



6 TIPS FOR  
**INCREASING  
COLLABORATION  
IN YOUR BUSINESS**



# Our tips

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1. Phase out outdated tools
2. Embrace cloud-based solutions
3. Enable global access
4. Create secure processes
5. Improve accessibility
6. Choose user-friendly systems

# Introduction

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**As most of us know, collaboration is important for successful business operations. By working together with others, skills will be pooled and knowledge can be shared in order to make projects even more successful.**

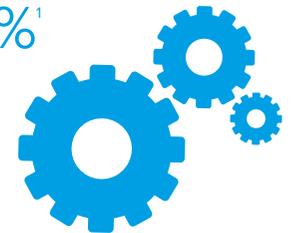
In organizations that focus on research and development, B2B collaboration is essential. Bringing in R&D professionals from external companies to share ideas and knowledge makes projects more streamlined and efficient, resulting in higher levels of innovation and an increased speed of discovery. In order to ensure the smooth running of projects, different people and companies need to be connected in different ways.

Whether it's working together on a new project and inviting external individuals to participate, coordinating team activities or collaboratively authoring and reviewing content, implementing successful collaboration within R&D can sometimes be challenging.

However, with collaboration bringing so many benefits, it really is important to ensure both internal and external teams have the tools and solutions they need to work together effectively. Thankfully, as a result of new digital solutions and advances in technology, enabling people to work together across today's R&D landscape has never been easier.

With this in mind, we've put together a few tips to help you foster collaboration and connectivity within your organization. We understand the important role productivity plays within R&D departments, and we're confident that these tips will result in not only a more cohesive workforce, but a team that pushes the boundaries of research innovation.

**Implementing collaborative processes and networking tools improves productivity by 30%<sup>1</sup>**



# 1. Phase out outdated tools

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**94% of firms think it's important to keep software updated<sup>2</sup>**

**When creating a culture of collaboration in your business, the first thing to consider is the existing tools and systems you and your team are relying on. Many businesses still use outdated computer systems and programs that are no longer supported by the manufacturer, and this increases the chances of errors occurring when files are shared and saved. Outdated tools are also more prone to cyber-attacks and malware, and this could pose a serious threat to your business.**

For organizations that focus on research and development, outdated tools such as paper-based notebooks are still widely used to record research and experiments. However, sharing information and ideas in this format is difficult due to the need for collaborators to be physically near the notebook in order to read it. Just like old software, using paper notebooks also poses an issue because the format fails to support current business needs in an ever-changing environment, as people move towards B2B collaboration.

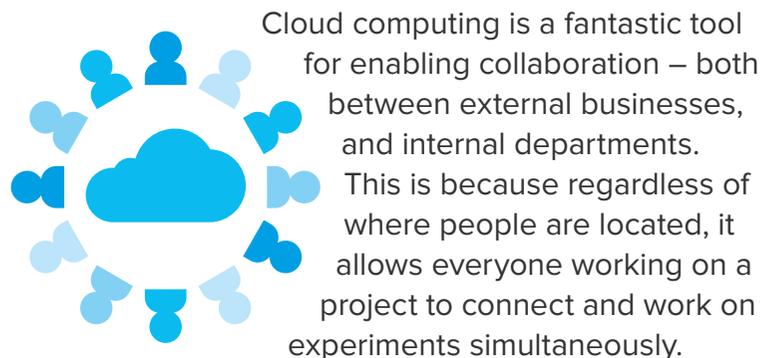
In today's digital world, old-fashioned solutions like this are acting as a barrier to effective collaboration, so it makes sense to investigate modern alternatives where possible. Exciting new technology is now available that can eliminate concerns surrounding security issues and wasted time. We'll explain more in the next section.

## 2. Embrace cloud-based solutions

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**Cloud computing is a rapidly growing solution for businesses who face challenges surrounding data storage and accessibility. When something is stored 'in the cloud', it is stored on servers on the internet, rather than on a physical computer, and data can be accessed from any device with an internet connection.**

On top of increased efficiency, cloud solutions also offer cost savings. For example, industry-leading providers of electronic laboratory notebooks offer cloud-based extensions that are cost-effective to deploy and maintain, due to the lack of installation or upgrade requirements.



You'll have full visibility of data, and critical updates and new discoveries will be received in real-time. This makes for faster and more efficient workflows, and greater innovation as a result.

**Nearly 90% of businesses have adopted the cloud in some capacity<sup>3</sup>**

# 3. Enable global access

Within your R&D organization, it's unlikely you'll have scientists carrying out experiments from home. What you are likely to have, though, is multiple external collaborators all working together on a single project.

