

The Business Value of Smartsheet



Amy Loomis, Ph.D.
Research Vice President,
Future of Work, IDC



Melinda-Carol Ballou
Research Director,
Agile ALM, Quality and Portfolio Strategies, IDC



Megan Szurley
Business Value Manager,
Business Value Strategy Practice, IDC



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BUSINESS VALUE HIGHLIGHTS

Click any link and look for the ► symbol on the corresponding page. Use the Return to Highlights button to return to this page.

745%

three-year return on investment

7-month

payback on investment

\$8,000

average annual benefits
per licensed Smartsheet user

39%

more productive work managers

53%

more projects completed
per year

27%

more productive project
contributors

45%

increase in on-time project
contribution completion

22%

increase in project output quality

10%

more productive executive teams

\$1.2 million

in additional net revenue
per organization

43%

increase in innovation ability

Executive Summary

In today's fast-paced, AI-driven business environment, organizations are under increasing pressure to deliver and optimize results faster, more efficiently, and with greater transparency. As companies seek to modernize their project and work management practices, platforms such as Smartsheet are proving to be key tools for driving productivity, innovation, and business agility. This white paper helps quantify the substantial business value organizations can realize through their investment in the platform.

IDC conducted research that explored the value and benefits for organizations using Smartsheet to modernize project and work management.

Based on an extensive data set and employing a specialized Business Value methodology, IDC calculates that these customers achieved benefits worth an annual average of \$2.5 million per organization (\$8,000 per licensed user) and a three-year ROI of 745% by:

- Improving business results and increasing revenue
- Bettering the overall quality of completed projects and the ability to be more innovative and market-competitive

- Cost-effectively modernizing workflows by managing projects with greater speed, accuracy, and productivity
- Boosting the productivity of project contributors and executive teams
- Delivering more work and completing more projects annually

Situation Overview

IDC has made some bold predictions about the future of work. For instance, adopting new AI-enabled work models will redefine or eliminate 95% of current IT and LOB job roles by 2030. IDC predicts that agentic workflows will reshape how teams deliver and perform tasks within the next two years, impacting at least 40% of G2000 knowledge work and doubling company productivity (Source: IDC's *FutureScape: Worldwide Future of Work 2025 Predictions*). As we move into an era of AI-enabled work, successful organizations will be those that invest in carefully monitoring and managing workflows. According to IDC's *2024 Future of Work Survey*, 43% of global IT and LOB leaders noted that they had already invested in work management and project management software.

The same survey found that the top 2 most important business outcomes that organizations were trying to achieve through 2025 were improved employee productivity (37%) and increased operational efficiency (34%). Additionally, 27% said they would focus on business resilience. When asked about the most important technological investments to support employee engagement, almost half of IT and LOB leaders pointed to intelligent digital workspace technology to provide employees with access to the people, tools, and data they need to work in a flexible environment. IDC also asked about what the C-suite leadership was doing to drive positive cultural change to keep pace with new ways of working. The top response? Fifty-seven percent pointed to promoting collaboration across functions such as HR, IT, finance, and operations.

In this context, IDC observes high and increasing demand for intuitive collaborative work automation, AI-augmented project and portfolio management (PPM) to coordinate resources, adaptable and agile workflows, and strategic planning. The demands of flexible work at a time of agentic dynamism, competitive pressures, and unpredictability increasingly drive organizations to automate, tailor key workflows and processes to their businesses, and implement organizational change to enable systemic adoption.

Smartsheet Overview

Headquartered in Bellevue, Washington, Smartsheet was founded in 2005 and has over 3,000 employees, more than 125,000 customers, and around 16.7 million users as of the second quarter of CY25. The company offers its Smartsheet platform — cloud-based software that combines project and task management, timelines, automated workflows for collaboration (including conversations within the application), reporting, and dashboards. Smartsheet is well positioned with its differentiated portfolio, the completion of its acquisition by Blackstone and Vista Equity Partners earlier this year (January 2025), and the recent expansion of its executive leadership (2Q25) with the hires of a new chief product officer to drive product innovation and general counsel to help lead privacy, risk, and governance policies. Smartsheet's significant capabilities for planning, content collaboration, and workflow creation; an engaging user interface with familiar spreadsheet origins; well-leveraged acquisitions; and successful AI approach underpin the company's execution. Smartsheet's intuitive product enables organizations to use templates and simple rules so that business users (and others) can create workflows without having to write code or complex formulas or requiring access to IT support. Project managers can establish automated updates to engage project participants with prompts for activities and/or project context.

Smartsheet's strategy of focusing on its platform and related portfolio offerings with high customization options, ease of access for work management, and project planning and collaboration has driven significant growth and high levels of customer engagement and loyalty. Smartsheet's most recent product announcements evolved the portfolio for key areas, including AI and advanced analytics, enterprise-grade scalability and security, PPM, data visualization, and resource and content management.

Smartsheet differentiates itself with its ease of configurability and platform adaptability, including dynamic data structures that provide customers with the choice to define flexible, strict, or hybrid data structures (with little to no coding). Smartsheet's scalable workflow automation lets organizations define and create workflows using configurable blueprints or templates, which can eliminate manual, repetitive tasks by setting up automated updates. Smartsheet Control Center capabilities drive standardization and consistency through project blueprints, automated provisioning, and portfolio reporting. Additional differentiators include Smartsheet's integration with third-party productivity tools and applications and data aggregation support, enabling the scheduling of large-scale data transfers between Smartsheet and other systems of record.

