Building the Business Case

If it were always easy to figure out the impact of new IT investments, the world would be a better place for all of us. You would no doubt have all the right systems in place — and we would spend all of our time building them and supporting them for you. This is, of course, too good to be true.

Sometimes, the metrics you need to build the business case (time savings, billable rates, etc.) are easily accessible and point definitively toward the right decision. Other times, you will know that making your customers and employees happier is the right thing to do, but will stumble in quantifying the benefits. Yet in other cases (when evaluating backup solutions for example), your only real metric will be the potential costs of NOT investing in a certain measure.

Our only real advice in the latter scenarios is to learn from other companies' successes and mistakes. Ask a trusted IT partner about how similar investments have played out at firms that do what you do for customers like yours. Hint: if every investment is deemed a phenomenal idea for your business, reconsider who you call your trusted IT partner.

Deploying and Supporting Your Systems

If you are a small or medium business with no in-house IT expertise, then some good news is in order for you. Most solutions we just discussed (and many we didn't) are increasingly available in the on-demand, managed, software as a service (SaaS) and in other turn-key varieties. It is entirely possible, for example, to have a vendor deliver, install and remotely manage your new firewall or your email server 24x7. You won't even know it's there.

The trouble with such bundled products, of course, is that they aren't always the best value for small businesses. Few of these offerings are designed to take advantage of your existing infrastructure, and the included management and monitoring services are often an overkill for that 10-15 person regional office of yours. Employing a good IT services company to build and manage your solution in-house is often cheaper. That being said, it is often a good idea to negotiate a flat-fee support agreement with your IT vendor. This can allow you to replicate the easy budgeting and worry-free experience of the bundled solution with the lower investment that comes with a self-built system.

About Bellacom Technologies

In business for over 6 years, Bellacom has provided IT support and services to small businesses in legal, healthcare, professional services and other industries. We have helped many companies like yours to stabilize IT budgets, increase productivity and eliminate technology headaches. Spend your time doing what you do best — and let us do the same for your business.

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