

Managed Services

Enhance Profitability

Mitigate Risk



GUIDANT
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Enhancing Profitability and Mitigating Risk

Gone are the days when the mere presence of Information Technology (IT) represented a competitive business advantage. IT is now a vital element in business, and must deliver more value and contribute to the achievement of strategic business goals. Aligning IT with the needs of the business – delivering profits and mitigating risk – is the challenge. IT Maturity is the answer.

What do we mean by *IT Maturity*?

IT Maturity refers to the concept of a process-driven approach to IT in order to achieve efficient, predictable results specifically in the provision of service, management, protection and design of the IT assets. The de facto method today for measuring and achieving process control of IT is contained in the Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL). Because of the significant costs of personnel and resources required to achieve this process maturity, many organizations are leveraging Managed Service Providers (MSPs) for the critical, higher risk IT activities.

Utilizing the right MSP allows a business to focus on core functions where it derives its competitive advantage while controlling IT expenditures and acquiring competitive capabilities it could not otherwise achieve.

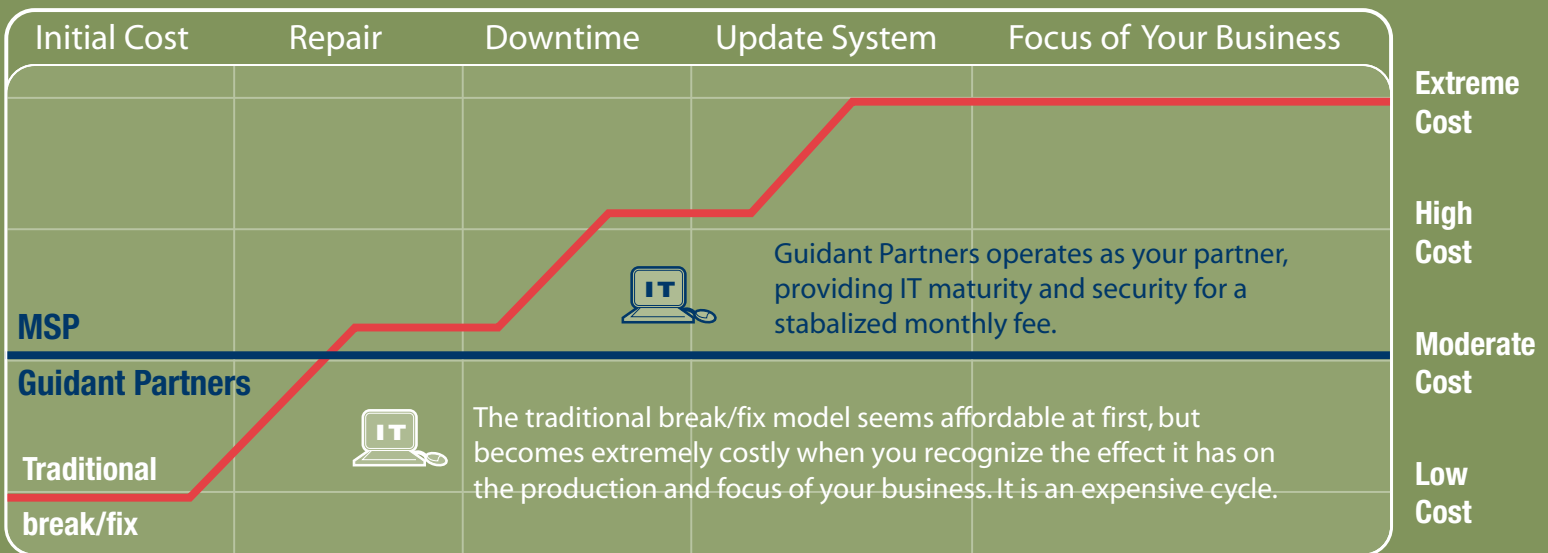
Managed Services -
a collection of IT services designed to minimize the inherent risks associated with IT as well as avoid and mitigate the business impacts arising from IT failure.





