

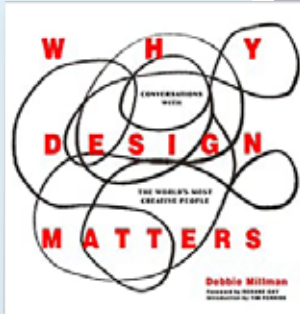
Technology Today

Insider Tips To Make
Your Business Run
Faster, Easier And More
Profitably

Why Design Matters

By Debbie Millman

For over 15 years, Debbie Millman has captivated listeners with her *Design Matters* podcast where she interviews creative minds and explores their journeys. Millman's book, *Why Design Matters*, brings her podcast to the next level by taking 80 of the best interviews from her podcast and exploring them further. As in her previous books, Millman transcribes her interviews in *Why Design Matters* and includes a short biography and image of her interviewee. If you've been trying to grasp a creative mindset, make sure to add this book to your reading list.



5 Ways Technology Can Take You To The Next Level

April 2022



This monthly publication provided courtesy of Jeremy Valverde, CEO of Affinity Tech Solutions.

Our Mission:

To build a community of success-minded entrepreneurs that inspires excellence, encourages collaboration and expands the capacity of all members to achieve great things.

It's nearly impossible to run a business in today's climate without using up-to-date technology. This doesn't necessarily mean bringing in the best computers, printers and other pieces of hardware needed to run a successful business. Instead, it means you should utilize the most current software and programs to ensure nothing falls through the cracks.

If you're just starting your own business, or even if you've been in business for years, it can be difficult to figure out what programs and websites will help you stay ahead of the pack. One of the biggest concerns that has plagued businesses lately is productivity. It

can be difficult to ensure your employees are staying productive, especially if your business is operating remotely right now. Luckily, many apps and websites out there are designed to boost productivity in the workplace.

It can be difficult to figure out which apps and websites will work best for your business, so we have created a list of the five best apps and websites that boost employee productivity.

TimeCamp

TimeCamp, an incredibly useful productivity app, is able to track how much time your team is spending on any given project. It will provide a breakdown, showing specific apps

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and websites, so you can see where most of their time was spent. You'll also get analytics so you can determine how they are performing. TimeCamp will even assist with keeping your budget in check to ensure that no task or project goes over budget.

If clocking time has been an issue in your business, TimeCamp can help there too. This program can be used as an easy attendance-tracking tool, as it has functions for clocking in and out, tracking overtime, automating payroll and reporting leaves. It's simple to use and comes with endless benefits.

Digital Assistants

While it would be nice for every employee to have an assistant, it's just not financially feasible. With the influx of technology over the last decade, nearly every person who works in your company has access to a digital assistant at all times. Siri, Cortana, Alexa and Google Assistant all exist to help you and your employees get through the day.

If you have employees who continually miss meetings or deadlines, have them set up reminders with their digital assistant. It can be as easy as saying, "Remind me that I have a meeting in three hours," and your digital assistant will remind you when it's time.

Slack

If your company operates remotely, or if you have certain employees who aren't working in the office, how are you communicating with each other? Using e-mail can become tedious, and e-mails are frequently missed. Texting is also not the best option unless you supply everyone in your company with a mobile work phone. That's where Slack comes in.

Slack is a group-messaging system designed to increase productivity. This program will keep employees up-to-date on recent developments within the company. You can also create specific groups if you need to get a message out to a specific team or group of people. Slack has been a lifesaver for many companies during the pandemic.

Asana

Asana is one of the best project management tools on the market. With this program, you'll be able to plan projects way in advance and plot out what should be completed first. There are also messaging options for every task and project so you can keep your team informed of any developments or changes. If you're overseeing a team that is working on the same project, then Asana is a must-have for your company.

“If you plan to grow your business until it’s considered elite, you must make the necessary technological adjustments.”

Microsoft 365

There are few things more frustrating than scheduling a meeting only to find out that you overbooked or the person you were supposed to meet with was double-booked. With Microsoft 365, you'll never run into this problem again. The calendar-sharing feature on Microsoft 365 allows you to see everyone's schedule so you can plan out meetings when everyone is free. You'll also have improved communication, secure cloud storage and automatic upgrades with Microsoft 365.

If you plan to grow your business until it's considered elite, you must make the necessary technological adjustments. If you're unsure about where to start, give these apps and websites a view. They could really bolster your productivity.

Free Cyber Security Audit Will Reveal Where Your Computer Network Is Exposed And How To Protect Your Company Now



At no cost or obligation, our highly skilled team of IT pros will come to your office and conduct a comprehensive cyber security audit to uncover loopholes in your company's IT security.

After the audit is done, we'll prepare a customized "Report Of Findings" that will reveal specific vulnerabilities and provide a Prioritized Action Plan for getting these security problems addressed fast. This report and action plan should be a real eye-opener for you, since almost all of the businesses we've done this for discover they are completely exposed to various threats in a number of areas.

To get started and claim your free assessment now, call our office at (352) 233-4031.

Cartoon Of The Month



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are trained – even incorporate training into your new-hire orientation so you can create a cyber-secure culture.

