is — mobile devices represent freedom, not barriers to usage.

> **Our SharePoint and Office365- friendly apps make ample use of forms, portals, dashboards, & branding to enhance SP/O365 and engage with users.**

Our SharePoint and Office 365-friendly applications make ample use of forms, portals, dashboards, and branding to enhance SP/O365 and engage with users. All of these visual elements include a high degree of configurability: you can select, specify, arrange, and present content as you see fit. Branding can be customized, dashboards can be configured, and forms are built according to your specifications.

There is a significant connection between digital transformation and UI/UX. The desire for easy-to-use applications, combined with a need for powerful functionality, means that the Device Culture demands robust features that can be learned quickly. Superior UI/UX design works behind-the-scenes to ensure that an application's feature set can get the job done while enabling employees to craft their own user experience.

2. Automating Workflows, Streamlining Processes

The greatest threat to a smooth User Experience is a corrupted Workflow. By corrupted, we mean a process that is either unintuitive, does not represent how your company works, or relies heavily on time-consuming manual input. Unfortunately, applications like this are much too common and represent a flawed approach to the development process. Workflows should be highly relevant and reflect the workings of your organization. After all, who knows your internal processes better than you?

Workflow planning is impossible without supported configuration. Whether it's an asset management solution or a service request system, organizations need the freedom to define how their users will interact and how information will flow from point to point.

Workflows also need to be capable of automation. Careful preparation and planning during the workflow configuration process results in smooth transitions between decisions, without the need for manual steps. For example, if a help desk ticket involves a known application error, then the underlying system should automatically route the ticket to the appropriate recipient — perhaps a Support Engineer who works specifically with application errors.

In a digitally transformed world, workflows must automate their underlying processes. The whole idea of Digital Transformation is to improve experiences, whether we're talking about business productivity or increasing efficiency. Old school processes that rely on manual input are not only outdated, but act as bottlenecks for the enterprise. CTOs and IT Managers should aim for process speed without sacrificing accuracy — from a workflow standpoint, this means crafting automated steps that can adapt to different scenarios based on user input.

Solutions from Crow Canyon facilitate your digital transformation journey by enabling your organization to define how your workflows should work. You specify how data moves between different end-points. Remember the help desk ticket? Where the ticket goes, how it is escalated, who is notified, and how it is finalized is entirely up to you. All steps—or some—can be fully automated.

Digital Transformation is largely about empowerment and giving organizations the tools they need to become better at what they do. Part of that is leveraging the power of automation and re-claiming time that, more than likely, was wasted on repetitive manual tasks.

> **In a digitally transformed world, workflows play in key role in automating and streamlining routine business processes.**

3. Using Reporting & Analytics To Improve Service

Our Three Pillars of Application Design are originally founded on core ITIL and ITSM principles. A key concept in both methodologies is Continual Service Improvement (CSI): being able to incrementally improve service management standards by continually analyzing data.

From a Digital Transformation perspective, software applications are prioritized based on how effective they are in terms of a quantifiable metric: fosters productivity? increases efficiency? more engaging? etc. In order to achieve any of these metrics, an organization needs to be able to look at itself objectively and compare performance over time. The ongoing application of this concept is Continual Service Improvement.

Analyzing data (e.g., your team's performance, customer feedback ratings, etc.) should be a regularly scheduled event that is given the same level of attention as other processes. Without Continual Service Improvement your organization cannot mature, grow, and be competitive... but, without reporting & analytics capabilities, you cannot even perform CSI!

As the third pillar of our application design approach, reporting & analytics represents a critical functionality set within all of our products. Our Reporting & Analytics functionality tracks and records all data-points as they pass through configurable workflows. Comprehensive filters enable you to view data that is relevant to your specific business needs, with dashboard results being visually conveyed via charts and graphs.
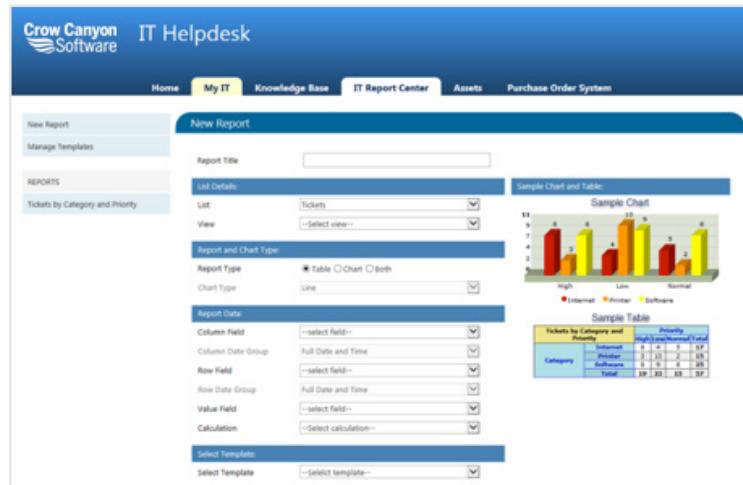
This robust reporting capability drives Continual Service Improvement in your organization and, over time, enables your company to become more productive, more efficient, and more engaging... in short, to become digitally transformed.

Crow Canyon's NITRO™ Application Service Layer

Earlier in this whitepaper we posed the question, "How can SharePoint and Office 365 contribute to your company's digital transformation?" The answer is through Crow Canyon's unique NITRO™ application service layer.

Our NITRO™ application layer powers up SharePoint and Office 365 with a unique set of functions and capabilities, turning both into true business application platforms. All of our applications integrate seamlessly with Microsoft SharePoint and/or Office 365 environments and they require absolutely no coding to install or configure.

Our solutions transform your out-of-the-box SharePoint/Office 365 platform into a powerful system capable of handling a multitude of business challenges, such as managing facilities, contracts, assets, equipment, onboarding, HR, security access, and customer service.

Every one of these applications has been developed using the Three Pillars of Application Design.

Each pillar powers Digital Transformation in your organization — UI/UX drives user adoption throughout your enterprise, Workflows automates processes, and Reporting & Analytics drives continual service improvement. All of these elements, expressed as the NITRO™ application layer,
are designed to help you achieve concrete business results while improving user engagement.

Conclusion

People's wants and needs are not that much different from years past. Whether it's 1987 or 2017, consumers want results and they want them quickly.
The difference is that technology has finally caught up. It's now feasible to sit in the comfort of your own home and check your bank balance on your mobile… or order groceries from a website. Market forces realized this potential and, consequently, the Device Culture was born. Everyone has a smartphone or tablet — usually both.

In this age of Digital Transformation, IT organizations need to move quickly to cater to the expectations of their users, whether it's a customer or an employee. Users don't have an interest in wading through unengaging apps, companies don't have the time to manually perform every process step in their workflows, and enterprises can't afford to blindly assume that their employees' performance always exceeds expectations. There is a gap between what users and companies want and how apps are developed. The NITRO™ application layer, built on the Three Pillars of Application Design, was created to fill that gap.

Crow Canyon solutions leverage the power of Microsoft SharePoint and Office 365, and then take it one step further. Both platforms are powerful, but cookie-cutter solutions are unable to address the unique needs of today's IT challenges. Our applications were made to not only fulfill your business requirements, but to do so in a way that meets the needs of the modern user head-on.

Digital Transformation reflects the reality of user and corporate expectations — apps should be engaging, workflows & processes should automatically run behind-the-scenes, and analytics should produce insightful reports that improve your business operations.

With Crow Canyon's NITRO™ application layer, your existing SharePoint and Office 365 environments have the potential to truly change the way you do business. The IT world is shifting to a Digitally Transformed landscape… why not join them?