



WHEN TECHNOLOGY
HAS TO WORK™

DO I.T. LIKE THE PROS

10 Steps to Save Your Company Money & Time

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You're not in the I.T. business

You're in your business. Your job is growing your company, retaining customers, improving the workplace, and these are the priorities that rightly take up your time. Sometimes (okay, most of the time) it is difficult to find space in your schedule for the hard but necessary work of ensuring that your computer and tech infrastructure is up and running at peak efficiency.

You need a powerful I.T. strategy, but when you do find the time to devote yourself to your I.T. concerns, you can find yourself lost in the little stuff and never really moving your company forward.

You are an expert in your field and you've built a successful business, but all businesses hit a ceiling now and then. It is normal. Your job is to break through that ceiling with new strategies, doing things in a new way which can break through this plateau without increasing the amount of work assigned to you. Generally, this is done by delegating work to others.

How, then, can it be so difficult to wrangle solutions to I.T. problems?

Are these problems so different from the other problems in a business?

Aren't there ways to smooth out these processes?

Should you really have to spend an inordinate amount of time (which costs money, and has an opportunity cost) on tech support?



The answer is no. Generally, you waste time on I.T. in several ways:

You do it yourself, robbing yourself of your own valuable time.

You use an I.T. resource (internal or external) who is ok in some areas, but not in every area you need, wasting time and money, and at times resulting in truly horrific results.

You farm it out to people with time in your organization (accounting, warehouse, even sales) but who have no real expertise, in the hope that they will learn enough along the way, but they never do.

You waste your own time or your people's time on long calls to IT vendors, to fix problems which you suspect should not be there in the first place.

You don't have to do this. If you can follow the following steps, you can reduce the amount of issues your network has, and quickly propel your company into a new stratosphere of IT stability. This will result in real time being given back over to your people (as much as 4% of their available time), helping you break through the glass ceiling your organization currently faces. The following are 10 steps that you and your staff can take, which not only keep your technology humming along, but also reduce the time and money spent on IT support.

This document is your key to a more productive workplace, with less downtime due to technology snags, and fewer calls to guys like us, and a real shot at significant productivity increases you need.

Let's dive right in.



#1

Stabilize Your Power

Power? What has that got to do with I.T.? It's a simple thing, but one that is too often overlooked and neglected.

Ensure that your hardware and network are connected to reliable power sources backed up by batteries and insulated against dangerous power surges. Do this, and you can greatly improve the reliability of your technology while protecting your investment.

Connect PCs and servers to "UPS"s (Uninterruptible Power Supplies). These are essentially large batteries which sit between your computing device and the wall. A UPS will take over power duties in the event of an outage, and most come with built-in surge protectors. These will give you the time you need to outlast a short power outage, or to properly shut down equipment in case of a prolonged blackout. And here are a few extra secrets which most people fail to do:

- Connect that data cable, as well between the UPS and the PC/Server
- Install the associated software on the PC or server
- Configure the software to work properly in case of outage. It can then read the UPS, and take action when bad things happen.



#2

Check Those Disks

There's a powerful tool at your disposal that you may not even realize you possess.

Check Disk (often shortened as CHKDSK) is a utility program found in the CMD "window" in MS Windows. You probably have not run this command on your servers or workstations, but everytime a system is hard booted, it likely needs this check to keep the hard drives happy. By periodically running this command (`chkdsk /f`), especially after an accidental system crash, you take a huge step toward ensuring the integrity of a computer's file structure

Doing this will cut down on error messages and reduce downtime due to corrupted files.

#3

Document, Document, Document

Whether you're setting up a new server, emplacing a new PC, or improving network hardware, it is crucial that you employ documentation.

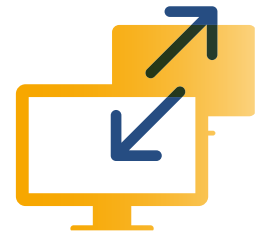
Where is the hardware? What is connected to this or that piece of technology? What is installed? Where is the installation media located? What is the name of the device? Is it a company device, or BYOD? Dates-in-service, part numbers, user access: all of these pieces of information could be critical if and when you experience trouble.