Protect Your Company's Future By Following Samsung's Methods

In this day and age, if you stand still in the world of business, you'll get left behind. Samsung is doing everything in their power to ensure they're around for a long time. In fact, Samsung's CEO, Jong-Hee Han, recently explained three methods they are using to keep their customers happy for years to come. While Samsung is known for developing new technology and devices, their methods can be applied to any product. If you want to ensure customers will continue to purchase your products in the distant future, give these methods a try:

- Make sure your products are easy to use.
- Create sustainable products.
- Ensure your products are energy-efficient.

Boost Your Confidence With These 3 Tricks

Throughout our lives, we come across many situations that are simply out of our control. When this happens, we tend to doubt ourselves, and our confidence wavers. But it's important that we do everything in our power to ensure our confidence doesn't wane. Thankfully, there are a few things we can do to help boost our confidence.

- **Stop doubting yourself** and believe in yourself instead. Take actions that allow you to believe in yourself rather than saying it and waiting for results.
- **Commit to yourself** and create consistent actions that will help you reach your goals.
- **Prepare for success** by expecting more of yourself and performing the necessary actions to become successful.

Remote Work Is No Joke



Not long ago, I read an article in The New York Times titled *We're Kidding Ourselves That Workers Perform Well From Home*, which I felt urgently needed a counterpoint. The article discussed the Houston-based law firm Ahmad, Zavitsanos, Anaipakos, Alavi & Mensing as they navigated the pandemic, avoided layoffs and achieved their best year on record. It's an inspiring story, and I don't mean to take any credit away from it.

That being said, the heart of the story is that Zavitsanos attributed the success of his business to when his colleagues returned to the office during the pandemic. He stated that "ambitious lawyers at firms like ours simply couldn't thrive in a virtual setting." That's true for your firm, but I fear your case might scare off leaders who are considering a more flexible work arrangement for their workforces.

I want you to consider the alternative experience that my company, ghSMART, saw when we offered flexible and remote work before and during the pandemic; we produced similar results! At ghSMART, every employee has worked from home since day one, and we have never doubted that ambitious professionals can function with remote and flexible work.

At ghSMART, we achieved record revenue and profits throughout the pandemic, completing a

10-year average annual revenue growth of 21% and profit growth of 24%. Client-satisfaction metrics reached all-time highs. Our clients are board members and CEOs of some of the largest companies in the world, as well as government leaders and private equity investors of the largest funds.

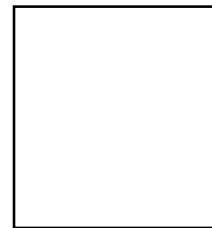
If you think a remote firm can't build a successful culture, you'd be wrong. ghSMART recently won an award for being the best management consulting firm to work for. This was out of 100,000 firms and was based on overall employee satisfaction. We also hold a Glassdoor culture rating of 4.9 out of 5, which is #1 in our industry.

You'd also be mistaken if you thought a remote firm would struggle to attract top-tier talent. We have four New York Times best-selling authors and two Rhodes Scholars — and many of our colleagues have performed at the top of their peer groups. It's clear that you can attract and retain top talent at a remote firm.

For the leaders of those organizations who are considering flexible and remote work, I say give it a chance. It offers a level of freedom and flexibility your employees will be incredibly grateful for, and you may even see an uptick in productivity.



Dr. Geoff Smart is the chairman and founder of ghSMART, a leadership consulting firm that exists to help leaders amplify their positive impact on the world. Dr. Smart and his firm have published multiple New York Times best-sellers. He stays active in his community and has advised many government officials.



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5 Ways To Keep Your Business Eco-Friendly



For years, “going green” has been a huge trend for businesses. And 2022 will continue this trend, so it’s important for entrepreneurs to consider the effect their businesses have on the environment.

We’ve gathered five ways you can make your business environmentally sound.

Account And Offset Your Carbon.

If you don’t know the carbon footprint of your business, you should take some time to figure it out. Once you know, you’ll need to make a consistent effort to offset it.

Don’t Use Paper.

Most things you do in your business can be completed digitally now. Stop using paper for basic situations and let your computer do the work instead.

Allow Employees To Work Remotely.

When your employees have to commute, emissions from their vehicles are harmful to air quality. If your employees can responsibly work from home, let them.

Perform An Audit.

It might be difficult to tell which practices are harmful to the environment, but it can help to perform an audit so you can pinpoint any waste management and consumption issues.

Incentivize Environmentally Friendly Practices.

Give your employees even more of a reason to be environmentally conscious. Encourage and reward them for their efforts.

3 SECURITY PRACTICES THAT BUSINESSES ARE ADOPTING IN 2022

Cyber security, a huge focus for small businesses, may cause feelings of risk and confusion about how to protect data,

employees, clients and a reputation. If you’re worried about cyber security in your business, implement one of these safety practices:

Adopt A Zero-Trust Framework.

Many IT security programs will require steps to access the system, but you’ll have access to everything once you’re in. That means one small breach and a cybercriminal will have full access. A zero-trust framework will close any gaps, keeping your information protected.

Utilize 2-Factor Authentication.

An experienced cybercriminal can get through password gates with ease, so you’ll need to create additional roadblocks. Two-factor authentication will add an extra layer of security that most hackers can’t break through.

Train Your Staff

Your employees must know the basics when it comes to cyber security. Make sure they

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