



Barnes Business Solutions

# Is Technology Helping or Hurting Your Business and Your Company's Growth?

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## INTRODUCTION

### **Is Your Data Being Used as an Asset?**

No matter what business you are in or who your customers are, technology has a vital role to play. *But in what way, exactly? And in what capacity?*

These questions surface routinely for today's business owners. And yet the true answers will often remain elusive. Because what's ultimately needed most is gaining a level of certainty on how best to proceed when accurately assessing the challenges your business is currently facing.

*For example, you get a real sense that your business could be running smoother. Business processes could be made more simple and effective. Perhaps a current activity that's being done manually could finally be automated to boost efficiency.*

**That's a positive step in identifying a need. Here's what comes next ...**



## CHAPTER ONE

# What are Some of the Technology Options for Your Business?

Let's face it, your time is best spent running a successful and profitable long-term business. So no one expects you to be a technology savant here. That being said, there is no shortage of options available to you, your business, and your overall operations.

*Is an off-the-shelf software package one of the options? What about hiring someone full-time to oversee all things IT? Or maybe you should hunt for an offshore programmer and try and pocket a few extra bucks instead?*

The sad reality is each one of those options come with some serious and likely unknown to you drawbacks.

Big picture-wise, it's always better to know what you're getting into now rather than wait until later when you have sunk time and money into something that's proven unworkable.

## Why off-the-shelf might not be the best fit

Sure, at first blush this appears to be an easy solution to the problem. But when you dig deeper you won't like what you find.

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You see, an off-the-shelf option has a habit of morphing into something much more expensive. This goes beyond just the investment in the software to actually how the software is deployed in your company's operations.

It's not uncommon for some level of customization of the software to be ultimately needed. Many times things are too rigid to allow that because the owner of the software doesn't provide the actual code. If they do, they'll charge an arm and a leg for it.

### **Hiring a full-time IT person?**

*First off, can your company support the ongoing financial commitment of a full-timer? Will this person be expected to solve all issues related to technology?* These are the type of questions you'll need to address before hiring a tech person on a full-time basis.

And here's yet another element to consider: say you have a full-time person in place. And that IT person has configured things their way. Things like servers, apps, data transfer, data integration, and more. But then that person leaves. Now you're stuck with technology that was driven by that employee's personality and preferences rather than by a systems mindset that can be successfully handed off to a successor.

**So what then?**

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## Going offshore for a programmer?

This can work from time to time but it's no slam dunk. The success rate usually involves more transactional tech support and not something more substantial both in scope and overall time commitment. Also, you have to seriously evaluate how invested is that offshore resource in your technology needs beyond a quick fix – both today and tomorrow.

With an unknown offshore company or freelancer, you're literally at the whim of the stability of their internet connection, not to mention their overall business operations. Also, depending on the global location, you may have some language and communication challenges which could lead to some unexpected miscommunications.

**There's got to be a better way, right?**





## CHAPTER TWO

### **A Software-based Solution that Does the Job is Closer than you Think**

Overhauling tech so it does what you want when you want and how you want can seem overwhelming at first. That's why carving out a role for an experienced collaborator as part of the process makes so much sense while giving you the peace of mind that things are in the right hands.

*You wouldn't expect your doctor to prescribe any treatment without doing a thorough diagnosis first, would you? Well, the same approach applies to technology upgrades.*

Mere coding skills alone won't get it done. You need an experienced pro that can diagnose and understand the key issues and accurately gauge the scope of what your business needs to take your tech to the next level.

The best way to get there is to work with business professionals that provide consulting, contracting, and collaboration from start to finish.

Your business doesn't need cookie-cutter solutions. It needs a tech solution that meets your company where it is now and is flexible and adaptable to future scalability.

