

HOW TO DO MORE FOR LESS MANAGING YOUR CORPORATE NETWORK?



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01 Current situation of the IT department

In the current economic climate, generating a higher volume of products and services with fewer human resources is a clear and evident necessity of companies in order to overcome the crisis and to become more competitive and guarantee business continuity.

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For this reason, a study by Spiceworks shows that the budgets companies allocate to the IT department will continue rising. This data simply confirms a trend observed in previous years in which a constant increase **in investment in information technologies clearly aimed at optimizing productive processes** was noticed.

Although higher expenditure implies higher dependency on IT infrastructures and associated services and tools (software and licenses), according to the same report, growth in technical staff has not been proportional or even similar:

IT budgets reach highest point in last three years, while hiring freezes up.

IT budgets at SMBs are on the rise in the second half of 2012. The average annual IT budget is now \$162,000, up from the \$152,000 reported for the first half of 2012. Only 26% of SMBs plan to hire IT staff in the second half of 2012, which is down from 31% a year ago.

Once again “doing more with less” is not a buzzword but a necessity for the IT department.



Doing more with less

Analyzing this data, if general IT expenditure is constantly rising and the budget allocated to human resources is frozen or even cut, the aforementioned report asks; where is the largest proportion of the IT budget headed?

To be specific, the largest proportion of company budgets are allocated to buying PCs, servers, laptops and tablets and to extending and upgrading software and existing computers. At the same time 'BYOD' (Bring Your Own Device) is the acronym of another trend that is currently gaining popularity, particularly in SMBs. According to the study "Mobile Security Strategies: Threats, Solutions and Market Forecasts" by **Juniper Research**, the number of personal devices (laptops, tablets and mobile phones) used by employees for their jobs will more than double within two years.

IT Challenges

As a result of these two trends, the IT department has witnessed a constant increase in the variety and complexity of the infrastructures to maintain; gone are the days when

PCs and servers were typically hosted in the same office and were relatively easy to manage and maintain. Distributed environments, road warriors, BYOD and mobile devices, all using a large number and variety of applications... that is the current reality of an IT department. The larger the IT infrastructure, the more heterogeneous and complex its management becomes and the more interoperability problems arise between devices or software from different manufacturers. All of this results in a higher volume and wider diversity of incidents that a reduced IT department must manage and resolve.

Nowadays, the reality is crushing IT departments and trashing businesses' bottom-line. IT departments need to work more intelligently and efficiently but not with more difficulties.

Ironically, IT departments are facing the challenge of reducing personnel costs and maintaining quality of service while the environment to manage grows and grows in a way that is not completely controllable.



02

What are IT departments doing to manage this problem?

In an initial attempt to increase the efficiency of the human resources available, all IT departments currently use remote device management tools. Cheap in general and in some cases, free, these solutions are easy to implement and can be rapidly adopted by the company's technical team. Although these solutions are essential for responding to users' problems, all of them have the same basic defect: fragmentation.

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If we examine the tools that an IT department uses on a daily basis, we will see that each of them has a very specific task: audit network devices, apply patches and install software remotely or allow remote access to devices, among others. In principle, it seems a complete functionality, **so what is the problem with using these sets of tools?**



Fragmented tools: Ineffectiveness

Firstly, as they are separate tools, they generally belong to different software providers and therefore, each tool has its own data repository and separate configurations from the rest. Each tool alone can be effective but does not explicitly form part of the process of a wider environment, which includes the full workflow for resolving an incident.

For example, imagine that a user detects an error on his computer. In general, he will end up calling the technical department or writing an email describing the problem. A technician will contact the user to get more details and warn him that he will connect to the affected device through a remote control program in order to detect the cause of the error. After examining it, he will decide that a series of system libraries need to be updated and to do this, he will connect to the device again with an additional patch management or remote software installation tool. If everything goes well, the technician will send the user an email confirming that the problem has been resolved and the user will send the technician an email closing the incident.

