

Carolina Tech Times

*"Insider Tips To Make Your Business Run Faster,
Easier, And More Profitably"*



MANAGED IT
Solutions

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♦ NOVEMBER
♦ TWENTY SIXTEEN

What's New

We at Managed IT Solutions want to take an opportunity to wish you and your family and loved ones Happy Holidays!

For our current clients, if you refer us a new client, we will buy your Thanksgiving or Christmas turkey!

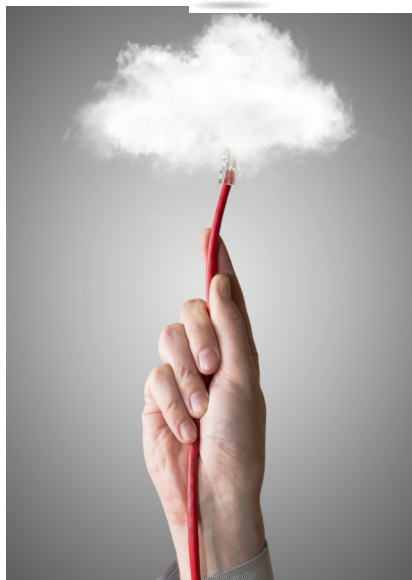
Please email marketing@managedits.com if you have any questions!

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This monthly publication provided courtesy of Rob Downs, President of Managed IT Solutions.

Our Mission: To build a community of successful minded entrepreneurs that inspires excellence, encourages collaboration and expands the capacity of all members to achieve great things.



6 Questions To Ask Before You Move To VoIP

Thanks to Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) and ever-improving cloud technologies, the phone-service options available to you as a small business are plentiful, with more features at a lower cost than were ever available before.

However, with all the options and vendors, separating the good from the bad and navigating the hype can be difficult. Not only are some VoIP systems a complete waste of money, but fees can be "hidden," so what appears to be a big cost-saving decision can end up costing you more in the long run once you've calculated in ALL costs over a three-to five-year period.

Here are six revealing questions you must ask to cut through the hype, half-truths and "little" white lies that could bury your company.
1) What will the call quality be like on my new system

Companies that sell phone systems

and do not install and support computer networks - which is what your VoIP system is running on - are often NOT qualified to recommend or install a VoIP phone system for your office. One of the biggest reasons for VoIP failure (poor sound quality, slowed Internet speeds, etc.) is that the person selling you the system does not understand how to properly assess your company's firewall, routers, network traffic, Internet connection speeds, as well as a host of other factors, to make sure their phone system will work as advertised in YOUR SPECIFIC ENVIRONMENT. That's because they're phone-system sales guys, not network engineers.

2) How many data centers do you have and are they geographically dispersed?

If the answer is only one, run away! What happens if their ONE data center goes down? Or, more commonly, what happens when the VoIP equipment *inside* the data

continued on pg2

center goes down? Your business is without a phone until they get their systems back online! Insist on at least two redundant data centers that are states away from each other to lower the risk of a natural disaster wiping out both data centers at once.

“If they’re THAT confident, have them guarantee it in writing...”

3) What was your uptime last year? What’s your guarantee for uptime?

If it’s anything less than 99.999%, find a different provider. And don’t just take them at their word; ask for documentation proving the reliability of their network in the previous year. If they can’t even do that, don’t buy their system!

NOTE: Uptime is the system’s ability to make and receive calls. If an individual office happens to be down due to an Internet outage, this does not affect the overall reliability of the system, because the system was ready and able.

4) If my phone is unreachable, do you have automatic failover to another phone?

If your provider’s system isn’t constantly monitoring the status of your network, VoIP system and VoIP phones, you should consider going with another provider. If your Internet goes down, or even a single phone stops working, the system should know that within a few minutes and automatically forward the calls to a

predetermined destination (like a cell phone or another office location).

5) Do you monitor my phones and system 24/7/365 for any potential issues?

If you have to tell your provider the phones aren’t working, then find another provider. Any quality vendor should be monitoring and maintaining your system for you, using remote management tools. If you are missing calls, move on to a different system.

