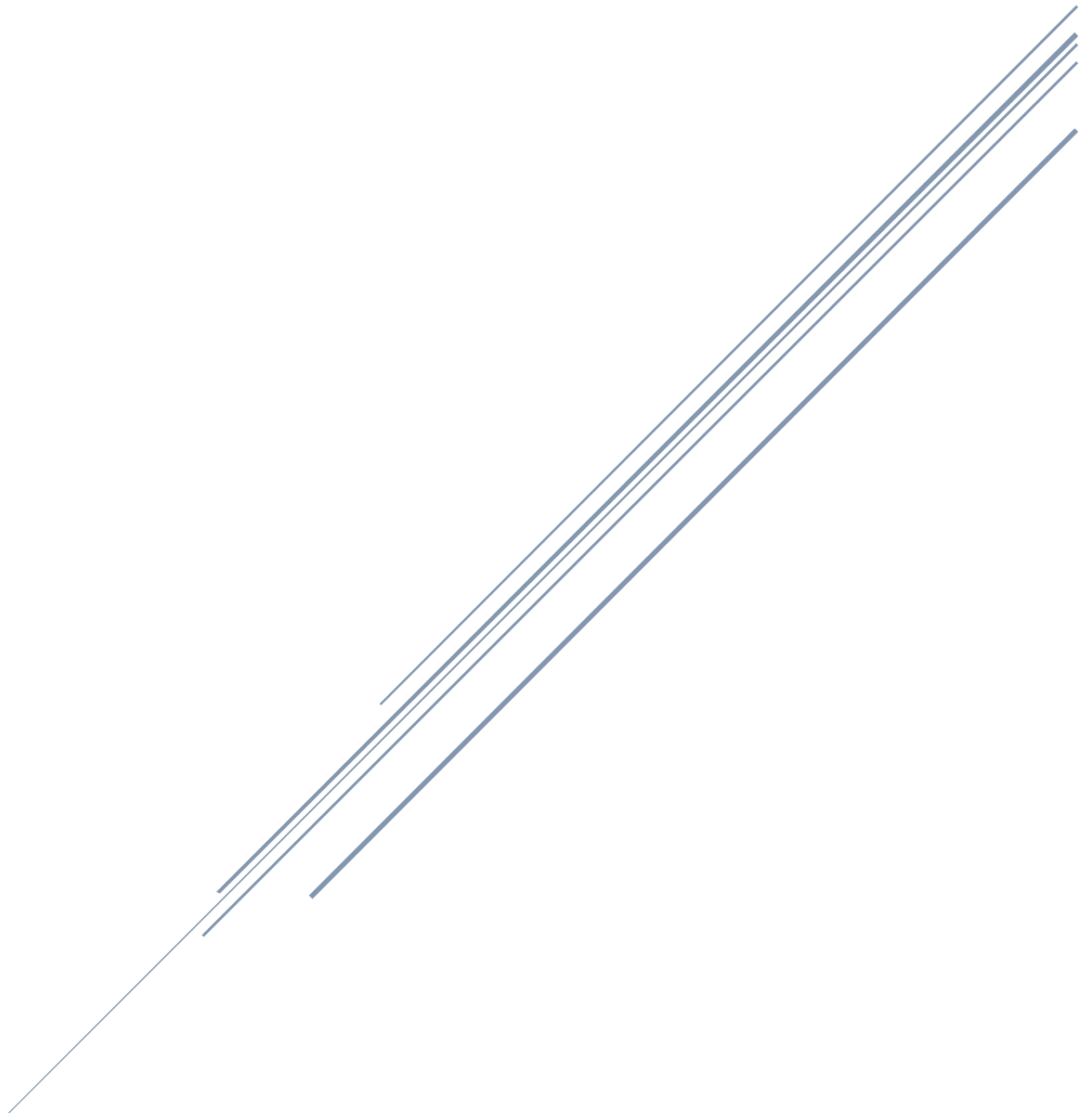# SYSTECH

MANAGED SERVICES WHITE PAPER

White Paper

Systech Information Services

Forward – This paper is intended to provide basic understanding of Managed Services Solutions and how they can benefit your organization

History and Concept of Managed IT Services

Managed Services began as a response to the many customers of IT service providers whom wrestled with the inconsistent costs of IT Maintenance and repairs. Often out of the blue a server would fail or a critical system would become unavailable and the customer was forced to call in an emergency to correct the issue and get back to business. These emergencies were costly and not able to be included in budgets. Further, there were issues with lack of visibility into the day-to-day operations of customers whom were utilizing outsourced IT resources. All too often there were occurrences of data loss, systems compromised by internet borne vulnerabilities, or simply a loss of productivity due to lack of visibility into performance and reliability information. All of which caused excessive and unexpected costs to customers.

The industry took note of these issues and began to develop capabilities to overcome these issues by creating software to monitor and service systems remotely. Then service providers, such as Systech, began to package these software capabilities with service plans that provided the customer with consistent monthly costs to address the issues of unexpected costs and reliability.

Today these capabilities have grown to include the ability to provide our customers with strategic vison, best practices alignment and risk assessment, compliance management, vendor management, cloud services and more. Ideally with good planning, proactive maintenance, and open communication with the customer Managed Service providers can achieve a level of predictability - and therefore consistent and predictable cost to the customer.

Benefits of Managed Services

- Reduced costs
- Predictable costs
- Stability
- Expert resources available when you need them
- Increased labor and technical capacity
- Recoverability
- Increased efficiency

Expectations of Managed Services

Many times there can be unrealistic expectations on the part of a managed services customer. Your provider should be providing expectations that are realistic. Some unrealistic expectations are the following.