Smartsheet made a series of announcements at its annual ENGAGE customer conference (4Q24), including a revamped platform and user experience and improved data access and visualization for better collaboration. Evolving AI support also enabled better access to actionable insights and was available without cost through December 2024 to help drive adoption.

Key announcements included:

- Smartsheet debuted a highly visual, AI-driven home experience to help users quickly initiate projects and processes with support for configuration management and the ability to more easily find and execute work.
- The release of Collections as part of Workspace brings items from Smartsheet and other platforms into a single view to centralize user access and management for greater efficiency. Collections is generally available to customers with an enterprise plan.
- File Library for workspaces bridges file silos by placing them alongside related projects where work is being planned and tracked. This has enabled users to readily share and collaborate on files without leaving the Smartsheet platform. File Library is available to customers now.
- Smartsheet significantly redesigned its user interface for accessibility and modern, approachable user engagement, which also helped unify functionality for a more cohesive experience.
- New data visualization experiences from Smartsheet included a board view (available now) and a table view.

With Smartsheet's Collections feature, content can include sheets, reports, dashboards, and forms across Workspace, Dynamic View, and third-party content such as Google Docs or Power BI dashboards. Access can be contextualized for different stakeholders to target specific data needs. Curating content from different sources, along with controls, can improve security and make collaboration easier.

File Library enables reviewers to annotate and comment on an asset from within the Smartsheet Workspace where the work is already managed. File Library can simplify content reviews and give teams the ability to collaborate asynchronously.

Alongside these enhancements, Smartsheet is enabling AI for users to leverage collaborative work management (CWM) and data. The company has partnered with AWS to create integration between Smartsheet and Amazon Q Business. The resulting new assistant can answer questions from the customers' enterprise data, provide summaries, and generate content based on information in Smartsheet, further evolving its AI support using the customer's data.

Needed and offered Smartsheet AI capabilities include sentiment analysis, task status and summarization, and ad hoc question support with Smartsheet data-informed AI-generated charts. To encourage adoption and leverage, Smartsheet offered these capabilities free of charge through December 31, 2024, leading to increased uptake.

Smartsheet's strengths include an intuitive, easily adopted product with a familiar interface/paradigm that includes customizable workflows, adaptive collaboration capabilities, an extensible data model, and ever-increasing integrations to extend customer capabilities to related products (such as Adobe, Atlassian Jira, Slack, and Microsoft Teams).

The company's execution has been excellent, with strong customer and employee growth over multiple years, an engaging value proposition, and an easy on-ramp for adoption in a crowded, rapidly expanding space. The company's multitenant SaaS solution also enables fast uptake. Smartsheet's customizable workflows provide stakeholders and others with proactive updates at critical times in the project pipeline for resource allocation and action initiation. Its solid business execution benefits from an effective acquisition strategy, the leverage of acquired companies as part of product expansion, and excellent use of its growing App Gallery marketplace. The company's thoughtful and proactive investment in AI and ML exemplifies its commitment to key growth and engagement areas, including the use of AI for improved visualization, usability, dashboarding, content management, security, AI, and ML.

The Business Value of Smartsheet

Study Firmographics

IDC's research explored the value and benefits for organizations using Smartsheet to modernize project and work management. The project included seven interviews with organizations that use Smartsheet and have experience with and/or knowledge of the benefits and costs of using Smartsheet. During the interviews, IDC asked the companies a variety of quantitative and qualitative questions about the offering's impact on their website security operations, core businesses, and costs.

Table 1 (next page) presents the study firmographics. The organizations that IDC interviewed had an average base of 8,039 employees and average annual revenues of \$5.9 billion. All seven companies were based in the United States, representing the education, entertainment, healthcare, manufacturing, and professional services sectors.

TABLE 1
Firmographics of Interviewed Organizations

Firmographics	Average	Median	Minimum	Maximum
Number of employees	8,039	8,000	275	15,000
Annual revenue	\$5.9B	\$2.7B	\$179.6M	\$20.0B
Countries	United States (7)			
Industries	Education, Entertainment, Healthcare (2), Manufacturing (2), Professional Services			

n = 7; Source: IDC Business Value In-Depth Interviews, March 2025

Choice and Use of Smartsheet

The organizations IDC interviewed described a full range of decision criteria involved in their selection of Smartsheet to modernize project and work management operations and procedures. In general, the companies were looking for a solution that would help them better manage projects, automate processes, and improve overall individual and team productivity. Study participants noted that Smartsheet helped them move beyond the limitations of manual processes, such as spreadsheets, and use dashboards to have data flow seamlessly on a single platform and create high-value reports. They appreciated that Smartsheet enabled dynamic document editing through built-in, web-based, dynamic capabilities that operate in real time. The companies also saw having a cost-effective and cloud-based solution as a distinct benefit.

Study participants elaborated on these factors:

Cost-effective, cloud-based solution (manufacturing):

“Two years ago, my company established a formal project management office in the Americas. As a global organization, different regions were using costly tools. We needed a budget-friendly solution. A new project manager introduced Smartsheet, which we adopted. Previously, we tracked projects on disparate spreadsheets, leading to disorganization. We required a cloud-based solution accessible to the entire organization.”