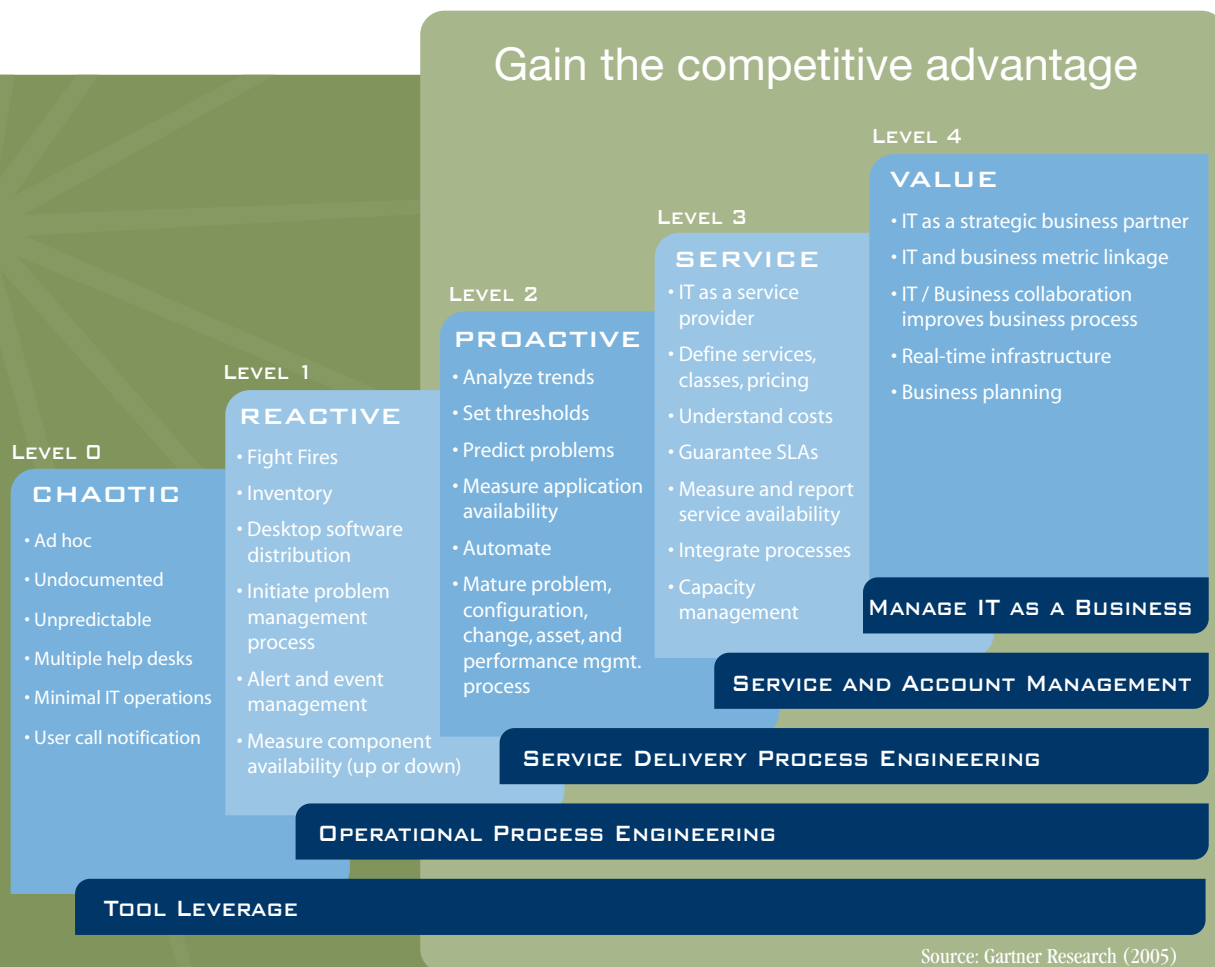
The disruptive and costly “break/fix” mentality (paying for downtime) has given way to the concept of paying for results (uptime).

Paths to IT Maturity



MSP = Uptime

Carnegie-Mellon University initially developed the Capability Maturity Model for the purpose of predicting operational success in software development companies. This model was later adapted for IT organizations and appears in the figure below. As a company moves from left to right on the model, process maturity and capability improves.



Since the vast majority of businesses are in the Chaotic and Reactive levels, simply achieving a Proactive IT maturity level can represent a strategic competitive advantage and improved delivery within the organization. Companies in the more advanced levels enjoy greater capability, better managed IT expenditures, and continual strategic improvements. Organizations who take advantage of Managed Services realize the benefits of IT Maturity without having to make the in-house investment.



