



# Are You Future-Proofing Your Future-Proofing?

A FUTURE-PROOFING EBOOK.



# You've reached your ideal state. For now.



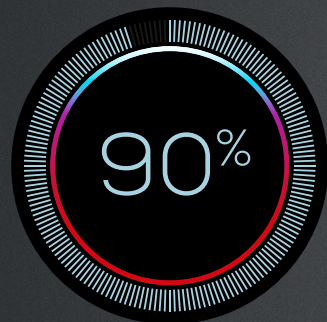
Your business is in great shape. Your processes operate efficiently, your teams work in perfect harmony, your information is secure, and your technology is on point.

Nothing to worry about, right?

Well—not yet, anyway.

When your organization is running like a well-oiled machine, you have the bandwidth to think about how you can get it to stay that way. That's where future-proofing comes in. Things are at peak performance *today*; what are the steps you can take to make sure that trend continues?

Future-proofing starts with taking stock of current policies, procedures, tools, and technologies that are helping you succeed—then looking at how you can continue to leverage them and identify new ones to keep you on the same trajectory. And we aren't talking six months from now. Think, at minimum, three to five years.



90% OF EXECUTIVES SURVEYED SAID THAT "BUILDING THE ORGANIZATION OF THE FUTURE" WAS IMPORTANT OR VERY IMPORTANT.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Deloitte, "Rewriting the rules for the digital age: 2017 Deloitte Global Human Capital Trends," 2017.



# So, what's your plan to stay fit?

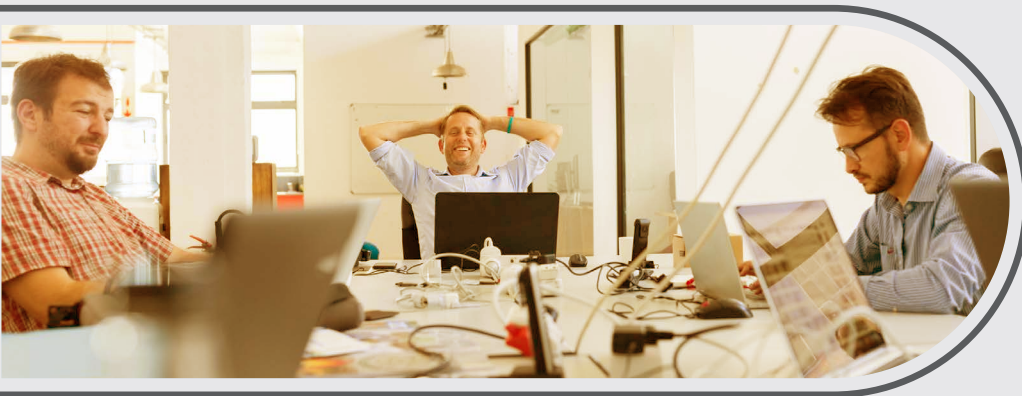
Make sure you're safe, secure, and in your sweet spot for years to come. Consider these action items as you're future-proofing your organization.

MAKE SURE THE STRENGTHS YOU'VE WORKED HARD TO MASTER RETAIN THEIR STATUS AS PRIORITIES AND PROFICIENCIES.

- + **Hardware:** Keep your networks, servers, and other physical resources updated, backed up, and secure.
- + **Software:** Download the right patches, make sure your employees have access to the proper tools, and stay aware of new solutions.
- + **Connectivity:** Implement and maintain safe, secure, and fast voice and data services.
- + **Collaboration:** Champion systems that work in unison, but allow for flexibility across software and devices.







## TAKE A LOOK AT WHAT YOU'RE USING TODAY.

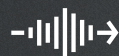
What's working? What isn't? Even if you're performing at optimum levels, think about what a truly ideal state looks like. Consider on-site and remote employees, specific customer needs, past pain points, and client feedback. If there's something you want to change, add, or phase out, now's the time to start thinking about it.

## MAKE A WISH LIST.

Without thinking about regulatory, financial, or organizational restrictions, make a list of all of the tech you'd implement if you had carte blanche to do so. From there, pick out what's realistic—some of it might be more closely within reach than you'd think, particularly as some solutions become more affordable, accessible, and scalable.

## HAVE A DEDICATED PRO IN CHARGE.

Make sure someone's always got their eye on what's around the corner: Assign future-proofing to one of your staff members, and task them with constantly monitoring your company's own technology, as well as overall trends for the industry. What's the standard life span of certain technologies and tools? How do they fit into your overall future-proofing? Are there better solutions? When someone always has their eye on these questions, your future-proofing plan can change with the market, technology, and industry.



