hAPPenings

PIONEERING PROGRAMMERS

Who's excited for their first biannual review coming up in June for this year? We certainly are because half of 2019 is almost done with and we're loving every moment of it. There's been so much going on and MSPs everything are competing for growing business opportunities in every sector. With business booming, the need to stay ahead of the competition is very real. Let's make May about improving and continuously looking ahead to better days. Keeping reading to see what we mean.

EASY BUT IMPORTANT CYBERSECURITY MEASURES FOR YOUR CLIENTS

Your clients trust you with everything. Keeping their systems and networks secure and safe from external threats is definitely on the top of the list. Malware, ransomware and phishing attacks have begun taking a toll on businesses and there just does not seem to be any end in sight. When a business is attacked and ends up with a big loss, the first to blame would be the MSP they're using.

Unfortunately, we know that in reality, it is not possible to be 100 percent prepared for any cyber attack. Yes, you can minimize the damage that would

happen and mitigate the risk, but everything else is all estimation. Some of the biggest companies in the countries also get hacked, despite having spent large budgets on setting up a fool-proof infrastructure. You may not have that sort of cash, but through these easy, but important cybersecurity measures, your clients will be safer than ever.

Updating Their Software

When our MSP clients do an analysis for their customers, it ends up being software as the culprit

in most cases. Hackers are constantly searching for vulnerabilities in software which can be exploited, while the good guys are releasing updates to fix them up before anything bad happens.

Even just updating their software and ensuring that the latest versions are being used across the board can minimize security risk chances monumentally.

Multi-Factor Authentication

A password leaked can cause significant damage and loss to any organization. Especially since people expect it never to happen to them and they also are proud to use the same password across all platforms and devices. This is a major security risk, which can be minimized through the use of multi-factor authentications.

With the requirement of additional identification such as a smartphone or even fingerprint, even having the passwords does not mean you'll get access.

Disabling Flash Player

Flash Player is one of the most widely used web browser plugins and was extremely common for playing video games or watching content online. The downfall of Flash Player started when it become a major security risk and experts began recommending that everyone uninstall it.

It is most likely that your clients don't need it either. Check their plugin settings from various web browsers and disable It.

An Added Layer of Security (SSL)

With the SSL certification, your website will be secure and fully modernized. Everyone is doing it and it is a matter of time before web browsers begin to cut of support for those websites without it completely.

Ever seen the 'S' at the end of 'HTTP' when going to a URL domain? That 'S' denotes the enhanced security and had been implemented several years ago. Fortunately, business are finally beginning to adjust and adopt the practice.

Before the SSL certification, data being transmitted may have been hacked or intercepted. Just like disabling Flash Player, HTTPS adoption only takes a few moments and can have lasting benefits.

3 FUNDAMENTALS TO HELP YOUR MSP MARKETING STRATEGY SUCCEED

Being a managed service provider, everyone expects you to be on top of the digital game and know everything about it. We understand that's not always the case. It can be hard being an IT service provider and also know everything about the rapidly changing world of digital marketing. Investing in a marketing strategy now is bound to include a huge focus on the online realm. Everything from content marketing to social media management and search engine performance is included in a good marketing strategy.

Seems intimidating doesn't it?

Fear not and keep yourself sane by reading our 3 fundamentals to help your MPS marketing strategy succeed. Make sure they're integrated, and your life will be a whole lot easier.

Use the Power of Data

How much does data and the science of analytics influence your MSP marketing strategy? It takes a lot to analyze, compile and really learn from data. Making data meaningful is a completely different skillset of its own, but with tools like Google Analytics and so many digital marketing solutions, it becomes a task everyone can perform.

What sort of audience is your online content pulling in? How does it affect the leads being generated from your social media pages, website and search engine promotions? Advertising is easy and so is setting everything up, but what are you doing with the data coming in?

Take some time out to analyze the data every week or at least once a month. The picture will become quite clear.

Is Your Website an Aggressive Sales Tool?

One of the biggest issues with MSP marketing is the fact that their websites have no flow, are highly unappealing and do not believe in great, value adding content.

A customer's journey of today usually begins online. In fact, 9 out of 10 consumers are likely to search online for products, services and solutions before anywhere else. This speaks volumes in terms of where clients are searching and finding businesses to do transactions with. Is your website at the level where you're confident that it reels in the leads for you? How well is this lead generation machine oiled? If you're having doubts, it's likely that there is a lot of room for improvement in this department.

Spending money elsewhere might be a mistake at this point. Focus on developing a website which will attract clients, provide unmatchable value and bring your MSP up in top contention for their business. It takes real effort but is definitely possible given enough attention.

Speak the Language of Businesses

Technical jargon was appreciated a decade or two ago. Now, it's all about the simplification of everything. People don't have enough time to be spending searching what services you offer actually mean or even knowing what their business needs. They just want a quick, easy and cost-effective solution to all of their IT related woes. Offer them those packages which make sense and are easy to understand.

