hAPPenings

PIONEERING PROGRAMMERS

The modern MSP is one which is efficient, knows what the priorities are and sticks to a routine to address them in a manner which keeps the client satisfied and business coming in. Business development is equally as important, but if your workplace isn't running smoothly, no amount of sales will guarantee continued growth over the years. In this month's newsletter, we're going to be providing insights on how to create a better managed workplace so that your business can not only survive in a competitive industry, but also thrive.

THIS IS HOW YOU CAN INCREASE TECHNICIAN PRODUCTIVITY

Running an MSP is competitive business. What MSP owners everywhere wish would happen is that their technicians run through daily tasks flawlessly and without interruptions. The biggest factor in increasing unnecessary costs is having to take time out of daily production hours to refocus on tasks which come up suddenly and at random. While interruptions will never be completely gone, there are ways to handle them as part of a framework and still manage top priorities.

 Completing assigned tickets which have been given due priority ahead of the daily routine should be done as needed. Having additional tasks being added can

mean these tickets move down further and may not be taken care of in due time.

Unless there is a sudden urgency to focus on something else, here are some simple steps to increasing technician productivity.

Advocate the Need to Stick to a Schedule

Priority tickets need to be the centre of attention for your technicians. Everything else needs to be treated and dealt with later on when there is enough free time or moved to the next free slot. Creating schedules in

advance, weekly or even monthly should become a routine and be a habit to keep technicians on track with their priorities.

Automate Checking Off Highest Priority Items

As technicians complete their work, checking off the tasks completed needs to be part of the routine. This shows that the work is being completed and gives technicians the motivation that they can finally move on to the next ticket item.

High priority items should obviously top the list and depending on the nature of the clients in question, need to be optimized for accordingly. If additional manpower is necessary, the ability to create a team to manage those items should become an automatic function amongst the staff. Create that culture where work is done seamlessly. It takes time but is worth it long-term.

Limit Email Checking

Email is a renowned time killer in the workplace. It can potentially take up valuable working hours, which could be put to much better use. Instead, make it a

standard to check emails on certain times of the day instead of just hanging out on outlook all the time. This can be every two to three hours instead of keeping up with every notification which comes through. It should be conveyed to customers that if there is something truly urgent and cannot wait to be adequately scheduled, a phone call may be the better option to get through immediately.

Administrative tasks around the office take a cut of hours that need to be spent on client servicing. Anything from certification exams, office-based routines and anything other than the technical aspects of the job should be done on times where the technician may not be working on more important work.

Using schedulers and sticking to a set routine will allow for maximum productivity. It may take time to fully implement and see the results, but once that culture is integrated into your workplace, the level of output achieved will speak for themselves.

IMPLEMENTING THE RIGHT EMAIL SECURITY SOLUTION FOR CLIENTS CAN LESSEN YOUR WORKPLACE STRESS

Regardless of how far we've come in email productivity and management, this popular method of communication in the corporate sector is also the most vulnerable. When outsourcing their IT and cyber security needs to you as a managed service provider, clients expect everything to be safe and secure. Ensuring 100 percent protection is nearly impossible but implementing the right email security solution can less your workplace stress and the burden on your team.

The last time you considered a security platform for client email protection, what are some of the factors you really focused on? Most MSPs, unfortunately, don't pay a lot of attention to the nitty gritty details which paint the overall picture of what to expect. The next time you are considering reviewing your vendor options for email security, here are some tips that will make the choice a more effective one.

Protection from Phishing Attacks

Some emails may not get through, but that will get better overtime as your email service learns the difference between trusted contacts and those which may pose a real threat. That is nothing compared to the sort of damage which may occur if even a single phishing attack gets through.

According to Verizon, 93 percent of data breached begin with a phishing email which gets through to a user inbox. A secure email protection system will ensure that phishing attacks are stopped right at the start. They are able to recognize what may be a threat and will notify the user if they continue to choose to go forward with anyway.