6) Do you offer a money-back guarantee?

If your provider is not willing to back up their claims with a

WRITTEN, no-small-print, money-back guarantee, free of “weasel out” clauses, look for a vendor that does. Every phone-system sales guy is going to tell you how wonderful their system is and how you won’t experience any problems. If they’re THAT confident, have them guarantee it in writing so you’re not stuck paying for a new system that doesn’t work.

Free VoIP Assessment Cuts Through The Confusion, Myriad Of Options And Tech “Mumbo Jumbo” To Help You Make The Smartest, Safest Phone-System Choice For Your Company

If you’re looking to upgrade your phone system to VoIP sometime in the near future, this free assessment will help you avoid making any mistakes and help you navigate the endless number of choices, techy “mumbo jumbo,” conflicting advice and confusion. We’ll answer all of your burning questions and determine which phone system is BEST FOR YOU, based on your specific needs, budget, Internet connection and existing network. No charge and no obligation! Simply call us today at 919-848-3259 to get started!

Help Us Out And We’ll Give You Your Holiday Turkey For Your Trouble



We love having you as a customer and, quite honestly, wish we had more like you! So instead of just wishing, we’ve decided to hold a special “refer a friend” event during the months of November and December.

Simply refer any company with 10 or more computers to our office to receive a FREE Computer Network Assessment (a \$397 value). Once we’ve completed our initial appointment with your referral and have on-boarded them as a client, we’ll rush YOU a free turkey or ham of your choice as a thank-you (or donate \$100 to your favorite charity ... your choice!). Simply call us at 919-848-3295 or e-mail us at marketing@managedits.com with your referral’s name and contact information today!

ASPEN CONSTRUCTION COMPANY, INC.**Client of the Month**

Aspen Construction Company, is a small company with a big-business client roster. From upgrading infrastructure for power substations, to installing security measures for nuclear plants, to renovating and upfitting interiors for major corporations, they do it all.

Owners Anna and Dallace Mayhew credit their success to the knowledge and expertise of their management team and crew, and the company's unflinching commitment to safety.

"We have zero-tolerance for safety violations," declares Anna. "Our employees are held to high standards and must pass stringent safety training initiatives in the classroom and in the field."

The company boasts a tight-knit team that handles huge projects themselves, rarely subcontracting the work.

"Our greatest challenge at the onset was getting name recognition," Anna reveals. "We don't do a lot of marketing. The quality of our work, our honesty and transparency, and the relationships we build with our clients result in repeat customers who refer us to other companies."

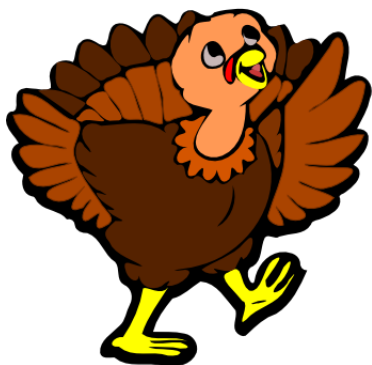
Now celebrating their 10th year, Anna is thankful they were able to break down barriers on the strength of their team. Her husband, Dallace grew up in the industry, getting his start in commercial construction.

The mother of three, who hails from Colorado, and office- and accounting-manager-in-one, enjoys working with her husband. "We really complement one another," she grins. Away from the office, afar from the field, their children's sports and music activities fill the rest of their time. On occasion, Dallace, an avid hunter will heed the call of the wild.

See them at work at www.aspenconstructionnc.com.



Talking Turkey and Giving Thanks



A **HUGE** shoutout and **THANK YOU** to our clients and newsletter subscribers!

We love watching you grow your business, and learn immensely from your commitment to your clients, and your true understanding of customer service!

We think of you when we write our newsletter and want it to be chockful of information we pass along to you.

You push us to excellence. We truly appreciate you and your business!

WARMEST THANKSGIVING WISHES TO YOU AND YOUR FAMILY!

Did You Know Managed IT Solutions Offers . . .