Although this could seem effective, this scheme of functioning is actually quite inefficient, as a global view of the entire process cannot be obtained. The user's

explanations are not registered in a central repository and they are not linked to the remote control session or the research or corrective actions carried out by the technician (in this case, using remote software installation or patch management tools). Neither are the user's confirmation emails or the resolution process part of the centralized repository.

How does this work scheme affect the efficiency of the IT department?

Firstly, it prevents proactivity and reuse of the work carried out: the incident could arise in another device but the steps taken to resolve it are not accessible in a centralized way, the rest of the technicians in the department do not know who resolved it, how it was resolved, when it happened and on which device. What usually happens is that the technical team will be inactive waiting for the next phone call describing the same problem instead of taking the measures necessary to anticipate the problem.

Secondly, as the tools used are not integrated, the status of an incident in progress cannot be obtained. Technicians cannot find out who is in charge of the incident or the steps already performed to estimate a resolution time. It will not be easy for another technician to takeover an incident opened by a colleague and it

is probable that different technicians use different tools to perform the same task, according to their individual preferences, hindering collaboration within the department.

Finally, in relation to the rest of the company, the performance of the IT department is difficult to quantify. How many incidents did they resolve? How long did it take? Which are the most problematic devices? On average, how long were they offline due to incidents? These are questions that are difficult to answer with fragmented tools.

IT departments have tried to improve their efficiency using a set of fragmented tools, which at the same time, have introduced other types of inefficiencies latent in the department. The lack of centralization and a clear representation of the entire process, from monitoring that allows early detection of the incident to its resolution, lead to tasks being constantly repeated and restrict the knowledge to a few key people in the company. For this reason and considering that IT infrastructures are getting larger and the human resources in the department are not evolving at the same pace, inefficiencies are multiplying and end up saturating the IT department, directly affecting the performance of the company's staff.

The evolution: Remote and management monitoring tools

However, the game is far from lost. The evolution of Remote Management and Monitoring (RMM) solutions towards completely centralized and unified platforms has created a new way of managing devices, which is simpler, more efficient and integrates a myriad of advanced tools (monitoring, scripts or patch management to name a few), which result in higher quality of service.

But, what are remote management platforms / solutions (Remote Management and Monitoring - RMM)? As its name suggests, it is a series of tools grouped under a single platform and created in order to remotely monitor and manage servers, workstations and other network devices. By doing this, IT departments can manage all of a user's devices from a single platform and respond to problems more quickly and efficiently.

For example, instead of "waiting for a call", technicians can set up warnings to supervise specific aspects of the performance of each device and to ensure that an abnormal situation does not become a real problem that affects the productivity of the end user.

Having all of the information on the device centralized on a single platform means that technicians can now base their diagnoses on specific data on each device (change logs, among others), and not on what the end user "thinks" the problem could be.

Having a centralized platform means that technicians can manage all of the information generated and offer a homogeneous service. Centralized systems for assigning tickets simplify incident resolution in a structured and organized way. Furthermore, any modification, such as additional structures, patches, etc. that the technicians create on the platform are available to the rest of the technicians. This allows them to use them to offer support and resolve customers' incidents.

In addition to controlling certain behavior, informing technicians using warnings and assigning tickets on the platform, any problems detected can be resolved more efficiently, offering higher device stability and reliability and keeping it automatically updated and patched.

This in turn, generates more benefits for the customer, as it directly affects its income statement. In this respect, Gartner says that effective management can reduce the total cost of ownership of desktop computers by 42%.

Furthermore, problems can be automatically resolved using scripts or command sequences associated to specific monitoring tasks. For example, if a service is blocked, it can be configured to restart automatically. Once a monitoring task and an action have been created, it can be applied to various cases, to some or many customers on several devices with just a few clicks.

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03

Panda Security's value proposal: Systems Management

Taking into account the many difficulties company IT departments have to face, market trends and the new possibilities offered by technology, Panda Security has developed Panda Cloud Systems Management, a platform for managing, monitoring and maintaining IT systems. This solution is designed to allow IT departments to manage their IT infrastructures simply and proactively, reducing costs and improving their efficiency.

Benefits

The new solution Systems Management solution makes life easier for the IT department.



