

6 Reasons To Choose Hosted (Cloud) IT Over Traditional IT

If you want to save your organization a good amount of money on hardware, software and support, you ought to be looking at the various hosted IT solutions that are available.

A hosted solution is simply a business application – be it a CRM system like salesforce.com or Microsoft’s Exchange – that is stored (or hosted) on a server outside of your office and is accessed via the web. This is also called “cloud computing.” While some folks are still a bit skeptical of putting their entire computer network in the “cloud,” that fear is starting to subside with the incredible cost savings and ever-increasing security and reliability of hosted applications.



How Hosted Solutions Save You Money And Solve Many IT-Related Problems

1. **Cost Savings.** With a hosted solution, you get the instant advantage of having very sophisticated software running on top-of-the-line, fully supported hardware without having to pay for it out of pocket. Since the resources are shared, you only pay a small fraction of the overall costs. Plus, upgrades and on-going maintenance are included, saving you even more.
2. **You’re Not Stuck With Any One Solution.** Another advantage of a hosted solution is that there is no long-term commitment. If you don’t like a particular CRM or application, you can (usually) cancel the contract and move on to something else. Compare that against building your own in-house solution which costs a LOT more money and is much harder to walk away from because of the investment.
3. **Your Costs Go Up Or Down Based On Users.** Since most hosted solution fees are based on the number of users who have access, you can quickly scale up or down.
4. **Less Hassle.** Since your provider is providing these services like a utility, THEY are responsible for all the upgrades, maintenance, security, etc.
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5. **Faster Implementation.** Building your own infrastructure is not only expensive, but also time consuming. With hosted applications, you simply turn the service “on,” making it much easier (and faster) to get started.
6. **Easy Access From Anywhere.** If you or your employees travel a lot or work from remote or home offices, going to a hosted solution makes even more sense because users can work from anyplace they happen to be connected to the Internet. (See “Downsides” on Page 4)

Are Digital Devices Dumbing Us Down?

Cell phones, which have become full-fledged computers with high-speed Internet connections, let people relieve the tedium of exercising, the grocery store line, stoplights or lulls in the dinner conversation. Now, instead of having a moment of downtime, every waking second can be filled with text messages, e-mail, Internet connectivity and games. But is this constant digital connection harming us?



According to scientists, the answer is a resounding “yes.” One of the unanticipated side effects of not giving your brain a break from the constant “noise” of PCs, cell phones, iPods, Blackberry and other digital devices is brain fatigue. People who keep their minds busy with constant digital input are not allowing their brains much-needed downtime.

One study conducted by the University of Michigan showed that a person was more effective at learning, retaining and processing information after a walk in nature versus a walk in a high-strung, noisy urban environment because the constant stimulation fatigues the brain, making it more difficult to be effective. One neurologist was quoted as saying, “People think they are refreshing themselves when they are actually fatiguing their brains.”

So the next time you have a minute waiting in line or at a stop light, resist the urge to pick up your cell phone and text someone!



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What About The Downsides of Hosted IT ?

Some folks are still a bit too squeamish to put their entire network and data into a hosted solution, usually because of concerns over security or the fear of not being able to access their data if the Internet goes down. While these are valid concerns, they can be addressed by choosing a reputable company with a long-standing history of good service (and by getting a backup Internet connection (something we recommend to all clients).

If you really want to know if your business can benefit from hosted solutions, give us a call. Even if you're not ready to go 100% to the cloud, you can often get certain pieces of your network hosted to save money and provide easier access to those who travel.

IRS Warns Of E-mail Scam

Targeted At Businesses

The IRS recently released an alert regarding an e-mail scam targeting people using the government's payment service. IRS spokesman Dan Boones said the scam claims a tax payment made through the Electronic Federal Tax Payment System (EFTPS) was rejected. It then directs you to a website which contains malware that may infect the user's computer.

Boone said the IRS never sends e-mails about taxes. If you receive this or any similar message, you are advised not to click any links or submit any information. You should also forward the e-mail immediately to the IRS at phishing@irs.gov.

EFTPS is a tax payment system provided free by the U.S. Department of Treasury that allows individual or business taxpayers to pay federal taxes electronically 24/7 on the Internet or phone .



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