MEET THE
ALWAYS ON
IT DEPARTMENT

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As IT gets more complicated it gets easier for the daily tasks – like backups, updates and reports – to slip through the cracks. Managed services give you an always-on IT department that lives in the cloud and has a 360° view of your organization.

WHAT ARE MANAGED SERVICES?

Managed services are a category of IT solutions that involve remote monitoring and management of your computers, mobile devices or network. It also provides alerts when something isn't functioning correctly. Managed services rely on software installed on your devices which runs in the background and constantly sends information about those devices – or your entire system – to a person or organization you've authorized to monitor those devices on your behalf.

WHO'S DOING THE MANAGING?

Typically, monitoring of your system is handled by a team of technicians at the IT company you've hired to maintain your system or network. Those technicians will use the information being sent from your devices to monitor the condition of your network, report on potential issues and, depending on your service arrangement, remotely resolve IT issues on your behalf.

COMMONLY MANAGED SERVICES

- REMOTE MONITORING
- MOBILE DEVICE MANAGEMENT
- ANTIVIRUS & ANTI-MALWARE
- DATA BACKUP & RECOVERY
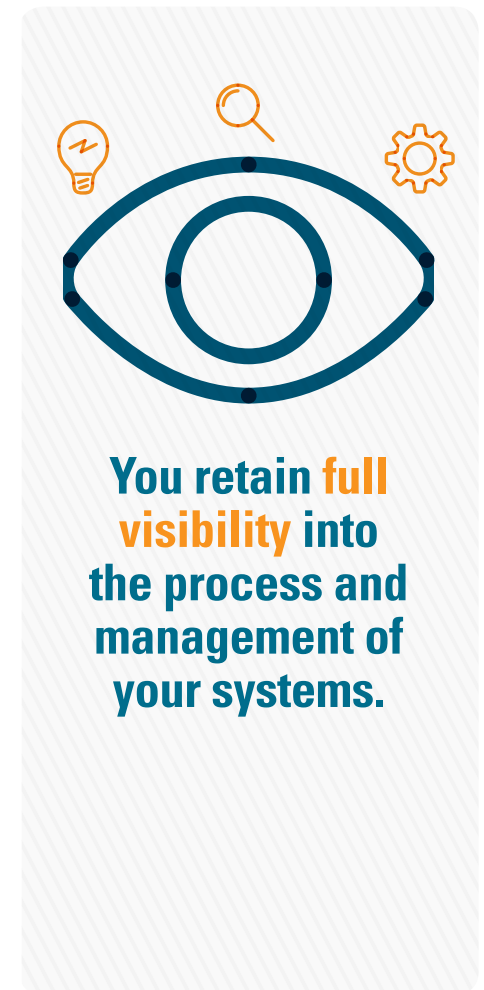- MAINTENANCE AUTOMATION

WHAT ABOUT MY IT DEPARTMENT?

IT resources are scarce in many small businesses and can be quickly overwhelmed with the day-to-day responsibilities of keeping the IT infrastructure that the business depends on up and running. Offloading routine infrastructure management to an experienced managed services professional lets you concentrate on running your business, with fewer interruptions due to IT issues.

Managed services won't replace your existing IT provider – whether it's an internal team or an IT company - but it will significantly reduce the amount of time they spend on maintenance and system monitoring.

HOW DO I GET STARTED?
The first step is to see if your existing IT service provider offers managed services. If they do, it makes sense to add it to your existing service agreement. Managed services are typically provided on a subscription basis. Depending on the services they provide, pricing is usually based on the number of devices, with different packages priced at different levels. Some provide customer support onsite when required.

Unlike traditional IT solutions, you decide when setting up managed services what you want the service provider to manage and what you want to handle. Instead of working on an ad hoc basis, you retain full visibility into the process and management of your systems through regular reporting by your provider.

You retain full visibility into the process and management of your systems.

COMMON MANAGED SERVICE SOLUTIONS

Understanding how managed services work is a good first step but the real value comes when you realize how they can benefit your business. That's easier said than done, since companies have been known to play fast-and-loose with the term "managed services". There's also a growing list of solutions and tasks, which is why we're going to introduce you to three of the most common – and valuable – components of managed service solutions.

REMOTE MONITORING & MANAGEMENT

Remote monitoring and management (RMM) is the proactive, remote tracking of network and computer health. RMM involves a collection of tools that are installed on workstations, network devices and servers. These tools gather information about the applications and hardware of the device they're installed on.

Many RMM solutions include agent technology, which allows a technician to directly control applications operating on the system. Remote agents can then securely connect without firewall issues, VPNs, or configuring routers, and perform tasks for clients.

