



A 3-Step Scalable IT Plan for Your Growing Business

IT that Grows With Your Company

Success is hard to achieve in a competitive and evolving marketplace. As a business leader, you're aware that for your company to grow well, you need a plan. Chances are you already have one. But does it include your technology roadmap? If the answer is no, you're not alone.

In fact, many business leaders who come to us are looking for just that: direction, guidance, structure, long-term planning and alignment of their technology to organizational goals. The demands of gaining compliance with ever-changing industry regulations, mitigating cyber intrusions and keeping your employees productive can be challenging for a company that has historically pushed technology aside. The reality is that there's no waving of a magic wand when it comes to IT, especially when you're digging yourself out from a decades-long trench of poor IT practices. The journey back to alignment is often long and hard, and there are no guarantees that the measures you take will be the right ones.

Putting together a smart IT plan can be tough and time consuming without the proper technology experience and knowledge base to address the critical questions, like whether your IT roadmap accounts for the varied demands on your resources. Will you have enough coverage as your company expands? How will you keep your network secure? What storage solutions will be best suited for you? **That's where a managed IT services provider (MSP) can help, giving your business its best chance at success.**

Partnering with an experienced MSP (to be your IT department or augment your internal IT staff) will allow you to invest wisely, spend predictably, reduce risks, improve security, and provide your staff with the tools they need to work more effectively. With proper planning and the right help from the right MSP, you can align technology to your business goals – ultimately transforming your organization into one that is agile and fully capable of meeting the challenges ahead.

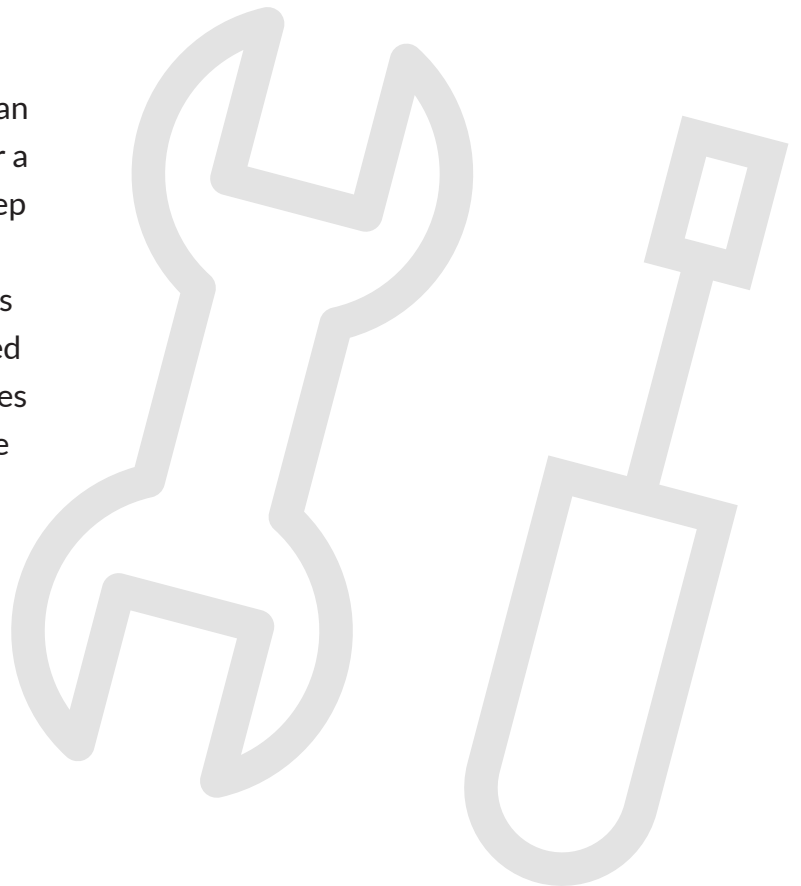


STEP ONE: Set the Groundwork

Whatever the size and state of your current IT department, MSPs can be a tool for building a more efficient one. Start planning for alignment and future growth by bringing in a trustworthy managed IT services provider for a thorough technical assessment of your IT environment. As experts in optimizing IT performance for businesses of all sizes, an MSP can provide incisive, actionable direction on services that would best suit your company and address the highest-priority areas.

