

The Boston HelpDesk Difference

What can small and midsize businesses do to insure their technology does not fail them?



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Imagine walking into your office to discover your computer network is down - no access to your vital data, no sending or receiving emails. How quickly would that bring your business to a grinding halt?

"Small businesses live in fear of technology failure." - AXA August 2006 Small Business Risk Survey.

Small businesses that don't have the right information technology (IT) support solution in place to properly implement and maintain their technology are the ones that have reason to live in fear. **How do businesses know if they have the right solution in place?** We speak with small business owners daily and we hear repeatedly that they need technology consultants who are able to consistently provide the following:

- 1. Immediate Response** to a businesses support needs, allowing your systems to be available and your users to be productive
- 2. The technical breadth, depth and expertise** that ensures your business won't "outgrow" your technology consultant
- 3. Essential knowledge of your IT investment** for strategic planning that will allow you to stay competitive and make critical business decisions

The AXA survey continues to state that small businesses report that -"**IT systems failure is the most feared threat to their ongoing health and profitability**" and "**IT problems were identified by a quarter of respondents as the most common cause of total business failure.**"

How can a small business be protected from a business failure that is caused by an IT systems failure?

Business owners, or those put in charge of a business' operations need to have an IT support solution that can deliver

- 1) Responsiveness** to react to the their immediate needs in a rapid manner
- 2) Technical Expertise** to make sure the correct skills are being put on the job
- 3) Knowledge that leads to Informaiton** necessary for the business to perform essential strategic planning

These are the three critical elements a small business must make sure they are getting from their technology consultant to ensure that the IT support solution they have in place is prepared to prevent a technology failure that does not lead to total business failure.

Technology is great...when it works, but it can be painful when it doesn't. Business owners know that information technology is the foundation that enables small businesses to stay competitive. What can small and midsized businesses do to insure their technology does not fail them?

" The stability & availability of IT systems is a key to business continuity. Despite recognizing the importance of their IT systems, 39% questioned had no plan to protect them in the event of failure "

Why is Responsiveness, Technical Depth & Expertise and a steady flow of Information Critical from your IT consultant's service?

Responsiveness allows problems to be corrected before they turn into a failure and keeps users productive. Even better, a proactive response means that potential problems are recognized and corrected before they have a negative impact on operations.

Technical depth and expertise results in a business being under the care and guidance of a team of experts. Together, this team of experts is able to contribute whatever technical or advisory skills are needed to support a companies technology, and consequently, business needs. As a business grows, there is a comfort level in knowing that a team of technology experts that care intimately about the business will be a constant in supporting their growth.

Finally, if a technology partner can provide essential knowledge of a businesses existing technology investment as well as recommend best practices that will help a business achieve the right technology infrastructure to support their goals, then the foundation is laid for a strategic technology plan. Smart businesses know that strategic investments in IT will give them a competitive advantage in the marketplace and allow them to outpace their competition.

What happens when Responsiveness, Technical Expertise and Strategic Planning Capabilities are missing from a technology consultant's service?

The most dangerous situation that a business can face is that their **critical IT systems are not available**. No matter the size of a business, downtime costs money and cripples productivity. The inability to maximize technology resources is a very serious competitive disadvantage. Lost productivity has many hidden cost that will, over time, have a huge negative impact on a business. The longer a small problem is allowed to continue the greater the chance that the problem grows into a disaster. Employees who lose productivity become frustrated, moral drops, deadlines are missed and ultimately the **reputation of the business is harmed and business is lost**.

"...investment in the right technology is a key factor influencing (small business) success - 94% considered it important" - AXAs Small Business Risk Survey.

The theme of strategic technology planning is highlighted repeatedly by small business experts: **"the one thing that separates small business successes from small business failures is planning"**

- <http://www.gaebler.com/Small-Business-Failure-Rates.htm>

What ultimately is the price for not having the right IT support solution in place?

When your server goes down, you can't get email, you have a virus, or your sole IT resource is no longer available and all the knowledge of your IT systems is gone as well, **your business can come to a screeching halt**. Your company's data is the lifeblood of your business. Even temporary disruption in the flow of data can bring a business to a standstill.

When small problems have to be fixed over and over again, and there is doubt if the problem is ever really fixed, then it is clear that **the right level of expertise is not being applied to the job**. In today's technology universe, a diverse set of technology skills are required to manage even a small business technology environment. And technology professional need to be continually challenged in order to keep their skills sharp and to find professional fulfillment.

