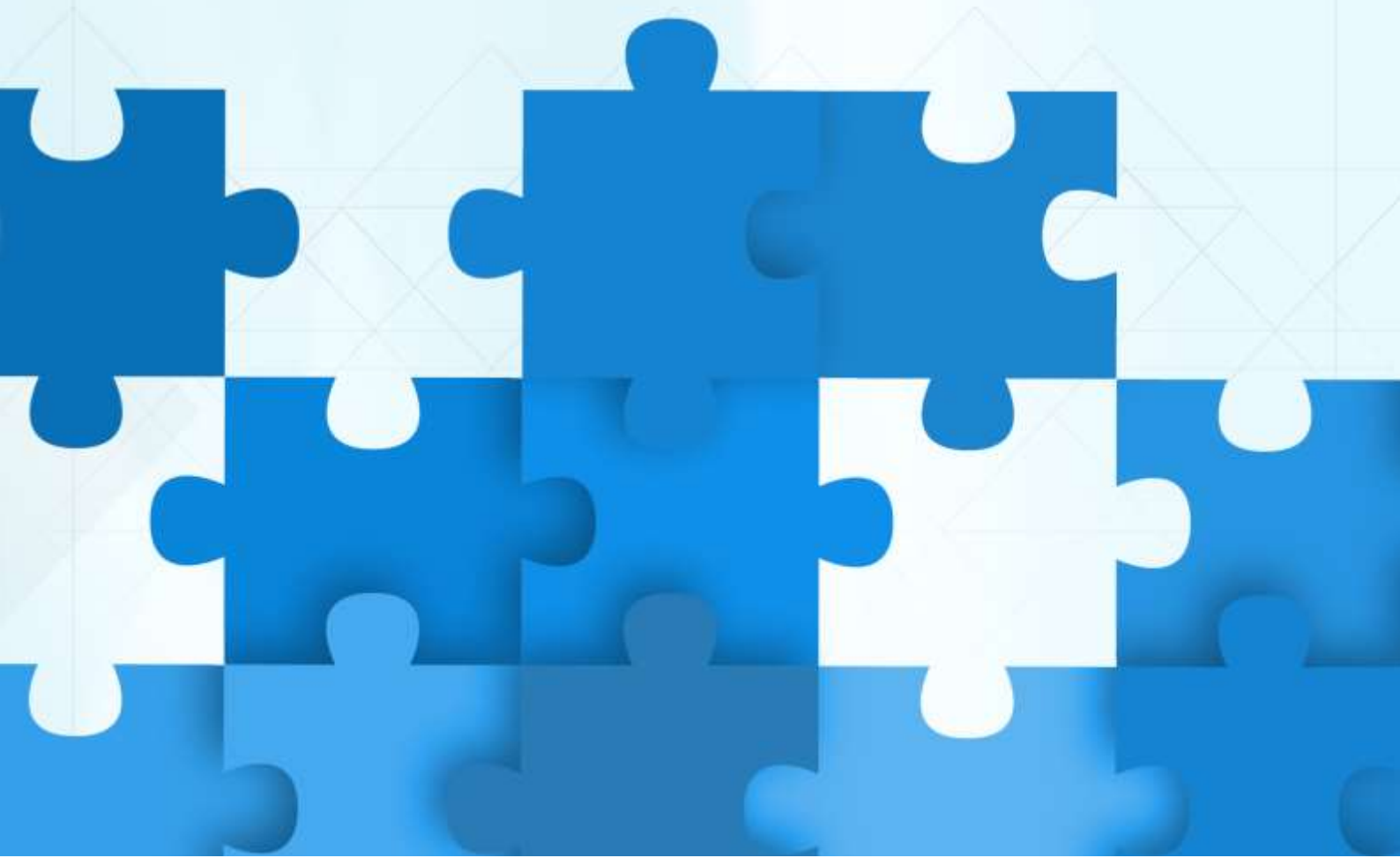# BUT WAIT, THERE'S MORE:

ALL YOUR MSP CAN DO

EXPAND YOUR THINKING ABOUT EXTERNAL IT PARTNERS

The role of managed service providers is becoming better appreciated by business. Yet many have a narrow view of what the MSP can do. This eBook explores other areas an MSP can address technology challenges and complexities.

The market for managed service providers (MSP) is growing. More businesses are recognizing the value of expert, remote IT monitoring and management. But, these IT professionals can make a difference beyond the common concerns.

This eBook will explore other, often untapped, areas where the MSP can also make a difference. These include:

- Forecasting future concerns
- Spearheading AI/automation advances
- Putting the right infrastructure in place
- Identifying security vulnerabilities

Read on to expand your thinking about external IT partners. See how MSPs support your business with proactive, remote services and so much more.

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MSP Myth Debunked

You might think only enterprise-sized businesses can enjoy MSP services. That's not the case! Small- and mid-sized businesses often turn to these specialists to secure data, manage networks, and use IT best practices.

Recognized Advantages of an MSP

There are four main reasons businesses of any size turn over some or all IT concerns to an MSP partner.

Removes IT worries.

The standard role of an MSP is to provide server and systems monitoring and maintenance. This team of experts will manage the hardware and software you have in place. Plus, they'll proactively ensure business technology continues to meet your evolving needs.

An MSP is also available to support your users and their IT needs. Taking help desk duties from internal IT can lead to improved business processes.

