

Re: Server 2003 or XP for small LAN?

Source:

<http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/Windows/microsoft.public.windows.server.sbs/2005-03/5472.html>

From: Lanwench [MVP – Exchange] (lanwench_at_heybuddy.donotsendme.unsolicitedmail.atyahoo.com)

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Hollis D. Paul wrote:

> In article <423bed98\$0\$527\$ed2619ec@ptn-nntp-reader03.plus.net>, Adam

> wrote:

>> Any thoughts, comments, or suggestions would be very welcome.

>>

> The downside of going to more sophisticated server services is that
> you will lose approximately one man equivalent of your staff to server
> management/system capability discovery/system servicing and feeding.
> So plan from your staff to increase to 5, and you won't really be able
> to talk to that fifth person, because he has rings in his ears, nose,
> and navel, studs in his tongues and eyelids, wears his pants below his
> butt, but is a whiz with computers. Are you up for that?

>

> Hollis D. Paul [MVP – Outlook]

> Hollis@-----

> Mukilteo, WA USA

Respectfully disagree with your assumption here, while appreciating the tongue-in-cheek aspects of your post. As a consultant, I'm a one-woman show who supports many small businesses in a variety of industries, and since I set up networks using good kit as well as good sense (cabling, network equipment, server & workstation hardware, OS & SPs & software, good antivirus, firewall, user workstations locked down as tightly as possible, etc etc etc), pretty much the only thing any employee needs to do is change backup tapes... and/or call me if acrid blue smoke is billowing out of the server room.

The company owner has network documentation & the admin credentials are written down on a piece of paper in a sealed envelope so that if I win the lottery and move to the Caribbean suddenly, someone else can take over without a lot of head-scratching.

I can do a lot of support remotely, including creating/changing user accounts, etc., if there isn't someone in the office who wants to do that (or has the proper skills). I see most of my clients maybe once or twice a month, usually to install fixes/SPs as well as basic housekeeping stuff they need. Some I see even more rarely than that, some more. This entirely

depends on what the user support requirements/needs are, meaning, it's relatively rare that I have to go in to deal with problems with the actual network/server environment. Very often Joe can't figure out how to do a mail-merge or Sven wants to connect his new Palm or something like that, and I may not be able to help out over the phone or via remote access to the network/desktop.

I do recommend that any small company with a network/server engage a consultant for the initial setup, basic training, and as-needed support, and would recommend this even if I weren't in IT at all. Said consultant may well have some interesting shiny metal thingies sticking out of his/her face, but that's certainly not mandatory (I probably would hire someone who could dress like a grown-up as well as having the technical knowledge/skill to do the job, but that's just my bias). If a company is seeing their outside IT people in the office every day, there is a much larger problem – either the consultants are sleazeballs, or don't know what they're doing, or management gave them a \$32.58 budget and expected miracles, or the company's end-users are super high-maintenance types. Or some combination of same.

I'm certainly not suggesting there will be no tech support needs, nor nor that a company can always rely 100% on outside help to resolve them immediately. Nor am I suggesting that I have some kind of super-powers. I just find that the cost of implementing everything right in the first place, and not cutting corners, means that any company's ongoing support costs are minimal. And some degree of technical skill is required even to *use* a computer, so someone in the office ought to be able to determine when it's time to call in the cavalry, and when a mouse can be replaced without placing a panicked phone call....

Now I'll stop ranting mindlessly and go out to enjoy the rest of the afternoon, as my dog needs a walk and is glowering at me. I may also pick up a lottery ticket.

Pax!