

# Innovative Solutions

## HTR Presentation Overview

### #1 - Staffing

- The biggest mistake most startups make is not having resources to staff IT effectively. It's either assumed that an internal employee (engineer, CFO, etc.) can manage IT.

*Solution: Most startups do not realize that IT outsourcing is more cost effective, allows employees to focus on driving new business, and delivers a much higher level of stability and growth.*

### #2 - Infrastructure

- Most startups put too much pressure on its network resources from day one. A small home-grade all-in-one wireless router, best effort internet service (sometimes not even business class), cell phones without email integration, and patched together computers with no centralized server are the norm.

*Solution: The best thing a small business can do is invest in a sound, highly optimized network infrastructure with business class devices and a small centralized server. This will allow for 300-400% growth as startups begin to leverage systems more heavily and mobility becomes more critical.*

### #3 - Software

- The most common applications startups need are found within the Microsoft platform, and a simple accounting application. As startups mature, a third set of software typically is needed to maintain business operations (ie. ERP/MRP, Inventory Control, POS, etc.)

*Solution: Startups who over-invest in fancy software with lots of bells and whistles typically do not see a return on investment immediately. It is essential to watch every dollar. Hence, investing in standard set of Microsoft Office applications for administration and communication, coupled with a sound accounting package such as Quickbooks, typically is all a business needs.*

### #4 - Web Presence

- A website offers startup an easy and effective way to market and proactively promote its products and services. All too often, startups do not recognize the value of having a website or on the opposite end of the spectrum, over-emphasize and engineer a website with too many features.

*Solution: A static website outlining the company's mission, product offerings, and contact information will typically give enough exposure. Customers looking to business will often qualify a company within 20 seconds on a website. It's important that startups have a professional front-end with clear and concise information for end-users.*

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#### **#5- Mobile Workforce**

- The ability for employees to work at any time from any place increases productivity and morale. Mobility is now a vital component for outside sales reps. Use of cell phones and laptops to access email, files, and applications outside of the office has become main stream, as is the use of wireless devices for mobility within the workplace.
- Most companies are aware of the importance of the mobile workforce however, few consider the importance of seamless performance and ease of administration. Most employees will limit their use of these capabilities if they are too cumbersome to use, or fail frequently.

*Solution: The integration of efficient remote access to data and applications with low administration overhead*

#### **#6- Security**

- With increased system complexity, (adding shared files, applications, and mobility) comes an increased security risk to the company. Financial and other critical data can be exposed internally and externally if certain precautions are not met. Additional risks include system failures, permanent data loss, and compliance exposure.
- An increase in security can reduce overall conveniences. It is important to consider the individual use of the system prior to implementing security measures.
- System access rights, Internet firewalls, password, and acceptable use policies are a few examples.

*Solution: The implementation of effective security measures and policies that do not negatively affect the user's performance.*

#### **#7- Messaging/ Collaboration**

- Email is a vital part of communication within the organization as well as the outside world. Workers need access to email from multiple devices and have the ability to access the schedules of coworkers.
- Companies with disparate email applications (Yahoo, Gmail, etc.) tend to struggle with collaboration. When they are forced to consolidate their email platform, it becomes very costly and inconvenient to migrate.

*Solution: Implement mainstream email platform such as Microsoft Exchange (in-house or hosted) and implement a policy against the use of third party email*

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#### **#8- Disaster Prevention Vs. Disaster Recovery**

- Down-time and data loss can cripple a company. Data backup of servers is often not enough to prevent a disaster. Often times, even when server data is backed up, critical data is saved to users' vulnerable desktop machines.
- Additionally, disaster scenarios as well as tolerable down time and data loss should be reviewed. This can range anywhere from 0 down-time/ data loss to 5 business days.

*Solution: Determine acceptable down-time/ data loss and implement the appropriate technologies.*

#### **#9- Hardware Acquisition/ PCs/ Laptops**

- Hardware can be acquired through many sources. CDW, New Egg, etc. Though this hardware can seem inexpensive, issues can arise in areas of performance and compatibility. For example, home-based operating systems that are not intended to be used in a business environment can create problems when a company expands. OEM licensing (that lives and dies with the machine) can create an inconsistent environment that is difficult to manage.

*Solution: Develop a hardware and licensing acquisition model that supports a consistent environment with minimal administration*

#### **#10- Phone Systems**

- Choices for the addition or expansion of a phone system can include Voice over IP, Standard PBX, and hybrid systems. Companies face decisions based on;
  - Future integration with network applications (such as email integration and CRM).
  - The overall future of the technology (will the system be obsolete in the near future?)
  - The supporting vendor (Example: Traditional PBX vendors are now trying to adapt to VOIP technologies, with little to no experience in data networks)

*Solution: Integration of a telephony system that meets the current needs of the company and possesses optimal longevity and future expandability*