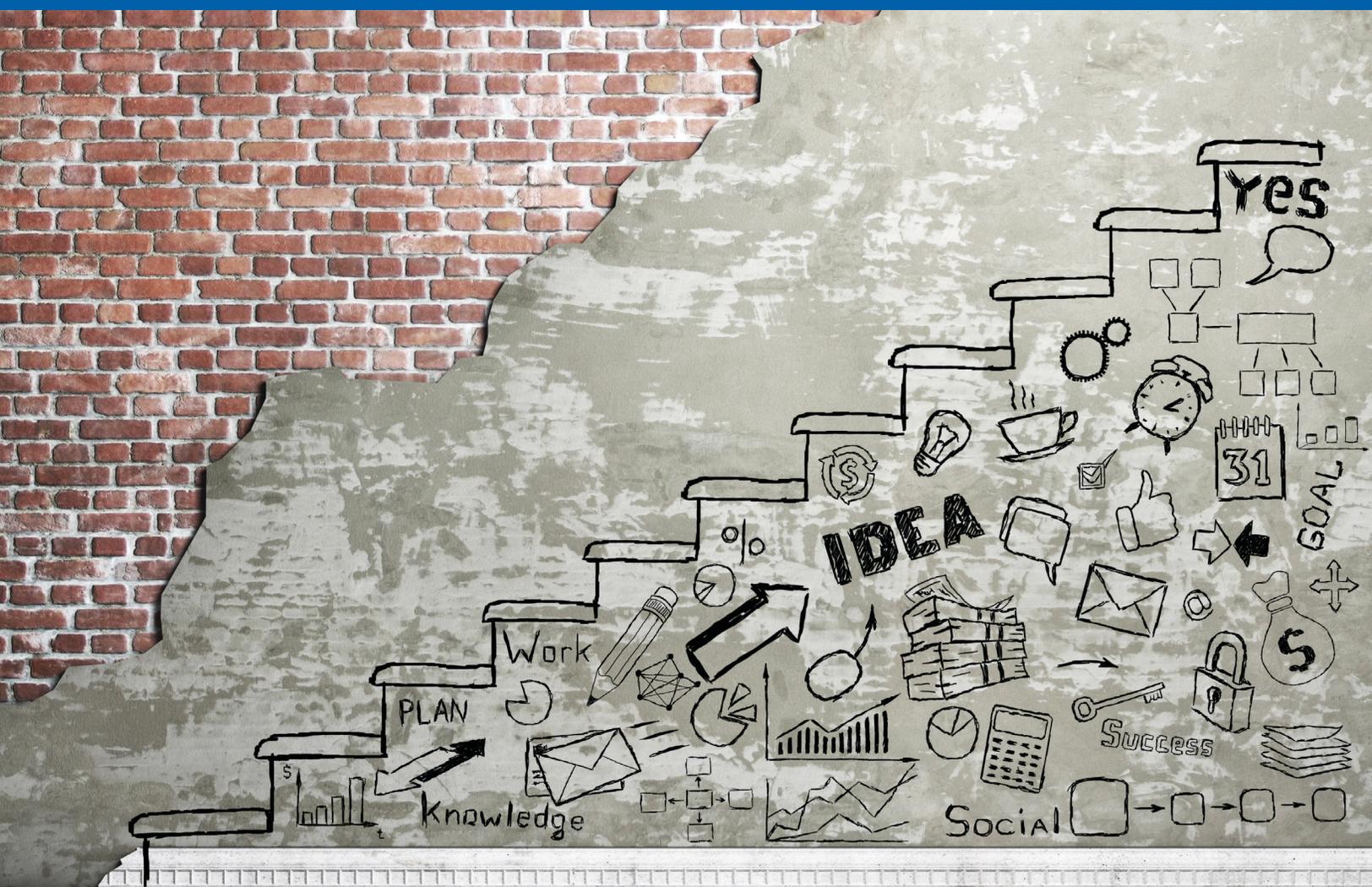
**Bottom line: your business needs flexible and affordable solutions.**

**For example,** say you have a Microsoft Access database with a basic template. Now, you may be able to capture the data without a hitch. *But how is that data best output and utilized?* **Data without a level of reporting is just that – data!**

Ultimately, what you want is data that is taken to the next level so it becomes intelligence and guides your decision-making as you plan your company's future.

