



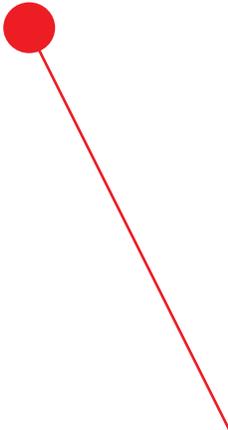
# Getting your business ready: A roadmap to digital empowerment



**In this white paper you will learn...**

- **What drives the need for digital transformation**
- **How businesses, no matter their revenue or headcount, can approach getting ready**
- **Why digital transformation is a play in five acts**
- **Why your business must prepare for a 5G-powered future**
- **What the next steps in your digital journey should be**

# What makes a business ready for the future?



Is it an efficient operating model? Reliable connectivity? Today's most innovative companies will understand that readiness is not demonstrated by any one thing at any one time.

Employees always need tools that will allow them to innovate freely. Leadership needs sophisticated defenses that help neutralize cyber threats before they become serious. Sensors and software should not only collect and analyze data, but simplify processes and protect the bottom line. Customers want and need to be met at every touchpoint by experiences that are frictionless, memorable and secure – over and over again.

Readiness is fluid, and creating it is a project that far-sighted business owners never finish. They do, however, start somewhere.

In a recent study roughly two thirds (64%) of small to medium businesses indicated technology was a primary factor in pursuing their business objectives.<sup>1</sup> No matter their size, a comprehensive digital strategy can enable organizations to adapt quickly to changing needs. And with technology becoming more accessible, affordable and more valuable to its end users, smaller businesses can drive better outcomes by taking advantage of solutions that were once cost-prohibitive.

Treating digital transformation as a continuous journey helps leadership not only drive change within their business, but also across their category.

But while companies recognize the need for their own digital transformation so they can better serve their customers, its value goes beyond a one-time expenditure. By Gartner's estimates for endpoint installed base, 4.82 billion connected things were in use in 2019, and that total is expected to reach 9.25 billion by 2023.<sup>2</sup> With so many points of connection and with 5G expected to provide unprecedented network speed, bandwidth and low latency, new business models will take flight, new customer experiences will emerge and new threats will proliferate alongside them. The task is to look at your organization and envision where you want to be in five or 10 years, and ensure you are laying the foundation to get there by using the latest technologies.

Digital solution providers tend to forget that small and medium businesses exist at different states of readiness. Few providers can make all the digital pieces of your business talk to one another. And with the advent of 5G Ultra Wideband, the business imperative to innovate will only accelerate.

Organizations of all sizes need to keep up with the breathtaking pace of change. Today, readiness touches every part of your organization, at every millisecond. Preparing for an always-on business environment is complicated, but with the right roadmap and partner, deep, meaningful digital transformation is possible – and can be a major competitive advantage. Organizations that are ready will feel they not only can keep up with, but outpace, the changes, challenges and competition to come.

# 64%

of small to medium businesses indicated technology was a primary factor in pursuing their business objectives

# 25B

things globally will be connected by 2021

<sup>1</sup> CompTIA, Tech Buying Trends Among Small and Medium-Size Businesses, 2019.

<sup>2</sup> Gartner, "Forecast: Enterprise and Automotive IoT, Worldwide Figure 1-3," April 2020.

## The rationale for ready

# The case for digital transformation emerges from profound shifts in the marketplace.

### Intelligence on the move

The mobile digital workforce is exploding. In 2018, 70% of global employees worked remotely at least one day a week,<sup>3</sup> and by 2023, it is estimated that 43.3% of the global workforce will be mobile.<sup>4</sup> Smaller businesses are no strangers to having to be nimble and maintain flexible employment models, but as more team members log on remotely, a growing percentage of business owners will be thinking about how to best keep their team as connected and collaborative as possible.

### Cloud migration and security

Additionally, organizations of all sizes are migrating from inefficient data centers to the cloud. Such shifts indicate a growing level of comfort with offsite storage solutions, but with adoption comes risk. In its latest Data Breach Investigations Report, Verizon analyzed 41,686 security incidents, of which 2,013 were confirmed data breaches spanning 86 countries.<sup>5</sup> Poorly configured servers practically invite bad actors inside.

### Customer experience (CX)

Customers, too, are demanding more advanced experiences from the businesses they support. By one study 67% of customers said their standards for good experiences are higher than ever, and a full 80% of customers said the experience a company provides is as important as its products and services.<sup>6</sup>

Fortunately, technologies are emerging that will allow organizations to innovate and develop new ways to care for their customers, their employees and their bottom lines. Deployed intelligently, digital solutions can help businesses stretch to achieve things they never could before. Again, it's not whether these shifts are coming, but whether you're ready for them.

