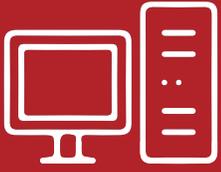


TECHVERA



# The Business Owner's Guide to Modern IT Management

Managed IT Support



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## INTRODUCTION



### Reese Ormand, Techvera Founder & CEO

Fellow Business Owner,

These days, you're expected to be connected 24/7. Now an issue with your computer, email, or network can have an exponential impact on your business. Time is our most valuable resource – and it's too precious to allow your businesses to operate in a reactive mode. Fixing problems after they caused downtime simply isn't good enough. Our clients needed more. We realized it was time to adapt – which is why our organization evolved into Techvera, one of the fastest growing managed service providers in the state of Texas.

At Techvera we ensure that our solutions fit your company's specific needs – allowing your team to focus on what they do best, while we manage the technology behind them. We're here to solve technology problems and empower your team.

We hope this eBook gives you some insight into why we took this modern approach to technology management, and the immense difference it is making in businesses. For more information on our Flat Rate IT service, [visit us online](#).

## PART ONE

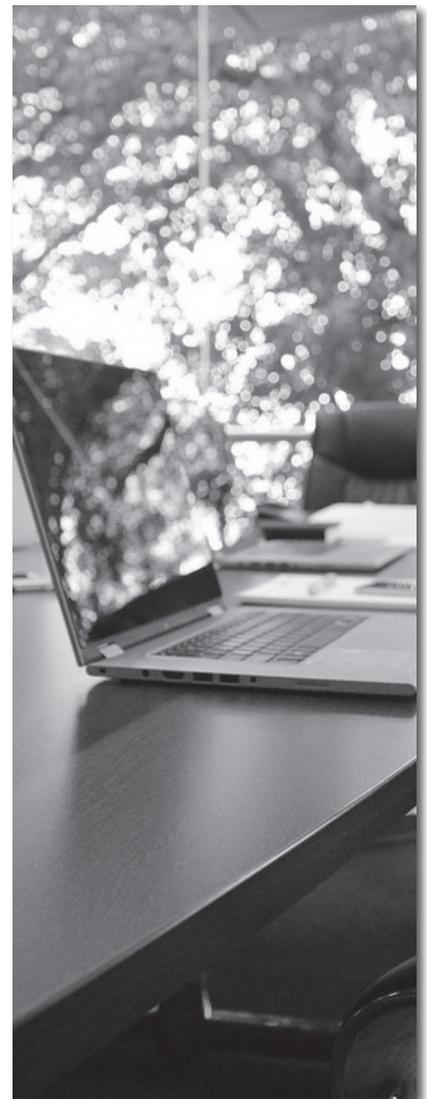
# The “Managed Services” IT Revolution

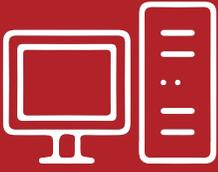
## What is Managed Service and how can it help your business excel?

“As a definition, [Managed Services](#) allow a business to offload IT operations to a service provider, known as a Managed Service Provider (MSP). The managed service provider assumes an ongoing responsibility for 24-hour monitoring, managing and/or problem resolution for the IT systems within a business.”

The business of today looks much different than it did even 10 years ago; entire databases and irreplaceable files are all stored on electronic devices and companies depend heavily on IT. Looking at the current model of “break-fix only” repair, we can easily see its shortcomings - and business owners have very likely experienced them firsthand. Systems are only serviced when something has already gone wrong: a critical computer contracted a virus that has it locked, the server has gone down, important files suddenly go missing, etc. This puts all parties involved into a frantic state, scrambling to repair a business-critical problem that is losing your company money every minute and keeping employees (and you) from doing their jobs. And in many cases, IT support won't be available until hours or even days later, leaving you helpless.

Managed services helps prevent, rather than just react to, these issues long before they happen. MSP's see every important detail of your business's IT operations continually, not just when they are on-site to fix a problem that has already occurred. Instead of minor issues being overlooked and eventually building up to a huge problem that seriously disrupts business, proactive managed service support ensures you will never lose time, money, and sanity due to IT nightmares. Having an MSP is like having an IT department that is on-call and watching your systems 24/7, without owners or managers having to lift a finger. This is why so many companies are switching to a managed service model to take care of their IT needs and change the way they do business.



