

Superfast Business Wales



# How to grow your business



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government



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## How to grow your business

Expansion of a business by developing new products and services or moving into new market sectors should be the focus of all small business owners.

Thriving businesses have a roadmap that clearly defines how their organisation will evolve into the future.

Setting goals and having practical steps to take will ensure your business remains sustainable, relevant and profitable.

## Use virtualisation across IT to expand your business at low cost



IT is often at the heart of a small business. Being able to expand these technical systems without incurring major cost is a key focus for many small business owners. Virtualisation when used with server-based IT infrastructures can deliver real-world expansion without increasing costs.

Buying new servers for your business is an expensive exercise. These may be needed to support the expansion plans you have for your organisation. However, creating virtual machines within an existing server infrastructure can deliver the additional server capacity without further financial investment. What's more, virtual machines can operate at much higher levels of capacity and efficiency than simply buying new server hardware.

[Find out more information about Software as a Service \(SaaS\).](#)



## How collaboration tools can help expand your business

To grow your business you need to ensure that everyone is working as efficiently as possible. Moving the data that is created, stored, manipulated and shared out of closed silos and into collaboration tools enables any business to work smarter and develop faster.

Such collaboration tools, including digital whiteboards, cloud-based office applications and unified communications with video conferencing at its heart, all offer an opportunity for teams to work more closely and productively together. [View the full guide on collaboration technologies.](#)

## Recognise the benefits of the cloud

The cloud offers a rich development environment that includes all the tools that any small business needs to expand without high cost. The principles of Software as a Service (SaaS) have now been applied to all business processes from accounting to marketing. Using the cloud as a services partner enables small business in particular to punch well above their weight. [Read more about moving to cloud-based software.](#)



## Investigate how flexible working can lead to an efficient and expanding business

With the arrival of advanced mobile digital technologies that can seamlessly link to collaborative tools in the cloud, flexible working is now a byword for businesses that want to expand and become leaders in their market sector. Using tablet PCs and smartphones, small enterprises can reap the benefits of a workforce that can be dispersed over wide geographical areas, yet work efficiently together.

Flexible working that is set up and maintained with high levels of security can become a massive differentiator between small businesses that want to innovate and expand, and those businesses that cling to traditional working practices.

[Read more about flexible working.](#)



## Develop brand advocacy across social media networks

Small businesses are by their nature agile enterprises. Taking advantage of the vast commercial opportunities that social media networks offer is vital to sustained expansion and profitability. Social media should be placed at the very centre of any growing and expanding business. As these networks touch on each aspect of your business – none more so than customer service – they can become new commercial channels for goods and services. Furthermore, consumers want to move closer to the businesses they have a relationship with.

Fast and efficient customer service is now a major differentiator in the market place. Your business will see huge benefits by committing resources now to the development of these social channels that will grow in importance, as social businesses become the norm. [Read more about how you can use social media in your business.](#)

## Exploit the potential for apps



With the rise of the smartphone and tablet PC, the app has become a common means for businesses to reach their mobile customers.

As the app ecosystem continues to develop and expand, the number of services now on offer is huge. Using an app to reinforce an existing customer relationship can be powerful, but using apps for new service or product delivery

taps into the whole app economy that has customers ready and waiting to buy. [Read more about developing apps for your business.](#)

## Invest in research and development

Innovation can come from inspiration, but for many businesses, a structured R&D process is where a steady stream of new products will originate. Where once R&D was the province of larger companies, even micro enterprises can now have their own R&D platforms.



Colleges and universities now actively partner with businesses of all sizes to develop the next ground-breaking product. Often sharing the cost, expanding small businesses can tap into a wealth of knowledge and expertise is that likely to be on their doorstep.

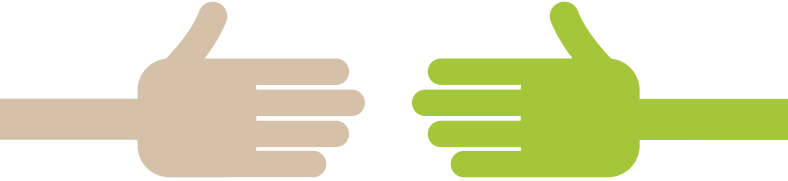
## Exploit new mobile commerce opportunities



Mobile commerce (m-commerce) isn't just about putting your website onto mobile phones and tablets, but is a paradigm shift in how businesses are evolving with mobile touch points becoming the pre-eminent channel to reach existing and new customers.

Small businesses can leverage the power that mobile devices place in the hands of consumers to expand their operations and connect with their customers when they want to buy. An expanding business today, has m-commerce on its development roadmap.

## Place a high emphasis on customer relations



Customer Relationship Management (CRM) has been transformed thanks to social media. In addition, as CRM systems have moved to the cloud even the smallest enterprise can now use professional tools to forge deeper and longer lasting relationships with their customers.

Customer service means more than simply dealing with complaints or queries. Expanding businesses need to ensure their CRM can expand with them to ensure the high levels of customer services and the positive sentiment this has bought are maintained.

Using cloud-based CRM platforms gives expanding small businesses the flexibility they need to scale their operations, yet maintain those personal relationships that are so important in today's commercial landscape. Paying attention to your CRM is vital for all expanding organisations. [Read more about developing your CRM.](#)

## Integrate your digital marketing

The power of digital marketing comes from its ability to send the same message to a waiting audience over several channels simultaneously. Using these digital channels to expand a small business means understanding how these different channels can be used together.

Smart businesses have a clear marketing plan for each action they want to take to promote a new product, for instance. Take the time to clearly understand your audience and the channels they prefer. Highly focused marketing messages that use the right delivery mechanism can help any business expand its market share. [Read more about how to create your own digital marketing strategy.](#)

**Summary** All small businesses need to expand to stay vital in their market sectors.

Your expansion plans need to be multi-faceted and clearly define your expansion goals. Audience appreciation and the changing face of customer relationships should not be underestimated.

Small businesses that can leverage and integrate several expansion initiatives will become leaders in their industries.



## Superfast Business Wales

To complement the roll-out of superfast broadband across Wales, you can access advice on what you can do once it's available to you, and what you can do in the meantime, to ensure your business gets the most from superfast broadband.

- Grow your business
- Boost productivity
- Increase efficiency
- Cut your costs

For more information and to download your FREE 'How to...' Guides visit:

[www.business.wales.gov.uk/superfastbusinesswales](http://www.business.wales.gov.uk/superfastbusinesswales)

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