Having this documentation on hand will greatly help your I.T. support in finding and fixing the problem more quickly. One trick here: If you buy Dell Servers and PCs, their service tag on the back is unique to that PC, and by using it, you can find all the associated information for that PC, including drivers, warranty dates, included software and more.

#4

Remote control

Emergency outside support, and its associated downtime, is a drain on your bottom line. It's an even greater strain on resources when that support takes the form of an on-site tech visit.



These visits take so much more time to complete, especially when you consider the drive time. This only slows down support for your end users, who could already be up and running if the visit was unnecessary. That's why tools that enable your people to access, correct, repair and re-start your hardware remotely are so important. Consider installing hardware and software for remote control. These utility devices and software programs will enable your tech support people to remotely reboot hardware, patch systems, remotely reinstall systems and give remote support even if the device has completely crashed and is turned off.

Added Bonus: You can set devices like Wattbox to ping the internet, and if it goes down, reboot the internet modems to reconnect the internet without user support!

#5

Clear Labels, Clear Operations

What happens when the server goes down and you or your staff need to get things re-started while on the phone with your tech support?



If you're not already an I.T. expert you are going to find yourself daunted by the sheer number of switches, buttons, and ports in a server closet. Make things easier for yourself by clearly labeling everything in the server room. Affix labels to power buttons, mark each server by name and IP address, tag key cables, even label the light switches. When you have problems, you'll be able to find what you need quickly and accurately, and be up that much faster.

Big Tip here: Label things that will be hard to understand in an emergency. For instance, find the Dell Service Tag on the back of the PC or server and make a label for the front of the device, so you can find it easy, incase the PC will not start.

#6

Software Install Directories

Setting up a new PC can be a time-consuming adventure. Not only do you need to physically deploy the hardware and get everything plugged in properly, but there's probably a whole litany of software programs that you need to have installed on each new machine.

Save yourself time – and make sure nothing gets accidentally left out – by downloading all your programs to a “software install directory” on your server. Use this master directory whenever you setup a new PC to dramatically cut down on time and headaches. Simply copy the CD to a folder on the server, and install it from there. Same if it is a download. Next time you need the software, you will know exactly where it is.

Additionally, any license text or emails, copy these to the folder where the install media will live. When you reinstall, you will need these at the same time.



#7

Shadow Copy

Use a technology called “Shadow Copy” on your servers and desktops.

This technology allows users to restore files or whole directories with little or no fuss. Just right-click on a given file and restore it to a previous version, or on a folder to restore a version of the folder from a previous time. This is immensely helpful after an accidental deletion or other unintended modification. Think of it like having a built-in backup copy of all your work, already on your PC or Server. You'll be glad you took advantage of this method when it comes time to recovering a project that could otherwise be lost beyond recovery. Shadow Copy typically runs at 11am and at 4 pm, but you can reset these times, or make it backup even more often. Big Tip: Better yet, get an ethernet connected hard drive (Called a NAS) and a copy of ShadowProtect backup software, and back the device up to the remote disk every hour. You will never be more than one hour out of data if your PC or Server goes down.

#8

Go on the Offensive Against Viruses



From our home PCs and laptops to our tablets and phones, we're all familiar with the debilitating consequences of opening a scam email or visiting a questionable site.

At work, those consequences are heightened by financial risks to your business if you can't get to your data, the smallest of which is the potential need for costly outside support, and even more costly downtime. Fortunately, you aren't without weapons in this fight. First, stack and layer your virus defenses: Use tools like OpenDNS Umbrella, SonicWall UTM, ESET antivirus, and permissions management to keep viruses and attacks at bay. Next, remove Administrative privileges from every PC where possible. This simple step will prevent most malicious software from ever installing. Finally, use tools like KnowB4 to keep your people up-to-speed and trained on how to spot and avoid attacks such as phishing emails.

Defend your hardware – and your business – from harmful attacks by taking the offensive yourself.

#9

Build a Complete Care Plan

As with any other area of your business, the first key to solving an I.T. problem is identifying it.



Once identified, build a plan around each issue to ensure it never happens again. Corrupted hard drives? CHKDSK once a month. Bad email? Move to Office 365. You won't be able to be perfect, but you will be amazed how many issues you can completely take off the board forever, by simply making a plan and executing it around each issue.