Financial loss is first and foremost of phishing attacks. These emails seem legitimate and usually imitate institutions such as banks or government agencies to scare the user into providing sensitive and personal information without a second thought.

Is your current security vendor providing this service as part of your setup or would it cost more to do so? Read the terms and conditions and see what your options are in having this important feature added in.

Implement Office 365 Usage

What email service provider are your clients currently using? If they haven't moved to cloud computing with Office 365 yet, then that should be the top priority in ensuring improved email security. Office 365 offers excellent protection for users and adding on an additional layer of security can optimize it against even the biggest threats.

The solution you choose to go with for further email protection should be one which easily integrates with Office 365. What this will do is improve service delivery and save on previous human resource hours.

Use Solutions with Better Email Management

With so many layers of security, you don't want clients to have to spend most of their time in a day to sort out all their emails and figure out where the important ones went. Team collaboration and workflow management through emails and the cloud aspect of it should work flawlessly with the chosen security solution.

See which of the available solutions have better reporting and quarantine management tools. Test them out and find out if they meet client needs or just make everything tougher.

Working in partnership with other MSPs should not be taken as a 'no-go' option. Different MSPs provide different tools and offer expertise in certain areas where you may be lacking. See where you can offer improve service delivery and don't hesitate to benefit from the experience of another partner organization.

BUILD EFFICIENT PASSWORD POLICIES WITH THESE SIMPLE STEPS

Creating password policies for your clients can be a tough task. We know that the need to have a balance between the passwords being convenient is top priority, but at the same time, so is the requirement to ensure that they are safe and stay protected from cyber attacks.

It is too common of a sight in workplaces where passwords are literally as simple as "password123". This practice needs to stop and one of the most effective ways to do that is by deploying a company wide password policy.

Even the slightest vulnerability in password management can set the stage for a real cyber threat. This can be scary, and most organizations are ill prepared for it. Use the steps we'll be talking about to create not only a strong password policy, but also an efficient one which works for you and your clients.

Provide Adequate Training

What managed service providers should be regularly conducting as a part of their plans with clients is security training and information on how to stay safe online. Nearly 1/3rd of all security breaches in a company's systems is caused by human errors and weak passwords top that list of loopholes caused directly by the workforce.

Relying on employees to make good judgement and stay informed on their own is a wish every service provider has. Unfortunately, it doesn't always come true. Whether you are servicing clients on a fixed, billable or fully managed plan, the need to conduct those training sessions cannot be stressed enough. This will help spread the knowledge of the importance of strong passwords, their storage and also further a strong relationship with your clients.

When rolling out password policies, go through them with clients and employees in groups. Show the pros and cons and how staying safe benefits everyone in the end.
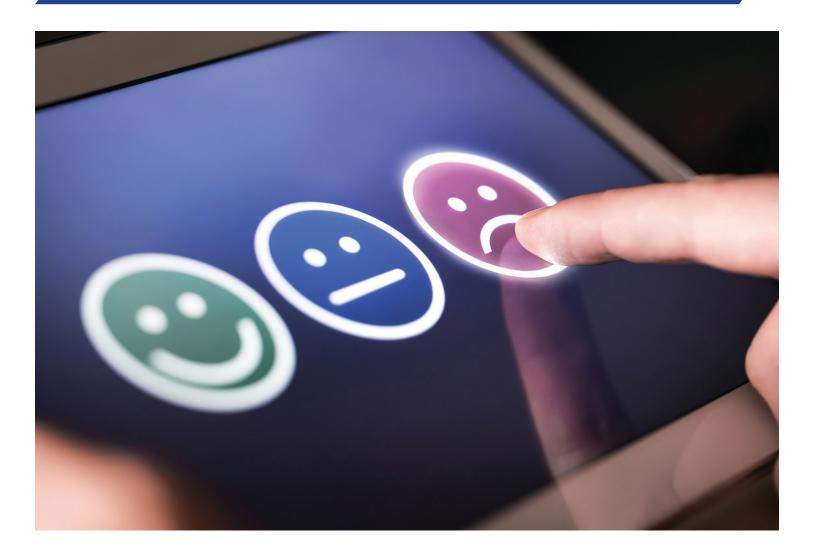
Incorporate Password Complexity

With a certain level of password complexity, client security can sharply increase. Just by adopting best practices and clearly laying them out in your password policy is the best way to lower the risk of any external threats to a minimum.