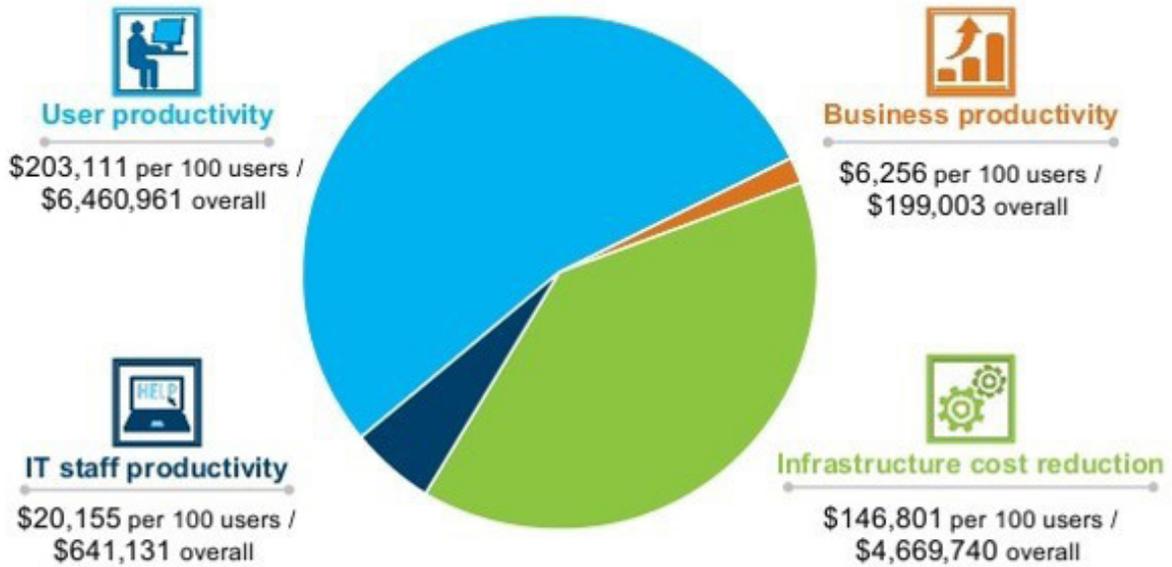


The business value of managed services: Findings from IDC research sponsored by IBM



## Study participants realized financial benefits in four key areas

**Average annual benefit**  
**\$376,323 per 100 users / \$11,970,834 overall<sup>1</sup>**



<sup>1</sup>Based on study group average of 3,181 internal IT users

5

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Via "IDC Whitepaper Executive Summary: The Managed Services Advantage" independent study sponsored by IBM. [Read the full report here.](#)



"It is only when they go wrong that machines remind you how powerful they are."

**-Clive James**

"We are stuck with technology when what we really want is just stuff that works."

**-Douglas Adams**

## **PART TWO**

# Major Benefits of Managed Services for your Business



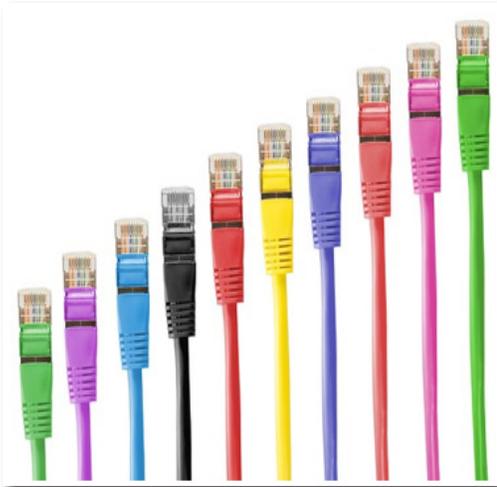
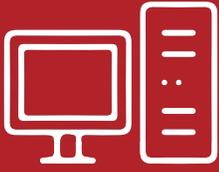
### Increased Efficiency

Many companies that turn to MSP's are accustomed to the "firefighting method" of tracking and responding to issues as they happen, causing panic and downtime for everyone involved. Most businesses are shocked to learn the extent of the inefficiency of their prior issue management system once they discover the gains to be made through managed services.

### Better Understanding of Infrastructure

Little things make a big difference in the efficient management of a company's IT infrastructure. Unfortunately with owners' busy schedules, these things can fall by the wayside due to lack of time and resources. Managed service providers are constantly on the lookout for helpful updates, patches, and upgrades to keep your systems running their best. Additionally, MSP's can help clients create a well-defined list of which technology products are tied to business-critical operations so that different service priority levels are assigned on a true needs basis.





## Access to Important Historical Data

Since your MSP's tools are constantly monitoring the performance and capacity of your file system space, database size, network bandwidth, and more, all of that information is captured and stored as historical data. The client has access to this data and can use it to analyze trends in performance or capacity associated with a specific device or database and to make educated, informed decisions about future IT capacity and performance needs as a result.

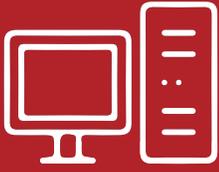
## Timely Patch & Update Management

When IT staffs are too busy with firefighting responsibilities, patch management is one of the things that tend to fall to the back burner. This can leave an organization at risk for downtime, security vulnerabilities, and incidents that a vendor may not support when patches are too far behind. Managed services providers can manage patches and software so that they remain up to date continuously.



