

Outsourcing the PC Refresh Process



Most companies have to replace their PCs and laptops about every three or four years. Technology advances so quickly that computers need to be upgraded to run newer applications, and once the warranty expires, the organization that handles the break-fix or the desk-side support will not repair the units.

In a large company, the process may be managed by replacing one-third of the computer population annually. Ultimately, the refresh process is continuous; by the time all the computers in the company are upgraded, it is time to start all over again.

Given the complexity of the task, employing a permanent IT staff to handle the job is too expensive and time-consuming for many firms. Refresh professionals tend to have a high skill set because of the risk associated with the process, so they command relatively high salaries. In addition, companies often fall behind schedule in the refresh process as other priorities take hold.

For this reason, it makes sense to outsource this function to CoreTech, a company dedicated to the task of efficient and cost-effective PC refreshes.

Myriad Advantages

The benefits of outsourcing the refresh process far outweigh those associated with doing the job in house.

Efficiency and customer satisfaction

Large companies have thousands of computers that need to be upgraded every year. This upgrading process needs to be extremely efficient, or the company may face a loss of productivity as older equipment fails. CoreTech uses specially designed customer satisfaction surveys to ensure the efficiency of their upgrade operations. CoreTech also build process improvements into the solution and includes appropriate metrics into the service level agreement to guarantee continuous quality.

Reduced costs, greater flexibility and more control

Upgrading a computer costs about 50% less than buying a new one, so there is a good reason for extending the life of equipment. Companies always have the flexibility to terminate a contract with CoreTech if the services are no longer needed.

A full package within budget

CoreTech will be able to deliver a full refresh package as determined by the service level agreement. Moreover, **the price should be determined on a per unit basis**, so there are no hidden costs. This transparency enables the company to improve cash management and budgeting.

When in-house employees handle the refresh project, it is difficult to determine the correct per seat charge because they also may be responsible for other tasks such as break-fix, application testing and integration work. Since CoreTech's solution is based on a per unit charge, the company can identify to the exact dollar amount.

Reduction in total cost of ownership

CoreTech can add value and reduce costs for its customers by arranging for the resale of expired computers. After older equipment is stripped of its applications, it is held in quarantine for two weeks. When that period is over, it is shipped to a warehouse and a business partner resells it on the open market on behalf of the customer. That reduces the total cost of ownership of the computers.

Convenient remote service

Companies often have employees working off-site, possibly in faraway locations. CoreTech can refresh these employees' computers remotely; all they have to do is plug their laptop into the docking station and CoreTech can move their data from their old computer to their new one. The only additional charge is for shipping a new computer to a remote location;

all other fees remain the same. If a company has many people working at a remote location, CoreTech can send a team to do a desk-side refresh on-site.

A Soup to Nuts Refresh Solution

A professional refresh team understands how to manage a major PC refresh project through five stages from beginning to end.

Project Scope and Definition

The first step is to define the project scope. The refresh team needs to know how many and what type of computers will be replaced, where they are located and on what dates they are available for refresh. Some companies refresh a given number of PCs per month, while others may have a more immediate requirement to refresh a certain number of PCs to coincide with an internal initiative. Once the refresh team has that information, it formulates a total cost for the project.

Logistics

Once the project has been approved and the equipment is ordered, a secure work facility for the refresh team needs to be set up. The company and CoreTech need to work together to determine who will provide these essential items. They will also establish the logistics for shipping PCs between the project room and the company's various locations.

Scheduling is one of the most challenging parts of the refresh process. CoreTech takes all the hassle away from the company by handling all the necessary approvals from the customers in the shortest period of time. The goal is to make the refresh process effortless and convenient for the company.

The Project

The refresh team picks up the customer's computer, copies their data and installs security patches and delivers a refreshed PC back to them. A checklist is reviewed with the customer to ensure all the tasks are complete and the new PC is functioning properly. At the end of the process, all of the customer's documents, network and local printers, email and Internet favorites, Microsoft Suite applications, wireless connectivity and remote access are in full working order.

In some large companies, the refresh process never ends. As soon as it is finished, it is time to start over again. CoreTech will use the knowledge it acquired previously and the information gathered through the customer satisfaction surveys to improve the process and further reduce costs for the company.



Summary

A myriad of details are involved in a refresh process. If it is not done correctly, the company pays the price of lower employee productivity, reduced customer satisfaction and diminished profits.

By contracting with CoreTech that has a professional staff dedicated to this task, the project is less likely to fall behind schedule. Refreshes are done right the first time and at the convenience of the customer, so the whole process is more efficient and cost effective. CoreTech continuously monitors the process to build in improvements over time.

Ultimately, outsourcing the refresh process leaves the company more time to focus on its core business instead of IT. Cash management and budgeting are improved because the per-unit cost of the project is a known quantity. Moreover, CoreTech can arrange for the expired computers to be sold on the open market, thus reducing the total cost of ownership of the equipment.

Learn More

CoreTech is a leading provider of IT staff augmentation solutions and managed IT services including PC refresh, application deployment support, service desk and service delivery management solutions.

Established since 1992, CoreTech's clients include Wyeth Pharmaceuticals, Johnson & Johnson, GlaxoSmithKline, SunTrust Banks, Merrill Lynch, Synovus Financial and more.

For more information about CoreTech call 800-220-3337 or visit www.coretech.com.

