


Guide to MSP Success

Beyond **COVID-19**





It is our intention with this whitepaper to empower MSPs to not only adapt to the times we are currently living, but to also succeed and grow as a business as we enter the new normal.

We believe there is potential and room for growth and our guide will help you navigate through these challenging times coming out the other side just as successful (if not more) as going into it.



Section 01.

Checking the Pulse of Your Organisation

An opportunity for introspection

Where the importance of things that matter to you and your business and the boundary of the things that you can control meet—is where the introspection lies that will light the way for clear decision making.

In these times of uncertainty, we encourage you to look deep into what really matters so that you can place your energy there. Energy expenditure during this unusual time really matters more so than ever.

So take a deep dive into what really matters most within what you can control.

What is your current state?

Begin by assessing your business including your role within the company to better determine where your energy and efforts need to go.

- Do you have all the resources you need to move forward?
- Do you need help?
- Do you know where to go to look for the help you need?

Sometimes fear can lead us to focus on what provides a result right now to satisfy the discomfort of fear and bring about some perceived confidence or satisfaction.

The flipside to this would be to look at your current state and what efforts will return the most long-term results—irrespective of the fear you're currently feeling. It may not be the easiest choice but it sure will stand the test of time.



Transforming your perspective

Sometimes all you need is a change of perspective to breathe new life into your business. And great change can come from the most uncomfortable of situations because it's during those challenging times that we are forced to reassess our way of doing things.

The new normal requires you to reassess your current normal and adapt it so that it thrives.

If you adapt instead of resisting change, your business will have better odds of surviving. We're not talking about blind optimism here, as there is no such thing as a sure thing. We're talking about moving from complacency to curiosity.

Challenge the notion of your current business model with a curious eye and look for areas of improvement where you can make a positive change.

Changes aren't going to happen overnight, and this is when your optimism will need to come in. Having a plan for improvement is only going to work if you stick it out in the long term, as long as it takes to properly execute it.

And this can be testing on your morale. Keep your eye on the end goal and remember the 'why' behind why you are doing this.







Your team

Checking in with your team is an important aspect to the running of any business at any given time but more so now as your team also navigate this change in their career. They too feel the uncertainty you are feeling. They have to adjust to bringing their work home and balancing home and work life—some employees may have to work and take care of children at the very same time.

These changes can be challenging. So while this is a business, this business is comprised by humans, and a little empathy goes a long way.

Check in with them and have them tell you what their challenges are and give them a share in responsibility when it comes to resolving issues. This way they will feel heard and validated.

Your employees are your best asset. In the words of Richard Branson,



"Clients don't come first. Employees come first. If you take care of your employees, they will take care of the clients."

— Richard Branson

Lay everything out on the table and co-create a long-term plan that will outlast this pandemic—together.

Your community

Although we are all physically apart, we need to come together now more than ever to maintain communication lines and strengthen community support.