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## CHAPTER THREE

### **You Invested in Yourself to Start Your Company. Now Do the Same with your Technology**

*Do you view technology as an expense or as an investment? When done diligently and correctly, with the right tech pro at your side, you'll discover what many companies across the entire business landscape have experienced.*

The right technology systems become a tangible asset for your business. That's because you're no longer throwing money at a problem and crossing your fingers that the temporary fix sticks.

Instead, you've transcended short-term thinking for a far more viable and profitable long-term solution.

**You've chosen the wise path to innovate.**

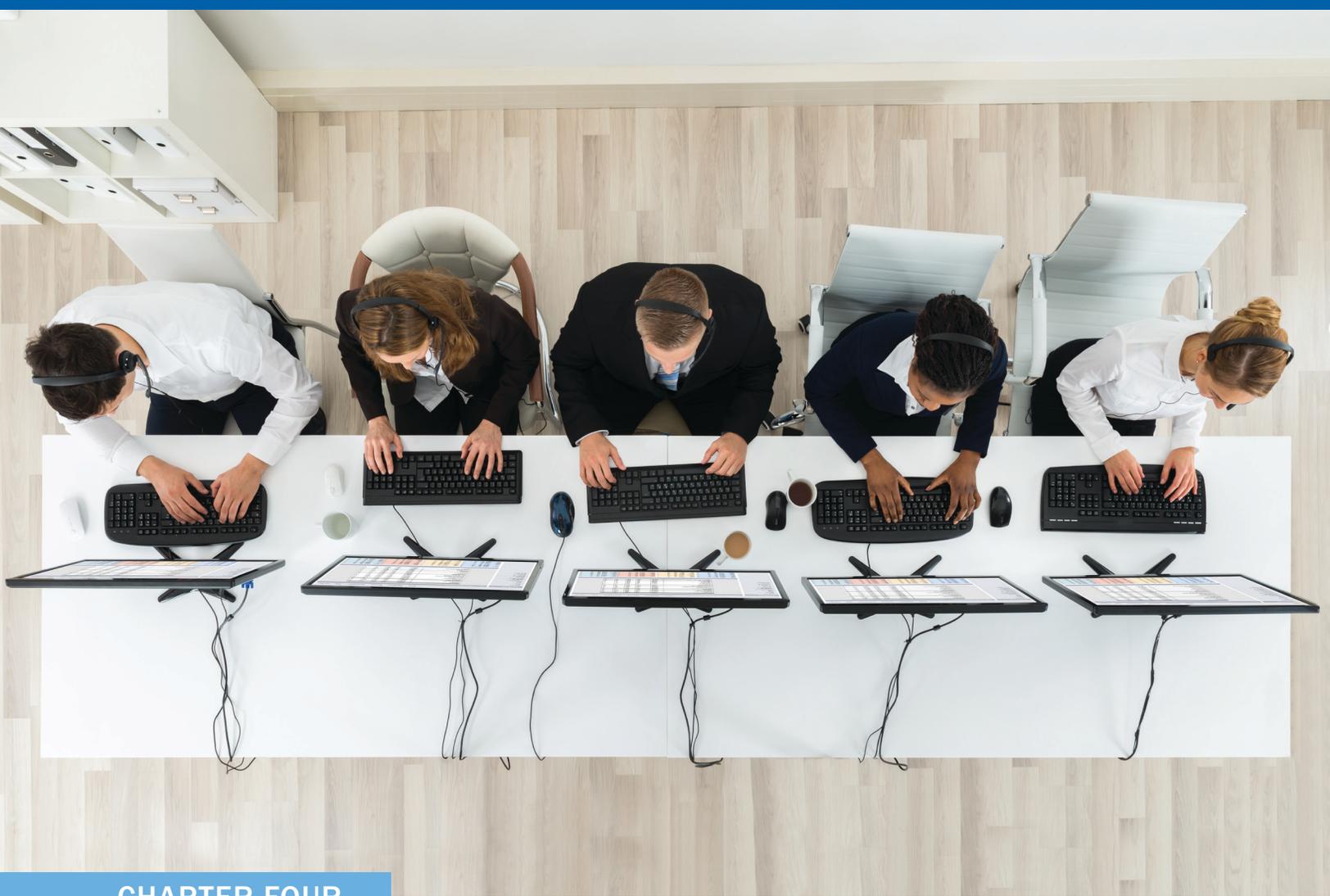
Your new technology represents an asset that is yours, that you can grow, you can change, and you can modify to suit your company's exact needs. That becomes something that can be a building block to your business. Which sure beats trying to pound a square peg into a round hole that many companies pursue with their tech challenges.