## Reduced Downtime & Risk

Because of the ability to track and rectify problems before they happen, downtime due to IT issues becomes nearly non-existent. There is rarely the risk that your business will be unavailable, and in turn customers will view you as reliable and organized.



## And yes - managed services can even cost you less than traditional break-fix support!

Surprisingly, managed services actually cost less than break-fix repair, especially when factoring in the cost of downtime that inevitably comes with the old method. Remote monitoring, remote maintenance, and the prevention of major issues allow a managed service provider to operate far more efficiently than a break-fix company that is constantly driving back and forth to customer sites. Likewise, rush fees and after hours or weekend support to handle emergencies can add up quickly. The managed service company can prevent these issues before they happen, and handle most maintenance and service remotely. The MSP can therefore offer a "better" service without charging more. Additionally, the monthly cost of managed services can be factored in as a business/operating expense, allowing most companies to deduct the service from their taxes to save even more money - something not available with the old break-fix model.

- No downtime = no lost productivity or profits
- 24/7 monitoring means potential issues are caught and prevented
- No rush or after-hours repair fees
- Businesses can factor in the cost of monthly managed services as a business/operating expense, allowing most to deduct the service from their taxes

## Sign Up for a Free Consultation Today

If your business is still suffering through the break-fix method of IT management, let us show you how easy it is to get enterprise-class, 'round-the-clock support. Click the button below to contact us and request a free business consultation and assessment.

**Schedule a Consultation**

Want to learn even more? [Our blog](#) delves into the history of managed services, and the many ways businesses are using them to improve every aspect of their company's infrastructure and operations.



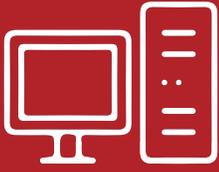
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## **BONUS CONTENT**

How to Allocate a More  
Effective IT Budget



Technology seems to occupy a bigger position in our lives and businesses with each passing year. Huge annual advancements in computers, phones, tablets, POS systems, cloud storage, data backup, software, and more create an ever-changing realm of IT possibilities. This can make it difficult to determine how to allocate your business' technology funds. Many owners make the mistake of using the same IT budgeting model every year, without considering changing needs and technological advancements that could benefit the company. But deciding on a budget requires more than just entering numbers on a spreadsheet. Businesses are confused and uncertain as to what an appropriate IT budget is, and they don't have a clear vision how these funds should be spent. Here we'll help answer some common IT budgeting questions, examine industry benchmarks, and share insight into where businesses today are investing their IT budgets.



Technology should be viewed as both a cost of doing business, and an opportunity to do more.

## BENEFITS OF TECHNOLOGY IN BUSINESS

Every business owner must decide where to allocate funds, and it can be difficult to reconcile spending a huge amount on IT without seeing immediate returns. But IT is an integral part of nearly all organizations, and can offer widespread and lasting benefits.

SOME GAINS THAT COME FROM WELL-INVESTED IT DOLLARS ARE:

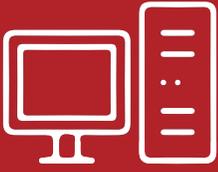
- The ability to reach more potential customers and develop a better business relationship with your consumer base
- Supporting better relationships with key partners
- Using customer demand to better guide the business
- Streamlining operations, reducing costs, improving efficiency, maximizing profit, minimizing waste, devoting talent to core business instead of overhead
- Providing better and unique service to customers
- Rising above competitors to establish your business as the most progressive and forward-thinking in the industry



## INDUSTRY AVERAGES

CIO Magazine conducts an annual State of the CIO survey and gathers data to compile an average spending budget across numerous companies. For 2013, it found that the average IT budget, as percent of revenue, is 5.2%. This is a slight increase from the 2012 average, which was 4.7%. Overall, businesses seem to spend between 4-6% of their revenue on IT, and this range is recommended by CIO Magazine.

In order to produce a reliable technology budget, it's critical that a company go through an assessment phase to review the network and its related systems from several angles (users, hardware, and current IT vendors). Finding a trusted IT consulting firm to guide this process is ideal, as it allows for an unbiased, all-inclusive assessment, along with sound budgeting advice that's in line with the overall business objectives. The 4-6% average is a great guideline, but the final number will depend on your company's individual needs and goals.



# IT BUDGETING QUESTIONS

There are a few questions every business owner should consider when determining their IT spending budget to effectively implement technology decisions.

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How will it change the basis of competition in our industry?

For incumbents in many sectors, technology is becoming an arms race. Companies are harnessing technologies such as social media and location-based services to reinvent the customer experience and capture market share. It is important to know who your emerging or existing competitors are, how they are taking advantage of technology, and how your IT is helping you win against them and even enter new markets.