Data consistency (healthcare):

“We are a large organization, and not everyone uses project management software. Our decision to adopt Smartsheet was sparked by the opening of a new nine-story office building, involving construction, operations, and IT. Some were already using Smartsheet — the one constant tool familiar to both construction and IT. We chose to unify on Smartsheet to streamline data sharing and tracking.”

Dashboards and reporting (education):

“Before Smartsheet, my organization used spreadsheets. In 2016, our IT department offered Smartsheet licenses, and we watched informational webinars. We purchased Smartsheet to build dashboards and forms and to have seamless data integration for report creation.”

Dynamic document editing (healthcare):

“My organization began using Smartsheet for project management three years ago. Our previous solution was static and required licenses for viewing and editing documents. Without licenses, users had to download PDFs, creating administrative burdens. We switched to Smartsheet because it is web-based, dynamic, and real time.”

Reduction of manual work (manufacturing):

“Before adopting Smartsheet, my organization relied on manual processes. Communication broke down between headquarters and our manufacturing plant, and business teams operated in silos. We evaluated several applications, and Smartsheet was the most easily adoptable and collaborative tool.”

Table 2 provides a quantitative view of Smartsheet usage and deployment at the time of the interviews. On average, there were 298 internal day-to-day users of the platform, and Smartsheet supported 35% of total annual revenue. Additional metrics are presented below.

TABLE 2
Organizational Usage of Smartsheet

Smartsheet Environment	Average	Median
Total number of users	298	172
Total number of guests	40	23
Integrations	6	2
Percentage of revenue supported	35%	20%

n = 7; Source: IDC Business Value In-Depth Interviews, March 2025

Business Value and Quantified Benefits

IDC's research explored the value and benefits for organizations using Smartsheet to modernize project and work management and advance digital transformation. The data IDC gathered from study participants confirmed that Smartsheet fulfilled its promised value to up-level and modernize workflows by helping organizations manage projects with greater speed, accuracy, and productivity. IDC data confirmed that the solution boosted the productivity of project contributors and executive teams across the organization while also improving the overall quality of completed projects and the ability to innovate. In addition, they were able to complete more projects annually. IDC's aggregated data also shows that these benefits ultimately contributed to better business results and higher annual revenues.

Study participants offered these comments on the most significant benefits of Smartsheet:

Reporting and resource management (manufacturing):

"A significant benefit of Smartsheet is its reporting capabilities. Without it, we would spend an extra 6 hours per week per project on updates. The second major benefit is resource management. At the project's start, we can set up templates and resources, avoiding reinventing the wheel. We know which parts of the organization to tap into and can estimate our needs."

Staff efficiency (healthcare):

"The biggest benefit of Smartsheet is staff efficiency. Our staff adapted well and are quite efficient with it. The product is intuitive and user-friendly, resulting in minimal follow-up questions."

A single source of truth (entertainment):

"Smartsheet provides a single source of truth for our organization, integrating updates into executive views and strategic priorities. Its automation features remind contacts of due dates without overwhelming them with emails. Our dashboard consolidates resources and checklists, making it easy to find and update information. Additionally, Smartsheet's capabilities, such as auto-assigning project IDs, save time and fill gaps left by other programs."

Project transparency (education):

"My organization uses Smartsheet to create dashboards for reporting. It offers transparent updates to leadership and external stakeholders on the status of capital projects, spending on people operations, and professional development."

Automation and reporting capabilities (professional services):

“A great benefit of Smartsheet is the automation it provides. We have also gained the ability to slice and dice data, and report quickly, without needing additional tools. The ease in which we can create and filter reports in Smartsheet is very helpful.”

Figure 1 presents IDC’s calculations of cumulative customer benefits following Smartsheet adoption, indicating average annual benefits of \$2.5 million per organization

► **(\$8,000 per licensed user).**

FIGURE 1

Average Annual Benefits per Organization

(\$ per interviewed organization)



n = 7; Source: IDC Business Value In-Depth Interviews, March 2025

Average annual benefits stem from five core areas:

- **Business enablement — higher revenue:**
Smartsheet helped executive and project teams perform better and make more informed decisions, both of which boosted overall annual revenues.
- **Operational cost savings:**
Smartsheet customers were able to enhance their project and workflow operations in a more cost-effective manner than with previous approaches.
- **Work management team productivity:**
Better productivity for work management teams increased overall business effectiveness.

- **Project contributor productivity impact:**

Contributors benefited from key features and capabilities to better visualize project progress and establish critical task completion paths.

- **Executive team productivity impact:**

Executive teams also benefited from improved decision-making, leading to positive impacts on financial results.

Work Manager Benefits from Smartsheet

IDC used its Business Value methodology to evaluate specific benefits from the adoption of Smartsheet to modernize project and work management and accelerate digital transformation.