And in the long term, **innovating provides a double bonus: your problem is solved and you've given your company the gift of growth and expansion from a technology perspective.** A solution that's flexible to continue to grow with you. And now you have the ideal opportunity. The future will look brighter than ever because with proper maintenance this solution will last for years to come.

That's because you'll finally own a technology that integrates into systems and other software that's the backbone of your company's operations. This can span everything from accounting to production, sales, and more. *Isn't that a path worth pursuing?*

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## CHAPTER FOUR

### The Best Path to Tech Success? Follow the Process

Effective technology solutions don't happen in a vacuum. They stem from knowledge, experience, and a validated process. So look for a tech partner/collaborator with a proven track for delivering on all three.

The process piece is how the work gets done. *Sounds like common sense, right?* Not so fast. Because today's technology environment often prioritizes short-term fixes over long-term success.

*It's not your job to identify the exact plan to solve your tech woes. That's the role of a tech provider like us at Barnes Business Solutions (BBS).* You see, there's no need to come to us with a plan you'd share with an offshore coder. Because we'll deploy a step-by-step plan in a series of defined and detailed stages. It's a plan based on needs, budget, timeline, and the best future outcomes.

**The plan we provide to your company is the genesis of our past work helping companies of all sizes and industries.**

With this considerable knowledge base at our fingertips, we can better understand your exact technology challenges and can connect and communicate with you on a business as well as a technology level. And rest assured, you have a business collaborator that can communicate in plain English and not tech jargon. When it comes to business growth, we are speaking the same language.

**Working hand-and-hand with you gives us a leg up on how to turn your technology investment into an ROI-driven asset.**

## **Here are the four phases our technology team works with you to define and deliver success:**

### **Phase 1: Diagnosis and Analysis**

**The best way to begin is with a simple consultation.** This Q&A will identify what type of data is to be stored and captured and the basic functionality of the software as well as the level of customization needed.

Overall, we'll look at the contract with software specs, key items, and references design documents. This could also include software licenses and hardware.

### **Phase 2: Data creation, Capturing, and Testing**

**This is where the exact functionality is put to the test.** Both design and cost are considered here. Development begins and ranges from concept to framework. You'll know what is in each field.

### **Phase 3: Systems Integration and Reporting**

**This phase puts it all together so everything that was envisioned has indeed become a reality.** *What does that look like, exactly?* It means you get meaningful reporting that provides a real picture of your most important business metrics. Getting a handle on your numbers is the key to scaling for growth and superior ROI.

### **Phase 4: Delivery of Final Solution**

**After rigorous testing and detailed configuration, the final product is delivered that has been validated at both an alpha and beta level.**

Naturally, there are variables to each one of these phases. **For example**, testing covers what is done during development and again during onsite/user acceptance, and in some cases in parallel with a production environment.

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## CHAPTER FIVE

### Some Sample Use Cases Reveal What's Possible

It's always helpful to provide some specifics and concrete examples of technology deployment. While BBS can deliver a custom solution, these examples provide additional insight and context.