What will it take to exceed our customers' expectations in a digital world?

Companies who are e-commerce leaders like Amazon and Apple are reeducating customers as to what the online business world can be. Ultra-convenient and personalized experiences are pushing customer expectations higher and upping demand for consumer-driven technology. You should understand how your customer experience compares with that of leaders in other sectors, what your customers expect and what it will take to delight them, and have clear plans for how to meet or exceed their expectations.

Do our business plans reflect the full potential of technology to improve our business?

Technology expenses can be high, but they are relatively small compared with their potential to boost the operating performance of a business. Technology can drive revenues, reduce overall costs, and lower risk. By seizing opportunities and mitigating threats, companies can dramatically improve their performance in all sectors. Ultimately, the strategy that emerges from an assessment of opportunities and threats should be an integrated plan that shows how the business will beat the competition using information technology over many years to come, not simply a revised annual IT budget.



How will it improve our operational and strategic ability?

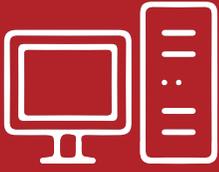
Leading companies are continually using IT to improve business agility and streamline processes. IT agility can be increased by changing the systems landscape, improving data quality, optimizing IT delivery processes, and building flexibility into the company. To be a leader, your company must measure and manage both business and IT agility, ensuring that the organization can operate competitively and determining where improvements can be made.

Do we have the capabilities required to deliver value from IT?

It is one thing to have IT, and another thing entirely to use it effectively. Technology alone delivers no value. It is the combination of a clear strategy, the right technology, high-quality data, appropriate skills, and lean processes that add up to create value. Leading organizations actively assess their capabilities in these dimensions and target any weak spots to ensure they will derive value from IT changes.

Are we comfortable with our level of IT risk?

Cybersecurity is a significant and growing IT issue. Every large company's security has been breached, and most executives have a poor understanding of the risks. Companies need a comprehensive system for managing IT risk that assesses the full range of threats and addresses their root causes. It is important with any IT budgeting strategy to ensure you are mitigating risks and preventing security breaches as comprehensively as possible.



# WHERE IS THE MONEY GOING?

SPENDING HAS MOVED INTO THREE KEY AREAS FOR MOST BUSINESSES:

## THE CLOUD

Cloud technology is still relatively new, and comes with its own set of risks - security, compliance, privacy. But the advantages are paying off as organizations from all different industries migrate away from the traditional IT model. Cloud computing allows you to set up what is essentially a virtual office to give you the flexibility of connecting to your company anywhere, any time. With the growing number of web-enabled devices used in today's business environments, access to your data is easier than ever. Cloud computing offers potential reduced overall IT costs, scalability, business continuity, collaboration efficiency, flexibility of work practices, access to automatic updates, and much more.

## MOBILE

It's hard to ignore the fact that tablets and smartphones are now serious players in enterprise computing. Gartner estimates that PC replacement rates will continue to fall through 2017 as tablets become the first-choice companion device for mobile phone users. Many organizations and their employees are spending IT dollars on more advanced, "premium" phones and it's estimated that these devices will represent more than 50% of total spending on all devices by 2017. Most cell phones and tablets have the capability of performing many tasks that a computer can. This allows for flexibility and availability, keeping employees and managers from being glued to a computer desk to perform their work. Additionally, many consumers use their mobile devices to access business websites and make purchasing decisions. Spending IT dollars on mobile website optimization is an integral step in today's world to ensure customers have easy, streamlined access to your company's site and products. Without mobile optimization, most websites look and act unwieldy and make it a hassle for visitors to use, potentially even driving them away from using your services altogether. Your website is the first impression of your business and its optimization is an invaluable and necessary investment.

## VIRTUALIZATION

Virtualization is technology that allows your organization to run multiple operating systems and applications from a single computer, consolidate hardware to get vastly higher productivity from fewer servers, save 50% or more on overall IT costs, plus speed up and simplify IT management and maintenance. Virtualization is the single most cost effective way to reduce IT expenses while boosting efficiency and agility, and is certainly a worthwhile expenditure. Whether or not your business could currently benefit from this technology, it is essential to know options available for future IT needs.



## Sign Up for a Free Consultation & IT Assessment

In the end, it is important to look at IT budgeting in a different light. Technology is an investment into the operations and flow of your organization, rather than a cost of doing business. With proper IT budgeting, your company's systems can be designed and implemented in a way that enhances your ability to respond to varying changes in the competitive business environment. At Techvera, we can help determine the most efficient and cost-effective way of harnessing evolving technology to benefit your company, and the best IT budget for your individual needs. Contact us today for a free consultation for your business.

[\*\*Schedule a Consultation\*\*](#)