What goes into good password complexity? With it becoming common knowledge thanks to the widespread adoption of everyday services such as email and social media, many clients and their employees may already be well aware of what a strong password consists of.

It is still to point out these parts of password complexity which should make up credentials for any sort of credentials:

- The use of numbers, alphabetic characters and special symbols. Lower case, upper case and a mixture of all characters can still result in a password easy to remember.
- Terms which can be figured out, such as employee name, company name, username, email or date of births should not be used as passwords. Never use the same password for services across the board. They should be unique and not directly attached to a person or thing in the workplace.
- Adopting a length of password closer to 15 characters is seen as a good practice. This allows for the usage of unique terms and also keeping them dynamic at the same time.

3 REASONS WHY YOUR CUSTOMER RETENTION PLAN MAY BE FAILING

A more organized, better focused and successful managed service provider is one which has a high customer retention rate. Remember, it will always be more cost effective to retain customers, than to acquire new ones. While new business development needs to be part of a higher level annual strategy, retaining them should also have a special focus during all quarterly or bi-annual reviews.

The rate of customer retention shows where your business currently stands. The health and overall performance of your sales and customer service team. Whether you're a small operation or have grown into a larger one, customer retention is a prime way to keep costs down, service delivery and profits up.

If your current customer retention policy isn't working exactly the way you would like it to, here are three reasons why that may be:

You're Not Focusing on Relationship Building

Those managed service providers which don't pay special attention to relationship building may easily fall out of their good books. With improved remote access and cloud computing, not building personal relationships with your clients is easier than ever.

This makes it even more important for you to add those aspects of customer relations into annual plans. Once you really make that effort into improved relationship building, you should start seeing results of better retention rates almost immediately. This ties into the next reason why your retention may be suffering.

Don't Always be Closing

Everyone knows that the ABCs of sales is 'Always Be Closing'. Not in this case. Instead of primarily focusing on selling, upselling and just constantly trying to close

the deal, get to know the other person and what they are really about. That personal rapport building will get you and your business a lot farther than just short-term achievements.

Add relationship building and adopt practices of keeping clients engaged throughout the year and it will ensure that customers are getting much more than just being 'clients'.
That personal touch is a what every level of human nature yearns for. Play your cards right and go beyond the traditional salesman approach.

Go Through the Customer Journey

What is the first point of contact customers have with your business? Is it online, through direct mail or via a sales call? All of these things don't have that one-on-one approach which is the foundation of relationship building. If that client is based in the same geographic region you are, how many visits have been done to that client's place of business? If the answer is 'not many', then that needs to change on a priority basis.

Go through that customer journey as a team. See how it feels to be in the customer's shoes. Businesses are investing in more than just services and products. They want to know that they can trust you and your team and that you, as a service provider, will be there for them in the long run. If you're able to build that level of trust and prove it, then customer retention rates for your MSP should improve overall quite significantly.

If you're looking for help to improve the performance of your MSP, whether it be better marketing, sales or operations, give us a call at 972-330-4035 and let's discuss what we can do for you. It may be the best call you ever make for your business.

PIONEERING
P R O G R A M M E R S

🏠 www.devs4msps.com
www.pioneeringprogrammers.com

📍 1059 S Sherman Street
#140 Richardson, Texas, TX 75081

✉️ info@devs4msps.com

📞 972-895-3100