By 2021, the VoIP services market will be a \$140 billion industry.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Zion Research, "VoIP Services (Domestic VoIP Calls and International Long Distance VoIP Calls) Market by Configuration (Phone-to-Phone, Computer-to-Phone and Computer-to-Computer) for Hosted Business, IP Connectivity, Managed IP PBX, Individual Consumers and Corporate Consumers: Global Industry Perspective, Comprehensive Analysis, Size, Share, Growth, Segment, Trends and Forecast, 2015 – 2021." January 2017.





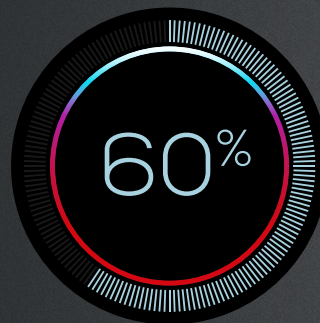
### SPEND WISELY.

When you're on top of your game, it's easy for your confidence to turn into swagger. Make sure you're appropriately controlling your finances and not splurging on unnecessary equipment, technology, or vendors that aren't aligned with your budget. You got where you are now because of smart spending—be sure to continue the trend.

That said, don't choose a low-budget option when you need to shell out for a costlier version. It's okay—and financially savvy—to invest more in certain solutions if you know you won't have to totally replace them in 18 months.

### REMEMBER BYOD.

In the next five years, remote work is only going to increase—and, with it, bring-your-own-device workers. When you're future-proofing, keep in mind that you'll need to accommodate this growing part of your workforce. They'll need the right support for their various devices—mobile and wired.



BY 2022, AS MANY AS 60% OF WORKERS  
WILL BE WORKING REMOTELY.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> PSFK, "Work Debrief: Nomad Class," February 2016.



## MAKE ROLLING UPDATES.

Don't wait to upgrade tools you can easily improve now. Install patches and updates as they become available, rather than as part of a massive, one-time overhaul.

## CONSIDER MORE THAN ONE SCENARIO.

Are the solutions you're selecting only appropriate if you grow your organization by 20% each year? Or will they quickly become outmoded and overwhelmed if you scale at a rapid pace? Make contingency plans to prepare for a few possibilities for your business's future growth.

## RELY ON THE CLOUD.

Again, decentralized workforces are going to require more access to remote files. Your security measures *and* your cloud technology will both need to be prepared to manage increased traffic from various locations and connection types in the coming years.

## REMEMBER: RESILIENCY OVER REDUNDANCY.

Having systems that are fully backed up will prove critical in the event of a catastrophic failure. Beefing up your backup technologies is a no-brainer, and protects you—and your customers—if something goes wrong, both today and in the future. But, don't go overboard: Multiple versions of the same backups will, at some point, slow you down. Be sure you're staying nimble and approaching backups with resilient network backups that can still operate elsewhere when something goes down.



## THINK MODULAR.

Modular tools and components that can build on each other are vastly preferable to one centralized hub that can't be augmented. Instead of buying one huge mechanism or platform that can't be modified, find ways to cluster and add components to each other to grow bandwidth and capability.

## GET NEW CLIENTS ON BOARD WITH NEW SYSTEMS.

If you've transitioned more data to the cloud or other technologies, onboard customers using these new, future-proofed systems rather than the ones you're replacing. It helps you familiarize yourself with the systems, it instills good habits in your partners, and it lessens the need for one huge, all-at-once migration.

## KEEP YOUR EAR TO THE GROUND FOR COMPETITORS.

Often, successfully growing organizations may have a comfortable edge when it comes to market share—but that can change on a dime. Be sure your future-proofing efforts take into account your industry's competitive landscape, and how you'll need to adapt to market entrants whose smaller size could help them make a sneak attack.

## And perhaps, most importantly...

## BE FLEXIBLE.

There are going to be tools in five years that we don't have any idea about today. And that's fine. So, don't expect a future-proofing plan you're assembling today to be a 100% accurate road map as time progresses. Reassess your plan whenever a technology salient to your industry comes along that could significantly change your course.

Nobody's crystal ball is 100% accurate. But with some plans in place to future-proof your organization, you'll have a pretty clear picture of where you need to go—and how you're going to get there.



Isn't it time your business was Custom(er) Fit™?

VISIT [business.frontier.com/enterprise](http://business.frontier.com/enterprise)