1. Once I sign this agreement I will never have to think about IT again
2. All my IT problems will be resolved now that we are under a Managed services plan
3. I will never have interruptions to my business processes since I now have managed services
4. I will spend less money on IT now that I have managed services

The more realistic expectations can be listed as follows:

1. I will have to spend time with my new managed services provider during the initial implementation of services to provide information necessary during this process
2. IT problems will be reduced or eliminated over time but managed services won't be able to correct all issues immediately.
3. Interruptions will be reduced and or eliminated over time and there may be ancillary costs to correcting issues which become identified and quantified by the managed services processes once they take hold
4. Sometimes your business may be growing requiring greater IT expenditures not related to the managed services. Further issues may be identified by the managed services that may cause some initial added costs. The reduced costs will come over time and with greater planning. Bottom line is that you will receive greater return on all of your IT investments and this is where you will see costs savings.

It is important to note that your IT provider should be discussing these expectations with you and making sure that there are realistic goals set. Managed Services can be expected to take up to one month on average to implement the services. This will then provide a flood of information that must be reviewed. Recommendations must be made from this data and provided to you in actionable items. Some may have costs associated and some may not. It may be that a poor process is identified and noted that corrections should be made. A good provider should understand that technology may not always be the answer to all issues. For example, if it is noted that handheld scanning devices go missing and are not being tracked properly, it may be that a simple procedure utilizing an excel spreadsheet and an employee to manage the distribution of the handhelds could be a low cost solution to the problem. Your provider should always think like an internal IT manager when considering solutions. The value to your company should be a strong customer advocate as your IT partner not a partner who looks to sell you something at every opportunity.

The potential vendor checklist

To help you find the right MSP, or Managed Services Provider, for your business you should consider the following checklist.

- ✓ **Reputation and Experience:** Check a potential vendor's industry reputation. How many years have they been in business? Are there testimonials? Have you contacted their references?
- ✓ **Services:** Make sure they provide everything you are looking for to help keep your IT infrastructure stable and able to adapt to the increasing demands of your business. Will they provide the vision, strategy, risk management and consultative relationship you would like from your IT Partner?
- ✓ **Security:** It is critical that your systems are protected from vulnerabilities. These can be viruses or lack of policy or procedure. Even with the best layered security approaches systems can be compromised. So ask the potential provider how quickly your business could recover from an issue such as crypto locker under their plan.
- ✓ **Proactive approach:** Managing IT systems is not just about making sure it is running smooth today, but also making sure things will be smooth in the future. Planning is everything when it comes to reducing long term

costs. Make sure your service provider is capable of long term strategic thinking and has a vehicle to provide you that vision.

- ✓ **Response time:** Whether you are a large or small business, down-time costs you money. It is important to find out what your potential providers response time is when you need them the most.
- ✓ **Transparency:** All providers are not the same. Your provider's processes and results should be clear. Ask for sample reporting. Ask them how they will communicate that they are providing the services you have contracted on a regular basis. Reporting should be simple and understandable with the technical issues facing your organization boiled down to actionable items with an associated risk assessment. These actionable items should be able to be substantiated by detailed reports.
- ✓ **Technology partners:** Your potential partner should have well established relationships with well-known hardware and software vendors. This will then benefit your organization when you need hardware or software solutions at reasonable costs.
- ✓ **Communication:** There should be healthy and clear communications between you and the provider. They should be willing to take the time to clearly explain issues in terms you can understand. They should be willing to educate you and provide you options.
- ✓ **Pricing:** Although I would advise you that your decision should not be solely based on price but rather value. Be sure the pricing model is clear and understandable. Make sure the edges are clear when it comes to what is included and not included in the monthly fees. Consider the cost vs. hiring IT Personnel to handle the IT support.

The Relationship

It is a relationship that you are entering into when partnering with a managed services provider. Therefore, it is important to know that the vendor you chose shares the same values and vision for the IT support of your company as you do. I would recommend that you visit their offices and meet their personnel. These will be the people that you work with for years should you make the right choice. Managed services creates entanglements like any relationship. Enter into a bad relationship and the results can be painful and costly. Enter into a good relationship, and the benefits are positive and productive. So take the time to get to know the potential service provider and ask the questions that will make you comfortable with your choices. Don't hesitate though when you feel it's right. When you have meet the staff, called their references, and they are offering solutions that are clearly aligned with your need, commit to the process and enjoy the benefits.

Benefits in working with Systech for Managed Services

- 25 years in business providing IT solutions
- A leading provider of Microsoft Cloud solutions
- Seasoned Virtualization specialists
- Hardware and Software sales consulting for all major vendors
- Payment options for hardware and software solutions
- Multi-Layered security approach with proven ability to recover entire sites affected by vulnerabilities such as crypto-locker in hours and not days
- Relentless commitment to world class support and proactive services
- Emergency on-premises response times of a maximum of 2 hours
- A partner that believes in "trust but verify". Systech will provide you information that you can use to manage your business effectively, and we will provide you data to substantiate our conclusions.
- A partner with proven skills and trusted long term relationships with our clients and the leaders in technology, including but not limited to Microsoft, Vmware, Hewlett-Packard, Veeam, Cisco, Lenovo, Fortigate, Threat track, Connectwise and Labtech.
- A partner who can help guide your business forward through the ever increasing complexity of technology solutions
- A partner who understands your needs and will provide your business what it needs, not what we have to sell
- A partner that can help you grow by providing the solid foundation on which all modern business thrives
- A partner who has built a reputation on delivering enterprise class solutions to small business. Systech works with businesses of 250 users to 10 users.
- Increased ROI for each dollar spent on technology
- A partner with Integrity, Ingenuity, and Initiative. Your trusted IT customer advocate.