Many small businesses have a laser sharp focus on running their day to day operation and serving their clients, that over time, they lose track over what technology they have invested in. Is there a strategic technology plan? **Poorly planned and inadequately performing information technology cost business competitive advantage**. Poorly documented Information Technology systems produce confusion and result in wasted resources. Not having sufficient knowledge of existing resources and the lack a strategic technology plan will have a significant impact on a company's ability to accomplish their mission.

This perfect storm of sub-standard IT support in multiple areas can combine to aggravate the situation and **ultimately put a company out of business**.

How can a business overcome the risks of technology failure?

For nearly all businesses, **technology is the lifeblood of their operations**. Businesses of all sizes outsource their IT support. A common fear about hiring an outside consultant to manage mission critical technology is the lack of accountability or "answerability" to the business owner. Since the IT consultant is not a direct employee or managed directly by the business, a business owner must rely on **experience, trust and proven processes** of the IT consultant to insure that the consultant will provide; - the immediate response that a small business needs - the technical expertise to solve any problem that may arise - the ability to capture and present essential information for critical business decision making.

Effective business managers recognize their company's strengths and weaknesses, and focus on leveraging their strengths. By allowing a professional technology service company to help them manage their technology, the business can have an improved focus on what they do best, the operational activities that generate revenue.

IT Mistakes: Failure is Not an Option. IT mistakes can do serious damage to a small business...when money is tight and customers are precious, IT can make or break a business.
- IncTechnology.com

The Boston HelpDesk Difference

Responsiveness Is Our Top Priority

Over 12 years of experience, and listening to our clients, has taught Boston HelpDesk what businesses need most from their IT consultants, and we are continually improving our processes to meet and exceed these needs. We have learned, above all else, that business needs a quick response to IT problems. Responsiveness allows problems to be corrected before they turn into a failure; even better, proactive response often means that potential problems are recognized and corrected before they have a negative impact on a business's operations. **Boston HelpDesk has made responsiveness our top priority.** We have developed our internal operations around proactively responding to our clients needs. The focal point of this responsiveness is the Boston HelpDesk's Service Desk, where our team of IT support professionals provide immediate phone support for our clients needs. Dozens of times per day, the end users that we support pick up the phone to get help with a computer

problem, and **7 out of 10 times they are back to work within 20 minutes.** These users can also email in support request and they will get a call back or email response **within 10 minutes of contacting Boston HelpDesk.** We understand that one of the most frustrating things for a business is when their technology does not work, idling their employees while they wait for a response from their IT support. That is why we have structured our Service Desk to *respond immediately to clients needs, prioritize those needs and escalate to the proper technology expert* to quickly resolve their problem. Just as important is our onsite response time. When Boston HelpDesk's service desk determines that a problem cannot be resolved remotely, the issue is escalated to our onsite team who will **be onsite in no more than 4 hours for high priority issues.** Even better than just responding quickly to users' needs, our dedicated network monitoring team within our service desk allows Boston HelpDesk to have our finger on the pulse of our client's network. We know when there is an outage, a server or network device down or a backup failed, and when required, we rush to the scene to fix the problem.

" Boston Help Desk has always come to our rescue. It's been a great match for us "

- Kate M. Colasanti, Vaughn + Associates, P.C.

" ...with many remote users nation-wide, partnering with the Boston Help Desk as allowed us to provide better services and support to our entire employee base making them more productive. "

- Mark D. Richardson, Senior Manager of Operations, TEI Biosciences Inc.

" Having the technicians directly connect to our workstations or servers for diagnostics has been incredibly efficient and results in a high standard of service. We expect a lot from Boston HelpDesk, and they really do deliver. "

- Kat Monaghan, Marketing Coordinator and IT Liaison, Schwartz/Silver Architects

" The important thing to know is they prevent computer problems before they occur. "

- Jim Gard, Vice President of Finance and Operations, Boston Latin School Association

How Does IT Work?

Boston HelpDesk partners with companies primarily from 5 - 500 end users. Our clients may need a network engineer for 4 hours or 40 hours per month, or they may require a desktop pc specialist for 50 hours a month. They may be looking to place all their IT needs in our hands or hand over a part of their support needs such as help desk or network administration. By having these diverse skill sets as members of the same team, available as needed, our clients know they have **the right person on the job**. By partnering with your company, we become an extension of your organization, "your IT department", providing your company a sophisticated, professional IT support solution that includes;

- Service Desk providing immediate user support
- Remote monitoring of critical systems
- Regular onsite and remote maintenance
- Onsite support and consulting
- Best Practices Assessment
- Reporting, metrics and strategic planning

The result is complete IT support!