Next, get proactive about maintaining your hardware and software by making it a routine part of the workplace schedule to visit with users and ask them what, if any, problems are plaguing their PCs. Use these inputs to make more plans and execute on these, as well. Error messages, misbehaving hardware and slow PCs can all be relatively minor problems that seem huge to end users who experience them daily. Keep these small things from adding up into big headaches by building plans around each, and then tapping users on the shoulder once a month and asking what's not working.

#10

Old Hardware = Slow Hardware

Is your server struggling? Are your desktops and laptops slow and unresponsive?

Technology is constantly evolving and improving, and the best way to stay on top of new developments – and to make sure your business is running at top speed – is to upgrade your hardware. Remember that documentation from Step 3? You should know when each PC was placed into service, and you should consider replacing machines when they reach about 3 years old. If your employees find themselves waiting on a slow computer for even 15 minutes a day, that could add up to over a week's worth of lost time in a single year. Get that productivity back by upgrading old machines.

A new PC is a fraction of the money you could make with your staff, if they could increase their productivity.



YOUR IT WIZARD CHECKLIST

- } Stabilize Your Power
- } Check Those Disks
- } Document, Document, Document
- } Remote Control
- } Clear Labels, Clear Operations
- } Software Install Directories
- } Shadow Copy
- } Go on the Offensive Against Viruses
- } Build a Complete Care Plan
- } Old Hardware = Slow Hardware

By following all of these steps, or even a few of them, you will begin greatly improving the performance of your I.T. infrastructure, and preventing small annoyances from turning into huge debacles.

We all know that, in business, time is money. By investing time now, you'll be saving yourself money later. Imagine yourself, after following the suggestions laid out in this document, as a businessperson transformed: no longer intimidated and frustrated by the technology in your building, but conversant, savvy, and informed about how your servers and PCs are performing.

Now, when a call to outside tech support becomes necessary, you'll find that the problem can be diagnosed, analyzed, and corrected more quickly than before.



But if all of this still looks daunting, if you're still unsure of what needs to be done and how to do it, that is normal! You are already doing your job. Let someone else do the I.T. work. Help is available, and it's here for you!

Blue Jean Networks provides the visionary I.T. support your company needs.

Fast, reliable, and affordable, Blue Jean Networks will be the I.T. department for your business, allowing you to focus on what you do best. For a flat monthly fee, we manage your company's entire I.T. infrastructure, preventing most problems before they even occur.

No more nasty surprises, far less disruptive downtime, dramatically fewer visits by outside technicians. In fact, our technology services will easily pay for themselves in terms of productivity reclaimed and potential problems averted.

Our plan is easy.

- 1. First, simply talk with us.** We will discuss your company and your unique goals and needs, and make a frank appraisal of how well our services can fit within the context of your business so you can make a decision.
- 2. Next, make a plan for upgrading your system when needed.** Blue Jean Networks will implement any necessary technology upgrades, and we'll migrate you over to our **Tru-Proactive™** System.
- 3. Finally, stop messing with I.T. and get back to business.** With an improved I.T. ecosystem, you and your employees will be productive like never before, and you can rest easy in the knowledge that Blue Jean Networks is not only saving you time and money, but paying for itself!

We've helped dozens of companies in the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex, and we can help you! Just listen to what one of our delighted customers had to say:



"The experts at Blue Jean Networks always have the right answer to our IT needs, they are responsive, highly experienced and keep our server and network system up and running so we can focus on our business."

Craig A. (Local Oil Firm)



YOU'RE NOT IN THE IT BUSINESS, YOU'RE IN YOUR BUSINESS.

But you can have an expert I.T. department by hiring Blue Jean Networks to build and maintain a reliable, efficient I.T. infrastructure for your company. Technology should serve your business, it should never hold you back. With Blue Jean Networks, your small- or medium-sized business can have an I.T. department like that of a Fortune 500-level organization:

- **80% fewer technical issues.**
- **Flat monthly fee; no more surprise invoices!**
- **Less time spent waiting for technicians.**
- **IT support that pays for itself!**

For a managed I.T. company that doesn't just support you, but helps you improve, trust Blue Jean Networks

