



FIVE IT MISTAKES TO AVOID:

EXPERT INSIGHT ON
**DETERMINING
TECHNOLOGY
NEED**

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INTRODUCTION

Strategic technology deployments can increase productivity, help reduce costs, and create new revenue streams. But while effectively deploying new technology is vital to the success of any organization, purchasing, and implementing optimal solutions can be challenging.

To help businesses navigate this complex landscape, Brother conducted a series of interviews with value-added resellers (VARs) that work closely with businesses to select the right technology solutions. These VARs have a unique understanding of how IT professionals think; as a result, they have witnessed many missteps that have led to “less than optimal” IT technology integrations. **What follows are five common - yet significant - mistakes identified during these discussions.**

MISTAKE NO. 1

PURCHASING TACTICALLY, NOT STRATEGICALLY

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PURCHASING TACTICALLY, NOT STRATEGICALLY

VARs noted that mid-sized business customers often misallocate or misplace IT project funds to address their problems. Vendors often do too good of a job selling their wares, and businesses consequently overspend on a single solution that only solves “part” of the problem addressing a single issue or pain point. According to the VARs we spoke to, the failure to think strategically about the bigger technology picture reveals a tendency among businesses to focus on a singular productivity concern rather than evaluating organizational needs, processes and growth as a whole.

“Decision-makers sometimes have pet projects that are less strategic and more tactical – they select solutions that plug a hole vs. rebuild a dam.”

– James Kuhl, Power Consulting

The VARs were asked if their customers favor solutions that might be regarded as “overkill,” or that provide more features or functions than necessary. The majority agreed with - and were not surprised by - Brother research that shows many businesses overspend by up to 90 percent each month on copier leases and managed print services.

The VARs believed many of their customers are unaware of their end users’ actual print volumes and the fact they are often paying for far more volume than they actually need. Organizations can remedy cost and productivity implications related to a poorly executed or outdated print strategy by first conducting an assessment of their existing needs and then deploying devices with only the necessary features, functionality and capacity required.

“Mid to large size companies sometimes spend thousands on solutions that could cost hundreds.”

– Jeff Dodd, OnsiteRIS, Inc.



MISTAKE NO. 2

UNDER-INVESTMENT IN IT SECURITY

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UNDER-INVESTMENT IN IT SECURITY

Most VARs indicated businesses are underinvesting in IT security. Many businesses still believe that hackers won't target them, or that basic security tools are sufficient. VARs help to educate their customers that any organization, regardless of size, can be hacked.

"Many mid to large size companies underinvest in security based on the assumption that they're not at significant risk."

– Jeff Dodd, OnsiteRIS, Inc.

One VAR participant noted businesses often refrain from spending on security solutions because of a sense of futility: even large companies with substantial IT security budgets and resources suffer from breaches. The seemingly unending news of attacks lends the impression there is no solution to the widespread cyber security problem. In addition, many businesses do not have a dedicated IT security team to perform preventative security. While proactively addressing security equates to an expense, VARs stressed fixing a security issue after a system has been breached is always more expensive than ensuring adequate protection ahead of time.



MISTAKE NO. 3

FEAR OF THE NEW

MISTAKE NO. 3

FEAR OF THE NEW

When it comes to IT, many professionals cling to old approaches and proven, tested technology. Learning new technologies intimidates them. An example identified by interviewed VARs is the underuse of cloud-based solutions. While businesses understand cloud efficiencies and cost savings, many are still wary. VARs attribute slow adoption to the learning curve required to understand a cloud-based approach as well as concerns about cloud management and security.

VARs admit that some of the promise of the cloud is over-hyped, but at the same time they point to a number of real-world business conditions that should prompt cloud consideration, such as when existing technology reaches end of life and a cloud-based approach can make financial and logistical sense. In addition, mid-sized businesses should constantly look for ways to operate more efficiently; thorough investigation and consideration of a cloud-based approach would be warranted. The VARs anticipate the development of new cloud solutions specifically for mid-sized businesses. VARs also predict the cost of cloud migrations will continue to drop, making the cloud even more attractive to companies of all sizes.

“Small and mid-sized businesses should take full advantage of the cloud ...it’s one of the best ways to collaborate and share necessary documents and work.”

– James Kuhl, Power Consulting

MISTAKE NO. 4

FAILURE TO CONSIDER THE
WIRELESS WORKFORCE

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FAILURE TO CONSIDER THE WIRELESS WORKFORCE

While no one can predict the future, IT pros can't ignore it. VARs expressed concerns regarding a lack of adequate long-term IT planning at many growing organizations. For example, few businesses are sufficiently prepared for the explosive proliferation of wireless devices in the workplace. The modern workforce demands flexibility in when, where and on which device they work.

According to the VARs interviewed, businesses recognize the importance of wireless technology to support an increasingly mobile workforce, but many do not understand that their current wireless infrastructure is not sufficient to keep up with this demand. Many networks are saturated with laptops, tablets and smartphones, leaving insufficient bandwidth. Assessing and updating wireless infrastructure can be expensive, but neglecting to address the issue can also lead to expensive downtime and have a significant, negative impact on worker productivity.

"We provide clients with cutting edge wireless access points. Approximately 50% do not make wireless a top priority, even though they know it's a business need."

– James Kuhl, Power Consulting

A large, stylized white number '5' is centered on a solid blue background. The number is composed of a white rectangular top section and a white curved bottom section. The text 'MISTAKE NO. 5' is positioned within the white rectangular section of the number. 'MISTAKE NO.' is in white, and '5' is in a bold, orange color.

MISTAKE NO. 5

FOCUSING ON COST ALONE

MISTAKE NO. 5

FOCUSING ON COST ALONE

VARs noted that businesses are also prone to make decisions based on cost rather than needs. Failing to make the necessary investments at the right time can lead to unnecessary downtime, security headaches and, ultimately, lost revenue. While budget limitations are a reality in every organization, mid-sized businesses can be particularly sensitive to costs.

“Many small and mid-sized businesses underspend - until they have a problem.”

– Jeff Dodd, OnsiteRIS, Inc. Determining

Growing companies need to avoid the pitfalls of cost-only thinking by approaching IT challenges with fact-based decisions. More knowledge leads to better IT strategies. Further, by linking IT functions to specific business outcomes, businesses are better able to prioritize purchases or redeploy unused assets. This approach can help IT extract the full value from existing technology and new solutions alike.

“Purchasing when something breaks is not strategic, and it will cost more in the long-run. You need a guiding principle that helps you reach and even exceed your IT and business goals.”

– Wayne Lerario, Nutmeg Technologies

SUMMARY

Deploying optimal IT solutions can be challenging. Awareness of the mistakes outlined in this eBook can help mid-market companies take advantage of new approaches and technologies and avoid pitfalls while deploying infrastructure that helps accelerate their businesses.

WHERE BROTHER CAN HELP

As noted in this eBook, many companies have not reviewed, assessed, or evaluated their existing output and input infrastructure and are wasting money and inhibiting employee productivity in the process. To learn more about how to optimize your business, visit www.BrotherThinkOptimized.com.

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