

## Creating a Modern IT Strategy

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*Nearly all businesses need some kind of IT leadership. For many smaller businesses, we help provide that leadership and guidance. However, whether you provide the leadership or outsource it, the goals are the same.*

As an IT leader, your job is growing more challenging by the day. Your IT strategy must be sophisticated and agile, balancing digital transformation priorities with security imperatives—and you probably have to stick to a lean budget too. What are the non-negotiable priorities you absolutely must include? Here's a look at some of the most important IT issues that a modern CIO or CTO must tackle and why they matter to your success.

### 1. Enable digital maturity

Digital transformation may be the buzzword phrase of the moment, but there's a good reason for that. Businesses that fail to become digitally mature will struggle to compete and thrive within the evolving digital landscape. While the transition to digital maturity often involves updating legacy infrastructure and implementing new technology systems that enable powerful business capabilities, it also requires a considerable amount of cultural change.



According to [TechTarget](#), IT and business leaders often underestimate the degree of change management and political acumen required to lead an organization to a state of digital maturity. With that in mind, remember to keep a close eye on the softer human elements associated with digital transformation as well as the innovative technologies your organization is pursuing.

### 2. Strengthen security

Even the most forward-thinking digital transformation strategy can't succeed without a strong security strategy to back it up. If the proper defenses aren't in place, your business may fall prey to a devastating breach that could profoundly damage customer trust and result in costly legal repercussions. To start, ensure that you are keeping a close eye on emerging cyber threats. For example, cybercriminals are already experimenting with machine learning, and this means organizations will have to beef up their capabilities to fend off AI-enhanced attacks.

It's also wise to prioritize hardware security and ramp up printer defenses so that an opportunistic hacker can't leverage this often-overlooked weak link to gain access to your environment. Advanced printers can boost your IT team's security capabilities by automatically identifying malware attacks in progress and self-healing after the fact. With upgradable firmware on board, these devices can also automatically receive new security features to keep pace with evolving security threats.

### 3. Develop IT agility

As you lead digital transformation initiatives for your business, you can do the same for your IT team by developing greater internal IT agility. One powerful way to accomplish this strategic goal is to automate specific IT workflows and eliminate tedious make-work tasks for your staff. You can secure multiple productivity wins at once with managed print services. Managed printing can protect documents in transit with pull printing features and ensure better overall hardware security by regularly refreshing your

printer fleet according to a set cycle.

By automating core IT processes, you can augment your team's efforts without adding to your headcount. And with timely notifications in place to alert you about priority concerns, you'll be far more nimble and able to respond quickly to emerging incidents before they become five-alarm fires. For example, your self-healing printers could automatically ping your security team when they detect an attack in progress. With these streamlined processes and smart solutions in place, you and your team can reclaim more hours in the IT workday and make serious headway toward accomplishing higher-level strategic priorities.

## 4. Build IT skills

Like your budget, cutting-edge tech skills are a precious, in-demand resource. According to [Gartner](#), staff shortages have quickly become the top emerging risk that organizations face around the world, and a lack of IT skills may exacerbate other pressing risks if it goes unmitigated. In essence, the IT skills gap represents an upstream challenge that today's IT leaders must tackle head-on if they are to make meaningful progress on digital transformation, security priorities, and compliance concerns like GDPR. Addressing the IT skills gap is also key to creating more IT agility on an ongoing basis and moving the needle on IT's own transition toward digital maturity.

With this in mind, consider investing in professional development opportunities for promising IT staff and exploring creative options to enhance your tech team's most important skill sets—whether through your hiring practices, training for your current IT professionals or a combination of both.

A career as an IT leader can feel like a complicated balancing act; especially as roles like CIO and CTO continually evolve. But it is possible to advance both IT and the business as a whole by prioritizing the aspects of IT strategy that create capacity and agility. In this way, you can position IT for success in both the short and long term and empower your team to take on new and complex challenges.