Although they may not be based in your laboratory, they'll be based on-site in a different location, perhaps even a different country. For this reason, it's important to find a way to effectively communicate and make data globally accessible, rather than being departmentally or geographically limited. Look for tools and modern technologies that allow global access, so that individuals from around the world can collaborate across time zones.



**30% of workers say their productivity increases when they work away from the office<sup>4</sup>**

# 4. Create secure processes

**Although collaboration increases business efficiency and productivity, it can also pose risks to an organization's infrastructure if the correct security measures are not taken. In order to speed up innovation and new discoveries, more and more R&D organizations are finding they need to outsource research to contract research organizations (CROs) and partners.**

When data is shared between multiple individuals, both internally and externally, it's important to take the necessary steps that will protect your organization's intellectual property (IP). For example, although you may need to share certain pieces of data with an external collaborator for one project, you may also need to screen them from information that concerns a different project.

The solution is to use tools that specifically support collaboration – standalone solutions that feed back into your corporate systems. You can choose who has access privileges and who can see specific information, while hiding experiments that individual scientists either do not have the permission to see, or that they simply don't need to see. This process is all automated, so as well as offering a more secure approach to project management, it will also save you time.



**IP plays an important role in facilitating the process of taking innovative technology to the market place<sup>5</sup>**

# 5. Improve accessibility

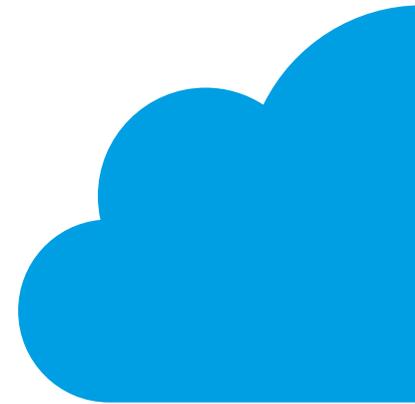


**58% of people waste one hour each day looking for information<sup>6</sup>**

Creating a collaborative business involves putting processes and systems in place, and providing the tools that are needed for effective and efficient communication. You and your colleagues also need to be able to quickly and easily access the information you need, so that this collaboration doesn't take time out of your schedule.

The research and development sector is fast-paced and you're no doubt already stretched, so you don't want to spend precious time searching for information and experiment results.

For this reason, a key part of a successful, collaborative business is the format in which your company records data and research. A common complaint in R&D laboratories is the difficulty individuals have interpreting information and data in other lab members' paper notebooks. Market-leading software platforms feature sophisticated organization tools such as subject headers and keyword tagging, as well as complex search features that allow users to find information quickly and easily.



## 6. Choose user-friendly systems



**When you're looking to improve collaboration in your business, the less time the process takes, the better. Especially, in organizations that focus on research and development every wasted minute is time that could be spent making groundbreaking discoveries.**

For this reason, when choosing technology that fosters collaborative working it makes sense to choose the simplest, most user-friendly options available.

Thankfully, many industry-leading technology providers are aware of how time-pressed organizations are, and their products prioritize simplicity. For IT departments, these modern solutions mean set up and installation is minimal, allowing them to get back to more business critical tasks as soon as possible. On top of this, many industry-leading collaborative tools are also run externally, meaning that the IT overhead and ongoing maintenance that's required will be minimal.

Most importantly, user-friendly systems are easier for you and your colleagues to pick up, so you'll require minimal training and will feel empowered to start using the tool immediately.



**The average organization wastes 11 hours per week on software updates<sup>7</sup>**



# Conclusion

**It's no secret that creating a more collaborative business is a good idea – in fact, many organizations are already taking steps to foster more communication and connectivity amongst their staff. With benefits including increased productivity, streamlined processes and a happier workforce, it's clear organizations that fail to make these changes will be at a disadvantage.**

For time-pressed R&D organizations, however, implementing these changes manually can be a time-consuming task that keeps you from your core activities.

Thankfully, there is a solution. You can implement all the tips we've discussed in this guide with one simple, streamlined tool.

**Sources:**

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E-WorkBook Connect is a secure portal that enables R&D organizations to collaborate with external partners, providing a safe space for users to coordinate project activities, handle complex data and documents, and discuss or review content. Paper lab notebooks are limited in their ability to be shared, digital collaborative tools, however, make it simple for data to be shared during the research process, and increasing efficiency across an entire business. Improved collaboration is key to staying ahead in the R&D sector, and organizations that embrace this technology now can look forward to continued innovation, groundbreaking research, and exciting new discoveries in the future.

To find out how E-WorkBook Connect can help you create a more collaborative organization, talk to one of our experts...





Talk to **one of our experts** today

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If you would like to know how **your organization could be more collaborative**, talk to one of our experts today.

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