#### Use Case #1

Two companies that provide cleaning services for both consumers and businesses decide to merge. The company being acquired had a Microsoft Access database. The acquiring company did not know how to maintain it.

This created a need for a Microsoft Access developer but not at a full-time level. Technology work was needed upfront as well as ongoing support where BBS served as a programming contractor role.

**As a process contractor, BBS saw the issues, proposed solutions, and executed them at the same time.** This consultant contractor role involves far more than just punching code. The end products helped take a platform technology like Microsoft Access to a new level of performance.

## Use Case #2

For a local, family-owned business, the enterprise needed a serious upgrade in modernizing operations. The company was running an old software system with no control over the source code. It wasn't working, and no one was available to maintain it.

**BBS developed new software with inputs from both sales and time-keeping software.** The software delivered a valuable ability to correctly compute commissions based on a complex system of business rules.

**In addition, the software BBS innovated also provided reports to the business, the sales reps, and outputs that could be loaded into the payroll software.** The code for the newly developed software was fully owned by the business.

Even better was the added future flexibility gained to “future-pace” as things changed down the road. The software was easy to customize as the business grew and evolved, and as the rules for computing commissions changed.

## Range of Use Cases

In our experience, technology initiatives segment themselves into two distinct categories: **Consulting Services** and **Managed IT Services**.

## Consulting Services Use Cases

You have a local database that has grown significantly and needs upsizing to SQL server and/or there's a need to migrate your data to the cloud.

There's even filling a temporary yet vital programming role on a short-term basis because your previous tech support has gone MIA.

These types of engagements typically run less than three months in length.

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## Managed It Services Use Cases

The ideal relationship is based on these three tenets: consulting, contracting, and collaboration.

These engagements can take many different forms. Maybe something was developed in-house, but the software can't be taken to the next level to grow the user base. In other cases, companies do outgrow their data limit size capacity and require more “enterprise worthy” solutions.

Other needs could include improving existing software, maintaining current apps, or even converting/migrating from one platform to another.

And even if in-house development exists, they would likely benefit from expert help with documentation, streamlining, and fixing issues.

## Examples: Microsoft Access databases, Excel, SQL Server, Power Apps

What distinguishes long-term use cases is the level of work performed and the duration which typically can span months or even years, if needed.

Some common threads in these situations are that a system is underperforming, help is desperately needed and the support tech left or is not available.