Established in 1988 . . .

Why Guidant Partners?

What makes Guidant Partners unique in this rapidly evolving marketplace is the real world experience of our staff and proven methodologies. Using a proprietary framework developed from industry accepted best practices, ITIL standards, and innovative methods, Guidant Partners accelerates our clients toward the highest levels of service and efficiency. Whether we deliver a single managed service to a mature IT operation or a complete provisioning of IT to a company with no internal IT department, we bring the value of mature processes normally achieved only by large corporations to all of our clients - regardless of their size or level of IT maturity.

Guidant Partners is an industry leading IT Managed Service Provider.

Utilizing our proven methods, we deliver increased system uptime and predictable IT costs. Our mission is to reduce business risk and provide a higher return on IT investments.

Our goal is to be your partner; our focus is serving your business.



A Word From the President...

Many of us have heard the adage “Change is the only constant.” The use of technology has never been greater than it is today. Information Technology is impacting nearly every area of business. Reliable information systems are no longer a luxury – they are a requirement.

As the founder and president of Guidant Partners, it is my goal to empower your success by guiding you with Information Technology solutions that support and converge with your business goals.

-Steve Burgess, CEO, Guidant Partners





IT's Role in Profitability: Risk or Benefit?

Regardless of the size of your organization, IT has a powerful influence on productivity and profitability. The purpose of IT is to automate and accelerate business processes. In today's information driven economy, how well companies Receive, Process, and Manage the flow of information determines their financial success. The less time to complete a task – the more profit generated. After all... Time is Money.

“IT reduces cost, shortens time to market, enhances customer service and enables people at all levels to work more effectively. Companies who are getting the most out of IT are insuring line management at all levels view IT as a competitive weapon, not as a cost.”

- John Rockart, Senior Lecturer of Information Technology, MIT

Since there is an established relation between IT and profitability, the competitive advantage is also a source of business risk. As businesses replace more and more of the manual processes and “paper trails” with automated systems and electronic interfaces, the ability to conduct business when these systems are interrupted is a significant risk factor.

“Properly managing and controlling the flow of information within the business of healthcare has never been as critical to organizational success as it is today. Guidant Partners accurately assessed our clients' overall IT systems effectiveness and developed a comprehensive, strategic technology plan, saving our clients hundreds of thousands of dollars. Guidant Partners is a valued service partner to PivotHealth, and to our physician practice management contract engagement clients.”

*-John W. Phillips,
President, PivotHealth*



For example . . .

Clothing retailer, J.Crew, reported weaker than expected second-quarter earnings due to severe problems following a website and call center upgrade. The fiasco cost the company \$3 million in addition to lost sales and dissatisfied customers. The company's 10-Q SEC filing describes what happened:

“...we implemented certain Direct channel systems upgrades which impacted our ability to capture, process, ship and service customer orders. As a result, our Direct sales growth rate was lower than recent quarterly trends. We expect the impact of the systems upgrades to continue...”

In plain English, J.Crew couldn't process orders or ship clothing to customers after deploying a website upgrade.

Recent Gartner studies demonstrate that the average IT organization devotes approximately one-half of its IT budget to deploying new applications and supporting/maintaining its existing applications/infrastructure. The sheer magnitude of this investment necessitates processes that will ensure a return on this investment. In addition, it is critical that these procedures be part of an agile culture — one that can respond to changes in an increasingly competitive global marketplace.

The Gartner study also noted that “as the economic downturn drives a focus on internal efficiencies vs. external “revolutionary” changes, IT organizations are concerned about improving productivity. Furthermore, with stagnated or reduced staffing levels and the increased business demands on IT, [organizations] must improve the maturity of their processes to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of their existing personnel. IT organizations attaining increased maturity levels manifest substantial reductions (e.g., by two-to-three times) in rework, thus increasing their capacity to tackle additional projects. To reduce the time spent handling defects, which can consume a substantial portion of IT effort, it is important to establish processes that enable earlier detection. **According to numerous industry studies, IT organizations achieving at least a Level 2 stage of maturity demonstrate a significant decrease in effort and numbers of problems reaching end users and consumers.”**

“Having lived through too many IT fiascos, I made the decision to engage Guidant Partners as my outsourced IT group. They have created, built and managed my multi-state medical practice solutions since 2001. I trust Guidant Partners to give me the right solution the first time, to identify the most cost-effective solutions possible and to do exactly what they say they will. The outcomes have included better productivity, contented employees and physicians, and an improved bottom line.”

