

Business Versus Technology

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Did you know that not all computer consulting firms are the same? Most people would say that is a true statement. I usually ask those same people why they believe that statement is true, and many believe that most consulting firms are different due to their hourly rate. Lots of businesses and consumers rely on cost to make their decisions for computers. Things that I have heard over the years on why businesses or consumers do not take their computers to a professional service company:

- I have a friend of a friend that does computers on the side and helps me out when he has time
- The computer store down the road seems to get the job done, although it does seem to take a long time to get my equipment back

If you are running a business you never want to hear that you need to wait a couple of days before your computer consultant can have your systems back online. Would you trust a hospital if, during an emergency, they told you to come back when it was more convenient for them? How would you feel if the bank told you they were not going to allow access to your checking account because it was not deemed necessary for you to use those funds. Not many people would accept these answers nor stand by and wait, so why should you when it comes to the equipment that runs your business.

The deciding factors for computer consultants should not be about hourly rates. It should be more about how many people they have to support your company. They should have certified professionals working on your computer equipment. They should have references from other businesses. And they should have a normal Monday-Friday 8am - 5pm business hour. These are some of the things that you should make sure your computer consulting firm has. In addition, you should ask them the following question:

Does business dictate technology or does technology dictate business?

I believe that business dictates technology. A majority of firms believe that they can help your company grow by deploying the latest technology and that making you upgrade to the latest Operating Systems will result in increased productivity. However, this is not always in favor of the client. Here's what you might also have to invest in and why:

- New software will dictate new hardware
 - Not all existing computers can run the latest version of software
- New Operating Systems will dictate new hardware
 - A Windows 2000 workstation is not going to have the critical components to run Windows 7 efficiently

- Existing accessories for your computer might not work
 - Desktop scanners, network printers might not be able to connect to a 64bit Operating System
- Specialized applications might not be designed to run correctly on Internet Explorer 8 or 9

The above are just a couple of items that could cause an inexpensive upgrade to cost you hundreds of dollars or more. A lot of new technology will not fix your workflow or productivity issue. Are you deploying multiple monitors for every workstation? Do you have field personnel or employees that need to work remotely? Have you deployed a Terminal Server, Citrix or Logmein? These are a few examples of possible changes you could make to increase productivity.

MP Integrated Solutions takes the approach to find out what you do in business and what your business needs are. In order to design a proper network and to guide a company to a more productive workflow, we learn what your business goals are. MPI designs a technology plan that encompasses what your goals are over the next 6 to 18 months and helps implement and carry out this plan. Why is this important? Because MPI can design a implementation plan that upgrades technology with your business not for your business. If you would like to learn more about how MPI sets its self apart from the competition and takes "Technology to the Next Level," invite us to do a free Business Technology Plan before you purchase your next upgrade.