

Embracing the future workspace

Collaborative work management solutions make it easier for agencies to manage projects, programs and processes



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As agencies rely more on desktop tools and innovations at the user level to advance their digital transformation efforts, they will need to create a collaborative work environment so that users can automate processes, build standardized workflows and better coordinate their work.

Over the past 18 months, the massive shift in how and where people work, spurred by the pandemic, changed the way agencies approach digital transformation.

As organizations shifted to a remote work or school environment, transforming at the edge became the norm. The pandemic helped normalize this trend, which will continue to grow as organizations

embrace this new hybrid work environment.

“Digital transformation shifted from a well-planned organizational priority to a fundamental daily requirement, effectively driving responsibilities and tasks usually done by IT out across the enterprise at large,” said Chris Aherne, vice president of Federal at Smartsheet.

Technology agility became the glue that held agencies together as employees began to work from home, he said. A recent Gartner study found that by 2024, 80 percent of technology products and services will be built by those who are not technology professionals.

It also found that digital business is now treated as a team sport and

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no longer the sole domain of the IT department.

As a result, digital transformation will look different than it has in the past. Change will not come from complex technology used by technology or domain experts, but rather from power users and users of technology solutions.

As a consequence, agencies will rely more and more on easy-to-use, accessible, intuitive technology that non-IT users can master in a matter of hours or days. Employees will use familiar, every day technology in new ways, innovating on their own using tools such as Excel and Google Sheets.

However, there are limitations to relying on these desktop tools when managing projects, programs and processes.

For instance, users have to switch screens 1,100 times a day on average to get their jobs done. Best practices are siloed across projects, programs and processes, and there is limited governance and standardization. Work, collaboration and reporting occur in separate systems.

In addition, the lack of a common operating picture strains executive decision making and makes it difficult

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to drive top-down strategic initiatives.

“As this shift occurs it will become more important that these new technologies can be secured, governed and managed according to agency standards—just like systems of records,” Aherne said.

The evolution of Collaborative Work Management solutions, such as Smartsheet, can help. The cloud-based platform provides automation, collaboration, and transparency to help teams increase productivity. End users “can easily collaborate, build standardized workflows, and automate processes,” he said.

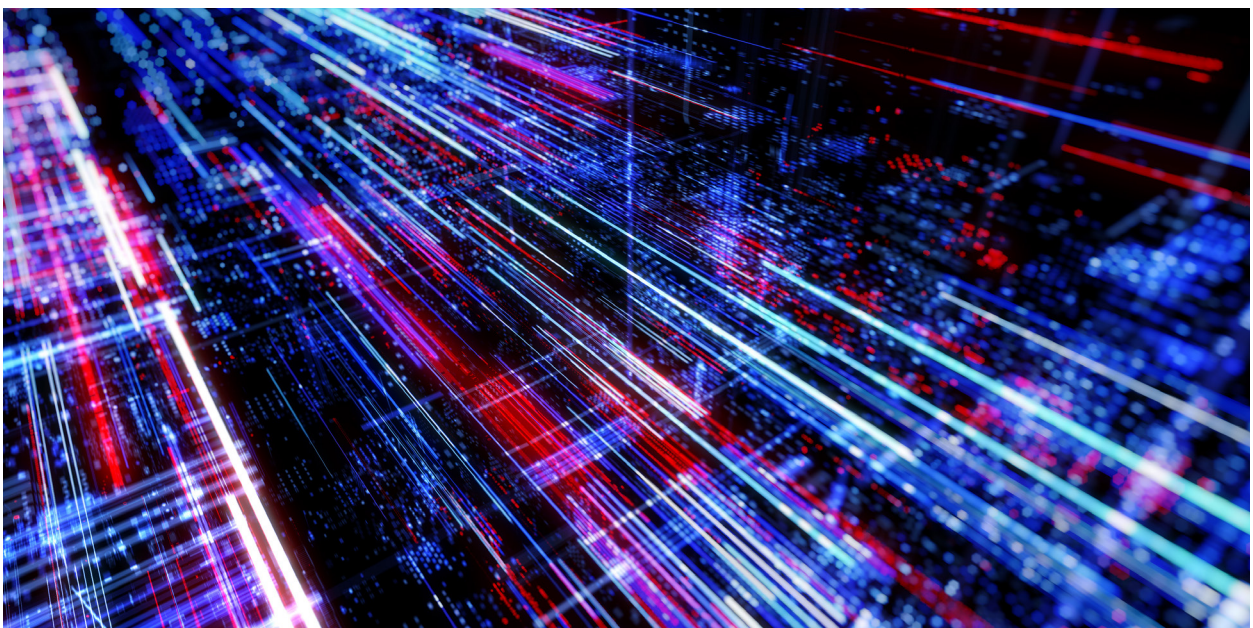
Smartsheet allows users to do all

their work from one tool, including collaborating with others inside and outside their organization. It is built on enterprise services to allow for integration with other systems and provides enterprise-grade security. Work can be collected and initiated by a variety of means including via forms, email, and mobile applications.

Users can coordinate and execute work via the Smartsheet easy-to-use, intuitive interface and work can be aggregated so that managers have access to reports, dashboards and portals that provide near real-time status of how the organization is performing. Because Smartsheet offers a high level of transparency, users don’t have to separately prepare these reports and dashboards.

In addition, the Smartsheet Gov platform is FedRAMP moderate certified and DISA IL4 accredited.

Collaborative Work Management tools represent the future of work and will be an important element of digital transformation going forward, Aherne said. “It will allow an organization’s most important and valuable assets—their people—to drive the innovations agencies require to meet ever changing and evolving priorities.”



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