Detailed information

Detailed information, constantly updated and available in real-time about all of the computers and devices across your network.

As the head of the IT department, would you be able to say off the top of your head which computers and which software each user has installed? How long would it take you to find out? With distributed offices and a growing number of mobile employees, it is very difficult to control all the computers and devices in the company. Think about how much time you could save if you could immediately count all of the devices across your network!

The inventory feature will allow the head of IT to obtain updated information about the status of your network. With Systems Management, this information will be available instantaneously and constantly updated. It will provide a full view of your entire network, as it includes automatic hardware and software inventories. It can perform a full inventory and also manage the

licenses installed on each computer in the company and the changes made to each computer.



Continuous monitoring

Constant monitoring of the most critical aspects of your network in order to anticipate problems and keep the situation under control.

¿How many times have you realized too late that there was a problem that could have been minimized if it had been detected on time? How much time does the IT department have to resolve incidents?

Nowadays, companies are more dependent on their IT department than ever: everything can affect the correct functioning of the business, from programs and applications that directly affect employee productivity to confidential data stored on servers that could damage the company's reputation if it were stolen.

The monitoring features and comprehensive activity reports allow the IT department to obtain a constantly updated snapshot of the status of your company's network. Furthermore, it can anticipate user

problems before they arise, allowing support technicians to work according to device data and change logs and not according to what the end user tells them, eliminating the need for lengthy conversations with users in order to diagnose the problem.

Although the technicians in your company can always go to the users to resolve the problem, with Systems Management they can do this task remotely, wherever they may be, allowing them to control the situation and without needing to run from one place to another "putting out fires".

As a result, the IT department can offer users more complete and higher quality support..



Centralized management

Centralized management of updates and patches in order to optimize the IT department's time.

How many times have technicians had to go from computer to computer to check that the patch they wanted to install has been correctly installed on users' computers and devices?

It is obvious that going from computer to

computer to launch scripts, update software and resolve incident is not very practical. Systems Management provides centralized management of all computers and devices, anytime, wherever they are. This minimizes manual and repetitive tasks, optimizing the value of the IT department.

The technicians in the IT department will save a lot of time on resolving incidents and can stop guessing and start seeing for themselves how this solution makes things easier. They can resolve incidents or deploy patches, managing them integrally and simply from the console.

Cloud-based service

Cloud-based service that dramatically reduces the maintenance costs of your network.

¿How many times have you been told that the maintenance costs of the IT department must be reduced?

With an avalanche of new projects in the IT department to adapt the company structure to market changes and the new economic

climate, it is necessary to use solutions that are simpler, more flexible and easier to use and implement.

Systems Management is a cloud-based solution, with all of the associated benefits: it does not require additional infrastructure, it has very low maintenance costs and it is a service without fixed costs. And all of that, without considering the time and travelling expenses saved, directly results in money not wasted.

Cloud solutions allow you to dramatically reduce infrastructure and maintenance costs and allow simple management of the network.

Added value

Comprehensive reports that are customized to your needs to easily demonstrate the added value you offer the company.

As mentioned in previous points, there is no point going out of your way to help users and spending time that you do not have on them if they do not realize how much work has been done and even complain because

it has taken too long to resolve incidents.

With the comprehensive and detailed reports offered by Systems Management you can explain to company executives how your time has been used and how much your work is worth, as it gathers your daily activity, prevention tasks and of course, ticket management.

So with integrated reports, all of the activities carried out by your technicians and the time dedicated to each of their users can be justified.

04

General
features of
Systems
Management

Features



Inventory

Network inventory: find out what you have and its status.

The IT network? They do not even know what they have, how can they manage it? You cannot put the cart before the horse and it is necessary to know exactly what you have to start using it and make the most of it. With Systems Management, IT departments will have a complete and real-time view of all of the hardware and software in the office.

This view is permanent, as an automatic audit is performed every 24 hours, offering a full hardware and software inventory (including all Windows and Mac devices, and shortly smartphones too).