Interviewed companies noted that, after adoption, the platform has provided the following benefits:

- Boosted the performance of work management teams
- Enhanced work processes, analytical capabilities, and project visibility
- Provided operational cost savings
- Increased project completion annually

Commenting on these and other benefits, interviewed customers appreciated that the platform provided greater visibility, better centralization, and improved transparency through tracking, tasks, scheduling, and resources. Respondents also noted that Smartsheet saved project managers' time by avoiding the need to reinvent various processes, thereby significantly reducing time-draining meetings and consultations. In addition, they called out the App Notes feature for augmenting communication between teams, along with the platform's ability to handle large and multilayered documents.

Study participants elaborated on these improvements:

Templates, automation, and reporting (manufacturing):

"Smartsheet saves our project managers time by eliminating the need to reinvent processes, reducing meetings by three hours per week per project. Standard templates help new project managers onboard faster, saving eight hours. Additionally, program managers save two hours per week per project using automation for updates and reporting, instead of emails and meetings."

Centralization and transparency (healthcare):

“Work managers are most impacted by Smartsheet. Our resource, project, and program managers use it all day for various projects. The biggest impact is greater visibility, centralization, and transparency in resource management. It is used daily for tracking, tasks, scheduling, and resources.”

Collaboration and resource tracking (education):

“Smartsheet has enhanced cross-departmental collaboration by providing a single platform for seamless file sharing and communication. It integrates with other business tools, addressing our pain point of disconnected systems. Automated workflows and approvals aid in workload and resource balancing, helping managers track and utilize team members effectively.”

Analytics and collaboration (manufacturing):

“Smartsheet’s analytics, real-time updates, and collaborative features are crucial for our fast-paced projects, allowing all teams to access information simultaneously. The App Notes feature enhances team communication. Additionally, Smartsheet can handle large, multilayer documents, which many systems cannot.”

Automated reporting (healthcare):

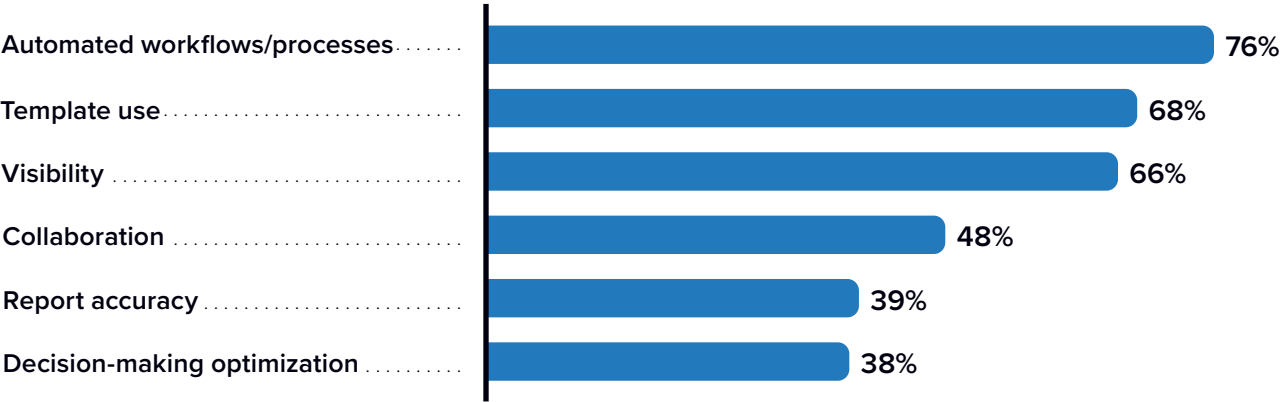
“Our work managers are automating a lot of the reporting that they once had to do manually. This is a nice time saver and benefit.”

IDC applied its Business Value methodology to validate and quantify these observations, starting with work manager KPIs. Work managers benefited from Smartsheet’s ability to enhance work processes while also providing enhanced analytical capabilities and project visibility.

As Figure 2 (next page) shows, after adoption, companies enjoyed these and other KPI improvements:

- 76% improvement in automated workflows/processes
- 68% better template use
- 66% improved visibility
- 48% better collaboration

FIGURE 2
Work Manager KPIs
(Percentage increase)



n = 7; Source: IDC Business Value In-Depth Interviews, March 2025

IDC then shifted the focus to work management team productivity. Interviewed organizations found that Smartsheet consolidated project tracking into a singular platform that provided greater transparency, process automation, data enablement, collaboration, and better resource management. After adoption, customers enjoyed a 39% productivity boost for their teams. This meant that teams of 20.4 FTEs could work at the equivalent productivity level of having eight additional FTEs on staff, translating into annual staff time savings of \$557,104 per organization (see **Table 3**).

