PRODUCTIVITY ENABLEMENT:
SIMPLIFYING THE MOST CHALLENGING PARTS
OF YOUR JOB AND BECOMING FUTURE-READY

Mike Sabbatis, COO of XCM
Tom Hood, CEO of MACPA

XCM  macpa
“WE’RE SO BUSY DOING OUR JOBS, WE CAN’T GET ANY WORK DONE.”

With 12 words, Seth Godin has captured one of the biggest, most frustrating and difficult-to-overcome challenges of our time: **How do we stay ahead of the dizzying pace of change and become future-ready, when we’re busier than ever with our day-to-day work?**
Too often, the default setting on future-focused work is, “I don’t have the time.” Until a clear return on investment is defined, many leaders fall back on the status quo, thinking we can dig ourselves out from the avalanche of busy-ness if we just work a little harder.

There are two problems with that line of thinking:

- **We can’t.** We’ll never have less work to do. The problem isn’t what we’re doing; it’s how we’re doing it.
- **Instead of worrying about the ROI, we should focus on the RONI—the risk of not investing.** Today, that risk is huge. Our competitors are working to become future-ready. If we don’t, we risk irrelevance at best...and extinction at worst.

But all is not lost. New productivity enablement and workflow solutions like those offered by XCM™ can help leadership teams work smarter, not harder—and increase their resource capacity to focus on strategies that prepare them for the future and deliver higher business performance.

**SURVEY SAYS**

Becoming future-ready starts with serious change...and change is stressful.

The source of most of that tension isn’t the work that accounting and finance professionals do; it’s the outside disruptions that are impacting that work.

Maryland Association of CPAs Executive Director Tom Hood holds a series of town hall-style professional issues updates for accounting and finance professionals twice each year. At each meeting, he asks a simple question: “What’s keeping you up at night?” The most recent results are eye-opening.

The top issues accounting and finance pros are most worried about today are:

- **Doing more with less**
- **Being proactive vs. reactive**
- **Change management**
- **A lack of time**

There’s not a technical issue to be found in the survey results. These responses all have to do with disruption—new technologies, regulations, demographic shifts, global, and economic issues. These disruptions create opportunities yet make our lives extremely complex at the same time.

Adding to the chaos is the constant challenge of recruiting and retaining talented employees, the demands of whom often run counter to our current corporate cultures.

Many organizations implement remote and flexible work options with a goal to boost recruitment, retention, and productivity. Only later do leaders discover they are ill-prepared for this evolving work dynamic and fall back to outdated business processes and controls. They want to physically see their people and manage their output, as they may lack the confidence in the work getting done. This kills productivity and alienates the workforce, resulting in disengagement.
“Characteristics of a good remote environment and office culture will expose the flaws that are present in your existing culture”

BARRETT YOUNG, FOUNDER
THE GREEN ABACUS

So, too, will a focus on future-readiness. The important work of becoming future-ready will expose the cracks in outdated legacy cultures.

BUILDING A FUTURE-READY PLAN

Building strong cultures and future-focused strategies are critical for success and require time. If accounting and finance professionals are busier than ever—and they are—where will that capacity come from?

One possible answer is improved workflow. Solutions that enable resource allocation, project tracking, process management, outsourcing of key services, as well as data management and analytics, can produce an increase in capacity that organizations need to address many of their key current and future business challenges.

PRODUCTIVITY, SIMPLY ENABLED™

While the pace of business will most likely create chaos for people in business, there are opportunities available today for executives to take control.

It starts with clear consideration of a business’s people, processes, and technology. Who are your key resources? How are they spending their time? Is there a better way to get the work done?

To start, let’s look at people. We’ve already touched on the challenges of staffing and retention, as well as the remote workforce.
“The dispersed workforce is a trend that will only grow. As companies look to cut costs and employees look for more flexibility, remote working is on the rise. A Stanford University study says employees who work at home are 13% more productive than employees who work in the office.”

PAT DIDOMENICO, EDITORIAL DIRECTOR
OF BUSINESS MANAGEMENT DAILY

If being future-ready means embracing the remote workforce trend to offset staffing and retention challenges, what processes and technology will you need to put in place to actualize this opportunity?

Productivity enablement solutions like XCMworkflow enable business leaders to gain a competitive edge by enabling:

- **360° visibility to projects, tasks, deadlines, and resource availability for new work**
- **Improved accountability resulting from transparency into the status of each project**
- **Agile flexibility to manage reprioritization as well as a remote workforce**
- **Better control over quality, communication, and prioritization**
HOW TO GET STARTED

One objective is to create a work environment that is structured to attract and retain the best talent, leveraging technology to manage tasks that can be handled more efficiently through automation. But another, related objective is to transform the data you already have into insightful information you can use for real-time decision-making. Without technology, this takes time—that you don’t have—and as soon as it’s aggregated in Excel, your data is… outdated. You need to spend your time increasing business performance instead of attending status meetings and looking in six different systems for one piece of data.

In addition to prepping your organization to thrive with a remote workforce, technology like XCM workflow can centralize key data in one, easy-to-use location as a “single source of truth” that quickly delivers real-time insight to your business’s performance as well as opportunities for greater profit and efficiency.

As the younger generations step into leadership roles in your organization, internal expectations will shift to increasingly reflect their preferences. Studies show that Millennials prefer collaboration in the workplace and co-creating, and they expect technology to simplify this collaboration. Technology will help Millennials stay engaged, and potentially retain and recruit them—there are big potential benefits to a culture that works this way.

Another benefit to using a productivity enablement and workflow platform like XCM is that you are effectively incorporating a knowledge management program as well. By documenting processes and capturing information about the Who, What, When, Where & Why of your business practices today, you’re establishing a cross-generational resource that will support future succession in your organization.

By connecting your people and processes through technology, you’re empowering strategic initiatives, as well as simplifying tactical, day-to-day work. Without simplifying that day-to-day work, your people won’t have the bandwidth to go after those long-term, strategic projects that ultimately grow your business.
IT’S TIME TO GET FUTURE-READY

You’ll never have less work to do, and the risk of not investing is very real. It’s clear that technology is the key that will help you stay competitive in today’s changing environment.

If you’re ready to connect your people through process and technology, you’re in a great position to make changes that will prepare your business for continued growth. You’ll also help your team “get out of the weeds” by working smarter, not harder—and make time for the really important work of becoming future-ready.

XCM’s productivity enablement and workflow platform delivers unprecedented performance gains by enabling business leaders to get more out of their human capital and the point technology solutions they deploy in their business. XCM clients gain visibility, flexibility, accountability, and control of work—within all departments, and across multiple offices.

Start laying your future-ready foundation today and build a dramatically more energized workforce. Empower your teams to gain the visibility you need to achieve higher business performance.

To request a complimentary consultation to expand your capacity and increase productivity, call 781.356.5152 or visit xcmsolutions.com.