You Won't Outgrow Your IT Support Solution

The technical depth and breadth of expertise in multiple areas of technology that Boston HelpDesk possesses results in our clients being **under the constant care and guidance of a team of technology experts who can provide support for their current and future technology needs**. As our clients grow they do not outgrow their IT support. We understand that technology is not the end in itself, but rather a means for our clients to overcome critical business issues and improve their business productivity. Together, our team is able to contribute whatever technical, analytic or advisory expertise that is required to support the technology needs, and consequently, the business needs of our clients. As our clients business grows, they have a high level of comfort knowing that **Boston HelpDesk will be a steady partner supporting their growth**.

Knowledge is Power!

Smart businesses know that strategic investments in IT will give them a competitive advantage in the marketplace and allow them to outpace their competition. Continuous improvement of information technology systems requires a clear way of measuring performance against goals. Well documented Information Technology systems can significantly reduce downtime and provide greater value to a business.

Boston HelpDesk provides clients with **essential knowledge of their existing technology investment as well as recommended best practices that will help them select the right technology infrastructure to support their business goals**. This knowledge is the foundation of our clients strategic technology plan, helping them to achieve a competitive edge and a path to growth. Boston HelpDesk acquires this information by thoroughly documenting existing systems and maintaining a documentation of all activity that passes through our service desk as well as all events that we monitor on our clients system. Our service desk knowledge base, which contains detailed system configurations as well as the work flow of all support service that we provide, and our monitoring system which adds performance and availability metrics.

Boston HelpDesk provides regular analysis of our clients IT data and provides them with in-depth standard and custom reports such as:

- Detail of all open and closed work orders,
- First call resolution rate
- Opened & closed work orders by category
- Opened & closed work orders by priority
- Network availability & performance

Our work process allows us to record and classify incidents and generate reports with the goal of identifying trends that will allow us to implement measures to **prevent reoccurrence of common problems**.

The Power of IT

When Boston HelpDesk's technology expertise is combined with reporting of performance and end user experiences, we can present clients with useful information that transforms their information technology into a strategic asset by making their entire business prepared to take advantage of the promise of information technology - collaboration of people, streamline of processes and accessibility of information that drives improved business results.

Boston HelpDesk clients repeatedly turn to us to answer strategic questions about how they use information technology. Common question are:

- Have we invested in the right technology?
- Are we competitive with others in our industry?
- Should we use virtualization or hosted solutions?
- Can we take advantage of cloud computing?
- What are industry best practices for security, data backup, lifecycle planning, remote access, disaster recovery?
- Are we compliant with state/federal/industry regulations?
- Do our end users make productive use of our technology investment?

Strategic planning results in higher performance and greater return on investment in information technology, **which is in turn a complete advantage.**

Boston HelpDesk focuses on what's most important to our clients business, what will provide the most tangible business value from their IT investments - **improvement in revenue or profit, stronger compliance to regulation, ability to quickly react to business opportunities.** In essence, Boston HelpDesk's ability to provide essential knowledge of our clients use of technology helps them to build a strategic advantage through IT.

"Fear of IT failure keeps small businesses awake at night. It has consistently topped our list of major worries. One thing is clear, if your IT systems fail and you aren't prepared, this is probably the one risk most likely to put you out of business"

- Doug Barnett, risk control strategy manager, AXA.

Is the fear of IT failure is keeping you up at night?

If so, Boston HelpDesk wants to help. We want to extend an offer to you for a **Free Boston HelpDesk phone consultation.** This is an ideal opportunity to discuss your specific information technology concerns. You may wonder, like many of our clients once did, if you've made the right investments in information technology for your business, and if you have the right level of support to minimize your downtime and maximize your end users productivity. We can address specific questions you are considering such as "is my critical business information securely stored and maintained" or "what is my current level of protection from a disaster". You may simply want to explore the Pro's and Con's of IT outsourcing or managed IT services, what will it cost and are you the right sized business to do this. **Please call me at 617-848-9393 x1402 or email Albert@BostonHelpDesk.com** to arrange for your Free consultation to discuss these or any questions you may have in more detail.

I appreciate your interest in learning about the Boston HelpDesk Difference and for taking the time to read this report and I look forward to speaking with you soon.

Albert Najimy
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