

On Demand Solutions for Small Businesses – Myth or Reality

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Nowadays magazines and web sites are with full of articles and stories on the subject of On Demand Solutions. While technical journals and writings provide full of technical information such as architecture, legacy migration alternatives, and solutions providers to support the on demand infrastructure, the marketing folks are doing a fantastic job of spreading the word around.

The large businesses and corporations have their Information Technology teams figure out the feasibility of such solutions. The supporters of On Demand solutions insist that the in house teams are biased and not competent enough to assess the usefulness of on demand software solutions. On the other hand, the CIOs and their teams are worried that on demand solutions provide a chance for the business users to escape their radars and implement piece-meal solutions without their knowledge. They argue that data security is compromised, integration efforts are wasted, and statutory and regulatory compliances may not be met. They are also wary of fly-by-night operators taking advantage of the situation and take the business users for a raid, which might prove costly in the long term.

There are elements of truth in both the arguments. There are advantages and disadvantages in on demand software solutions just like in any other business decisions. Each business has to weigh the pros and cons and assess how it suits their business scenarios. What is suitable for one business in a particular scenario may be virtually meaningless for another business in a different situation. The business and information technology teams have to work together in arriving at the right decision. Again, the decision may be different for each solution. There can not be an umbrella ban or acceptance of On Demand solutions across the organization.

What are On Demand Solutions?

Let us step back and take a look at the definition of the phrase. Again, as any other definitions, there is no universally acceptable definition for this too. Technical jargons and acronyms abound the market place. Software as a Service (SaaS) is another widely used term for On Demand Software Solutions.

Characteristics of On Demand Solutions

The following are the characteristics of an On Demand or SaaS solution:

- Software is available through the Internet in a hosted form.
- The service can be availed by anyone who has access to Internet.
- Service fees are collected via subscription (typically paid monthly).
- No need for any additional software or hardware installation by the user.
- All users use the same version of the software with minor configuration changes.
- The users can start using this in a fairly short amount of time (hours or days).
- System access is available 24 X 7, except small scheduled maintenance windows.

Small Businesses and On Demand Solutions

The cursory look at the characteristics indicates that this is a boon to the small and even tiny businesses. There are millions of small businesses that use computers with dedicated software for specific uses. However, general purpose usage is mostly manual intensive and not cohesive. Many users do not have time and knowledge to install and maintain computers and software solutions. Hence they resort to manual processes and procedures and the result is gross inefficiency and lots of missed opportunities in the market place.



The small business that we refer here includes millions of home based businesses, net branches and franchise licensees. The On Demand modules that they could leverage to improve their businesses include sales calls and activities tracking, document libraries, customer calls and service tickets handling, sales orders tracking, secured email services and forums with peer groups.

Example of small businesses who could leverage On Demand Solutions include franchising such as mail and parcel centers, loan originators, mortgage and lending service providers, and copy and print centers, home based net branches, prepaid legal services, home and handyman service providers, home remodelers and contractors, and insurance agents.

Conclusion

Small businesses are the most suitable ones to immediately leverage the advantages of web based On Demand solutions. The subscription fees are very affordable and there is no need for any upfront investments. Above all, the risks involved are almost nothing from the small business perspective. For more information on demand services offered by Anagha Group, please visit www.fmsplus.com and www.leadpro247.com web sites.

About Anagha Group

Anagha Group provides a range services in Marketing, Sales, Operations and Customer Management and Service arenas. The portfolio of services includes strategic marketing, marketing research, email marketing, lead management and support services. Rebates programs administration, loyalty programs management, co-op programs execution, integrated marketing and fulfillment services are delivered to the customers using flawless delivery methodologies. Backed by an experienced, strong technology team and global delivery capabilities, Anagha Group helps customers achieve significant cost reduction and enhance profitability.

Several technology tools and customer centric solutions are offered in on-demand (Software as a Service or on-demand) or on-site models. These tools help handle day to day marketing related operations efficiently, measure and analyze benefits in terms of ROI and aid in decision making by effective utilization of marketing dollars. These tools also provide valuable business intelligence reporting in marketing, sales, operations, administration, service and customer data management areas.

Anagha Group offers consulting, best practices and allied services in data management, customer data integration initiatives, global data exchange programs among trading partners, portfolio management, quality improvement programs and technology consulting in marketing, fulfillment, sales and operations business processes.

Anagha Group provides its services to a cross section of the industry, including consumer packaged goods, marketing services, retail, franchising, healthcare, life sciences, building materials, finance, mortgage processing, banking and insurance, property management, automotive and other manufacturing industries. For more information on services offered, please visit www.AnaghaGroup.Com.