BENEFITS OF RMM

- QUICKER RESPONSE TIME
- LESS DOWNTIME
- LOWER IT COSTS
- HEALTHIER NETWORKS

MAINTENANCE AUTOMATION & SCHEDULING

Of course, keeping a close eye on your networks and devices is only beneficial if it provides useful insights. So, what are some of the real-world scenarios that RMM can help your business address?

1. INCONSISTENT UPDATES

Software updates for a reason but it always wants to do it when you're in the middle of something. That's why people hit the 'Remind Me Later' button and it means your IT department is constantly fighting the battle to keep everyone current on their updates. RMM allows them to see who's running what version and keep them up to date.

These updates can be scheduled to occur after working hours, when it works for the business. This is true for all your applications, including those that do not already have a silent automated update program.

2. HARDWARE FAILURES

RMM provides information on hardware as well as software, which means you should get notified before a hard drive fails or your laptop overheats and wipes out your critical business data. It also reports on memory and CPU usage over time, which can be indicators that it's time to upgrade your systems.

3. INVENTORY MANAGEMENT

Keeping track of all the devices in your office is complicated enough, but introduce mobile devices and laptops into the equation and it can be almost impossible to keep track of everything. RMM can keep track of all the devices your business uses to function and let you know when they're not connected, giving you insight into how they're being used.

AUTOMATIC BACKUP & STORAGE

Backups, whether in the cloud or on-site, are something that every business should be diligent about managing. Managed backup services are a natural complement to the other roles managed services will be filling within your organization and, as an important automated process, it's perfectly suited for outsourcing to a managed service provider.

Of course, backups are nothing new but, so what advantages do you get by going the managed services route rather than automating it through Windows or setting yourself an Outlook reminder?
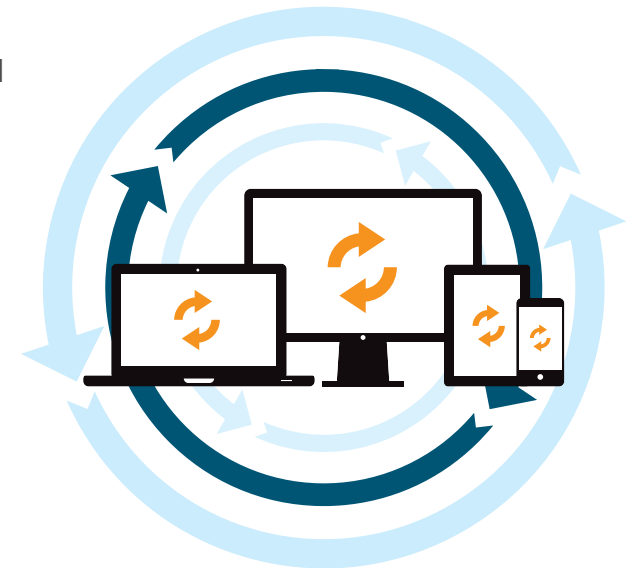
1. AUTOMATIC OFFSITE BACKUPS
Backing up to a physical drive and taking it home is a tried-and-true solution for ensuring your backups are offsite. However, one forgetful employee can sabotage the entire system, whether they forget to do it, forget to take it home or forget to bring it back. An automatic cloud backup is always offsite and adds another level of protection.

2. PARTIAL RESTORES
You don't always need to restore the entire system or an entire day's data. A managed backup solution gives you the option to restore specific files and folders, backup only files that have been modified and schedule restore points as often as required.

3. ARCHIVING & COMPLIANCE
Whether it's for security or compliance purposes, storing copies of your daily backups is a simple and effective way of archiving data. Many managed backup services offer multiple years of storage in the cloud, so you never need to worry about losing drives or overwriting information.

ANTIVIRUS & ANTI-MALWARE

Keeping your devices and networks secure is a continuous, repetitive and meticulous process. That's why it's perfectly suited to be handled by a managed service provider. Using the RMM features mentioned earlier they can deploy antivirus protection to every device they're managing, ensure it's running and up-to-date and check the health of the device.

With managed antivirus and anti-malware you can also enable email protection to reduce the risks presented by viruses, malware and phishing attempts. You can also set exemptions so that approved file types don't get flagged as threats.

You can lecture your employees about IT security but there's always a chance someone delays an update or turns off the software. Managed antivirus and anti-malware solutions mitigate that risk and save you money by preventing downtime.

COMMON SECURITY THREATS

- VIRUSES
- ADWARE
- SPYWARE
- WORMS
- ROOTKITS

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Contact Prophet Business Group to find out exactly how managed services can improve network security, reduce downtime and save you money every month.

Prophet Business Group is an experienced IT provider and Microsoft Gold Certified Partner in Winnipeg, Manitoba. We provide hardware, support and managed services to organizations across all verticals and we can help you get an always-on IT department!

ASK US ABOUT
MANAGED SERVICES TODAY!
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