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BCS Technology Review

“Insider Tips To Make Your Business Run Faster, Easier, and More Profitably”



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Should You Pay for Performance or Effort?

By Chris Cote, President BCS

Have you ever paid someone to fix a problem only to find that the problem is still there after they leave? Or perhaps they fix a problem, but not the problem. Or maybe you have a problem that has been bothering you for months, but it comes and goes, and never appears when the computer guy is there.

Having worked with technology my entire professional life, I've seen these situations time and time again. Elusive problems that come and go can be the toughest to solve because they can be impossible to reproduce and difficult to know if they are fixed since they can disappear, only to reappear hours or days later. These issues are almost impossible to fix with one visit or without the correct tools.

A lot of people believe that paying their computer guy to fix problems as they occur is the most cost effective way to maintain their technology. While in today's difficult economy such a view is understandable, there is an underlying flaw with this approach. Let me illustrate with an example. I have a friend who provides computer services by charging an hourly rate. He likes to kid around that when he gets up in the morning, he gets on his knees and "prays" that his customers have a lot of problems that day. While this might be somewhat of an exaggeration, the reality is that the more problems his customers have, the more money he makes. This can be particularly true if the problem keeps coming back like so many of them do.

I'm not saying he is dishonest. In fact he is an ethical and competent technician. And for some users with simpler systems, it may indeed be a correct fit. For example a home user may survive if their computer goes down for a few days, or if they have to pull the battery out of the cell phone every so often to reset it.

However for businesses or organizations, technology can play a much different role. A failure in any number of common components can cripple the ability for business to deliver to their customers. Components such as servers, switches, cabling, or even their broadband service can represent real losses to an organization if they fail. Even something that doesn't work at peak performance can cause a loss of productivity and perhaps missed deadlines.

The same difference between home-based and office systems apply to the products used. A cheap product bought at Best Buy may work well for a home user. For example, the security provided by a consumer grade router may be "good enough" If the router breaks, it can just be replaced. However in a professional environment a router that does not adequately secure a network, or that fails at the wrong time can have a much greater impact.

At BCS, we put a lot of effort into researching and selecting products that are a correct fit for our clients. We also make sizeable investments in time and money into certification, training, and testing of the products that we sell. It's equally important for us to partner with companies that provide world class support for our clients when needed.

Perhaps most importantly, we continue to invest in technology to remotely monitor and repair our clients' computer systems. This capability lies at the heart of what we do. Our goal is to keep our client's systems healthy, so they work properly and perform the tasks that they demand every day.

Our vision statement embodies this philosophy:

“To help businesses and organizations by installing the correct products and using the right tools to monitor and maintain them.”

Client Spotlight: Automotive Dealership Institute

Of all my clients, perhaps none have inspired me more than Alan and Arzu Algan of Automotive Dealership Institute (ADI). Although the recession brought their company to a near standstill, they never gave up and are now on the road to recovery. Here is their story.



After an 18 year successful career as Finance Directors at a large automotive dealership group, Alan and his wife Arzu started a boutique private school in California in 1988. This school was different than the usual vocational school as it catered strictly to the retail automotive industry, training mid-management personnel for dealerships. It became the first school of its kind in the USA dedicated to training automotive finance and insurance managers. In fact Alan wrote very first the book on this subject, “Automotive Finance and Insurance Management” which is the only one of its kind admitted and registered with the U.S. Library of Congress. Subsequent five editions of the book all sold out including the 897 page Encyclopedia of Finance and Insurance Management.

The Algans sold their school in 2004 agreeing not to compete in California. They moved to Phoenix to open the Automotive Dealership Institute at their current location in Scottsdale. It proved to be successful from the beginning, and by 2007 was generating over \$2M in gross revenue and employed 17 people.

However 2008 proved to be devastating year for ADI for two reasons. The first was a historic collapse in car sales (shown in the graph to the right). Dealerships began closing across the country and the ones that stayed open were not willing to invest in training. The second problem was availability of funding for their students. With the onset of the financial crisis, student loans for trade schools became extremely difficult to obtain. The U.S. Department of Education then began issuing their own loans but students who attended trade schools such as ADI were left out.