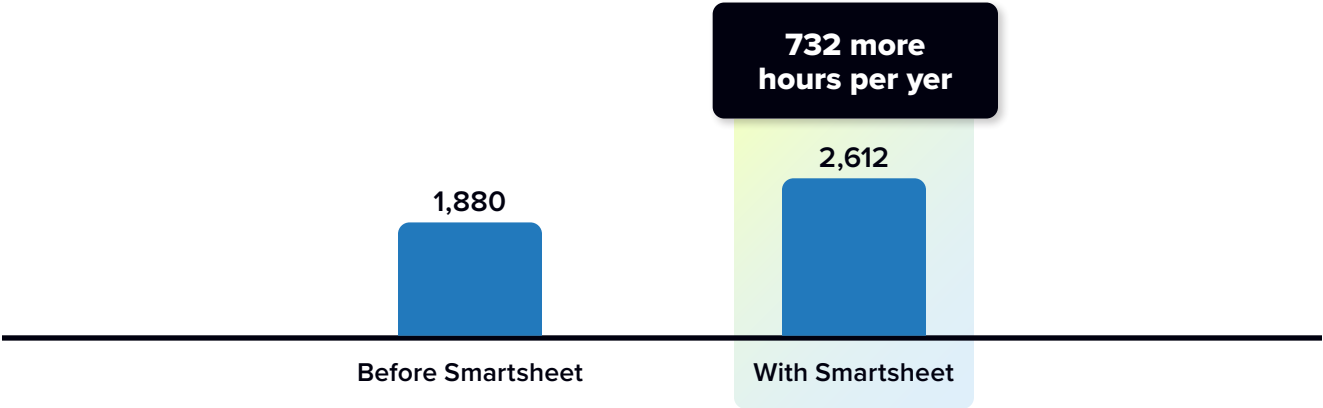
► **TABLE 3**
Work Management Team Productivity Gain

Productivity Gain	Before Smartsheet	With Smartsheet	Difference	Benefit
Equivalent productivity level, FTEs	20.4	28.4	8.0	39%
Value of staff time per year	\$1,430,000	\$1,987,104	\$557,104	39%

n = 7; Source: IDC Business Value In-Depth Interviews, March 2025

As **Figure 3** (next page) shows, the previously discussed productivity enhancements enabled work managers to work with equivalent speed and effectiveness of having 732 additional hours to work per year.

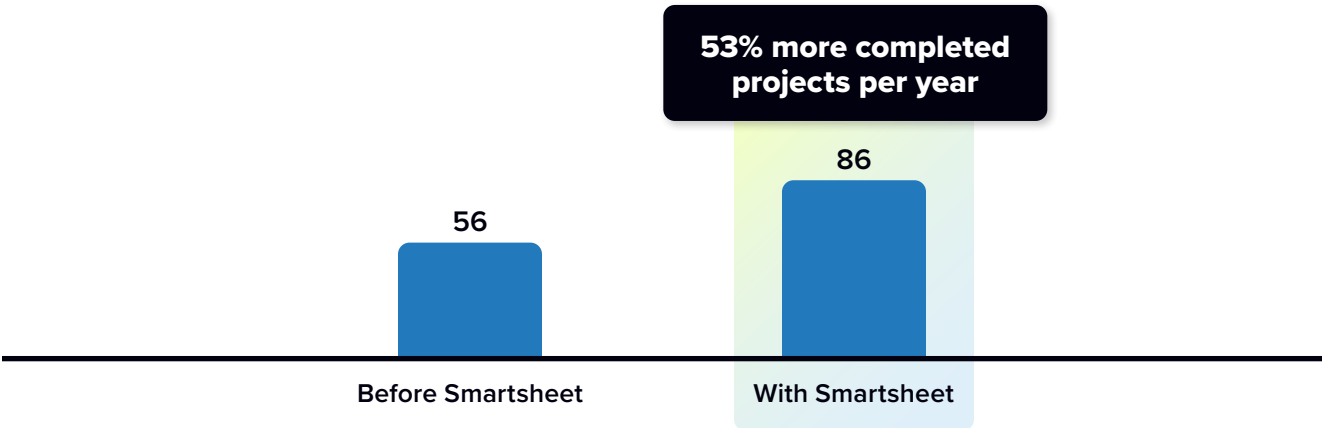
FIGURE 3
Work Manager Productivity Gains from Smartsheet
(Value of productivity gain in hours per year)



n = 7; Source: IDC Business Value In-Depth Interviews, March 2025

Smartsheet significantly improved annual work output by helping individuals, teams, and organizations better manage projects, automate processes, and more easily create, assign, and track tasks and deadlines. As a result of working more productively, Smartsheet enabled interviewed organizations to complete 29.9 additional projects per year (see **Figure 4**).

► **FIGURE 4**
Annual Project Completion with Smartsheet
(Completed projects per year)



n = 7; Source: IDC Business Value In-Depth Interviews, March 2025

IDC then shifted the focus to the platform's cost-effectiveness. Interviewed organizations reported that they were able to significantly reduce operational costs because Smartsheet enabled better resource management and project planning. These included but were not limited to third-party expenses, consulting fees, external resources, expense rationalization, and overtime reduction. Based on interviews, IDC calculated total annual operational cost savings at an average of \$824,000 per organization.

Project Contributor Benefits from Smartsheet

Shifting the focus to another key assessment area, IDC then evaluated project contributor benefits, with interviewed organizations reporting an array of project contributor benefits resulting from the adoption and use of the Smartsheet platform. Contributors benefited from key features and capabilities, such as the use of Gantt charts, Kanban boards, calendars, and grid views to visualize project progress, thereby allowing them to establish critical task completion paths for complex projects. In addition, they could easily share workspaces and dashboards with team members and other organizational stakeholders. In their comments to IDC, study participants discussed the most significant of these. They noted that after adopting the Smartsheet platform, cross-team collaboration improved significantly through the use of dashboards and the ability to create inventory systems. In addition, participants stated that the cross-organizational visibility available to all team members keeps everyone on the project more accountable.