With an in-depth assessment, an MSP can help you to better lay the foundation for a more agile IT department by digging deep into your technology challenges, your current infrastructure and your business goals. The best assessments are designed to help you implement intelligent updates to your network and help you determine how your business could benefit from cloud services.

The end goal is a sustainable IT environment that will serve your business well today in addition to being future-proofed to support any known or unknown factors later on. A network like that would be able to effortlessly accommodate changes such as expansion of your user base, new compliance requirements and the employment of necessary technology, like mobile device management and virtualization.





STEP TWO: Choosing the Right Team to Execute the Roadmap

Once you have received your detailed roadmap through the assessment process, the next challenge comes in making sure those action steps are implemented at the right pace and within your business's budget. You have the option of having your internal IT staff take on those changes entirely, bringing an MSP onboard to help your IT resources implement the plan, or outsourcing your IT completely to an MSP.

The Outsourcing Advantage

Imagine for a moment that IT “just works.” No end user complaints, no crashing servers, no email downtime, no catastrophic loss of data. That, in a nutshell, is the outsourcing advantage. It may sound hard to believe, but many business executives and IT leaders are realizing that the proactive approach offered by a Managed IT Services Provider offers peace of mind unlike any other IT model.

An elite MSP will implement your IT roadmap and continue to ensure that your company stays on track and ahead of technology curves. Many factors make up a world-class MSP, so it's important to be prepared to ask the right questions, such as:

- Do they have a bench depth of IT consultants to ensure business continuity?
- Do they provide on-site coverage as well as a 24/7 remote help desk if needed?
- Does their list of technology vendors include leaders in the field?
- Do their consultants have both technology and people skills?
- Do they have a list of referrals they can provide?
- Do they offer white-glove treatment? (Referrals are key to finding the real answer).
- Do they have experience with on-premise and cloud environments?

By outsourcing IT support services at fixed rates, you can also maintain predictable spending for the department month after month. With a steady budget to work from, it will be easier to account for any unanticipated developments such as a security breach or data leakage. Cyber hackers are increasingly targeting vulnerable small and mid-sized businesses, but an MSP ensures that security services – including anti-virus, email encryption, and SPAM filtering – are implemented and managed, so that you don't lose any sleep at night.

As your company grows, so will your IT needs and the demands placed on your

existing resources. Projects will become larger and more complex, strategy will increase in importance, and you'll need greater coverage for the more demanding workloads. Bringing on a strong MSP – with a deep bench of IT consultants – will provide the stability you need to prepare for expansion and increased capability down the line.

The Hybrid Approach

Another IT model that has grown in popularity in recent years is the hybrid IT model, which combines the strengths of your internal IT staff with the capabilities of outsourced IT consultants. Having an





MSP in charge of day-to-day or project-based IT tasks will free up time and resources for you to focus on further optimization through strategy, compliance, and business processes. (Read: [Building a Hybrid IT Department: How to Leverage a Managed Services Provider](#)).

If you choose to have your internal IT staff take on the strategic execution of the plan, an MSP can provide you with plug-and-play IT consultants to augment department initiatives where necessary. These IT consultants have specialized skill sets, product stack knowledge, and experience across multiple industries that can ultimately help your internal staff execute a project that is on time, on scope, and on budget. The primary benefits to an

arrangement like this are twofold: your IT department stays flexible and efficient while the outsourced consultants bring in a steady stream of new ideas, current best practices, and experience with emerging technologies. This augmentation enables seamless productivity and a continuously renewed knowledge base to keep your permanent staff from stagnating.

The ebb and flow of business demands can also mean that you need extra hands for only a limited time or to cover for department members who've gone on vacation or short term leave. An MSP can provide staff augmentation to fill the gaps where temporary loss might otherwise stall productivity.



STEP THREE: Integration & Scalability

Through hard work and thoughtful planning, your company has begun to flourish. As your company continues to mature and your reputation for high quality work and client service (thanks in part to your well-organized and adaptive IT department) draws more business, your mission can turn from stability to expanded scalability.

Increased business will continue to occupy your employees' valuable time, along with the demand for greater function and streamlining to continue operating effectively. While the MSP options you've implemented so far will remain a cornerstone of your IT operations, you'll also be ready for solutions that not only work with your current system, but provide more powerful integration of your data.