ADI saw its business decline steadily between July 2008 and October 2010. By 2009, revenues had declined from over \$2M all the way down to \$250K and Algans had reduced their staff down to 4 employees. Arzu describes that year as a “nightmare” while Alan felt that the market would recover much sooner. During 2009 and 2010 however, the Algan’s had to subsidize the school with nearly \$750K of their own money. Looking back, Alan now regrets that he didn’t react to the downturn soon enough.

2011 was definitely an improvement, particularly in the second half. The automotive industry began to rebound and credit sources slowly came on line.

Student funding sources are still scarce but ADI has lined up 2 private lenders, a credit union, and also provides their own financing in select cases. Classes are still held every other month instead of monthly, but class sizes have increased to an acceptable level. At its current rate of growth, ADI hopes to achieve \$1M in revenue by the end of 2012.

I asked Alan what kept him going during those tough times. Alan responded by throwing his arms up in the air “what else could we do” he said, adding, “We have invested our life savings into ADI. I can even go so far saying that ADI became our lives, we built a very strong brand name recognized and respected not only in this country but around the world, so we had to stick with it and make sure that ADI emerged still standing tall through the recession.”

Finally, Alan added “We appreciated the support offered by BCS during our worst two years of our company’s history, and we will remain as one of their most loyal clients for many years to come” said Algan. “Loyalty, trust and customer satisfaction are everything, and I believe BCS also shares these same old fashion values with ADI ”

Product Highlight: Cisco Small Business Pro

The Cisco Small Business Pro Portfolio

Over the past 3 years, Cisco has been investing heavily in the Small and Medium business market. They now have a great product line that falls between their traditional enterprise (i.e. big company) products, and those for home use. If you believe that technology can help your business gain a strategic advantage, we recommend the Cisco Small Business Pro Series.

Individually, every Cisco Small Business Pro Series product is a strong solution for small business needs. Together, they form a solid foundation that you can base your business on—building an integrated system over time as your networking and communications needs change.

Cisco Small Business Pro Service gives you three-year peace-of-mind coverage at an affordable price, helping you get the most value and best performance from your Cisco Small Business Pro products. This service includes software updates and next-business-day hardware replacement.

I've highlighted some of their products below:

Cisco ESW 500 Series Switches :

- Easy integration with Cisco Smart Business Communication System to provide complete data, voice, video, and wireless networking solutions
- Choice of Fast Ethernet and Gigabit Ethernet connectivity
- Power over Ethernet (PoE) available on up to 48 ports of Fast Ethernet and 24 ports of Gigabit Ethernet
- Advanced security services, including IEEE 802.1X port security and access control lists, to keep unauthorized users off the network
- VLAN support for assigning users to different networks, improving their performance and network security
- Enhanced 5-year hardware warranty



The Cisco Smart Business Communications System supports:



- **Integrated communication:** Quickly set up voice, data, video, and wireless services for a new way to reach, serve, and retain customers
 - **Easy access to information:** Offer secure communications access to remote workers and branch offices
 - **Simple set-up:** Take advantage of simple applications for set-up, management, and monitoring

Cisco Small Business Wireless Access Points support:

- **Connectivity:** Now employees can securely access network resources from places that were previously out of range. The reach and signal quality of Cisco Wireless Access Points go beyond that of a standard wireless connection so you can provide stronger connections from further away.
- **Security:** Standards and encryption protocols keep Cisco Wireless Access Points just as secure as a wired network.
- **Performance:** Cisco Small Business Wireless Access Points offer the fastest speeds possible with expanded range and coverage—a transparent extension of your wired network.
- **Ease-to-Use:** Web-based configuration tools make it easy for you to install the access point and set up your network devices. Getting your business online with your new Cisco device isn't a complex process at all.



Technology News:

Google announces privacy settings change across products; users can't opt out

Cnet, Tuesday, January 24, 2:33 PM

Google said Tuesday it will require users to allow the company to follow their activities across e-mail, search, YouTube and other services, a radical shift in strategy that is expected to invite greater scrutiny of its privacy and competitive practices.

The information will enable Google to develop a fuller picture of how people use its growing empire of Web sites. Consumers will have no choice but to accept the changes.

The policy will take effect March 1 and will also impact Android mobile phone users, who are required to log in to Google accounts when they activate their phones.

