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working world

# Five ways to incorporate digital into your succession strategy

As many leaders will admit, planning for the future of a private business can be overwhelming. In this transformational age, incorporating a digital strategy into your broader succession plan is a great place to start. A comprehensive digital strategy can not only protect your business, it can help your business adapt and continue to thrive in the long run.

Whether your intentions are to keep the business in the family or sell to a third party, the main elements of succession planning are the same: leadership succession, assets that may be in an estate or trust (both business and non-business assets), competing interests among stakeholders, incomplete or missing account records, investment liquidity, and existing complex tax structures. But adding on a digital component to the succession plan can help you make your company even more relevant in today's transformative marketplace.

Technology is always evolving, so nailing down a digital strategy can be tricky. Below are five elements helpful in making digital part of your overall succession plan:

## 1. Be proactive

As a business leader, you need to be one step ahead. That means keeping on top of the changing technology in your industry so that your business can act quickly to lessen digital disruption. Being nimble to adjust to changing conditions can help your business grow faster and yield greater rewards.

## 2. Look at the bigger picture

Incorporating a digital strategy into your succession plan will require you to evaluate your business's current technology, and to subsequently determine any gaps in your growth plans. This also includes evaluating your current management team to see if they have the right mix of technology capabilities.

## 3. Be inclusive

A digital strategy should go hand in hand with leadership. Ensure that your next-generation leader is included in major decisions regarding technology investment, since that person will eventually be the one to move the business forward. If you have the right digital solutions in place together with the right leadership, your business will have a distinct advantage.

## 4. Plan for innovation

As customer needs change, so should your product or service offerings. Your succession plan should focus on innovation to enable sustained business successes. This includes having a technological platform that meets your customers' needs and enables easy communication between management and operations.

## 5. Back office integration

Make sure your back office is fully integrated digitally for maximum operational efficiency. Work toward reorganizing and integrating back office support functions by standardizing and automating processes. Ultimately, this will deliver operational cost savings that can be reallocated to growth initiatives.

Building a succession plan is part of the journey of running a business. It's an ongoing process – especially as your strategy becomes increasingly digitized through technology that's constantly evolving. Even if it's a work in progress, a detailed plan designed to help prepare your business for what comes next can make the future less daunting and help you grow through change.

## We can help

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