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Does Your Business Communications Provider Offer Managed Services?

Tom Cordell of Spectrum Communications Explains the Value of Managing the Complete Network Infrastructure

SANTA FE/ALBUQUERQUE, NM – July 30, 2008 – A common theme among many small to mid-sized companies is their inability to micro-manage their network. These organizations are typically understaffed and lack the sufficient skill level, technological capacity or resources to keep their network operating in a fully optimized state.

Running an efficient network is not easy, especially with the convergence of voice and data. Too often companies are caught up in day-to-day operations that mission-critical network maintenance and security management get overlooked. In today's business environment, you can't afford to let your guard down. There are too many threats and other issues that plague network integrity and performance. So what are companies supposed to do? One answer is to outsource the management of their network services to a qualified partner.

Essentially, managed network services are designed to assist companies in maintaining and supporting their network and IT infrastructure. Types of services may include remote network monitoring and reporting 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, firewall monitoring, intrusion detection, patch assessment and vulnerability scanning, preventative tasks, disaster recovery, data backup and regular performance analysis. The strategic process was developed to give a 360 degree view of the network at all times to ensure optimal use. As we all know, the network is the backbone of a business and if it's not managed correctly employee productivity and profitability rapidly declines.

Therefore, outsourcing of a company's network has a number of unique benefits. First and foremost, experts in the field analyze the network to develop a complete game plan. Modeling and simulation tools assess current network traffic and evaluate the performance of desired enhancements and upgrades to determine the most appropriate solution before implementation. The end result is a custom designed system that supports future growth and change through flexible and scalable network environments.

Above and beyond the installation, testing and training phases, the provider will remotely monitor the network from their Network Operations Center (NOC). The NOC provides advanced network control, systems management and help desk operations to ensure optimal performance on a daily basis. This is a critical component because a network is so susceptible to change everyday. For instance, at one company two employees uploaded webcam software onto the network so they could watch their children at daycare. The live video stream shutdown the entire network and bandwidth destroying productivity for the day. Remote monitoring would have proactively identified the problem as well as the appliance causing the issue.

Your business communications provider should also couple their managed services offering with the new manner in which technology is being purchased. It's essentially a leasing option for new equipment and applications but for the first time it is one that eliminates technology's two greatest risks – obsolescence and price (also known as outright ownership). This program ensures that the solutions under managed services are refreshed with the latest advancements, thereby eliminating technology's obsolescence. For instance, updates (also known as a refresh) to a company's voice and data system can occur anytime after 24 months with no change in their monthly payment. Additionally, both labor charges and software upgrades are waived. The program also focuses on the cost of technology rather than its price, thus eliminating the second risk. Companies are able to transfer technology costs from a capital expense to a fixed monthly expense absorbed by an organization's operating budget. This enhances the financial health from both tax and budgeting standpoints.

Ultimately, managed services gives small to mid-sized companies the ability to focus on their core competency, while feeling comfortable knowing that their network is being managed by a highly skilled team of experts focused on efficiency and productivity. This strategic process is a welcome relief for IT managers with understaffed departments. It also eliminates the stress normally associated with IT for owners and enables them to work on their business and not in their business. So if your business communications provider doesn't offer managed services that eliminates the two greatest risks associated with technology – stop what

you're doing and immediately re-evaluate your impending relationship.

ABOUT SPECTRUM COMMUNICATIONS

Founded in 1985, Spectrum Communications is a locally owned, full-service technology company servicing New Mexico with offices in Santa Fe (505) 474-4100 and Albuquerque (505) 888-6464. As technology marches on, digital voice and data networks have "converged" into integrated computer/telecommunications systems that offer many advantages versus traditional analog telephone systems. By employing these latest technological advances, businesses will help to ensure their success – improving their productivity and increasing their "bottom line". Spectrum Communications evaluates the communications needs of its customers/partners and implements customized state-of-the-art technology solutions. Through emerging technology we help our clients gain a competitive edge and increase their revenues.

To implement these solutions, Spectrum Communications employs staff who are licensed and certified and are experienced in the installation and repair of low-voltage cabling, traditional telephone and voice mail systems. Spectrum holds a New Mexico Contractor license and is insured and bonded. Spectrum is a Microsoft Partner and a certified dealer for ShoreTel (pure VOIP solutions), NEC (converged solutions) and Vodavi (traditional), offering communications systems that can accommodate large VoIP solutions with multiple sites. Customers are thoroughly trained in every component of their system by Spectrum Communications highly experienced customer service team.

The company's local dispatch center delivers round-the clock service to ensure system reliability. Spectrum Communications also offers comprehensive service 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and emergency service guaranteed within 2 hours.

For more information on Spectrum Communications, call (505) 474-4100 or visit www.spectrum-nm.com.