



Red River

**BUSINESS PAIN POINTS:
HOW MANAGED SERVICES
CAN HELP**



Cash flow, talent acquisition, growth management — most businesses have specific pain points they need to address, whether they're large or small. But they don't need to confront these challenges alone: Filled with talented professionals and experts, Managed Services Providers (MSPs) have access to the resources needed to guide businesses of any industry or size.

Let's take a look at how managed services can help businesses manage and mitigate their most critical pain points.



EFFICIENCY AND TECHNOLOGY IMPROVEMENTS THROUGH TOOLS AND TELEMETRY

Many business owners worry that their organization is falling behind the competition in terms of technology — and the services that they can provide their clientele. When surveyed, 68 percent of responding small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs) noted that cost was a significant barrier to acquiring better technology. Further, many SMBs found it difficult to commit time and effort into rolling out new technology and feared that it would be disruptive. While larger enterprises may not have as many day-to-day monetary concerns, they are often concerned with disruption and opportunity cost.

MSPs are able to help organizations save both time and money — while still giving them the tools and telemetry they need to grow and succeed. Through an MSP, organizations are able to gain access to advanced tools and reporting, to better understand their own processes and potential inefficiencies. Advanced, machine-analyzed data can be used to drive business decision-making, and expert analysis can be used to determine when technology may need to be upgraded and legacy tech systems may have run their course.

Bottom line: Address shortcomings in tools and analytics technology through the resources provided by an MSP.



ACCESS TO EXPERT SPECIALISTS IN LIEU OF LARGE INTERNAL IT DEPARTMENTS

An MSP has an arsenal of experts with real-life experience within the IT industry. It would be incredibly costly for an organization to hire these experts, but with an MSP, they have access to their extensive knowledge and skills. Many businesses hire an MSP so they can get the perspective of those who are within the industry — especially when they run into issues of security and security breaches.

As reported by [MalwareBytes](#), most SMBs don't have the budgets to have large, internal IT departments — but they end up paying for it when their systems are breached. There are many advantages to having access to expert specialists, from avoiding system disruption to remaining one step ahead of the competition in terms of technology. Larger enterprises can afford internal IT departments, but they may find it unnecessarily expensive to hire best-of-the-best specialists and keep them trained.

Bottom line: Forego expensive internal IT departments by outsourcing your IT needs.



INCREMENTAL FINE-TUNING OF ORGANIC PROCESSES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Many enterprises start off as small companies. Through the process of growth, they build their processes and infrastructure organically. Ultimately, this leads to large companies that are still working with antiquated technology and patchwork processes. The organization will need to be re-built from the ground up — but as the organization continues to grow, this process becomes progressively more complex, expensive and daunting.

MSPs can find discreet (and discrete) ways to help an organization slowly transition to modernized processes and technology. Rather than having to change things all at once, companies can still invest in a step-by-step journey toward their destination. Instead of disrupting their client organization's existing workflow, they can slowly alter its course — and they can continuously move ahead toward the technology and processes that they need to thrive.

Bottom line: Companies can grow unwieldy over time; an MSP can help organize the chaos.



24/7/365 CUSTOMER SERVICE AND MONITORING

Even a 9-to-5 business may have 24/7/365 needs. With more employees working on flextime, from home and in other time zones, it's become more important to have 24/7/365 customer service, support and monitoring. Further, though a business may only be open 8 hours a day, data breaches can occur any time — and the faster they're mitigated, the less expensive they will be.

MSPs can provide round-the-clock customer service and monitoring, to ensure that an organization is taken care of regardless of the time of day. Employees working from home or outside traditional office hours will still be able to connect with help, and potential data breaches and other security issues will be caught as soon as possible.

For most businesses, it would be impossibly expensive for a company to hire 24/7 internal IT support — especially if it isn't frequently needed. But an MSP can provide complete support for far less. An MSP is already providing 24/7/365 monitoring services to its other clientele, and it can bill an organization for merely a fraction of this time.

Bottom line: When you need them, an MSP is there—and far less expensive than hiring round-the-clock internal staff.



CONQUERING CASH FLOW ISSUES THROUGH COST-EFFECTIVE TECHNOLOGY AND IMPROVED ROI

For many companies, ROI is the bottom line. An MSP will almost universally save an organization money. With an MSP:

- Companies don't need to pay for a large, full-time internal IT staff.
- Businesses are able to benefit from advanced technology without having to purchase it themselves.
- MSPs can look for areas of improvement for the business, both in terms of efficiency optimization and cost-savings.
- The business can avoid costly disasters such as data breaches and malware attacks.

At the end of the day, MSPs are often valuable because they can provide better services at lower costs, through superior technology and economies of scale.

Bottom line: MSPs can help an organization save money, whether it's large or small.



REDUCING THE NEED FOR DAY-TO-DAY MAINTENANCE

The average employee wastes 22 minutes a day on IT-related problems. And that's just the average employee; IT staff members spend even more time on day-to-day maintenance. While employees are fighting with their passwords and their applications, IT professionals are completing patches, software upgrades, hardware upgrades and backups.

Often, IT staff members aren't able to plan or execute technology changes because they are too busy putting out fires.

MSPs are able to perform routine day-to-day maintenance, including help desk support. IT professionals within the company can concentrate on value-generating initiatives, rather than having to close tickets. With employees focused more on big-picture tasks, the company is able to make better use of the IT resources they have.

