

The

invisible

Infrastructure



Out of Sight, Out of Mind

Many business managers have no issue describing their organizations' physical infrastructure, like the building roof's condition or the electrical service. But they can overlook the digital infrastructure, which has lately grown for most organizations due to remote work and cloud computing, including AI-based tools. This unseen digital growth brings risks that many organizations are unprepared to manage.

And as organizations grow, their digital infrastructure becomes more

Above: People more readily take care of what they can see, but not so much those things – like cloud-based digital tools and assets – that are behind the scenes.

complex and what once worked for a small team no longer scales effectively. Relying on a break-fix approach – calling for repairs only when something breaks – may seem cost-effective but often leads to downtime, lost opportunities and accumulating technical debt (where digital infrastructure is not maintained) that stands in the way of growth.

Businesses have IT management options depending on their size and needs: handling IT internally with a small team, outsourcing IT entirely, or adopting a hybrid approach combining internal staff with external providers.

IT setups vary widely and should align with how an organization operates. A common effective solution is partnering an internal team with a Managed Service Provider (MSP), which offers specialized expertise without the cost of full-time specialized employees. The division of responsibilities between internal staff and MSPs differs by business, with some internal teams focusing on strategy while MSPs handle execution. Others integrate an MSP into their strategic planning.

An IT team's roles can include strategic planning, incident response, network design, backup management, disaster recovery, real-time monitoring, patching, hardware maintenance, vendor management, user administration, cybersecurity,

Cover: Let's get digital. Unlike physical assets, digital systems are invisible but no less critical – with customer data, financial systems and operational processes.

help-desk support, compliance and cloud infrastructure management.

Because the responsibilities are so broad, to determine the best IT approach, organizations should assess their current IT handling, confidence in operational continuity in a crisis, readiness for opportunities that will depend on compliance or other IT-enabled function and ability to scale. Reflecting on these concepts can help reveal IT strengths and gaps, guiding decisions on whether to maintain internal IT, outsource or choose a hybrid model. In this report we'll take a look at some options.

Hybrid IT

By hybrid IT I'm referring to the collaboration between internal IT teams and external Managed Service Providers (MSPs) to accomplish cybersecurity and operational efficiency goals.

other and so the kind of support individuals need). MSPs offer people with specialized expertise, the ability to continuously monitor systems and coverage during staff absences. This is a partnership meant to reduce downtime, emergency expenses and the risk of overburdening staff.

For example, Spencer Machining (the company name is anonymized), a small aerospace component manufacturer, faced the challenge of complying with the Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification (CMMC) to secure a Department of Defense contract. Lacking in-house expertise, they partnered with an MSP to find security gaps, implement necessary controls and guide them in how to maintain compliance. The collaboration enabled Spencer to meet strict requirements and go after new business.

Similarly, Northborough Neighbors (anonymized company name), a small nonprofit, upgraded to Microsoft 365 Business and adopted a hybrid IT approach. Their internal administrator managed daily user support, while the MSP handled infrastructure setup, security configurations and complex technical issues. This arrangement helped them realize continuous operation, better security and compliance with grantors' security requirements.

The key advantage of co-managed IT lies in its flexibility and depth of expertise. Internal teams benefit from MSPs' broad experience

across multiple organizations, enabling proactive problem-solving and strategic planning. This collaborative approach fosters a resilient IT environment where roles are understood regarding security and operational continuity. The aim is to maximize the value of an organization's tech investments.



Above: How should a smaller organization best deal with IT? A hybrid sharing of responsibilities with an external provider may be the solution.

Organizations that integrate IT into decision-making processes tend to avoid costly issues, such as duplicated efforts or incompatible systems. In mergers or acquisitions, early IT involvement can lead to cost savings and better transitions.

Hybrid or co-managed IT models leverage the strengths of both internal staff and MSPs. Internal IT personnel have deep institutional knowledge which can aid routine support (employees may know each

Right: Reliable electricity is a given for an organization's building. Today a dependable digital infrastructure must be held to the same reliability standard.



Outsourcing IT

Outsourcing IT support to a Managed Service Provider (MSP) offers a scalable solution. An MSP acts as a comprehensive IT department, providing design, implementation, security, maintenance and proactive monitoring. This approach helps prevent crises by identifying issues early, defending systems against breaches and advising on automation and infrastructure improvements. Because MSPs are shared across multiple businesses, it spreads the cost of the expertise, making it more affordable than maintaining an equivalent in-house team.

MSPs are built to be able to deliver comprehensive IT services at a predictable monthly fee, reducing the financial burden and disruption of emergency repairs and unplanned downtime.

An MSP can also remove the technical constraints that limit strategic decisions, to help enable organizations to pursue new opportunities with confidence.

Just as reliable electricity is a given for an organization's building, today a dependable digital infrastructure is held to the same standard. Proper IT management helps an organization be ready for growth, compliance and unexpected demands. And by this approach IT goes from a liability to a strategic asset.

You Decide

Bryley's best clients understand IT is something the whole organization is wrapped up in: if IT is in the loop it can facilitate processes and remove production bottlenecks. Most employees use networked devices, and everyone who does, needs to be know and abide by best practices. And not least: knowing what to do in the event of an IT emergency is everyone's job.

IT goes from a liability to a strategic asset

The beauty of hybrid IT is its power and flexibility: an internal team has ingrained, institutional knowledge and an MSP can handle everything from infrastructure monitoring and help-desk support to strategic planning and vCIO services – it all depends on what support you decide your internal team needs most. A collaborative approach gets you the right expertise, it creates a stronger, more resilient IT environment for everyone in your organization.

This partnership is suited to catching problems before they become expensive emergencies – not because your team lacks capability, but because a deep bench of experts has seen patterns and solutions from working with multiple organizations.

A conversation with Bryley's Roy Pacitto can help you have clarity about your current IT and how to improve your IT posture. You can email Roy at RPacitto@Bryley.com or phone him at 978•562•6077 x217.



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