



A WHITE PAPER

Should You Hire A Full Time Geek OR An Outside Company To Provide Technology Services?

The complexity of Information Technology (IT) required to run a small business these days can be overwhelming and most business owners don't have a handle on what it really costs them to have computers and mobile devices including tablets and smart phones to support their business. We here at the Geeks at Work / Computer Tamers have seen the good, the bad and the ugly when it comes to how businesses use and take care of their computers. Yet, computers and mobile devices are important today to keep records, manage projects, do billing, maintain an accounting system, communicate using email, instant messaging, conduct meetings, do video conferencing, do research, and many other activities that ensure a small business achieves its goals and succeeds.

THIS WHITE PAPER MAY SAVE YOUR BUSINESS FROM INFORMATION AND FINANCIAL LOSSES. READ IT CAREFULLY. WE'RE AVAILABLE TO ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS.

Unlike typical expenses such as rent, utilities, payroll, etc., technology costs are often more difficult to calculate because of the hidden costs in machine downtime and even having inadequate and outdated systems; that is lost productivity as a direct result of poor planning or no planning at all – or just plain ignorance. These factors are extremely important and even vital for every business person to understand.

“Cutting to the chase” - the reality for most businesses is that they may need a combination of in-house and outsourced resources in order to manage this critical area of their business in the most cost effective manner. Yes, someone within the business must take accountability for IT and computers. This person needs experts at their disposal to ensure every piece of technology is working to peak efficiency.

Common **“elements”** to consider when it comes to using technology devices in your business:

1. **Communications** - E-mail Services (even phone systems are computerized today, meetings are being done using the computer, mobile devices, and video conferencing is here to use to speed up business processes)
2. **Website development and hosting, including Social Media** (this is marketing)
3. **Network Management and Security** (this is safety)
4. **Application support** (accounting functions including billing, A/R and reporting)
5. **Data reliability and protection**
6. **Long-term planning** (in IT long term may mean 12 to 18 months)
7. **Disaster planning**

The “**key factors**” to achieve the best solution for your business are:

1. Understanding the actual **cost**
2. **Ease of management** (most small businesses can't devote a lot of resources to manage technology when all resources are devoted to doing what the business does)
3. **Reduced risk**
4. **Experience level**

Businesses that can only justify a single person for computers are in a precarious situation. The risk level in placing all of the responsibility on one individual is extremely high because if this person leaves your business or if his or her skill-set is not properly suited for your present and future needs, your business will suffer. Often the same person has to do other things in the business and computers are more than often abandoned due to critical other needs of the company. Your business is too important to be open to that high of a risk. If your business is like most other businesses, your technology is at the center of your operation and putting that much control over your business' future into the hands of a single individual who often is too busy with other job duties is very, very risky. Would you do that with the more obvious core business functions that determine whether you make a sale or finish work for a customer? Of course not!

The numbers of calls our service center gets from frantic business owners who are locked out of their own network because their “computer person” has left their business or is unable to resolve the issues are all too common. These are the big emergencies that service providers like us deal with almost every day. The cost of



having a service provider come into work in a “panic situation” of productivity loss is very high indeed.



The amount of money that it would take to hire and retain a relatively competent computer and network person along with the additional costs in payroll taxes, benefits and other associated expenses will generally be much higher than contracting with an experienced service provider like Geeks at Work / Computer Tamers. In every case the results will be better with an out-sourced approach.

If you engage a company with many years of experience like Geeks at Work / Computer Tamers, you get the benefit from all that experience from the moment you get them involved in your business. You get technicians that work on many diverse business networks and servers every day who will bring those experiences to your business thereby giving you “faster, better, cheaper (lower cost)” results thereby giving you the knowledge to make better computer/server/network decisions moving forward freeing you as owner or manager to do more real business work such as selling, building, planning, communicating, and repairing.

You also have a much easier time “getting rid” of a service provider that is not working out for you and you can hold them more accountable than you can an employee.

It’s not being realistic to expect that one person whether working full-time or part-time can keep up with the rapid changes in business technology, so partnering with a service provider that works with many other businesses and is constantly being developed (experienced) is a smart idea. Often a small business has the accounting person, or the owner’s nephew, or some college kid working on their computers as if their investment in technology isn’t important or critical. How foolish! Computer problems are just waiting to happen and threaten the business. There’s one thing that I detest and that is people demeaning their computers and networks as if they aren’t important. These individuals should go to work for someone else and not be running their own businesses; plain and simple! These are ignorant people traveling at a high speed to failure.

Okay your business is an exception; so you have an exceptional person on staff that is very competent. Still having one person at your business who is in charge of managing your technology needs makes a little sense, but having that person who is in charge actually doing

the work rarely makes good sense. These two competencies rarely if ever co-exist in one person.

There are a few essential elements that you need to make sure you have in your control as the owner of the business.

Simple things like knowing your administrator passwords and having a blueprint of your company's network can save you lots of time, grief and money when an emergency arises or when "Larry the computer guy" leaves town or gets sick.

Developing a disaster plan in the event of fire, flood, theft and employee sabotage are also essential parts of a solid computer and networking strategy.

From our experience working with many businesses from small to medium size, most "one person" computer departments never find the time to be pro-active. It makes good business sense to not find yourself in the mess of trying to create a "disaster plan" while you are in the middle of a disaster!

From the biggest IT consulting companies to local service providers there is agreement that "linking up" with a good and experienced computer service provider like Geeks at Work /



Computer Tamers is one of the best decisions an owner of a business can make. When your server fails, network breaks and your computers stop working or a virus has crippled everything where do you go? Do you turn to the "yellow pages" and quickly find someone? Or do you think about it now when everything appears to be going

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well so that you can choose the best and most capable service provider you can find? Good business sense should tell you, DO IT NOW! If you call us, we do an assessment free of charge to give you some insight into your current situation. We'll also give you a list of business owners in our area who sleep better at night knowing we're their partner when it comes to computers, servers and networks.

😊 A free professional assessment is available upon request.

We have more than 16 years of experience helping businesses with their computer and technology needs. Our customers include law offices, local governments, libraries, schools and universities, construction companies, health practitioners, entertainment media, newspapers, printers, fire and safety departments, financial institutions and banks, farms, non-profit community services, HR services companies, retail stores, restaurants, etc. - and of course individuals who require quality service.

You are invited to join with many others who entrust their technology and information to us and make one of our tamers your personal on-call expert.



“The computer says I need to upgrade my brain to be compatible with the new software.”

CALL FOR HELP - (828) 262-3359