<sup>3</sup> IWG, Global Workspace Survey, 2018.

<sup>4</sup> Strategy Analytics, Global Mobile Workforce Forecast Update 2017-2023, 2018.

<sup>5</sup> Verizon, 2019 Data Breach Investigations Report.

<sup>6</sup> Salesforce, State of the Connected Customer, 2019.

# **Key questions to ask your business:**

- 1. Are you using the right digital technology to give you an edge?**
  - 2. What gaps or inefficiencies could you tackle digitally?**
  - 3. How are you outpacing digital security threats?**
  - 4. How secure are the mobile devices being used by your business for critical data and activities?**
  - 5. Could you improve customer experiences with new digital tools?**
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## Approaching ready

Organizations that successfully tackle the essential work of digital transformation view their businesses through three lenses: Connection, Protection and Customer Experience.

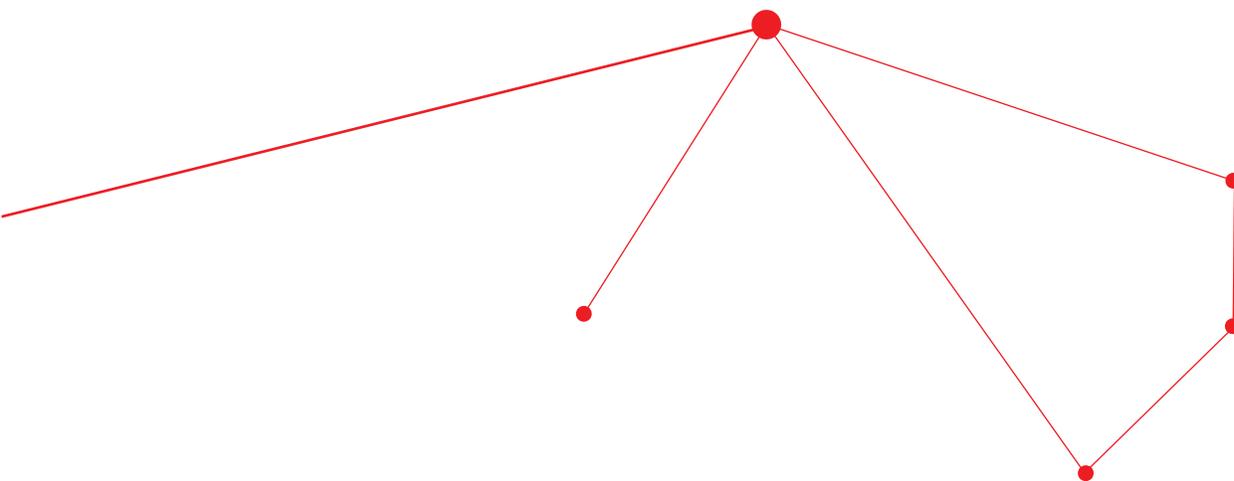
### Connect

Being ready to connect goes beyond Wi-Fi and wide area networks (WANs). It's a reset around what it means to meet the world beyond your walls – both physical and virtual. Whether you're migrating your databases to the cloud or exploring how mobile edge computing can help power new, immersive customer experiences, being ready to connect is being ready to react.

### Protect

Readiness to protect should be top of mind for all businesses. Security threats aren't solely the concern of large corporations, and becoming a target of bad actors is as much a function of a business' vulnerability as its size.

Businesses have realized – at times painfully – that the reputational hazard of a data breach is far too great for security to be treated as just a line item on a budget. The breakneck pace of the digital economy requires organizations to think about securing their businesses in bold new ways that extend far beyond a lock on the door.



## Customers

Being ready for customers is perhaps the most challenging and exciting work of all. Offering a valuable service is table stakes. Taking that service to market with a strategy backed by sound, actionable intelligence – and with the ability to adjust both the strategy and even the offering in near-real time – will separate the innovators from the imitators. And when businesses harness the power of 5G, opportunities for CX differentiation can expand exponentially.

5G will be more than the next generation of wireless connectivity. It's the seed of a revolution with the potential to transform both society and numerous industries in remarkable ways. From augmented and virtual reality to self-driving cars, remote telemedicine to a more robust Internet of Things, the viability of these life-changing technologies will depend on the ultra-low latency and lightning-fast speeds of 5G. Its wide-scale adoption should upend old business models and drive previously unimaginable innovations. The doors that 5G is expected to open for business and customers are predicted to be so profound that this network technology has been called the key ingredient for the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

## The power to act

In anticipation of this massive digital shift, owners must start questioning their businesses through the lenses of Connection, Protection and Customer Experience. Only then will they be prepared to start asking some challenging but tantalizing questions of themselves.

