



CEO GUIDE

RE-EXAMINING YOUR APPROACH TO IT MANAGEMENT

A Guide for Senior Mid-Market Business Executives



You know IT is an integral part of your mid-market business. However, you see your costs rise each year, you aren't seeing tangible returns on your investment, and it feels like your IT team is constantly working just to stay ahead of the next issue that needs to be addressed.

Your business is increasingly dependent on technology, and complex and constantly evolving systems pose ever-increasing IT management challenges for mid-market companies. Many organizations find themselves limited by budgets, constant turnover, and less than ideal results.

Ironically, these very same challenges could present an enormous opportunity for your business to get ahead of your competition, drive profits, spur growth, and foster innovation. Mid-sized companies today are harnessing these opportunities and seeing tangible results by altering their approach to IT organization management through a partnership with a Managed Service Provider (MSP).



THREE REASONS YOUR EXISTING SITUATION ISN'T WORKING

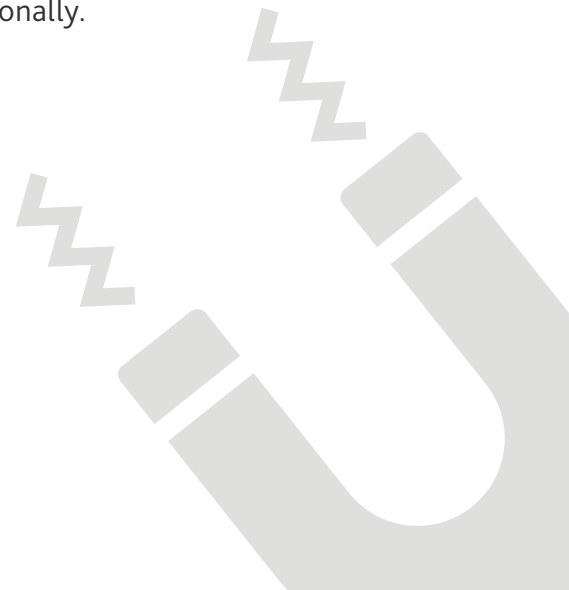
For years, mid-market IT departments were fairly straightforward; build an in-house team to manage your network and provide technical support for your users. Many organizations preferred to keep their IT organization in-house, valuing institutional knowledge that made small incremental changes year after year. However, while your in-house team stayed focused on your systems, the world around them changed.

IT teams today need experts for an increasing array of advanced technologies.

There are new challenges and risks facing today's IT organizations. The complexity of technologies used to enable your business has created new requirements for expertise in more IT specialties than ever before. Factors such as increased security risks and regulatory mandates, an influx of new technology (e.g. cloud) in the marketplace, increased reliance on data-based decision making, and an amplified rate of technological obsolescence, have placed additional strains on your IT team to keep pace. Just trying to keep up can over-extend your team and create a wider gap between requirements and results.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to attract and retain the talent you need.

As new technology challenges arise and specialized expertise is required, CEOs often consider staffing the talent they need in-house. However, mid-market firms soon come to the realization they can't attract and retain top talent in a highly competitive market. If you have this problem, you aren't alone: Cisco's Annual Security Report pegged the number of IT security professionals around the world at 500,000 to one million people. Another realization many CEOs come to is that even if they could vet and attract top talent, it often proves to be financially prohibitive and difficult to justify the spend when a majority of these resources are only needed fractionally.



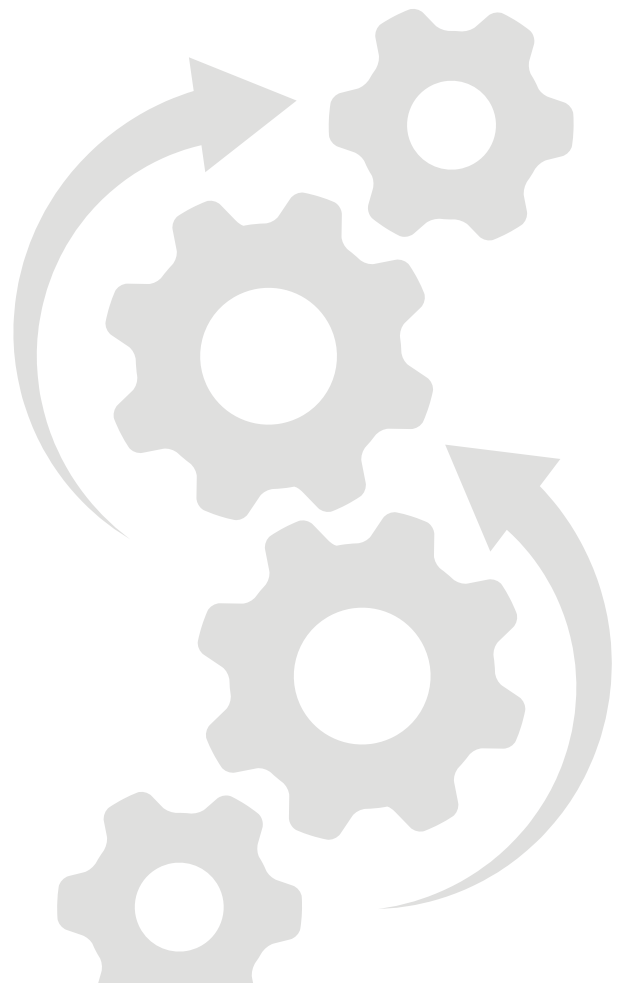
Innovation is now constant.

