ProSupport

WATCH AGREMENTS
REMOTE CARE AGREEMENTS
CARE AGREEMENTS

What is it all about?

A lifeline for your network

Computer networks are often complex and sometimes convoluted.

Almost always, the data stored on them and the functions they perform are critical to the successful operation of the business.

We sometimes think we would rather be without them. Interestingly, this is usually when they are not performing properly.

But many businesses have fallen into the habit of using a model of fixing the computers when they are broken rather than maintaining them at an optimum level for the operation of the business and productivity of the operator.

This model actually penalises the operator and rewards the service provider. There is no real motivation for the "break/fix" repairer to do any more than repair the broken bit – no motivation to ensure that the system is performing at its best and most reliable. In fact, it is to his advantage to just fix what is broken.

At Managed Solutions, we believe the best for both of us is when we keep your network operating at its best. We prefer to work in an environment where you are happy to see us and your network is working at its peak rather than seeing us as a necessary evil because the computer has broken down again.

From our experience, we believe the best is achieved for both parties when the network is maintained. The dilemma is recognising the cost of the activity that it takes to make the network run properly.

Any network needs constant monitoring and regular service & maintenance to ensure maximum network availability and minimum problems for users. Often this expense can be quite erratic and disrupt business if it is performed on a break/fix arrangement rather than on a proactive manner. And the cost can easily get out of hand and be difficult to justify.

And that is ignoring the cost of lost time.

So, how do we come up with the right balance?

In an average month, on a network of 2 servers & 30 workstations, we would expect to spend:-

- 15 minutes per workstation loading updates – total 7.5 hours
- 1 hour per server loading updates – total 2 hours
- Maintaining asset & resource list for the network – total 2 hours
- Monthly reporting – total 1 hour
- 15 minutes per workstation for general workstation maintenance – total 7.5 hours
- Server service monitoring & maintenance – 6 hours
- 2 hours on site support per month

This totals around 30 hours per month and does not include unpredicted issues like server crashes or workstation rebuilds (By the way, all of these are covered under our CARE Agreement). The cost of a server rebuild can often exceed $3000 and a workstation $500 plus the cost of lost time and productivity.

In fact, we provide all this plus more on our CARE Agreement - a supported network service agreement for a fixed cost each month enabling your businesses to budget effectively for your IT needs.

So what are the other real advantages?

- Proactive solution rather than being re-active – this will reduce downtime and ensure the most availability possible – less time lost by staff, less inconvenience for clients.

- Less "emergencies" for things to be repaired or fixed – better work environment for all

- Maximise the life of the server and workstations by identifying issues promptly

- Appropriate updates are installed at the right time making sure that your network is as secure as possible with less likelihood of crashes PLUS scheduling of these updates at a convenient time rather than having to apply due to urgent necessity.

- Being aware of future financial requirements for the network (eg knowing that drive space is running out, a hard drive is failing or the tape drive is starting to fail)

- Assist in the budgeting process by fixing IT costs

- Priority service AND a fixed price for the whole of your IT support – no more unexpected bills to pay.

This actually shifts the responsibility of looking after your network to us.

Instead of you needing to decide if service is necessary and then having to find funds for it, it is in our best interest to have your network behaving perfectly – resulting in less callouts to fix issues, less angst for you and your people and better productivity – all at a fixed cost.

So what are the different levels?

WATCH AGREEMENT

We have found some people prefer to do much of the work themselves or pay for work on an hourly basis.

We monitor servers, workstations and other devices on their network, report alerts and issues to them and they purchase time on an ad hoc basis to correct the issues.

This is really an enhancement of a break/fix model where we are providing as much pre-warning of problems as possible.

We are also monitoring the performance of the network and receiving early warning of failures.

This model suits situations where:
- there are technical people on staff who are budgeted to provide in-house IT support.
- people are unsure about moving from the traditional break/fix model

REMOTE CARE AGREEMENT

Under this Agreement, we provide the monitoring aspects of the Watch Agreement with unlimited remote support.

We find we can fix the majority of issues remotely and can offer technical support to the users on the network thus fixing most of the cost of owning a network.

This agreement does not cover any work that requires our engineers to attend site and attendance is billed at our standard rates.

If the Disaster Recovery Option is included, we can recover many of the situations where a computer or server has crashed without coming to site but we may require assistance from local staff.

The main issues we find we need to attend site to fix include:
- Diagnosing network issues (eg cabling problems, etc)
- Rebuilding of a server
- Rebuilding of a workstation
- Resolving complex issues involving a number of factors

While this agreement provides much of the support needed for most networks and is often the best practical option for remote sites, it often requires more time for local staff to assist in the diagnosis and correction of the problem.

Where staff time is valuable, a full Care Agreement is the best option.

CARE AGREEMENT

Simply put, if it has to do with the computers, network or servers, it becomes our problem.

We monitor the network and its components, respond to computer alerts and alarms, plan to prevent issues and work to predict the requirements of the network over time.
We help you plan to get the best value from your network and maintain the best uptime possible.

Every issue on your network is our issue – your users communicate directly with us – often without need for approval to call support or seek assistance.

Because our job is to keep your network running.

We are your IT staff – but you have as many engineers as you need at any time. We are at work every day - we don't get sick, take holidays, need to be recruited and trained AND you can always find us. You don't have to check if we are doing our job – you will know because your network is working fine.

All at a fixed price.

At the commencement of any agreement, we will audit the network and prepare documentation of the network. From this, we will prepare recommendations for the successful maintenance of the network.

We do reserve the right to identify issues caused by not following our advice and the agreement may be altered to exclude certain parts.

We find that the cost of the audit and commencing the agreement is typically equal to the cost for one month of the program.

Contracts are generally for 12, 24 or 36 months.