KEYSTONE
TECHNOLOGY CONSULTANTS

Using Managed IT Services Allowed a Busy Exec to Focus

How Keystone Technology Consultants helped a client transform their IT infrastructure to be more reliable and secure, allowing company leadership to refocus on the business.

At most small businesses, leaders wear multiple hats. As a company grows and operations become more complex, this approach quickly becomes unmanageable. Systems begin to break down, issues arise faster than they can be resolved and company leaders get bogged down with responsibilities that are not part of their core competency.

This was the case for our client's company, a metals recycling company based in Northeast Ohio. Our client, an executive who was not an IT expert, found himself in charge of the company's tech stack. Even though he was technically savvy, his involvement was a necessity rather than a choice. Frequent server crashes and mysterious IT issues drained hours from his workday and reduced the efficiency of the organization as a whole. An outsourced IT vendor provided some assistance but lacked the bandwidth to provide a complete solution.

When our client brought in the team from Keystone for an assessment, they discovered a range of IT issues that needed to be urgently addressed. Outdated technology, hidden malware and a cybersecurity breach had put more than company efficiency at risk. By partnering with Keystone, the client's company was able to transform their IT setup to eliminate these threats, increase the company's efficiency and allow our client to refocus on his role as an executive officer – no longer consumed by constant technical headaches.

The Challenge: Outdated IT Systems & Security Vulnerabilities

The state of our client's IT operations was clear as soon as Keystone consultants stepped into his office. IT hardware had overtaken the room, leaving no space for them to actually have a meeting. This disorganized IT setup made performing basic maintenance on the server a struggle, and this was just the beginning of our client's technology challenges.

Surface-Level Issues

First were the surface-level issues. The client's IT infrastructure was outdated and unreliable. Their server was more than a decade old and was running software from 2008. It was constantly crashing, and each time it did, it knocked out the company phone, payroll and ERP systems.

This meant that every server crash would nearly halt the company's operations. These issues alone would have been reason enough to engage an experienced IT provider, but they turned out to be just the tip of the iceberg

Deeper Issues

As part of any initial engagement, Keystone conducts a thorough risk assessment. For our client, the assessment revealed that the company's systems had been infected with malware. This cybersecurity breach gave a malicious entity the ability to spoof their email addresses and reach out to their contacts without the client knowing.

This breach put the company's reputation at risk. Immediate action was needed to remove malware from the server and prevent bad actors from creating this sort of vulnerability in the future.

The Solution: A Complete Overhaul

To address the client's IT challenges, Keystone developed a comprehensive solution that started from the ground up.

Upgrading Server Infrastructure

The first and most critical step was dealing with the compromised server. Keystone began by removing the malware that had infiltrated the system and physically reorganizing the on-premise server infrastructure. Once the server was cleaned and reorganized, they upgraded the old operating system and consolidated the company's virtual servers into a more streamlined and efficient setup.

In addition to this, Keystone introduced a remote access solution that allowed them to monitor and modify the servers without being physically on-site. This made IT management much more efficient, allowing Keystone to quickly respond to potential problems.

Implementing Cutting Edge Cybersecurity & IT Technology

To protect our client against cybersecurity attacks in the future, the Keystone team installed vital security technologies:

- A new state-of-the-art firewall that would block unauthorized access.
- New antivirus software that could detect potential malware on the computer.
- A new company password policy that made all employee passwords more secure.
- A new, multi-factor authentication (MFA) policy for extra account security.

Lastly, Keystone implemented a disaster recovery procedure. This ensured that if the system was compromised, they could quickly restore the client's systems with minimal downtime and minimal data loss.

Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA): Multi-factor authentication (MFA) is a security process that requires users to verify their identity through two or more verification methods before accessing a system. It often requires employees to enter both a password and a temporary code sent to their phone. This means that even if a hacker has access to a company username and password, they still won't be able to get in without also having access to the temporary code.

The Solution: A Complete Overhaul

MDR: The Next Step in Cybersecurity

Managed Detection and Response (MDR) is a cybersecurity service that combines advanced technology with expert human analysis to detect, monitor, and respond to threats in real time. It enhances security without requiring extensive in-house resources. If our client had MDR in place, it would have prevented many of the issues above. Key benefits of MDR include:

- Rapid Threat Detection & Response: MDR reduces the time to detect and respond to threats from weeks or months to minutes, minimizing damage.
- Continuous Threat Hunting: Experts proactively identify and neutralize threats that automated systems may miss.
- 24/7 Monitoring & Incident Response: Around-the-clock coverage ensures quick action against potential attacks.
- Reduced Alert Fatigue: MDR prioritizes security alerts, allowing organizations to focus on critical threats.
- Optimized Security Posture: By managing configurations and eliminating vulnerabilities, MDR strengthens overall defenses.

MDR is an essential solution for organizations looking to enhance security without increasing internal workload. We are recommending this service to all clients who want to strengthen their defenses against cyberthreats.

The Results: Secure Systems and Streamlined Efficiency

Before partnering with Keystone, our client had two key goals:

1. Ensure the safety of their systems and data
2. Remove the burden of constant IT management from our client, the busy executive

Keystone's comprehensive overhaul of its IT infrastructure accomplished both.

With the new system in place, everything works without anyone at the company needing to worry about day-to-day IT issues. The company's employees no longer experience the frustrations of frequent server crashes or downtime, and the company no longer loses valuable time due to technical failures. Our client is no longer distracted by the overwhelming responsibility of managing the company's IT and is now able to focus on his job as a CFO.

In addition, the company's new advanced firewall, antivirus software and security protocols have thwarted multiple attempts by malicious actors to breach their systems. Thanks to these systems, the client's data remains secure and their business reputation is protected.

What Our Client Takes Away From This Experience

If there's one thing our client says about this experience, it's this:

> **"Don't wait to take action. If you're busy and spending too much time on tech instead of your actual job, it will only get worse. By working with Keystone, we were able to fix all of the issues that had been plaguing us for months and focus on the business. Our only regret is not doing it sooner."**

Not addressing your ongoing IT problems not only wastes time but also leaves you vulnerable to cybersecurity threats without you even knowing it. With Keystone Technology Consultants, you get reliable IT infrastructure that ensures you have secure and streamlined systems, allowing you to focus on your business instead of the tech that supports it.

START THE CONVERSATION