And, of course, companies can also choose to involve MSPs in those big-picture tasks — if they need additional resources to make everything work.

Bottom line: When your IT staff is tied up putting out fires, they can't concentrate on growth. MSPs can take on smaller tasks so your IT staff can focus on more important ones.



PROACTIVE APPROACHES TO STALLED OR DELAYED INNOVATION

Depending on industry, companies currently commit about 13 to 22 percent of their IT budget to innovation and improvement. But for many, it should be more.

Innovation improves efficiency, security and ultimately cost. But many companies can't imagine the upfront investment of time and money — in terms of IT, they're too busy keeping their head above the water.

Companies are often hesitant to engage in growth because it can feel disruptive. They may remain with proprietary, legacy solutions rather than investing in more advanced technology because they fear the amount of disruption it can create.

But though there would be an upfront investment, it would save the company money over time. And, indeed, it might be necessary for the survival of the business, depending on how competitive the organization's industry is.

MSPs are able to concentrate on proactive innovation and innovation cycles, so the business doesn't have to. Rather than sending employees to countless seminars and meetings to learn about new technologies, the business can instead engage with an MSP who already knows all about the best tech on the market. MSPs are able to generate complete plans and road maps for their clients, to tell them exactly what they need to do to move to the next stage of development.

Bottom line: Companies may not have the time to devote to innovation, but an MSP can help them become more proactive with their improvements.



TALENT AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT

Scaling is the most dangerous and vulnerable time for practically any business.

When organizations grow, they can end up growing too quickly. They may hire too few workers and end up short-staffed or hire too few and end up overstaffed. They may invest too little or too much in technology or may find it difficult to adapt their existing processes to their new business side.

An MSP can address these problems in multiple ways.

First, an MSP can guide a business by future-proofing its technology and its processes, ensuring that its current technology can support it both now and into the future without being overkill in terms of pricing. Second, an MSP reduces the need for an organization to bolster its internal IT staff before it knows what it will really need. MSPs can scale with the business, offering the business exactly the technology and services it needs throughout its growth.

MSPs are experts in talent and growth management, and they can advise an organization on the right times to grow, how to manage this growth and how to avoid growing too fast or too far. Because growth is a vulnerable time for the business, MSPs are also able to provide flexible and elastic levels of support — and are able to reduce that support once the organization no longer needs it.

Bottom line: It can be difficult for companies to find the right IT talent to hire, but an MSP can make it easier to gain access to experts and specialists.



ENHANCED SECURITY AND COMPLIANCE

In a survey, 9 out of 10 respondents said they would switch to an MSP if they could provide better security.

It's easy to see why.

Security is absolutely a top issue when it comes to SMBs today. SMBs are constantly being targeted by malware and malicious attackers. They may even find that their employees are their biggest issue, as employees can inadvertently cause a data breach through carelessness.

MSPs can provide security and compliance functionality that seriously outpaces what an organization could manage internally. Not only do they have best-in-class technology, but they have the knowledge and specialization to back it up. MSPs can audit an organization's current security, make suggestions and upgrade it. From there, they are able to monitor the organization's infrastructure and react swiftly to potential threats.

Even a very solid, skilled and talented internal IT team may not have the resources or the time to learn about every current threat. For an MSP, specialists are able to devote all their time to ensuring that their clients are kept protected and safe.

Bottom line: Security concerns are an ever-present and growing threat, and an MSP can help.



PERFORMING OBJECTIVE AUDITS OF EXISTING SYSTEMS

It can be difficult for an organization to see the forest for the trees.

When organizations are so inundated by their day-to-day problems and used to their own infrastructure, they may not see the potential areas of improvement open to them. An outsider is able to make an objective analysis of the situation, auditing the organization's software and hardware inventory and providing them with the plans and resources they need.

MSPs have seen countless companies in similar situations. Not only are they able to advise organizations on what they should do, but they can also identify potential drawbacks, pitfalls and complications. This reduces the risk for the organization; they are less likely to experience problems and disruption under a knowledgeable managed services provider.

Having an objective, third-party analysis can also help overcome the "well, we've always done it this way" mentality. This is often pervasive the longer the organization has been operating with a specific infrastructure. Without the C-Suite on board, it can be difficult if not impossible to upgrade an organization's technology. An outside perspective can help an organization really see how and why it needs to change.

Bottom line: An objective third party is more likely to identify areas of improvement and help a business grow.



THE NEXT STEPS

Managed Services Providers can do far more than most organizations assume. With an MSP, you can improve your organization's current technology and processes — and gain day-to-day, 24/7/365 support for the new infrastructure. MSPs are able to augment your existing staff, support your growth and otherwise audit, troubleshoot and reduce risk. And, of course, the superior technology and resources of an MSP can be used for better security and compliance.

Every business, from SMB to large enterprise, has pain points to fix. An MSP's job is to identify these problems, analyze them and present the solutions that are most likely to yield positive results for the organization. With an MSP, an organization is able to reduce their costs, acquire additional resources and otherwise streamline and optimize their processes.



ABOUT RED RIVER

Red River brings together the ideal combination of talent, partners and products to disrupt the status quo in technology and drive success for business and government in ways previously unattainable. Red River serves organizations well beyond traditional technology integration, bringing 25 years of experience and mission-critical expertise in security, networking, analytics, collaboration, mobility and cloud solutions. To learn more, visit redriver.com.