



HOW AN MSP CAN CHANGE YOUR BUSINESS STRATEGY



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Every business, small or large, has 3 basic levels of technology support needs.

1. **Make sure it works** - Every organization, from enterprise to not-for-profit, needs IT staff who are able to offer routine maintenance and support, including the updating of hardware and software, handling maintenance, and putting out daily fires.
2. **Make sure it works when needed** - Technology supports business activity 24/7. Even when everyone in a small business has gone home, there are periodic non-negotiable staff needs at unpredictable times.
- 3) **Make sure it helps make you more money** - This top tier is the most important. This is the support that is helping you to proactively manipulate technology to improve revenue.

Why is a MSP useful?

When you only have a part-timer or one full-time IT person in-house, too much of this well-paid resource may be focused on putting out fires, doing routine maintenance, and handling software updates. Result? The IT staff member that best understands your business doesn't have the time to help you devise forward-thinking applied technology to grow your business. This is a waste of resources. Instead, use their expertise to develop your business: use an MSP to provide all of the below-ground support.

Here are some areas where a managed service provider can be your best business ally.

1. Specialized areas of support - MSPs often specialize in specific business sectors and have deep knowledge of their needs, the specialized

software packages and the Federal, state or provincial level regulatory environment. They can help you make sure your technology stays in compliance with regulations, such as those requiring the maintenance of verified security procedures. (e.g, HIPAA)

- 2) Help desk support - For all of the various questions, problems, hardware and software crises that can happen anywhere, at any time, a 24/7 help desk means your IT staff isn't distracted by smaller problems, and dragged out of bed by a routine client issue at 2am.
- 3) Security and data protection - With the increasing news about hacking and data theft, it is apparent that everyone will be compromised at some point or another. This is an area where you can benefit from the deep specialized knowledge of an expert. Because it seems new malware and hacking tools are invented on an hourly basis, an MSP can provide the support you need to protect your data.
- 4) Disaster planning and recovery - Smaller firms are the most vulnerable financially to the revenue damage that comes from downtime. However, they have the least resources to focus on this vague and seemingly improbable threat. A MSP

can provide consulting resources to plan what needs to be done to minimize the effects of a disaster, and put into place procedures to ensure a speedy return to business-as-usual if something does go wrong.

- 5) Software updates - Software updates are a necessity, but can potentially create headaches for every user. Instead of distracting your in-house IT staff with this routine and time-devouring procedure, use the resources of a MSP on a scheduled or as-needed basis to handle all of this in the background.
- 6) Avoid expensive emergency upcharges and exorbitant one-off fees. MSPs can offer you a service plan that provides on-going levels of support and includes priority attention in the event of an emergency, so you avoid becoming just another client in the queue.

To summarize, the MSP model offers more than IT support. The MSP model provides a different business model for the role of IT as an integral part of your entire long-term development strategy. Technology is more than just a low-level distraction that takes you away from the core issues of your mission as a business. Technology, when managed right, is a key driver of that mission.

CONTACT DETAILS

David Cross
CEO | Elevative Networks
Email: dcross@elevative.com
Phone: 703.226.3419
<http://www.elevative.com>