*Mark Cherney, CEO
Prologics*

Organizations successful in using IT as a competitive advantage have discovered that IT is more than just hardware and software. A mature IT department analyzes trends, predicts problems, defines and guarantees service levels, and is viewed as a strategic business partner in support of the overall business plan. With over 20 years of enterprise experience, Guidant Partners knows how to help our clients manage their IT resources to achieve their business goals.



Meeting strategic business goals with IT

Many companies once regarded IT as a necessary evil. But today, most see IT as the means to secure a competitive advantage in the marketplace. The cost of implementing these IT systems is such a large percentage of a company's overall budget that the need to properly install and integrate these systems into the business correctly the first time is imperative.

As more and more business solutions require network resources, the network infrastructure is in danger of becoming the bottleneck to profitability. Well engineered and managed networks balance these competing demands and provide a planned, organized method to control and prioritize resources based on business need. Guidant Partners has proven expertise in network engineering and management, and can help determine the impact of future growth to make sure solutions are scalable and reliable.

When people are being asked to "do more with less", organizations are demanding more value from their IT budgets. **Regardless of your industry, if you are dependent on technology to generate revenue, the alignment of IT with your strategic business goals is critical.** Guidant Partners has helped our clients achieve their business goals in projects ranging from multi-million dollar, enterprise-wide technology deployments to basic server upgrades. Whether you have a qualified internal IT staff, partial staff, or no staff at all, we can help. Guidant Partners will find the optimal working relationship to make sure your IT projects meet your business needs on schedule and within budget.

"Respondents reported that on average, only 69% of IT projects are delivered on time... having an IT project come in under budget proved to be a bit more difficult. The average reported having done so only 51% of the time."

*–KPMG/Harvey Nash,
2007/2008 CIO Survey*



The New Operational Model

As the capabilities of Information Technology have evolved, so has the importance of IT management. Just like any other part of your business, IT requires planning, budgeting, and management. As organizations strive to contain and reduce costs, some elect to outsource their IT altogether, while others attain a competitive edge by utilizing discrete Managed Services, which are designed to minimize the inherent risks associated with IT as well as avoid and mitigate the business impacts arising from IT failure. As an MSP, Guidant Partners offers multiple solutions to provide the optimal balance of cost/benefit for the client.

Organizations that leverage Managed Services are not paying large amounts of unpredictable dollars for fast response times. Instead, they pay a stabilized monthly cost to prevent crises from occurring.

The disruptive and costly “break/fix” mentality (paying for downtime) has given way to the concept of paying for results (uptime). This mental shift is evident in organizations that effectively manage IT as a business. By implementing Network Monitoring and Managed Security Services, organizations are making strides toward IT Maturity by ensuring uptime, instead of paying for costly downtime.

- Increased Uptime
- Reduced Risk
- Predictable Cost
- Enhanced Profitability
- Heightened Security





Let us be your Managed Service Provider.

Managed Services provide the most cost effective method for organizations to rapidly achieve higher levels of IT maturity in support of business objectives. Risk is more effectively managed by the proactive nature of Managed Services and its ability to prevent business interruptions and data loss. The net effect is IT dollars once spent reacting to unplanned downtime are now utilized to deliver uptime and improved service to the organization.

Network Monitoring is the method used to identify potential bottlenecks or failures within a network, so the problems may be corrected before an organization suffers the negative impact of downtime. Guidant Partners' Network Monitoring has a proven track record of reducing unplanned downtime and stabilizing IT expenses.

Providing **IT Security** to mitigate the constantly changing threat to networks presents a formidable challenge for organizations. Just the cost of equipment, personnel and specialized training required to keep up with the ever changing security threat can be prohibitive. Managed IT Security Services allows organizations to acquire their hardware, software, and expertise needed to properly secure their company and client information for a fixed monthly cost.

Guidant Partners = Uptime



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