



Guide your Technology Success – Look for a Technology Advisor.

By Laura Dallas Burford

You hire an accountant to develop a financial roadmap -- a lawyer to develop a legal roadmap – a marketing strategist to develop a marketing roadmap.

Why not hire a technology advisor to assist with developing a technology roadmap?

Whether your business is brand new or has been around for years, the business's efficiency and effectiveness is impacted by its technology. Small and midsize businesses struggle with hardware, software and networks because it is not their core competency.

A technology advisor is more than a technician. A technology advisor is someone who knows how to use technology to meet business needs. A good advisor works with you to determine the right solution. The right solution might not be the cheapest, the most expensive or the most technologically sophisticated. The advisor works with you to anticipate future **business** issues and needs, and leverages your existing technology investments.

So what should you look for when looking for an advisor?

1. Find someone who you are comfortable with since you need to build a trusted relationship with them; just like with your accountant, lawyer and market strategist.

40% of businesses productivity gains in the last decade were due to technology investments.

(Forrester Research)

2. Select a person who has a broad technical background so that he/she can assist you with your technology needs. This does not mean they need to be able to do everything themselves, but they should be able to work with you to determine who is the right resource to assist you with the task at hand.
3. Make sure the advisor has a solid understanding of core business processes and business operations. Changes are normally necessary to business operations when new technology is implemented and without the changes to the processes you could lose

the efficiency gained by the implementation of technology.

4. The advisor should be able to communicate and listen well. Questions asked by the advisor should help you determine your future technology needs and help you determine what your real issues are. Explanations of the technical solutions should be in simple terms – in plain English. Visual drawings and graphics should be used to assist with explanations.
5. And last, make sure the advisor is objective and unbiased. They need to provide you with alternatives including the pros and cons of each alternative, then work with you to determine the right solution.

Technology is an integral part of all businesses – it is here to stay. And if it needs to be integrated into the business just like your finances, legal and marketing strategies.

**YOUR BUSINESS
TECHNOLOGY
ADVISORS**