Cloud options, like Microsoft Office 365 and Azure, can be cost-saving alternatives to hosting your company's information and the applications you use. They offer greater flexibility with more utility, as well as enterprise-level security, ensuring

that your growing business is receiving the same protection as Fortune 500 companies. Cloud solutions can also simplify the task of overseeing the mix of technologies you use, providing a stable, constant platform for moving toward integration and away from siloed applications. Software upgrades are made easier, as is speed of access, security, and organization of your data.

And because the cloud doesn't require use of your own servers, the costs of phasing them out and providing ongoing maintenance becomes less of an issue. Demand on your infrastructure can be accommodated at will, rather than having to spend on over-provisioning (or worse, under-provisioning) early on and bearing the cost regardless of the actual usage. The money you save can then be reinvested into the company – either for new technology for your IT staff to utilize and enjoy, or for more managed services (like proactive maintenance and expert consultations) to further boost agility and production.

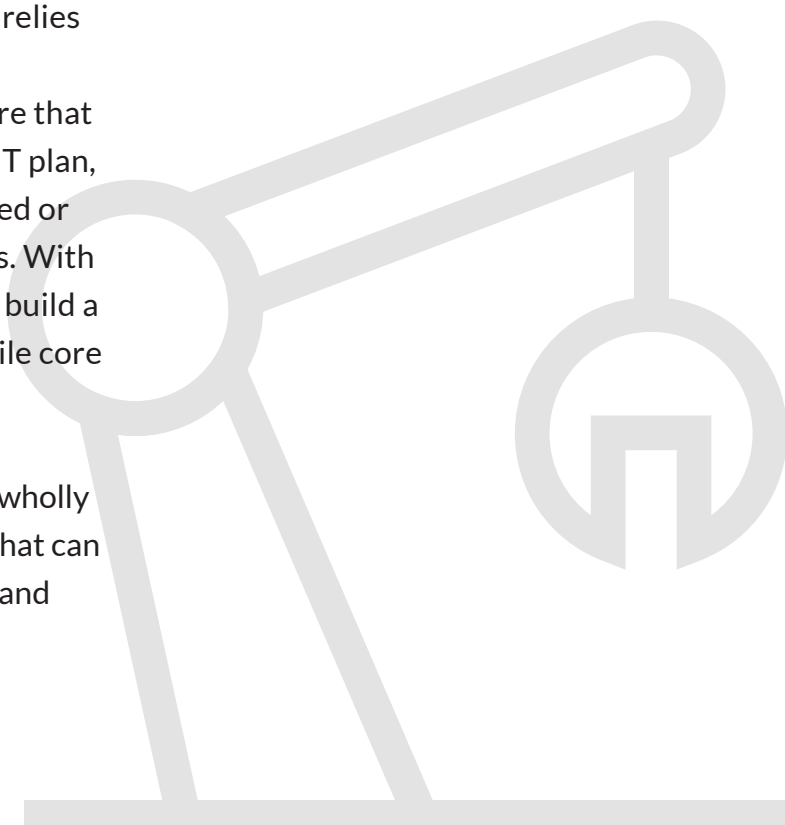
Build a Better IT Department

Now, with your MSP-optimized IT department, your company is more efficient and less vulnerable to attacks or security breaches. A combination of internal and augmented staff, or a fully outsourced IT team, gives you an IT workforce that is diverse, knowledgeable, and much less likely to suffer from constant turnover. Managed services provide the support you need so your company can handle whatever comes next.

The productivity of your workforce and the success of your business relies on well-managed and up-to-date technology. You can help to ensure that success by establishing a strong IT plan, whether you're just getting started or recovering from years of IT chaos. With these three steps, it's possible to build a department that is a lithe, versatile core of your company.

A fully supported IT department, wholly outsourced or hybridized, is one that can better serve the company's goals and

needs. Managed IT services providers can help to fill in the gaps where personnel, task management, and security that can't currently be covered independently. Working with an MSP can ease the burden on you while providing varied, customizable options for growth. By including managed services in your scalable IT plan, you can move forward with confidence, knowing that your IT is being handled while you handle business.



About iCorps Technologies, Inc

A pioneer in comprehensive IT outsourcing since 1994, [iCorps Technologies](#) provides IT services for small, medium, and large businesses nationwide with offices in Boston, New York and Philadelphia. Our comprehensive services and certified expertise in every aspect of technology immediately broaden your IT capabilities and resources to handle all of your technology needs and put technology to work for you. After all, technology that fits your business drives your business to be more profitable, productive, and competitive.

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