TECHNOLOGY CONCERNS FOR BUSINESS RELOCATION:

Managing a Move or a New Branch Opening

When it's time to relocate your business or open a new branch, there are more than a few pieces involved to make the process go smoothly. The physical act of moving equipment and furniture is tough enough. But what about the technology concerns for business relocation and organizing the setup or integration of your IT services?

For a smooth IT transition, careful planning is key. And giving yourself plenty of lead time is crucial, as there are many providers who can't perform installations in short order, depending on the solutions you require. In fact, some services require up to two months notice in order to take effect in a timely manner at your new location.

During business relocation, there are a number of technology-related concerns to keep in mind for an office move to succeed. Often, the best option is to utilize the expertise of outsourced telecom or IT partners to make it happen.

This whitepaper aims to address the key technology concerns for business relocation when moving to a new office or opening a new branch entirely. We will discuss specific IT services to plan for, what your business should prioritize to make the process go smoothly, and how an outsourced provider can help.

THE TOP 3 TECHNOLOGY CONCERNS FOR BUSINESS RELOCATION

Relocating your business is a challenge overall. Of particular concern are issues related to IT services. Knowing where companies like yours have run into speed bumps, and how those problems are best addressed, will help you better plan your relocation or new branch opening.

Keeping (or Changing) Your ISP

Moving your internet service to a new location is, unfortunately, not as simple as unplugging a router and plugging it in somewhere else. Most internet service providers (ISPs) need advance notice that service is being transferred or

newly installed at a business location.

The first step is to determine if your current ISP is available at your new location. If it is, at least 30 days notice is typically required (and for some ISPs, as much as 60 days). If your current ISP doesn't service your new location, you'll need to give yourself at least 90 days to evaluate and select a provider and schedule the installation so there are no interruptions in service.

Cabling

A frequently overlooked detail is the planning required for the installation of cable at your new location. To avoid the frustration of situations such as employees requiring extension cords to power their internet, or a lack of outlets in the copy room, it's imperative to ensure effective management of cable installation.

One way to do this is to facilitate early collaboration between the vendors that are installing electrical outlets and connections for your IT equipment. That way, a coordinated plan can be developed between your ISP, cabling vendor, and even the interior designer, so that all required cabling is already in place before you execute your office move.

Phone Systems

Moving your phone system, whether on-premise or in the cloud, isn't as simple as plugging it in at your new location. On-premise systems need to be properly disconnected and then reconnected one phone at a time. Further complicating things is that the phones may be tied to your ISP, which you ideally will have worked with already to ensure service at the new location. For VoIP service, it's important to account for the time it will take the provider to process the move so that your voice service continues uninterrupted.

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PRIORITIES FOR A SUCCESSFUL RELOCATION

Keeping in mind that your ISP, cabling, and phone system are your main concerns, avoiding pitfalls associated with moving those services to a different location or new branch should be a top priority. There are a few risk areas involved to be aware of in terms of technology concerns for business relocation, and planning for them well in advance will help set you up for a successful transition.

Planning and Management

As with any element of an office move, winging it isn't an option for your IT services. The creation of a thorough plan is step one toward a successful move. With a solid plan and proper management, you can avoid delays associated with moving your technology, including costly downtime. A good rule of thumb is to begin the planning process by contacting your vendors to make them aware of your move at least two months in advance.

Assigning someone to serve as a point person or project manager for the IT portion of the move is a wise decision. This central point of contact can work with both your employees and your technology providers and facilitate a smoother transition as a funnel for all IT-related elements of the move.

Security

The risk to your systems, data, and even physical security naturally increase during the process of a move. While in transition, processes and policies might not be followed, shortcuts might be taken, and doors — whether physical doors or vulnerable entry points to IT systems — are left open. To ensure the security of your data, create backups of all company data systems, including firewalls and servers, and store them in a location that won't be affected by the move.

All employees should be educated on the increased risks involved in the move. They should be given training on preventive actions they can take as well as the consequences of failure to adhere to security policies during the transition.

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Connectivity

Upon completion of the move, one key step to a successful transition is to ensure thorough testing of your systems and network at the new location. Phone systems, including whether call-forwarding functionality is working, need to be tested, as well as servers and network connections. In some cases, individual phones might need to be tested, and even whether both incoming and outgoing emails are being received and sent.

LEVERAGING AN OUTSOURCED IT PARTNER FOR A SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS RELOCATION

With all of the IT and telecom factors at play in an office relocation or new branch opening, managing the move alone requires full-time attention. Even the planning stage to ensure your ISP, cabling, and phone systems are all going to transfer smoothly can be a monthslong process that requires a high level of coordination among different vendors.

An outsourced partner, such as a managed IT provider, can help facilitate the transition to a new location effectively while removing the added stress from your plate. They have the capacity to plan the details of your move far in advance. Activities such as site visits can be the responsibility of the managed IT provider, which will have the expertise to understand cabling requirements and ideal configurations for your equipment, as well as the needs you'll have to keep your communications systems up and running.

An outsourced partner can be particularly helpful with regard to critical aspects of the move, including security, backups, and avoiding downtime. A managed IT provider can take over the responsibility of ensuring your data is securely backed up in a location that isn't affected by the move. And while it might be impossible to avoid some downtime as your IT services are transitioned to a new location, secure backup through an off-site partner is an effective way to ensure downtime is minimized.

If your company is preparing to move to a new location or open a new branch, it might be time to consider an outsourced IT partner to facilitate a smooth transition. With all the responsibilities to shoulder in the transition, offloading technology concerns for a business relocation to a trusted partner is an intelligent approach for a successful move.

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