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## Medium-size company. Extra large potential.

Midsized companies have tremendous opportunity to expand, innovate and lead



Midsized companies are becoming an engine for growth in the global economy. In our flatter, flexible world, size doesn't matter—but speed to market, innovation and knowledge do. **What are midsized companies doing to thrive?**

### Get the facts

#### Who we talked to



#### What worries them?



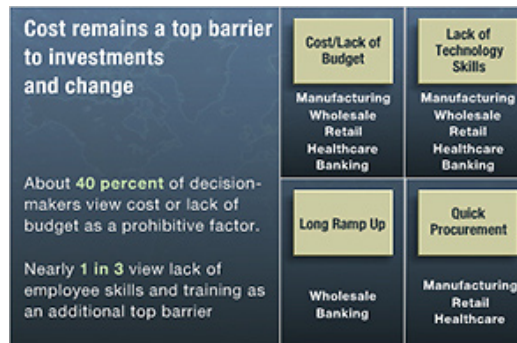
#### What will change?



## What will change?



## Barriers to consider



## Hear their stories

### PORTO MEDIA, Ireland

#### Fast downloads advance movie rental experience



It takes the average person about 18 seconds to get cash from an ATM. This is exactly the service paradigm that Chris Armstrong, founder of Porto Media, had in mind as the company developed a breakthrough method of downloading and storing a two-hour movie onto a pocket-size flash memory card in about 20 seconds. Porto Media wanted to make this capability available to consumers through movie kiosks.

One thing was missing. They lacked the digital rights management functionality. To address this, IBM Research tapped a new standard for copyright protection and extended it to enable content providers to set the exact profile of when and how long content can be viewed.

According to Armstrong, portable digital media amounts to "...a profound transformation in today's movie rental experience because customers can always get the movie they want, when they want it. They don't have to return it and there's no late fee."

And from the retailer point-of-view, using kiosks allows them to expand inventory within the same store footprint, sidestep issues related to stocking a variety of DVD formats. Plus, they gain the ability to collect valuable point-of-sale information about their customers. All in all, a happy ending.

### **City Furniture, U.S.**

#### **Retailer makes design services easy, affordable**



For many people, buying a couch is a first major commitment. It certainly seemed that way at City Furniture, a South Florida home furnishing chain with 21 showrooms. Keith Koenig, CEO and owner, would see levels of indecision amongst his customers, in terms of what they would like or if it would fit into their design scheme at home and this slowed down decision-making, which slowed down the sales process.

City Furniture saw the opportunity to differentiate itself by creating a first-of-its-kind service that allowed customers to easily and inexpensively engage a local interior designer familiar with their portfolio of products. Partnering with IBM, City Furniture created a new service called the Academy of Design, and customers can access it through multiple channels, including an in-store kiosk and a Web site. Shoppers can detail their preferences and budget, select a designer and later on view design plans online. These could include color palettes, flooring plans and window and wall treatments.

The Academy of Design helped City Furniture develop new revenue streams and innovate the home furnishings industry and by the way, made picking out the perfect couch a little bit easier.

### **Upaid, U.K.**

#### **Pay your bills by mobile phone**



You can take pictures, watch movies, even just chat on your mobile phone. Now, thanks to Upaid, a U.K.-based mobile payments company, you can even use your phone to pay your bills.

Teaming with IBM, Upaid launched a managed, end-to-end mobile payment service. While the main idea is the ability to use mobile phones to authorize bill payment, the most compelling aspects are in the details. Consider, for example, a mobile subscriber whose electric utility offers mobile payments. When that utility generates the bill, it

automatically sends a text message to the subscriber that includes the amount owed as well as a prompt to pay the bill. If the subscriber chooses to pay, he simply types "OK," inputs a PIN code and the system automatically handles the backend processing all the way back to the subscriber's bank.

The most compelling aspect of this example is the speed with which transactions are processed. For companies such as utilities, whose monthly billings typically run into the millions of dollars, the potential savings from faster receivables turnover are enormous. Not to mention the savings associated with self-service. And Upaid can work with any business model based on recurrent billing.

And what's in it for the users? Added flexibility and control and the chance to pay their bill... anywhere, anytime. With Upaid, in fact, there's no excuse for not paying your bills, unless you lose that phone.

### **Storstrøm Erhvervs Center, Denmark Telemetry helps prevent falls in elderly**



As a pig farmer knows, a sow moves differently when she's ready to mate, and this change in movement can be tracked using wireless telemetry. Why not use the same innovation for people? That's what happened as IBM helped Danish client, Storstrøm Erhvervs Center (SEC) create a first-of-a-kind healthcare telemetry solution for the elderly that can help sense when they become prone to a fall.

Storstrøm County, is a 2,000-square-mile region in southeast Denmark with a population of just over 260,000. Like most of Scandinavia, it operates world-class healthcare services. They recognized the increasing strain that an aging population would place on its services and were particularly concerned with the growing number of elderly patients who had high blood pressure or mobility issues that make them prone to falling.

Storstrøm Erhvervs Center, a regional business development organization that encourages innovation for growth, wanted to head off this problem.

They engaged IBM, along with local healthcare providers and municipalities, to develop a pilot solution. At its most basic, the system needed to detect and transmit relevant health data, such as blood pressure readings, and more challenging, a measure of the "normalness" of a patient's physical movement. It was at this point that IBM introduced the idea of adapting the livestock motion detection approach to the human motion requirements of the solution. It was a perfect fit, and the healthcare industry learned a lesson from the farm.

### **IBM Corporation**

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