

SEPTEMBER TECH NEWS

630-236-6625

Issue: 9



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## **How Small Businesses Should Budget For IT Expenses**

A question that seems to come up a lot lately with clients, in some form or fashion, is "How should I properly budget for IT expenses?" While this is a great question, there are a lot of variables that determine the answer, so I can't provide a "one-size-fits-all," simple answer. However, below are some general guidelines that should help you figure this out:

1. **Hardware Refresh.** No one likes the cost of a network upgrade, but it IS necessary approximately once every 3 to 5 years. PCs and servers older than that tend to run slow, crash frequently and generally become more expensive to fix and support than to replace. Therefore, your budget should include an IT refresh of PC's every 3-4 years and Servers every 5 years to be on the safe side.
2. **Maintenance.** There is no "set it and forget it" when it comes to network maintenance. With cyber criminals becoming more sophisticated and aggressive, you **MUST** constantly monitor and update your network against cyber-attacks, malware, data loss, etc.
3. **Data Backup.** Another expense you must account for is backing up your data to an offsite location (often called "cloud backup"). Since all businesses generate **MORE** data year after year, the backup will grow. Start by

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### **TRIVIA**

assessing the growth of your data over the last couple of years to uncover a trend. From there, forecast those additional expenses going forward at the same rate (don't expect this to stay static year after year).

4. Expansion. Another factor for your IT budget is upgrading software, line of business applications, CRM systems and accounting packages that can no longer support your growing company. As your company grows, systems, processes and data become more complex requiring more sophisticated (and often more expensive) software and systems. Make sure you are looking ahead year upon year to see this coming and to properly budget for it. There's no "magic" formula for this because the timing and cost of your upgrade is unique to your company, situation and what you are trying to accomplish.

Many of our clients have opted for our Hassle Free IT Plan as an easy way to budget for IT. This program allows you to pay a fixed, monthly fee for IT expenses. Find out more about our Hassle Free IT Plan, call 630-236-6625.

## CONFUSING VOIP TECHNOLOGY EXPLAINED

Technical terminology with what seems like millions of acronyms is among the most difficult to understand. If you listen to IT people speak, it can often sound like nothing but a string of abbreviations with the odd technical sounding word thrown in for good measure. The same goes for VoIP, Voice over Internet Protocol.

Here are seven of the most commonly used VoIP terms and what they mean. **Internet Service Provider - ISP** = the company that provides your company with Internet access. **Private Branch eXchange - PBX** = a system within a company that allows internal phones to connect to an outside line. This is also referred to as a switchboard in larger businesses. **An IP PBX** = Internet Protocol Private Branch Exchange, is the same thing, but it handles VoIP calls as well. **Analog** = the old system that transmits voice over telephone lines. Your normal landline telephone connection is most likely analog. In many countries, this is also called the Plain Old Telephone System - POTS for short. **Analog Telephone Adapter - ATA**. = a piece of hardware that allows you to use a traditional telephone for

First person to submit the correct answers by email to [anorton@osgusa.com](mailto:anorton@osgusa.com) will receive a \$25 Starbuck gift card!

Entries are judged by date/time received and correctness. Include your name and phone number, the question number and the answer.

1) What number President was Zach Taylor?

2) What year was John Adams inaugurated?

3) Dwight D. Eisenhower died at what age?

4) James Abram Garfield was born in what state?

VoIP calls. Digital. Any information, including sound, that's on a computer. VoIP is a form of digital communication, because it uses a digital system, the Internet, to transfer your voice.

**Integrated Services Digital Network - ISDN** = a telephone network that allows digital signal e.g., VoIP, to be transmitted over traditional phone lines. **Softphone** = a VoIP application that is run strictly on your computer.

There's a lot of technical terminology out there, the majority of it in acronyms. Don't be afraid to ask us for more information. If you'd like to learn about ways you can use VoIP in your company, please contact us at 630-236-6625.

## MICROSOFT ANNOUNCES RELEASE OF WINDOWS SERVER 2012

Windows Server 2012 redefines the server category, delivering hundreds of new features and enhancements spanning virtualization, networking, storage, user experience, cloud computing, automation, and more. Simply put, Windows Server 2012 helps you transform your IT operations to reduce costs and deliver a whole new level of business value.

Some new features include:

### **Complete Virtualization Platform:**

A fully-isolated, multitenant environment with tools that can help guarantee service level agreements, enable usage-based chargeback, and support self-service delivery.

### **Improved Scalability and Performance:**

A high-density, scalable environment that you can modify to perform at an optimum level based on your needs.

### **Modern Workstyle, Enabled:**

Provides users with flexible access to data and applications while simplifying management and maintaining security, control, and compliance.

To learn more - call us today, 630-236-6625

Click here for more information: [Microsoft Server 2012](#)

## Are You **STILL** Using Outdated Tape Backups?

If your computer network and the data it holds got erased or corrupted because of a virus, hard drive crash, fire, flood or some other random, unforeseen disaster, how confident are you **RIGHT NOW** that your business could be back up and running again **FAST**?

If your answer to that is, "I don't know," or "I'm not sure," you are taking a **HUGE** risk with your company's most important asset-the data on your network. Just imagine what would happen to your business if you lost your entire client database...

...Lost all accounting documentation and history...Lost all the work files you've spent **YEARS** developing...Lost the work files and documentation you so desperately need to service your customers...

Can you even put a price tag on it? Probably not -yet so many business owners aren't 100% certain that they could be back up and running after a disaster and are purely hoping that their current tape drive or backup is working and storing a usable copy of their data.

### **Tape Drives Are The MOST Unreliable, Unsecured Way To Back Up Your Data**

All tape drives **fail**; it's only a matter of "when," not "if." So if being able to get back up and running again in the event of a data-erasing disaster is important, then you need to call us today.

Want to know if your data is **REALLY** secure and being backed up properly? Call us for a **FREE** Data Backup and Disaster Recovery Audit Call us at 630-236-6625

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Outsource Solutions Group | 1730 Park Street, Suite 225 | Naperville | IL | 60563