Reduces costs.

Your MSP can help cut business costs by reducing infrastructure expenses. These IT experts get to know your systems to increase operational efficiency. With an MSP on your side, you can also avoid the expense of recruiting and retaining your own large in-house IT team.

Matching your business with the right technology, MSPs right-size the IT budget. This might mean endorsing a cloud migration or eliminating duplicate software. The answer will be unique to you needs.

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Help prevent downtime.

Partner with an MSP to avoid something going wrong and then needing to find someone to solve the problem. For one, part of their job is to help you avoid downtime. Plus, if something does go wrong, they step right in to fix the issue. Already knowing how your business tech and processes work helps expedite your recovery.

No business is too small to hack or breach. The MSP can also help develop business continuity and disaster recovery plans. Business continuity anticipates what you'll do about physical premises, staffing, and IT. Disaster recovery focuses on getting you back up and running after a disaster.

Protects from data loss and breach.

An MSP gets to know your business to help future-proof your IT services. They also ensure greater risk management.

The MSP can take over your system security. They can add protective firewalls, filtering and scanning. They'll also work to keep technology up to date and patched against vulnerabilities.

An MSP can also install data backup to protect important assets and valuable data. It's best to establish one backup on a local, onsite computer. Then, you'll also have a backup on a remote device and another in the cloud. They'll also test the backup to confirm your business can restart its system when needed.

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Each of these on their own is a great reason to bring in an MSP. But there are so many more problems that an MSP can solve for you. Let's turn to those next.

Forecasting future concerns

Your business is likely focused on getting the job done. The important thing is that your technology does what's expected of it, when you need it. Yet an MSP partner takes a wider lens view of your IT.

The MSP considers several different hypothetical scenarios to ensure resilience. Anticipating what could happen helps to build better protection and plan alternative approaches. Instead of scrambling in surprise, you can enjoy working with a partner who plans ahead.

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Take the COVID-19 pandemic. No one expected that so many people would have to work from home, and for so long. But businesses that had remote working in place were able to transition more smoothly.

An MSP plans ahead for any instances when a user isn't able to get into the office. This could mean putting servers in the cloud, which gives users access to always-on features from almost any device in any location.

The MSP also thinks ahead to identify and fix any security deficiencies. You might not want to think the worst of your employees, but the MSP has to do so. They'll prepare you for a rogue employee by segmenting access to limit any damage. They'll take precautions around stolen laptops or lost phones, as well.

Spearheading AI/automation advances

Every business has its share of time-consuming tasks, of which many are manual and paper-based. It's the way things have always been done. The MSP brings an objective outsider's perspective to routine processes. Artificial intelligence and process automation sound intimidating, but the MSP's expertise supports digital transformation.

The price tag could seem scary. Yet you can free up employees for more creative, critical thinking tasks. Or you might be able to do away with contractors doing work the technology could take on. That can add up to thousands of dollars saved.

Erring on the side of caution works, but the MSP has depth of expertise to understand all AI and other new technologies can offer.

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The value of process automation

Automation is a cheap and efficient way to get benefits. You can improve customer service, address compliance, reduce employee stress, and tackle data increases. McKinsey has seen a 200-percent return on investment with process automation in the first year.

Putting the right infrastructure in place

How much do you know about and understand the IT infrastructure of your business? You likely made purchasing decisions based on budget and convenience. Your MSP partner approaches your IT infrastructure with a broader, nuanced perspective.

They will get to know your business, but they also know what works and what doesn't in your industry. They keep current on the latest technology offerings and service providers, and they can consult with you to ensure that:

- you're not getting fleeced by a service provider;
- you buy the tools that best suit your business;
- you partner with vendors who add value.

The MSP makes recommendations that aren't only about cost savings. Yes, they can find those, but they're also paying attention to what purchases can avoid trouble down the road. Your MSP might know a certain internet service provider is unreliable or slow to respond. They also ask the right questions to streamline integrating new IT tools.

Identifying security vulnerabilities

Your business knows by now that it needs to protect itself against hackers and cyberattack, but your cybersecurity efforts can't stop there. The MSP will work also to deter and detect. They will work to identify:

- employees who might need extra security training;
- computers that are generating the most warnings;

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- devices that are not current on antivirus protection and security patching.

The MSP can even do security assessments to determine what you are doing well and what you could be doing better. They can also gauge the cyber hygiene practices of your people. For one, they might send a fake social engineering email to see whether people at your company open it. This would suggest the need for cybersecurity education.

Plus, the MSP knows how to respond and recover if the worst does happen. They can manage communication with stakeholders during and after an incident. The MSP's experts can also analyze the response and determine the impact of any incidents.

Do more with your MSP partner

Working with an MSP cuts IT worries, corrals costs, and helps protect your business. But that's not all. Visionary

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MSPs develop a robust IT environment for your business. They anticipate issues, identify potential improvements, and develop a reliable and resilient technological infrastructure.

MSPs offer the expertise and solutions that best suit your business. Your MSP partner can provide tools and support to increase revenues and support innovation. Don't stick with the standard features only: take full advantage of the opportunities of working with your MSP.

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Phone: **(813) 563-1000**

Email: **Support@RYT.Tech**

Web: **www.RYTITSolutiosn.com**

Facebook: **facebook.com/RYTITSolutions**