



Forest Admin

Operations Playbook

What Happens When Tech and Ops Share a Room

3 Fast-Growing Startups Explain How They Drove 3x More Productivity



In short

Why this matters

In the race to scale, startups often hit a familiar roadblock: the growing divide between technology and operations teams. While engineers focus on building products, operations teams are tasked with keeping the business running smoothly. Too often, these teams end up speaking different languages and working toward seemingly different goals.

According to McKinsey's research on digital leaders¹, companies that thrive in today's landscape achieve something critical: **they integrate their operating model and technology seamlessly**. This isn't just consultant talk: it's the difference between startups that scale efficiently and those that burn resources fixing the same problems repeatedly.

As Antoine Bouttier, CEO and co-founder of Motto, puts it: "When you put the tech team and the ops team very close, basically in the same room, and they get to talk every day about the problems our users and team have, you create this synergy that is very healthy."

These are strong words from an Ops-focused founder who got the number of customers handled per service rep from 450 to 2,000. A more than x3 productivity improvement!



Antoine Bouttier, CEO & Co-founder, Motto

Antoine launched Motto, a hassle-free ebike subscription service in 2022. We interviewed him on our podcast.

→ [Watch the full video](#)

¹ [Rewired and running ahead: Digital and AI leaders are leaving the rest behind](#)

The Opportunity

Close Quarters, Fast Growth

When tech and operations teams work closely together, magic happens. Resources stretch further, processes improve continuously, and the entire company moves faster. This isn't just theory: it's what our most successful customers have discovered.

For fast-growing startups, the opportunity is clear: **breaking down the wall between tech and ops creates a competitive advantage**. It's not about throwing more people or money at problems. It's about working smarter.

"For the first two years of the company, the tech team launched one product for the users - the app. And then it was 100% features for the ops team," explains Motto's CEO. "That allowed us to identify that this business can run itself. You don't need a lot of people to operate a big fleet, and the only way to do that is through technology."

This approach tackles a common issue: tech teams become overwhelmed with requests, creating bottlenecks that slow down the entire organization. "Engineering time is one of the most sought-after things that everybody at the company wants," explains Mark Hummel, VP of Customer Experience at Givebutter, a fundraising platform for nonprofits.

Meanwhile, business teams struggle to move forward. The solution isn't better ticket management; it's a radically different way of working together.



Mark Hummel, VP Cust. Experience, Givebutter

Mark narrated on our podcast joining as a "fan boy" of the fundraising startup, and scaling rapidly with tech & AI.

→ [Watch the full video](#)



Success Patterns

What Works in the Real World

Looking at our fastest-growing customers, three distinct patterns emerge in how they've fostered productive tech-ops collaboration:

1. Physical Proximity Creates Organizational Alignment

At Motto, the magic started with physical proximity. They discovered that having tech and ops teams literally in the same room changed everything.

"When you put the tech team and the ops team very close (...) and they get to talk every day on the problems that our users have, you create this synergy that is very healthy," says Antoine Bouttier.

This proximity coupled with an "Ops-centric DNA" fostered a culture of automation. "We were always asking ourselves, if this represents 30% of the day of our customer service, how can we automate it?" shares Antoine. "After three years of operating, we realized we had automatized maybe 75% of the tasks that at first we thought would need a human."

The results speak for themselves: a support person at Motto can now handle 2,000+ customers, compared to 450 originally.

2. No-Code Tools Unlock Business Team Autonomy

At Givebutter, an all-in-one fundraising platform that scaled from 15 to over 100 people in just 18 months, reducing dependency on scarce engineering resources was critical. Mark recognizes that in startups, "we're always fighting for those engineering resources."

Their solution? Embracing no-code tools that let business teams configure and adapt their own workflows without constant engineering support.

Explaining how Givebutter has implemented Forest Admin, Mark is adamant: "Being able to be no-code where we're able to set up inboxes and segments and workspaces without having to submit a single ticket to engineering is amazing and so appreciated."

This approach doesn't just make operations teams happy and autonomous. It frees up engineering to focus on product innovation rather than maintaining internal tools or adding features to back office software.

3. Automation Eliminates Bottlenecks

At Elevo, a fast-growing HR SaaS startup, the focus was on systematically identifying and eliminating bottlenecks between teams.

"It started saving us tons of support time once we identified the most common requests and added smart actions to automate them," explains Gustavo, its Engineering Director who joined in 2019.



Gustavo Zanoni, Engineering Director, Elevo

Gustavo shared with us how Elevo, an HR SaaS startup, empowered all their operations with Forest Admin.

→ [Discover the full case study](#)

The most mundane example of this approach, early on, was transforming password resets: what was a multi-step manual process involving tech support became a one-click operation for customer service.

By analyzing patterns in support requests, the Tech and Ops teams continuously automate routine tasks. "Forest Admin is the backbone of our support operation," Gustavo notes. "When an agent needs to check something, they don't have to ask tech, they can find it themselves."