Study participants elaborated:

Increased project visibility (healthcare):

"Smartsheet simplifies collaboration. Contributors use the same system as everyone else, ensuring visibility for project managers and accountability for all."

Visibility and collaboration (manufacturing):

"With Smartsheet, project managers can access IT resources as needed. Contributors collaborate and update Smartsheet in real time, gaining visibility into project progress and performance."

Cross-team collaboration (education):

"Smartsheet has increased cross-team collaboration time. Teams are working closely with Smartsheet, whether it is building dashboards or creating different inventory systems."

Quicker contributions (manufacturing):

"Smartsheet has accelerated internal contributors' work. When all teams can access needed information in one space, it makes a huge difference. Smartsheet is always open, allowing us to make updates and see changes in real time."

Increased contribution accuracy (entertainment):

“Smartsheet makes presentations and readouts much more accurate because we’ve created a consistent format with Smartsheet, rather a piecemeal approach.”

IDC then quantified these anecdotal comments. Project contributors were able to work more effectively with Smartsheet because they had better visibility into projects, a deeper understanding of project requirements, the ability to collaborate, and automated workflows. IDC calculated that, after adoption, there was a 37% reduction in project contribution errors. In addition, Smartsheet customers experienced a 27% productivity boost for their teams (see **Table 4**). This meant that teams of 19 FTEs could work at the equivalent productivity level of having 5.1 additional FTEs on staff. IDC further calculated that this benefit provided an annual staff time savings of \$354,667 per organization.

► **TABLE 4**
Project Contributor Productivity Gain

Productivity Gain	Before Smartsheet	With Smartsheet	Difference	Benefit
Equivalent productivity level, FTEs	19.0	24.1	5.1	27%
Value of staff time per year	\$1,330,000	\$1,684,667	\$354,667	27%

n = 7; Source: IDC Business Value In-Depth Interviews, March 2025

Smartsheet also significantly enhanced project contributors’ ability to complete their work in a timely manner and with higher quality.

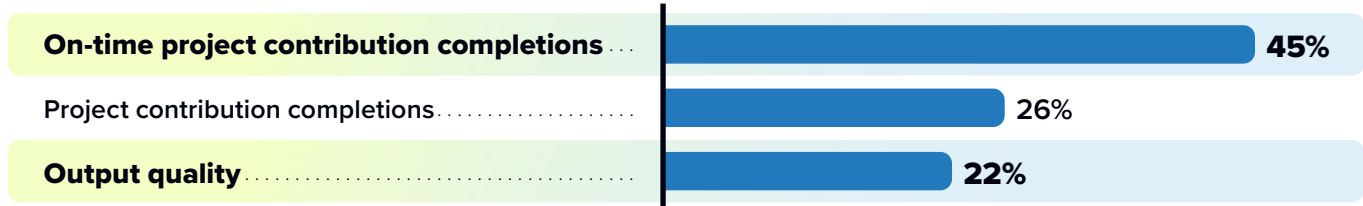
As Figure 5 (next page) shows, IDC calculated the following KPI improvements in typical operational areas:

- 45% improvement in on-time project contribution completions
- 26% boost in project contribution completions
- 22% improvement in output quality

► FIGURE 5

Project Contribution KPIs

(Percentage increase)



n = 7; Source: IDC Business Value In-Depth Interviews, March 2025

Executive Team Benefits from Smartsheet

IDC then examined executive team benefits. Interviewed companies reported that these teams could work more efficiently and effectively, which ultimately led to better organizational management, with attendant longer-term impacts on overall business operations. This was evidenced by improvements in annual revenue results and various key performance indicators that IDC focused on. In their comments, interviewed companies noted that Smartsheet's dashboard helped them highlight operational areas that needed attention and required executive input or decisions. They also appreciated how the solution condensed C-suite data into easily digestible one-page summaries to facilitate those decisions.

Study participants offered these detailed comments:

Data aggregation and dashboard views (entertainment):

"Our executives are reaping the rewards of the data aggregation and dashboard views of Smartsheet despite not directly using it. They can identify areas that are actionable quicker, and my team can dig into it. They ask the hard questions, and we find the answers in Smartsheet."

Report consumers (manufacturing):

"Executives are the consumers of Smartsheet reports. They are now used to the format of the dashboards and like the consistency and knowing what they are looking at every time."

High-level overviews (healthcare):

"Work managers can provide a high-level overview through Smartsheet, and the C-suite likes it. The overview is simple to understand, and we don't get calls or emails asking what things mean. C-suite gets a digestible one-page summary."

Scorecards and dataflows (manufacturing):

“Our project managers use scorecards and dataflows to create analytics for managers and executive teams. This helps them understand installation projects, make better decisions, and ultimately impacts the bottom line by meeting customer needs.”

Strategic goal alignment (manufacturing):

“My organization has been aligning strategic goals with frontline projects using Smartsheet. It provides direct visibility and has improved decision-making by 30%.”

Transparent reporting and goal alignment (education):

“My team has built dashboards in Smartsheet for transparent executive reporting, aiding decision-making. The dashboards display metrics for their goals, showing if they are meeting fiscal year targets based on collected project data.”