Lottery for iPhones

Cnet, January 30, 2012

Looking to minimize large lines and unhappy shoppers, Apple is testing out a new type of reservation system that lets people sign up in hopes of getting a crack at buying a new iPhone in its sole Hong Kong retail store.

Windows 8 promising easier time juggling mobile networks

Cnet, January 29, 2012

Windows 8 users will face fewer headaches managing their Wi-Fi and cellular connections, says Microsoft.

Though the Wi-Fi experience improved in Windows 7 over prior versions, setting up a mobile broadband connection entailed a number of hurdles, including finding the right drivers and software. For Windows 8, the company worked with mobile carriers and hardware makers to come up with a single universal driver.

Microsoft: Designing Windows 8 app store was a challenge

(Credit: Microsoft)

Microsoft designed its Windows 8 app store to make it easy to find and download content. But that goal proved challenging given the variety of apps expected. In a Microsoft blog published Friday, Jonathan Wang, a program manager on the company's Store client team, took readers on a tour of the store, covering everything from browsing to searching to downloading.

For its look and feel, the store set out to be clean and uncluttered, letting the apps take center stage so that people could more easily focus on what they need.

Intel CEO: Windows 8 tablets 'being queued up' for production

news.cnet.com Jan 19, 2012

Intel CEO Paul Otellini hinted that Windows 8 tablet production may not be that far off, while asserting that Android tablets won't be able to compete against the Android 4.0 becomes more widespread.

In an earnings conference call after the chip giant posted better than expected earnings today, Otellini said Android-based tablets don't have what it takes to compete against the iPad--yet.

Then he made an interesting comment about Windows 8 tablets and production schedules. "The other part of that test [of competing with iPad] of course is the Windows 8 tablets that are being queued up for production," he said.

Steve Ballmer Willing To Pay \$230 Per Phone To Beat Apple, Google

Nigam Arora, Forbes, Jan 30th 2012

The question investors, technologists and strategists have long been asking is, "What is Steve Ballmer willing to pay to beat Apple and Google?" Now we have a small part of the answer, \$230 per cell phone.

Microsoft (MSFT) is in a venture with Nokia (NOK) to gain market share for Windows phones in its battle with Google Android. In the last quarter, Microsoft paid \$250 million to Nokia. Nokia claims to have shipped 1 million Windows phones.

BCS News

BCS Partners with Cox Communications



Effective 16 December 2012

BCS has teamed up with Cox Communications to provide installation services to those who sign up for Cox's business broadband services. Elliot Ulrich, Territory Account Executive for Cox states "BCS is a key player in our efforts to ensure that our customers experience fast internet speeds with professional and secure integration of their network."

BCS Recertifies as Cisco Small Business Partner



From the Cisco Small Business Center:

Effective 21 January 2012

BCS Tech Center Inc has been recertified as a Cisco Select Certified Partner with a specialization in Small Business.

Cisco writes "Congratulations. BCS Tech Center Inc has met all requirements for renewing your Cisco Select Certification and your company has demonstrated that it is qualified to sell, install and support Cisco solutions."

"In recognition of this achievement, Cisco will recognize your company as having achieved this certification in the Cisco Partner Locator which can be found at: <http://www.cisco.com/go/partnerlocator>"

BCS Partners with Imagine Technologies

Effective 15 January 2012



Imagine Technology Group was founded by the Top Professionals in the industry. They are locally owned and operated which gives them the unique ability to act quickly and respond accordingly to our local Phoenix marketplace.

Each individual in their organization has a minimum of 10 years experience in the Office Equipment Industry.

Imagine Technology Group has/is:

- Local ownership, management, warehouse, dispatching
- Manufacturer Authorized on the full line of Sharp office equipment
- Manufacturer-trained: Ricoh, Kyocera, Sharp, Toshiba, Savin, Gestetner, Lanier, Samsung, Hewlett-Packard, and Copystar
- It's possible to save 25% or more on operating costs by simply switching to a machine with a lower cost of ownership.

We Love Referrals:

Can we buy you dinner and send you to the movies?
How about make a donation to your favorite charity in your name? Earn rewards for referring new customers to BCS.

BCS Loaner Program:

Did you know that BCS offers equipment for free loan to our Managed Services clients such as:

1. LCD Projector
2. 24 Port Switch
3. Netbook