The ripple effects extended beyond just ops and support: "Our product team doesn't need to bug developers for test scenarios anymore, they just hop into Forest Admin and do their thing," adds Gustavo. "And our sales team can create demo environments for their prospects on their own. They don't depend on Tech for demo setups!"

Tool of the trade

How Forest Admin Enables Collaboration

Forest Admin sits precisely at the intersection of tech and operations, providing structure that enables closer collaboration without creating new dependencies.

For tech teams, Forest Admin offers:

- A way to empower business teams without compromising security or data integrity
- The ability to quickly build back office and internal tools without maintaining a codebase
- A structured approach to data access and maintainability as the company grows

For operations teams, it provides:

- Direct access to the data they need without engineering assistance
- The ability to create and modify workflows without coding
- A unified interface for all operational tasks

"We use Forest Admin's Teams feature to create different access levels for Tech, Customer Success, and Sales," explains Gustavo from Elevo. "Then we fine-tune what each team can see using Views and Filters. Our tech team controls these settings, ensuring everyone has access to exactly what they need - nothing more, nothing less."

At Motto, Forest Admin became the central nervous system of their operations: "We built our backend on Forest. Our ops team started using Forest on a daily basis and clearly worked on the tool many times with so many different use cases that we are now managing 100% of our bikes on Forest, 100% of our users on Forest, and we even connected Forest to Stripe."

Practical Steps

How to Strengthen Tech-Ops Collaboration

Based on our customers' experiences, here are five practical steps startups can take to improve tech-ops collaboration:

1. Create physical proximity as much as possible

If your teams are remote, create virtual spaces where tech and ops can have casual, ongoing conversations.

2. Establish a culture of automation

Ask yourself regularly: "How can we automate this?" for any repetitive task.

"Our mindset at Motto was always to ask ourselves, if this represents 30% of the day of our customer service rep, how can we automate? By doing this, you create a culture of automatization."
- Antoine, Motto

3. Invest in tools that empower business teams

You want your Ops teams to be able to set up their own workflows without requiring engineering support for every change, while enforcing permissions and compliance. Gustavo explains "Forest Admin has become our default interface for everything data-related."

4. Define secure yet practical data access rules


Build clear processes for data access that strictly balance security with operational needs at each level and for every functional team. Gustavo adds "The tech team keeps control of the permissions, but everyone else can work independently in their space."

5. Regularly review and rebuild processes as you scale.

As Motto's CEO advises: "If you've been handling a problem or situation for the last 18 months and the business has doubled in size, you need to enlarge your vision and think about new ways. To me, it has always been how we've been succeeding in reaching the next level, when we take everything we built, destroy it, and rebuild it."

McKinsey's analysis of more than 200 large-scale digital and AI transformations highlights key capabilities in the following six key areas; At the center are Operations, Technology and Data. ([source](#))

Transformations are more likely to be successful if they make progress in six areas.

Strategy	1. Strategic road map Align the senior leadership team on the transformation vision, value, and road map, and reimagine business domains to deliver outstanding customer experiences and create competitive distance.			
				
Capabilities	2. Talent Ensure talent has the right skills and capabilities to execute and innovate.	3. Operating model Increase the productivity of the organization by bringing business and technology together.	4. Technology Allow the organization to more easily use technology to innovate at pace.	5. Data Continuously enrich data, and make it easy to consume across the organization to improve customer experiences and business performance.
	6. Adoption and scaling Maximize value capture by ensuring the adoption and scaling of digital and analytics solutions, by building new skills and leadership characteristics, and by tightly managing transformation progress and risks.			
Change management				

The takeaway

Rethinking How Ops & Tech Teams Work Together

McKinsey's research on digital leaders highlights three key areas where companies differentiate themselves: operating model, technology adoption, and data accessibility. The stories from Motto, Givebutter, and Elevo demonstrate how close collaboration between tech and operations teams addresses all three.

In today's environment, throwing more people or money at problems isn't sustainable. The startups that will thrive are those that find ways to work smarter by breaking down silos between tech and operations.

As Antoine Bouttier from Motto puts it: "The DNA of Motto is ops. I was managing the ops for the first 18 months of the company, so I worked on every single topic we're addressing. You need to understand your business, understand what your customers really want, and where your business can offer something valuable." And to achieve this and grow, true collaboration between the builders in Tech, and the operators in Ops, is vital.

When tech and ops teams work side by side, in the same room or virtually, they create that valuable synergy that powers the fastest-growing startups. Now, the question isn't whether you can afford to bring these teams closer together, it's whether you can afford not to.

Take your operations to the next level

Accelerate process handling, resolve support issues faster, close cases more efficiently and track team performance.

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Built for intensive operations teams.

Empower your team to achieve better collaboration and improve the efficiency of your customer operations with our unique platform. Accelerate process handling, resolve support issues faster, close cases more efficiently and track team performance.

More than just a product, we are your operations partner. Leverage our market experience and benefit from our advisory services to address your challenges effectively.

[Discover Forest Admin now](#)