How might near-real-time insights into parcel tracking improve your inventory forecasting? How might heat-mapping technology inform the layout of a retail planogram? How might the low cost of sensor and camera technologies allow you to compete against businesses twice your size?

Anyone can consider these questions, but not everyone is prepared to act on them. That's why digital transformation must be treated as a journey, with clearly defined steps, states and milestones. Being ready means having the right insights – and the right partner – to help you strengthen operations, deepen customer relationships and safeguard your position.

# The 5 states of ready



## ● Start

For some small businesses, this might mean overhauling and managing voice communications via a voice over IP (VoIP) solution, which better controls costs and streamlines mobility, video conferencing and online meetings.

For others, it's migrating data to the cloud, where software-defined networking in a wide area network, or SD WAN, can bring together distant and disparate assets more efficiently. Since management is centralized, orchestration of an entire network is easier – from provisioning to maintenance to upgrades.

The rise of cloud and mobile technologies, however, is driving the demand for a better-performing WAN. As your business races to deliver experiences to more people in more places on more devices, the need for bandwidth is skyrocketing. Traditional WANs – typically built on aging protocols, rigid routes and racks of hardware-intensive appliances – are simply not flexible enough to keep up.

An SD WAN solution helps businesses quickly connect their people to the data they need, when and where they need it – while being mindful of budgets.

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### **Solution spotlight**

Enterprises establishing their operations can set the right tone with **One Talk**, a mobile-first solution that enables businesses to receive, route and redirect calls across multiple compatible devices. Numbers will ring on everything from a smartphone to a laptop – so customers can reach teams whether they're in the office or on the go, wherever they are. As a complement, **Mobile Device Management (MDM)** helps your team manage access and data integrity of data on your workforce's devices. MDM is a scalable solution to right-size small and medium businesses' peace of mind.

## Adapt

### Businesses that are ready to adapt make critical investments in technological infrastructure.

This entails the kind of behind-the-scenes work that may never be noticed by customers – and that is precisely the point. The changes at this stage help businesses make their IT more agile and efficient, driving value at every level of the business.

With an SD WAN in place, your team shouldn't be burdened with ongoing network maintenance. A suite of Managed Network Services can help your network adapt on the fly to changing service levels and bandwidth demands using software-defined policies. Layering on top a smart suite of WAN optimization services can help improve the performance of the most demanding apps, whether in-house, externally hosted or in the cloud.

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#### Solution spotlight

Companies that are ready to adapt are ready to scale. At this state, securing operations becomes critical – especially when employees are distributed and business is happening via diverse platforms: across the enterprise, in the cloud and through the Internet of Things (IoT). With **Network Detection and Response**, small and medium businesses get a scalable threat detection and forensic analysis solution that helps shore up their security posture and intercept attacks before they arrive.

## Elevate

### Technology can radically enhance business interactions both internally and with end-users and customers.

For organizations that must consider supply chains and shipping logistics, a next-generation fleet telematics solution can help drive better efficiency, increased productivity and improved safety for vehicles and drivers. Sophisticated telematics can help produce significant efficiencies at the pump and on the road.

No matter at what volume you may be shipping, remaining hands-on during the fulfilment process is vital. For retailers, manufacturers and suppliers, establishing a secure chain of custody is crucial to combatting wastage, limiting costly write-downs and delivering products to customers on time and in good condition. A truly intelligent supply chain is one that reduces blind spots and accounts for every set of hands the inventory passes through along the way. Insight from IoT sensors can capture crucial data,

powering decisions that drive more on-time deliveries and more efficient shipping schedules. And with 5G-powered computer vision, these processes can become even more precise and scalable.

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#### **Solution spotlight**

The power of **5G** will help companies elevate their communications. Imagine an immersive conference solution atop **BlueJeans**, an easy, secure cloud-based video conference software platform. Whether it's team training and onboarding, or connecting with high-value clients via premium, secure video, BlueJeans is a transformative piece of technology. But when BlueJeans is combined with 5G-enabled mobile devices, businesses can build a conference room in the cloud – a virtual space where collaboration can happen, and heavyweight shared files swapped back and forth, in near-real time.

## **Innovate**

This goes beyond operations to deploying value-added, innovative solutions that drive your operations forward.

Increasingly, being noticed in a crowded market is determined not by how well an organization reacts to its customers' needs, but how well it can anticipate those needs before they form. As they move along their journey, businesses will be better equipped to determine what their customers value most, and orient their digital transformation around that north star.

