MANAGED IT
FOR BUSINESS
TODAY

Contributed by

Waypoint.
IT Experts

Over the past several years, we've watched smart companies survive—and thrive—by learning to manage resources more effectively. Successful technology management, in particular, has undergone a sea change due not only to the uncertain economy, but also to changes in the technologies themselves.

Prior to the recession, most growing companies invested in an internal IT department to manage and maintain infrastructure, to install new equipment, and to provide day-to-day technical support. This structure provided the benefit of on-site IT staff to address concerns as they arise—especially important in an environment in which physical interaction with equipment was a daily necessity.

However, thanks to remote monitoring technology, physical management of IT equipment is now unnecessary on a daily basis. Today, in fact, the benefits of internal IT often are outweighed by the costs:

- **High staff overhead** that does not easily flex with the business
- **Limited skill sets**—the company gets only what the existing staff brings to the table, with little room for growth and change as the technology environment changes
- **Potentially low productivity**,
  - Staff is available only during regular business hours, so if a problem occurs overnight, the entire business team must wait for the IT team to resolve the issue
  - Because the IT team spends their time in the weeds, there is little time to look for new developments and see better ways to support productivity
- **Staffing shortages** during employee vacations
- **Knowledge transfer gaps** when adding to or losing personnel

Shannon

Essentially, the old structure leaves the traditional IT guy stranded on a desert island, disconnected from the wider world of best IT practices, and unable to leverage his strongest skills and talents to best support the organization.

Fortunately, current technology has sped the rise of a model of IT support that solves all of these problems: Managed IT. The outsourced, managed IT model provides all the services of an old-fashioned IT department, plus many additional benefits—without the overhead and headaches. A good managed IT company can complement current IT staff, freeing them to focus

on their strengths and talents—or, when appropriate, manage the entire IT infrastructure.

The model works so well in part because remote monitoring enables fast and effective troubleshooting, diagnosis, and often problem resolution, without ever stepping foot on site. Complex problems requiring on-site presence can be addressed by specialized staff deployed to match the specific concern. In this newer model, businesses gain access to the proactive services and expertise of an entire team of IT experts at any time of day or night.

Of course, not all managed IT companies are created equal. To outsource effectively, companies should look for a managed IT program that offers these benefits:

- **Cost Containment.** A flat fee based on a careful assessment of the client's needs.
- **Flexibility.** Multiple service levels, permitting investment in company growth simultaneous with cash flow preservation.
- **Team of Experts.** Focused expertise across multiple platforms and technologies.
- **Modern Tools and Advanced Security.** All the latest security and productivity tools.
- **24/7 Support.** Monitoring and help desk available at any time, meaning IT crews identify and address problems immediately, no matter when they occur.
- **Advanced Security.** Staying ahead of the latest security threats.
- **Technology Leadership.** Proactive guidance in the best current tools for the client's business, often acting as a CTO, always acting as a true partner to the business owners.

A well-managed move to a primarily outsourced IT model saves companies approximately 30 percent on technology costs over the long term—a percentage independently verified by a recent Berkeley study of the credit union industry. With so much to gain, few companies can afford to ignore the growing trend toward managed IT.