Ever heard about bundling your services together to appeal to a wider crowd? Maybe it's time to include some of that and everything else we talked about in our next MSP marketing strategy.

4 REASONS YOUR CLIENTS NEED YOU AS THEIR MSP

Knowledge building and educating potential and current clients is as important as investing heavily in marketing your MSP. It can transform the sort of relationship you have with them once they get a sense of you truly wanting the best for their business performance. It's hard to find that in today's business setting. Most businesses fail to offer the services and promises they make when signing someone up. Seeing those expectations being met can truly make the much-needed difference.

There should be a clear policy in your workplace. The success of your clients is the success of your MSP. Without client businesses to manage, you would not be in business. It's as simple as that. The next time you're in a meeting with clients or signing a new one on board, remember the benefits you need to provide and let them know about it:

With an MSP, You Get the Latest Technology

Maintaining networks and staying ahead of the game when it comes to upgrading to the latest technology can be a major headache for businesses. It requires a massive investment in IT alone and not all businesses are capable of adopting such a strict IT policy. A major way to save on resources and still have a highly capable team running IT matters with the best technology is via an MSP. MSPs are literally in the technology business.

Stay Safe from Cyber Security Threats

The online world has its own threats and issues which require round the clock monitoring. The worst of the worst could happen at any moment, causing systems to go down and widespread data loss to happen.

Protecting its clients from hacks, attacks, breach and loss of data is one of the foremost responsibilities of an MSP and they should be made aware of the major benefits.

Cyber attacks can take a company down for good. MSPs are the front line of defense in making sure that doesn't happen.

Clients Can Grow without Investing in IT

Business expansion is what keeps revenue growing. It is the aim of every medium and small sized business out there. With an MSP, clients have the freedom of scaling business without having to invest a major chunk of their budgets in just expanding IT infrastructure. MSPs can do that for them. What could be more of a relief than knowing all of your IT needs are being taken care of in the background by a team of experts?

MSPs Bring Business Stability

After going through the previously discussed benefits, doesn't it just seem like that the world is a much better place because of MSPs? Doing business today is hectic and stressful. IT is one of the departments which businesses should be least concerned about, but not having a team to handle it could make it the biggest worry of any entrepreneur.

MSPs bring immense stability to businesses. Let your clients know regularly of what you're doing to keep things from running into chaos. Keep everyone informed and improve communications. This is how good information is spread and benefits your MSP in the end.

THE SECRET CHECKLIST FOR IT SERVICE PROVIDER SUCCESS

For MSPs in the region, business is competitive. Sometimes it seems like you have to go all out just to stay afloat. This can mean minimized margins of profit and trouble maintaining a consistent level of growth. IT services providers which go too out of the way than they possibly can, end up usually hurting themselves and many have even had to close their doors for business. Times are tough, which is why you need the secret checklist for IT service provider success.

With this, you will be able to provide clients with a better quality of service and keep expectations to a realistic level. There are always exceptions and different needs based on the nature of business your MSP is catering to, but on a general level, maintaining certain standards is key to staying sane. Let's get to it:

Forget Long-Term Contracts

Keeping someone locked down when they want to get out is the worst possible feeling to have and thing to do. Even marriages aren't binding contracts. There should always be an easy way out. This is turn will keep glowing reviews coming in, even from those companies which chose another route.

Don't have contracts for years and years on end. Let clients lock you down because of the quality service you provide and not by the threat of facing lawsuits and fines.

Get Partner Certifications

When clients see that you're a trusted 'Microsoft Partner' or licensed by any other vendor for meeting certain standard criteria, it shows commitment. Clients want to see those badges and know that they are dealing with experts and not just a company working out of a storage unit. Even though there's technically nothing wrong with that either, if you can make it work.

Have a Strategic Plan and Share It

What would really set you apart from other MSPs is having a plan for advancement and letting your clients know about it. The ability to have a broader vision and goals for the future is what businesses are all about. Be relatable and share updates about how you are working to provide even better services will certainly get you noticed.

Expect the Greatest Volume between 7 AM to 7 PM

MSPs need to learn how to prioritize and be prepared for an influx of queries to be able to provide the best level of service possible. Clients cannot always afford to be waiting on the line for a help desk agent, especially when there is an IT crisis going on. For most MSPs out there, 7AM till 7PM is the timeframe when the highest number of calls take place from clients and customers.

Being staffed adequately between those times and lesser during slower hours can bring about huge changes for the better in budgetary requirements and customer service.

Have a Project Manager and Account Manager

Dealing with the account is totally separate from what a project manager would do. This level of service to any customer would keep them onboard for years to come, plus provide exceptional technical service.

Clients should be confident in knowing that they are talking to an expert when it comes to discussing their account needs or technical requirements. While this may not be possible for all MSPs with smaller budgets, when you get to that level, make sure you add it in there.

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