**Whether your needs are hosted or onsite Voice over Internet Protocol,
Managed IT Solutions can accommodate.**

A hosted VoIP system allows users to have fully-functional business phones within their office area without the need for extra hardware other than the phones themselves. This is a great option for smaller companies that would rather not have the need for extra setup onsite, potentially creating extra costs for supplies in excess of what is needed. A hosted system will leave all of the so-called "heavy lifting" to the offsite VoIP provider who will deliver the calls to your in-office phones.

An onsite VoIP system on the other hand, is a great option for larger companies that are in need of a greater amount of extensions or lines. This can cut costs that hosted services can charge for the additional lines. Having an onsite VoIP system allows the company its own IP-based private branch for receiving and sending call data. Doing so will improve call clarity and allow for a higher volume of calls at any given time.

Would you like to know which system type would best fit your office?

Schedule your FREE VoIP assessment and plan of action today!

Visit us at www.managedits.com/services/voip/



If the hosted system meets your needs, we offer hosted VoIP services through Cytracom.

Get a new advanced phone system with no hardware costs and less than \$25 per month per phone. This includes unlimited local and long distance calling.

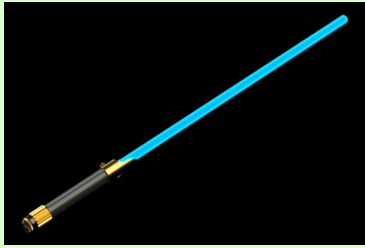


If the onsite system is best for you, we offer on-premise VoIP services through 3CX.

The on-premise varies in price depending on the size requirements of your system. Sign up for your FREE VoIP assessment today and receive a no-obligation quote!

Get more free tips, tools and services at www.managedits.com

Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:



Resist The Dark Side: Custom Lightsaber

The Sith Lord is about to strike – this is no time for an ordinary lightsaber. Time to pull out your own hand-made custom lightsaber...

You'd be hard-pressed to find an imaginary weapon as iconic as the Star Wars lightsaber. Haven't you (or someone you know) ever secretly yearned to wield one against an evil warlord? Well, in case you didn't know – you can. And, with your own custom-made lightsaber, you'll be well-armed.

These are no ordinary Hasbro plastic toys. In fact, the features and choices available at some of the top-rated lightsaber shops could well leave you "starstruck." From "flash-on-clash" to blade color to heavy, medium or light battle-readiness, to custom soundboards and circuitry, the choice is yours.

If you're a diehard do-it-yourselfer, complete kits are available. You can even get a double-bladed or cross-guard-type lightsaber. Prices range from about \$400 on up. For more details, check out <http://www.ultrasabers.com/>.

Choose well, young Padawan.

Accomplish More By Doing Less

As I've considered what some of today's greatest achievers – Richard Branson, Maria Shriver, Arnold Palmer, Tony Hawk, John Wooden and Colin Powell, among many others – have accomplished in their lifetimes, I've thought about why many of the rest of us work harder and put in longer hours without achieving the same big results. What makes the difference?

After a great deal of thought, I realized the key is not to do more or work harder; the key is actually to find ways to do less and think more, to be less busy and more productive. In this, I have struck upon the very secret to what separates the super-achievers from the rest of us.

I've started applying this strategy in my own life and work. And I'd like to share with you three of the principles I have found to move from stress-filled "success" to super-achievement and a more balanced lifestyle filled with joy, harmony and personal fulfillment.

Learn to Stop Doing

Reevaluate how you spend your time and stop doing the time-wasters. The only way you can gain more time is to stop doing something. If you don't like what your life has become, you need to figure out what to stop doing so you can concentrate on activities that bring better results in your life.

Consider: if you spent just 40% of your time on your high-value activities, you could double your income. Spend 60% or even 80%, and you could multiply your income by four times.

Create and Protect Your Boundaries

For a workaholic, these are dangerous times.

The natural boundaries of time allocated to work, personal and family have been obliterated. Technology has penetrated the walled garden separating these important segments of our lives. This breach provides for constant intrusions into our attention, keeping us constantly connected and at the mercy of a stream of information and demands.