IDC evaluated executive team productivity, as **Table 5** shows. After adoption, customers enjoyed a 10% productivity boost for their teams, whereby teams of 4.6 FTEs could work at the equivalent productivity level of having 0.5 additional FTEs on staff. Over the course of one year, this benefit amounted to annual staff time savings of \$47,347 per organization.

► **TABLE 5**
Executive Team Productivity Gain

Productivity Gain	Before Smartsheet	With Smartsheet	Difference	Benefit
Equivalent productivity level, FTEs	4.6	5.0	0.5	10%
Value of staff time per year	\$457,143	\$504,490	\$47,347	10%

n = 7; Source: IDC Business Value In-Depth Interviews, March 2025

Enhanced executive team and project contributor performance had important positive downstream impacts on overall business results. **Table 6** (next page) shows significant revenue gains, with \$7,750,000 in total additional annual gross revenue for each organization. For the purposes of IDC’s financial model, we applied a 15% operating margin assumption, resulting in net revenue gains of an annual average of \$1,162,500 per organization (see **Table 6**, next page).

► **TABLE 6**
Business Enablement — Higher Revenue

Analysis	Per Organization	Per Licensed User
Total additional gross revenue per year	\$7,750,000	\$25,990
Assumed operating margin	15%	15%
Total additional net revenue, IDC model	\$1,162,500	\$3,898

n = 7; Source: IDC Business Value In-Depth Interviews, March 2025

Business KPIs also showed significant improvement levels after adoption, as **Figure 6** shows. Interviewed organizations found that Smartsheet fostered a more collaborative and transparent environment, which ultimately increased innovation and satisfaction.

► **FIGURE 6**
Overall Business KPIs
(Percentage increase)



n = 7; Source: IDC Business Value In-Depth Interviews, March 2025

ROI Summary

Summing up the financial and business-related benefits for study participants' use of Smartsheet, IDC calculated an average three-year ROI. As **Table 7** (next page) shows, IDC projects that these companies will achieve three-year discounted benefits worth an average of \$5,803,700 per organization through significantly improved project and workflow management, enhanced team and staff efficiencies, and better overall business results.

These benefits compare with total three-year discounted costs of \$686,800 per organization. IDC projects that these levels of benefits and investment costs will result in an average three-year ROI of 745%, with a payback period of seven months.

► **TABLE 7**
Three-Year ROI Analysis

Analysis	Per Organization	Per Licensed User
Discounted benefits	\$5,803,700	\$19,463
Discounted investment	\$686,800	\$2,303
Net present value (NPV)	\$5,116,900	\$17,159
ROI	745%	745%
Payback	7 months	7 months
Discount factor	12%	12%

n = 7; Source: IDC Business Value In-Depth Interviews, March 2025

Challenges/Opportunities

IDC’s business value findings underscore Smartsheet’s excellent positioning at a time of increased CWM and PPM adoption. The imperative to automate work and leverage emerging AI and AI agents results from the need to coordinate flexible work across disparate teams and benefit from analytics to make data visible and both pragmatically and strategically actionable across initiatives. The drive to innovate and increase efficiency is particularly prescient at a time of competitive dynamism and technical, economic, and geopolitical volatility. Organizational and process changes with the expansion of the use of AI agents and an evolving “digital workforce” will require both substantive cultural change and automation, with capabilities from vendors such as Smartsheet and others in the PPM and CWM arena. This is a key opportunity and a challenge for organizations and automation providers.

Updates to Smartsheet’s portfolio align with these IDC findings, including the company’s revamped platform and user experience with improved data access and visualization for collaboration and its increased AI support for better access to actionable insights.

Higher scalability and performance position Smartsheet to further support its enterprise customer base. Along with Smartsheet's recent acquisition by Blackstone and Vista Equity Partners and expanded executive leadership, these releases set the stage for the company to leverage increased adoption for collaborative work automation and digital workspace environments into 2026 and beyond.

Competitive pressure in the space is significant, as are cooperative opportunities with integration with providers such as Atlassian, Jira and its broader portfolio, and Microsoft's portfolio and Copilot strategy. We see Smartsheet following a substantive partner and integration strategy to leverage openings and service support.

For customers, several organizations have not yet made sufficient investment in work management as they rush to keep pace with automation and AI technologies that purport to single-handedly drive work practice transformation. While the progress toward automating repeatable tasks and gathering information across disparate data sources has been fast, the key hurdle of incorporating human workflows has been more complex — even when it doesn't need to be. Automation, coupled with process change, can enable execution in this context.

So, the flip-side opportunity for work management vendors, such as Smartsheet, is that the renewed focus on productivity, cross-functional collaboration, communication, security, and transparency matches their offerings and strengths. Work management and project management capabilities are a clear complement to and, in some cases, an example of AI-enabled workflow adoption.

Conclusion

At a time of increased competitive pressure to innovate dynamically in the context of economic volatility, the imperative to effectively leverage and prioritize teams to deliver on key business initiatives has never been higher. Organizations should assess their current adoption levels and gaps in project management, collaboration, and work automation to benefit from efficiencies of scale. Increased AI adoption presents substantive opportunities, along with the need for AI governance by design and the incorporation of work management practices that are evolving to encompass mixed environments of human and digital workers. The context of this business value analysis helps establish the clear value proposition and business advantages of evaluating and adopting collaborative work and digital automation platforms, such as Smartsheet. Coupled with effective process and cultural change to establish systemic adoption, the benefits of scale are demonstrable and urgently needed to optimize resource leverage and business execution.