Additionally, it logs any changes made in the two environments and offers complete and flexible management of licenses (by group, profile or filter) so that they are easier to find.



Monitoring

Monitoring and control: find out if something has gone wrong or is going to go wrong.

You do not need a crystal ball to stay ahead of your users' problems; this smart solution allows you to anticipate when something is going to go wrong and will notify you through dashboards, graphs, etc.

More specifically, the solution offers:

- Process and service control
- Performance graphs
- Event logging
- Activity reports (global, by profile or device)
- Alert notifications
- Real-time dashboard
- Alert history for detecting incidents



Management

Computer and device management: manage devices and increase stability and reliability proactively and automatically.

To automate maintenance tasks is the best way to save money. The Systems Management central management console allows IT departments to deploy any type of file, script or critical patch, and to monitor the antivirus and firewall protection of all users.

In addition, the solution provides software information for bandwidth optimization and device management for scheduled maintenance and optimization tasks

The console simplifies management by deploying a single control agent for all devices, and gives details of all software licenses installed and used for all users.

 **Remote support****Remote support and help: connect to each device centrally and non-intrusively.**

When problems arise, the solution is often too intrusive for users (disruptions to the work of employees, incident resolution testing, etc.).

With Systems Management, IT department technicians can run diagnostics remotely and resolve issues transparently and non-intrusively to end users, wherever they are.

The console includes built-in remote access tools that provide access to users' resources in the background. In addition, it allows you to execute commands, view and manage event logs, run processes and services, edit the registry, etc. without disturbing users.

Finally, the solution allows remote management of Windows services and screenshots for troubleshooting purposes.

 **Reporting****Activity reports: show users why everything is working fine.**

As previously mentioned, users often do not know how much work the IT department is doing. To fix this, Systems Management offers activity reports that allow you to demonstrate the value of the work of the IT technicians in the company.

Technicians can configure the tool to create different types of reports (global, by profile and by device) adapted to their needs. This will allow them to show the success of their work and implement improvements to the network.

More specifically, the console includes the following features:

- Different types of reports (global, by profile and by device)
- Automatic report scheduler
- Device change log
- Remote activity reports by customer
- Hardware/software asset reports

With Systems Management, IT department technicians will be able to perform diagnoses and resolve incidents wherever they are, and non-intrusively.

You do not need a crystal ball to stay ahead of your users' problems. This smart solution allows you to anticipate when something is going to go wrong.

Summary

Systems Management

PROBLEM	SOLUTION	FEATURE	BENEFIT
You cannot manage it if you do not even know it exists	Find out what you have	Network inventory	Detailed information, constantly updated and available in real-time about all of the computers and device across your network.
Do you know when things go wrong?	Anticipate problems	Monitoring and control	Constant monitoring of the most critical aspects of your network in order to anticipate problems and keep the situation under control.
Can you automate your daily management tasks?	Resolve problems and deploy files centrally and automatically	Computer and device management	Centralized management of updates and patches in order to optimize the IT department's time.
Can you resolve problems non-intrusively?	Resolve incidents remotely and transparently	Remote support and help	Cloud-based service that dramatically reduces the maintenance costs of your network.
Can you easily justify your activity in each customer?	Demonstrate the full value of your work	Activity reports	Comprehensive reports that are customized to your needs to easily demonstrate the added-value it offers the company.

Take a free trial of Systems Management

From reading this white paper you will now have a clear idea of Panda Security's value proposal and the benefits that Systems Management can offer you: higher efficiency, lower maintenance costs and save time on resolving user incidents, to name a few.

This solution represents the next step in network management for businesses and is perfectly aligned with cloud computing and the needs of a new kind of customer, who demands value-added and custom services.

More control of the IT infrastructure means greater efficiency for your customers. It is time to say goodbye to the old way of doing things. No more

traveling to customers' premises, wasting time on the phone and not having time to concentrate on your business.

See for yourself the new way to manage IT networks, grow your business and differentiate your service. Take a free trial of Panda Cloud Systems Management.

Please visit <http://www.pandasecurity.com/uk/enterprise/solutions/cloud-systems-management/>