Put a junk filter on your life.

To filter incoming requests, you must first become clear on what you want.

Who are you? Who do you want to become? What is most important to you in life? What direction do you want your life to take?

What are your three most important goals for the year? This month? This week? Today?

After identifying your values, goals and priorities, put a junk filter on everything else and keep it out of your in-box and off your to-do list.

Don't Just Learn...

Knowledge isn't power; it's the potential of power. What you do with knowledge is where the power lies.

Don't just read a book and put it down.

Read it, summarize the key ideas, then write out how you're going to implement those ideas in your life. Now act, review and improve. Stick with the ideas in that book until you realize a desired transformation.

I hope you'll take time to stop and examine your life and incorporate these principles into your daily routine on your journey to super-achievement. Remember: it's not what you know; it's what you do.



Darren Hardy is the visionary force behind SUCCESS magazine as the Founding Publisher and Editor, and is the New York Times and Wall Street Journal bestselling author of what has been called "the modern day Think and Grow Rich": *The Compound Effect—Jumpstart Your Income, Your Life, Your Success* (www.TheCompoundEffect.com) and the world-wide movement to onboard 10 million new entrepreneurs through his latest book *The Entrepreneur Roller Coaster--Why Now is the Time to #JoinTheRide* (www.RollerCoasterBook.com). Access Darren: www.DarrenHardy.com and get free daily mentoring: www.DarrenDaily.com

Being “smart” isn’t just for phones and TVs anymore.

Soon, Microsoft’s Cortana will be able to see inside your fridge. With cutting-edge, fridge-safe technologies, Cortana can identify the foods you place there. After spending some time with your fridge’s contents, Cortana learns your food preferences. It can even offer up recipes or shopping lists to make your life easier. While other smart fridges have cameras that show users what’s inside without opening the door, the Cortana version actually helps you keep your fridge stocked. By the time this fridge hits the market, it will have captured thousands of photos of food packages from around the world. And that means you may soon have a smart new helper when it comes to shopping and fixing meals.

-TechCrunch

Ditch the meeting, get more done.

The average manager spends 30%-

50% of their time in meetings. And most feel 67% of meetings are an utter waste. So what can we do to stop killing time? Quit having meetings. Here are three ways to tell if a meeting is worthwhile. 1) Compare cost to benefit. Take the number of folks attending times their average pay rate. Multiply that by their time spent meeting. Is the desired outcome worth it? 2) Will this be a one-sided affair? A dead giveaway is the conference call when the boss puts everyone else on mute. 3) Is the meeting a guise for “communication”? Instead, send an e-mail, point to a website or suggest someone to consult with. Now you’re talking...

-Entrepreneur

Want earbuds that last – and sound great?

Bragi’s new earbuds, named simply The Headphone now have “bragging rights” on both battery life and sound quality. At six hours of battery life, these buds

shred all competition. That includes Erato’s Apollo 7 and the Earin buds – both of which wimp out at three hours. Bragi’s Headphone also delivers a crystal-clear sound that beats most Bluetooth and WiFi earbuds. And they let sounds come through from whatever space you’re in. They also receive phone calls and respond to voice commands. Plus, all of this is 100% wireless. They even include a sleek-looking lanyard-style carrying case. All that being said, The Headphone is well worth a look if you’re looking for a great pair of earbuds.

-DigitalTrends

Google’s Chromebook Pixel may have faded into a high-resolution sunset...

But the good news is, some great new challengers will soon take its place. The Dell Chromebook 13, for instance, sports a 1080p touch-screen display, aluminum chassis, glass trackpad and a (very fast) Intel Core i3 processor.

Meanwhile, weighing in at just 2.9 pounds, the Toshiba Chromebook 2 delivers nearly the same performance as the Dell. Yet at a full two pounds less, you’ll appreciate its light weight. And the new kid on the block, the Acer Chromebook 14, offers a high-end feel and near top-of-the-line specs for just \$300. Any of these challengers will fill the bill for you if you love the low price of a Chromebook, but want something a little more premium.

-AndroidCentral.com

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