Today, largely enabled by the emerging prevalence of the cloud, there are new business technology solutions being continuously released to the market. Often, the decision to implement these new technologies is being driven by the business unit they enable - not by IT. However, when it comes time to support or troubleshoot a solution, the expectation is that IT has the knowledge and ability to provide support. Furthermore, not only are there more solutions to support, but the way IT needs to support the solutions themselves has changed. In the past, there would be a new software release or upgrade maybe once a year. IT could anticipate and prepare not only their network, but their users for the rollout. With cloud-based solutions today, change is constant, and new features that may impact your IT environments roll out monthly, even weekly,

creating persistent new challenges for IT.

The result is **gaps in expertise**, a relentless revolving door of **hiring demands**, and a **lack of a deliberate IT roadmap** and **processes to govern constant change**.

As technology continues to have a greater impact on how companies conduct business, organizations are finding it difficult to manage their constantly changing IT systems and users who engage with them.



THREE BENEFITS OF THE MANAGED SERVICE PROVIDER (MSP) MODEL

Business executives are searching for IT advisors who can give them the whole package – understanding business goals and linking them to a strategic roadmap that fuels innovation and growth through technology. Partnering with a MSP – as opposed to short-term project-based outsourcing or staff augmentation – can provide mid-market businesses with the opportunity to reap many benefits.

Access to enhanced capabilities and collective expertise/experience without sacrificing institutional knowledge.

Many CEOs hesitate to outsource because they place a high value on knowledge of their unique IT environment. However, shifting to a Managed Service model in your organization can actually give you the best of both worlds. When you partner with an effective provider they learn your IT environment and develop a framework unique to your business that supports your specific challenges and goals. This framework actually gives you more continuity, eliminating the risk that you might lose knowledge with turnover in your in-house organization. When major initiatives come along, an MSP provides benefits over a project-based outsourcing model, as you avoid going through cycles bringing a new provider up to speed each time you identify a new project. This continuity allows your MSP to shift easily from different projects and address different business needs in a cost-effective manner. Hesitant to take the leap? Some mid-market businesses choose to start with a shared model, first bringing on an outsourced provider to complement their team and address existing gaps.

They provide you with the specialized IT expertise you need, when you need it.

Managed Service Providers' entire business model is dependent on attracting and retaining top IT talent. Partnering with a MSP takes the IT hiring burden off your shoulders, giving you access to the IT specialists you need, without absorbing the cost of keeping those resources on staff full-time, not to mention saving you from the sunk costs of constantly onboarding new employees. Next time you need to roll out a new business technology or face a challenge, you can count on access to an expert who knows that technology inside and out, with knowledge and experience gained from supporting it at numerous organizations like yours.



They enable innovation and allow you to harness technology to compete, instead of trying to keep up.

Imagine what your IT organization could accomplish if they had access to experts in cloud technologies, data analytics, application development, security, user-enablement, and countless other fields of IT specialties that a well-rounded MSP can offer. What could your business accomplish? Today, technological innovation, driven primarily by the cloud, is causing disruption across nearly every industry. In the mid-market, companies are either harnessing technology to become the disruptor, or they are being disrupted themselves. If your IT organization is struggling to just keep pace, how much time will they have for innovation?

IN ORDER TO SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUR MID-MARKET COMPANY,

you want a **cost-effective, flexible solution** to support your IT needs and be an **accelerator to your business**.

The right MSP will not only answer your questions, but advise you on the questions you should be asking and providing strategic guidance on technology available that could be your next opportunity to innovate and drive success.

ABOUT BDO DIGITAL

BDO Digital is an award-winning provider of IT solutions to midsize organizations. For more than 30 years, BDO Digital has excelled at delivering technology solutions that optimize productivity, strengthen customer relationships, enhance data sharing and drive profitability. BDO Digital specializes in the technology solutions that match the needs of midmarket organizations including managed services; infrastructure solutions such as Unified Communications, virtualization and network security; software solutions including Microsoft SharePoint, business intelligence, CRM and custom development; and digital design services including website design, digital marketing and Search Engine Optimization.

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