Appendix: Methodology

Table 8 presents a summary of IDCs Business Value calculations as fully described in the previous sections, with total average annual benefits of \$2.5 million per organization accruing annually.

TABLE 8
Specific Calculations: Benefits from Use of Smartsheet

Value Category	Average Quantitative Benefit	15% Margin Applied	Calculated Average Annual Value*
Work management team productivity impact	39% higher productivity worth 8 FTEs, \$70,000 salary	No	\$467,348
Project contributor productivity impact	27% higher productivity worth 5.1 FTEs, \$70,000 salary	No	\$297,526
Executive team productivity impact	10% higher productivity worth 0.5 FTEs, \$100,000 salary	No	\$39,719
Operational cost savings	\$824,000 in annual operational cost savings	No	\$691,244
Business enablement — higher revenue	\$1,162,500 in additional net revenue	Yes	\$975,208
Total average annual benefits	\$2.5M per organization per year		

n = 7; Source: IDC Business Value In-Depth Interviews, March 2025

IDC used its standard ROI methodology for this project, which gathers data from current Smartsheet users as the foundation for the model. Based on interviews with organizations using the platform, IDC performed a three-step process to calculate the ROI and payback period:

- 1. It gathered quantitative benefit information during the interviews using a before-and-after assessment of the impact of Smartsheet.** In this study, the benefits included IT cost reductions and avoidances, staff time savings and productivity benefits, and revenue gains.

- 2. IDC created a complete investment (three-year total cost analysis) profile based on the interviews.** Investments go beyond the initial and annual costs of using Smartsheet and can include additional costs related to migrations, planning, consulting, and staff or user training.
- 3. It calculated the ROI and payback period. IDC conducted a depreciated cash flow analysis of the benefits and investments for the organizations' use of Smartsheet over a three-year period.** ROI is the ratio of the NPV and the discounted investment. The payback period is the point at which cumulative benefits equal the initial investment.

IDC bases the payback period and ROI calculations on several assumptions, which are summarized as follows:

- Multiplying time values by burdened salary (salary + 28% for benefits and overheads) quantifies efficiency and productivity savings. For the purposes of this analysis, IDC used its standard Business Value assumptions of an average fully loaded \$100,000 per year salary for IT staff members and an average fully loaded salary of \$70,000 for non-IT staff members. IDC assumes that employees work 1,880 hours per year (47 weeks x 40 hours).
- IDC calculates the net present value of the three-year savings by subtracting the amount that would have been realized by investing the original sum in an instrument yielding a 12% return to allow for the missed opportunity cost. This accounts for both the assumed cost of money and the assumed rate of return.
- Further, because Smartsheet requires a deployment period, the full benefits of the solution are not available during deployment. To capture this reality, IDC pro rates the benefits on a monthly basis and then subtracts the deployment time from the first-year savings.

Note: All numbers in this document may not be exact due to rounding.

About the IDC Analysts



Amy Loomis, Ph.D.

Research Vice President, Future of Work, IDC

Amy Loomis is research vice president for IDC's Worldwide Future of Work market research service. In this role, Loomis covers the growing influence of technologies such as artificial intelligence, data analytics, robotics, augmented and virtual reality, and intelligent process automation in changing the nature of work. Her research looks at how these technologies influence workers' skills and behaviors, organizational culture, and worker experience and how the workspace itself is enabling the future enterprise.

[More about Amy Loomis, Ph.D.](#)



Melinda-Carol Ballou

Research Director, Agile ALM, Quality and Portfolio Strategies, IDC

Melinda-Carol Ballou serves as research director for IDC's Application Life-Cycle Management (ALM) program. In this role, Ballou provides thought leadership, expert opinion, and analysis through comprehensive research on end-to-end application life-cycle management – from requirements to quality, testing, change, continuous release, process, project, and portfolio management (PPM) with a focus on agile DevOps software life-cycle strategies. ALM is a lynchpin across IDC's development research and is a basis for software success across emerging platforms, including mobile, cloud, social, and embedded software within products or "things" as part of IoT. Business leaders leverage metrics and portfolio prioritization and management capabilities to collaborate with IT by leveraging ALM and PPM.

[More about Melinda-Carol Ballou](#)

About the IDC Analysts (continued)



Megan Szurley

Business Value Manager, Business Value Strategy Practice, IDC

Megan Szurley is manager for the Business Value Strategy practice, responsible for creating custom business value research that determines the ROI and cost savings for enterprise technology products. Szurley's research focuses on the financial and operational impact of these products for organizations once deployed and in production. Prior to joining the Business Value Strategy practice, Szurley was a consulting manager within IDC's Custom Solutions division, delivering consultative support across every stage of the business life cycle: business planning and budgeting, sales and marketing, and performance measurement. In her position, Szurley partners with IDC analyst teams to support deliverables that focus on thought leadership, business value, custom analytics, buyer behavior, and content marketing. These customized deliverables are often derived from primary research and yield content marketing, market models, and customer insights.

[More about Megan Szurley](#)

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IDC Research, Inc.
140 Kendrick Street, Building B, Needham, MA 02494, USA
T +1 508 872 8200

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