## CONCLUSION

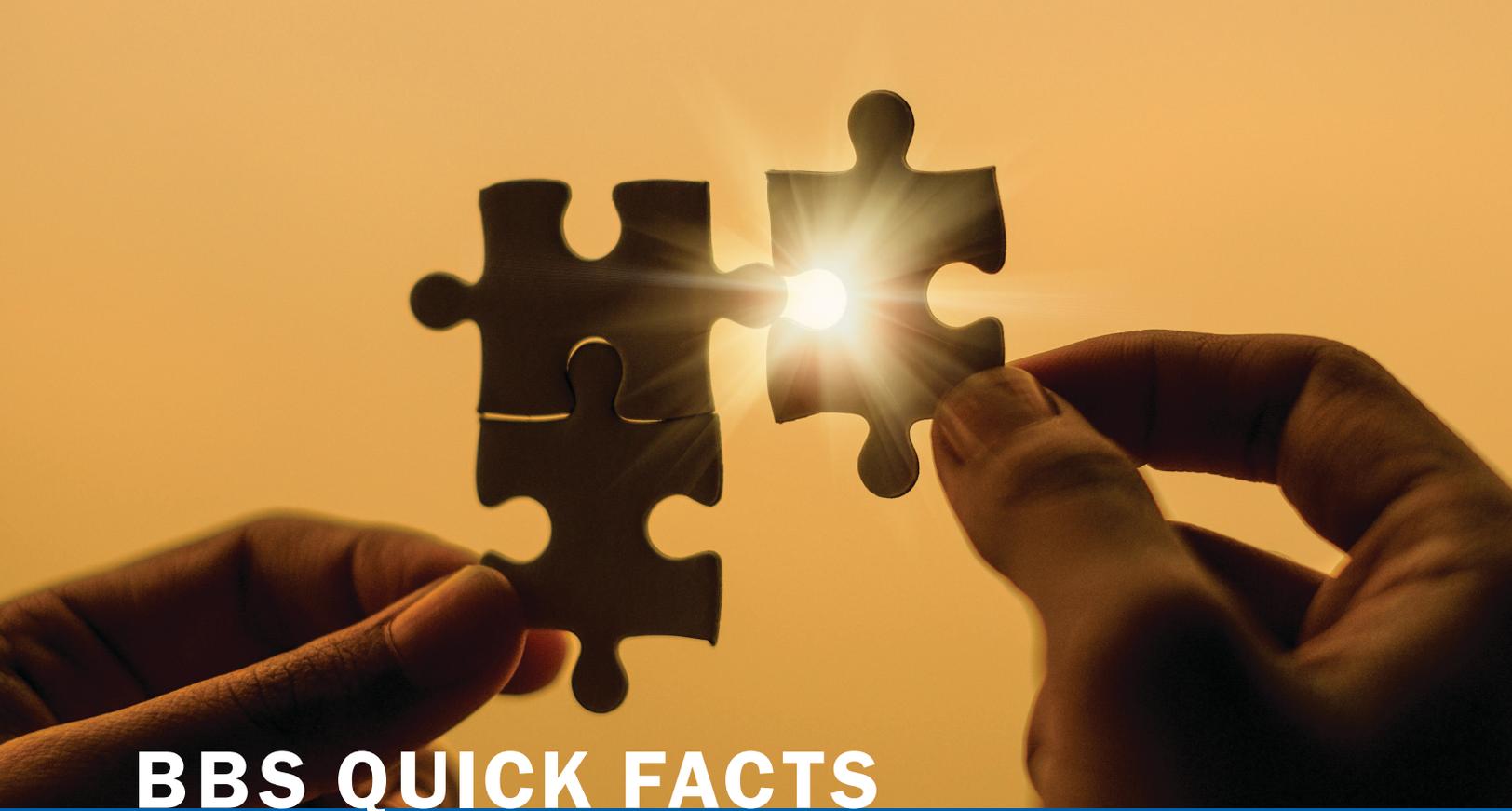
### Barnes Business Solutions: We're Here to Help Where you Need it Most

What does success look like when it comes to working with us? **First, the problem is solved.** So if you've already invested in particular platform technology, why scrap it and throw it away and start anew? (Which can get very expensive.)

We can take old code and breathe new life into it via new, creative, solutions that help utilize legacy systems but with new technology. This is an expandable investment in the business future and scale of your company.

From conception to completion, flexibility can be built-in on the time allocated and needed to complete a project.

*For example, BBS can provide maintenance and support to your existing applications and be your alternative to in-house tech personnel. Need something more expansive? We can write, develop and deploy what's essential if you've outgrown your current systems.*



# BBS QUICK FACTS

- 20+ years experience
- Custom software provider
- Specialty areas:
  - Microsoft Access Specialists
  - SQL Server
  - Power App Development
  - Business Analysis & Consulting
- Wide breadth of industries and vertical experience:
  - Medical
  - Manufacturing
  - Non-profits (CRM systems)
  - Education
  - Software vendors (resellers)
- [Industries served and our satisfied clients](#)

## Want to learn more?

[Visit Barnes Business Solutions.](#) You can also call us at 630-715-4452.

*Have an urgent need you'd like to get a consultation about?*

[You can reserve a time on our founder's calendar here.](#)

Whichever you choose, you can be assured we have your company's best interests at heart. **And it shows.**