From mobile integration to workforce optimization, Contact Center Managed Services can help your business manage incidents and deliver a better customer service experience. When you're ready to take the next step, an intelligent chatbot such as Virtual Agent uses natural language processing to better address inquiries and enable consistent, personalized conversations between business and client.

Tools like Knowledge Assist further use artificial intelligence (AI) to supply administrative staff with accurate, relevant information in real time, while Social Engagement allows your teams to analyze social traffic, participate in conversations and generate targeted content that drives quality interactions with valued audiences.

Ultimately, these and other CX solutions help you deliver an improved digital experience without sacrificing a critical human touch.

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#### **Solution spotlight**

Businesses that are ready to innovate will lean on next-generation technologies to create superior customer interactions. **Digital Customer Experience Services** harness artificial intelligence and natural language processing to help automate the understanding of what customers are saying. This allows businesses to better tailor and personalize their conversations, ultimately leading to deeper customer insights, reduced wait times and stronger brand affinity.

## ● Disrupt

Businesses at this stage will begin to adopt the latest technologies to design truly revolutionary experiences.

Feeling ready is a false summit. The goal is to both defend *and* disrupt.

As 5G paves the way for an all-new era of business, tools like augmented and virtual reality can become more accessible to businesses of all sizes, changing the way they approach everything from forecasting to inventory management. In retail settings, an employee could scan the stockroom without leaving the sales floor, or a customer could call up product information on the fly. Immersive experiences could help blur the lines of physical and digital retail by creating lifelike interactions for home shoppers, whether that's a personal stylist surveying a closet to make recommendations, or a skilled expert assisting with the set-up of a smart appliance. The innovations capable of being supercharged by 5G – from computer vision analytics to product forecasting – could help to level the playing field, putting small and medium businesses on the same operational footing as larger enterprises.

5G is anticipated to make AR and VR more affordable and accessible, and these technologies have the potential to revolutionize employee training, modernize record-keeping and supercharge robotics applications, from the manufacturing stage to shipping. Viewing your operations through an AR headset could fundamentally change the way you do business.

Customer service can reach new levels, from uniquely tailored promotions and recommendations to virtual assistants that can react to emotions and infer intent. And in a 5G-powered business environment, CX will provide unique client insight, free up employees to engage in higher-touch tasks and empower the organization to evolve and keep pace with the shifting needs of its customers.

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### **Solution spotlight**

As applications and processing power move to the network edge, visionary companies will be poised to disrupt themselves and their categories. The new frontier of network speed and latency, enabled by **5G** and multi-access edge computing (**MEC**), will help technologies and processes such as AR/VR, IoT and AI-enabled asset tracking realize their potential, making the promise of near-real-time insight and automated intelligence, captured at scale, viable for the first time in history.

## ● Start

Transformation never stops. Keep moving.

# Starting your journey

Digital transformation clearly doesn't happen in a vacuum, and business owners who undertake it should not have to go it alone. The work demands the expertise and objectivity of a nimble partner – one who can make a quick, pragmatic assessment of the landscape, apply solutions and stay on board to see them through.

This work requires data-derived intelligence and deep knowledge of multiple business verticals. Powerful applications must simplify processes, not complicate them. Not only should the network be reliable and secure, but flexible. Threat intelligence and industry research should be gathered and presented in a way that puts leadership on proactive footing.

## Ultimately, businesses need a partner that not only knows the network, but that is the network.

### Why Verizon for digital transformation?

Verizon works relentlessly to understand customers' needs. We reach across divisions and silos, helping businesses at every step to apply tomorrow's technology solutions to today's most pressing challenges.

We live for this – teaming with organizations of all types and sizes to deliver transformative change, and make innovation an integral part of doing business.

Working collaboratively with our clients and their teams across functions, we help to efficiently and securely integrate digital into our clients' operations.

At Verizon, our goal is to deliver the promise of the digital world by enabling people, businesses and society to innovate and drive positive change. When our mission aligns with our client's mission, amazing things happen.

Businesses choose to partner with Verizon because we possess the right technology and expertise to transform their practices, helping them move from a state of need to a state of readiness.

People think of us as a phone company. Our customers think of us as a technology partner. Let us show you why.

**Talk with one of our product specialists.**

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#### **Mobile phones and plans**

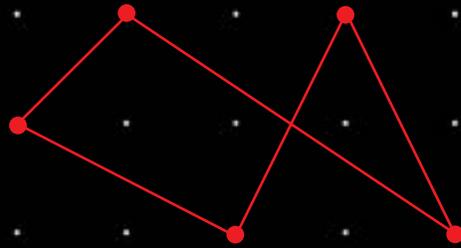
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**Where are you  
on your journey?**

**verizon<sup>v</sup>**