

In our Technology DNA whitepaper we introduced you to the concept of your Technology DNA, contrasting the two models for technology support (onsite vs. remote) along with the two ways to consume hardware and software infrastructure (on-premise vs. cloud).

In this whitepaper we will discuss how to evolve from the traditional model of onsite support/on-premise infrastructure to remote support and cloud services with the goal of: **Better Service, at Less Cost, that's More Secure.**

To start off, we know *“you have an IT guy or gal”* - that person you call upon to fix things when technology problems arise. There are four main reasons small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs) from 10 to 250-employees are slow to move away from the traditional technology model:

- 1. Loyalty to current IT provider;**
- 2. Lack of information on what's available and possible;**
- 3. Perceived costs vs. benefits; and**
- 4. Resistance to change.**

What is important to point out is that thousands of companies (including your competitors) have embraced the new technologies and support models turning IT from a tax to a key enabler for their business. So the questions are **“Why not you?”** and **“How do we get started?”**

The answer to the first question is another question, “What would happen to your business if you walked in tomorrow morning and there was a flood or fire that destroyed all your records and IT infrastructure?” For most businesses in knowledge-based industries, like professionals, financial and healthcare, their reliance on technology is such that this type of event would be catastrophic - the majority of businesses employing the traditional IT model also have no back-up and disaster recovery plan. We digress... Let's get started.

SMB's have three types of technology users:

- **Technology prime** – the person responsible for IT in the organization, which is typically the office manager/controller in small businesses and IT manager (to CFO) in mid-enterprises.
- **End-users** – the employees that utilize technology – desktop/laptop, applications, internet, data, Smartphone – as a critical tool for their job.
- **C-level** – ah yes, “the boss” who in recent years has found a new religion by the name of BlackBerry® or Apple®.

So any changes in technology, service and support requires careful planning with Accredited Technology Professionals. Unfortunately, most technology decisions are made in a time of crisis at point of pain rather than as a strategic business decision. As technology prime, your IT decisions impact everyone in the organization from CEO to sales to receptionist. Here are some steps to help guide you through the process...

7 Steps to Move into 21st Century IT

1. Get a second opinion from an Accredited Managed Services Provider – see 10 Questions to Ask Your (Would-be) MSP.

2. Survey your internal end-users on their technology usage, satisfaction and suggestions.

3. Determine the Technology DNA of your end users and management team.

4. Map your Technology DNA to 4 key service buckets:

a. IT automation plan – 24x7 remote monitoring and management of network, PCs, security and data back-up.

b. Remote technology support plan – on-demand access to a virtual IT department with breadth and depth in all areas of your technology.

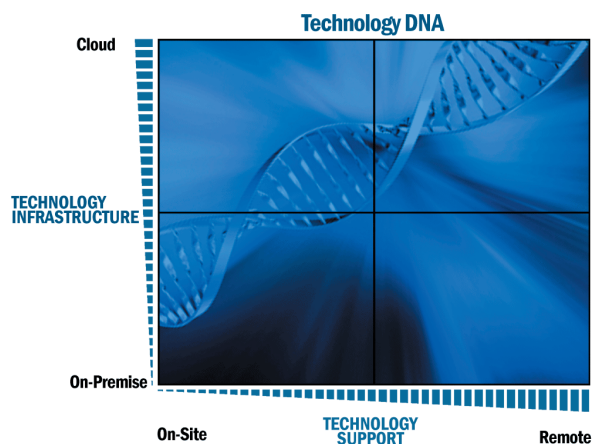
c. Cloud services plan – how virtual is your company and executives willing to go provided your information security is maintained or improved?

d. Professional services plan – ongoing business-technology consulting requirements.

5. Develop a Request for Proposal with a Service Level Agreement.

6. Get references of other clients “just like you” including industry expertise and affiliations.

7. Be strategic but pragmatic! – if you are getting “resistance to change” internally then start small and build from successes.



The diagram above provides a straight-forward analysis of where your company, executives and end-users are in terms of technology infrastructure (hardware and software) and technology support. Generally speaking, most companies sit in quadrant 1, on-premise infrastructure with on-site support which is the most costly and inefficient model.

About The Utility Company

The Utility Company® is a leading provider of virtual IT service and support for businesses, delivering the required hardware, software & service for a monthly fixed fee per user.

Our Connected Office® service program provides a single point of contact to deliver and manage technology, communications & vertical line of business applications – **95% Remote; 100% Proactive.**

Customers are supported by local Utility Service Providers delivering on-site service & business-technology consulting to reduce spending and increase utilization – our Beyond Managed Services® franchise opportunity is available by prospectus only.

Learn how to make technology work for your business today at theutilitycompany.com