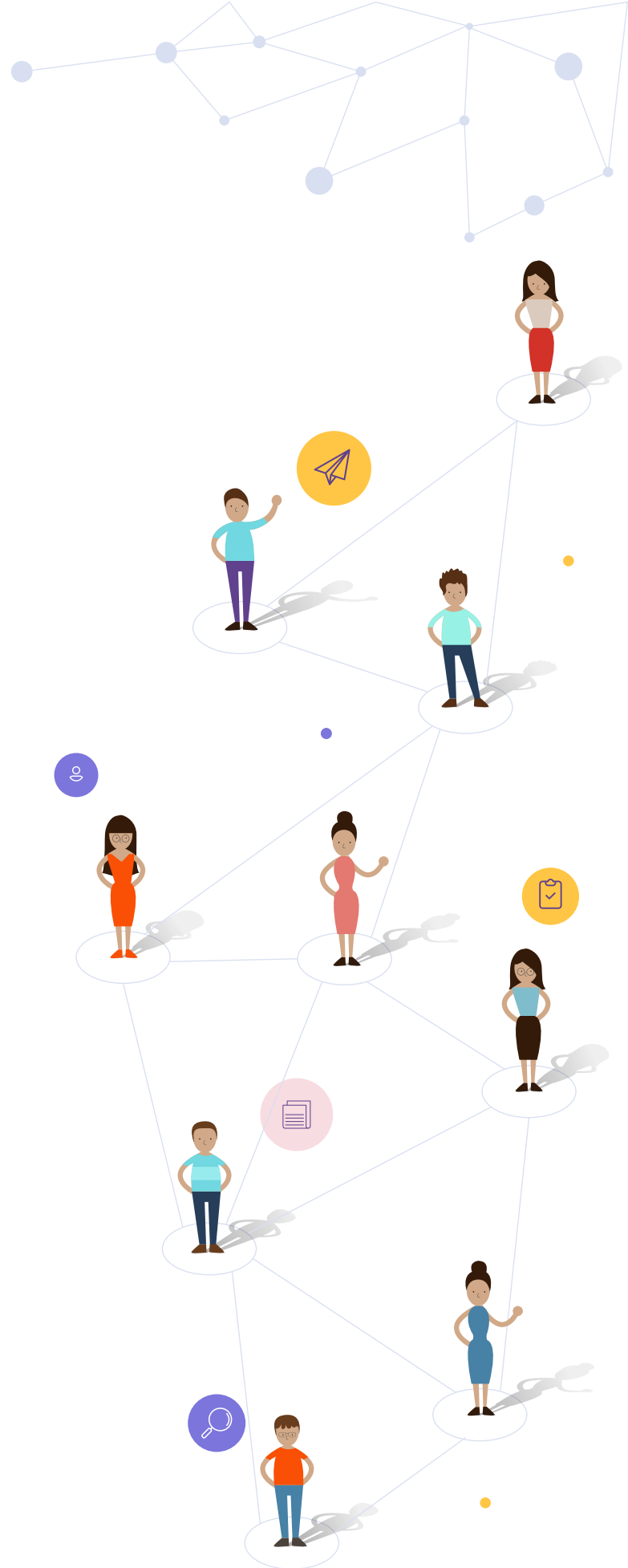
So this brings us to our next point: check in with your community just as you've done with yourself, your business, and your employees.

The support you extend to them during this time is very telling of the heart behind your business. It will also solidify your professional relationship with them.

Be mindful not to simply talk business; ask how they are feeling, how they are coping, and how they are doing financially. This is best done over the phone or via a video call where possible.

You can use this opportunity to be a source of knowledge for them and guide them through the potential challenges that are yet to arise so they can prepare for the times ahead.

If you're not quite sure how you can help, simply ask. You don't have to have all the answers but you do need to let them know that you are there to help.



The importance of joining a tech community as an MSP

There is an array of established tech communities out there that you can join, lean on, and learn from during this difficult period and thereafter.

One of the greatest benefits of joining a community is the knowledge you'll acquire from others, but that aside:

- you'll also meet industry experts
- gain potential referrals
- be exposed to job opportunities
- and find solutions to your problems

Joining a community can mean participating in industry events, webinars, and customer vertical markets. The global pandemic period has in some way made this easier as you don't have to travel to another city or state to connect with your community—you're simply a click away from connecting with others.

They say you should surround yourself around those who are already achieving your dreams so that you too can follow in their footsteps.



Finance Pulse Check

Some of the things possibly keeping you up at night during this pandemic are dollar signs, bills, and unpaid invoices.

We hear you. The age-old adage 'cash is king' has never carried more meaning in these uncertain times. Getting on track with your finances and understanding exactly where you stand is going to help you sleep better.

As you look to manage your cash flow, here are some of the points to keep in mind:

- Everyone is in the same boat or in different levels of the same boat but probably experiencing the same worries and struggles. Contact your suppliers and providers and negotiate payment plans so that you continue to cover expenses but over a longer period of time to allow for some cash flow.
- In the same regard, contact your debtors. The time is now to receive payment for work done so negotiate a payment plan that will result in consistent cash flow. If you normally have a 60 day payment period, explain that due to circumstances it needs to be paid within a certain amount of days and that you would be happy to accept it in small instalments up until that time.

- What financial initiatives does your bank offer to help business customers throughout this time? Are there payment pauses on business loans? Can you negotiate a better interest rate on loans and business savings accounts?
- Furthermore, access government grants, incentives, support, etc. Make use of all the resources the government has on offer.

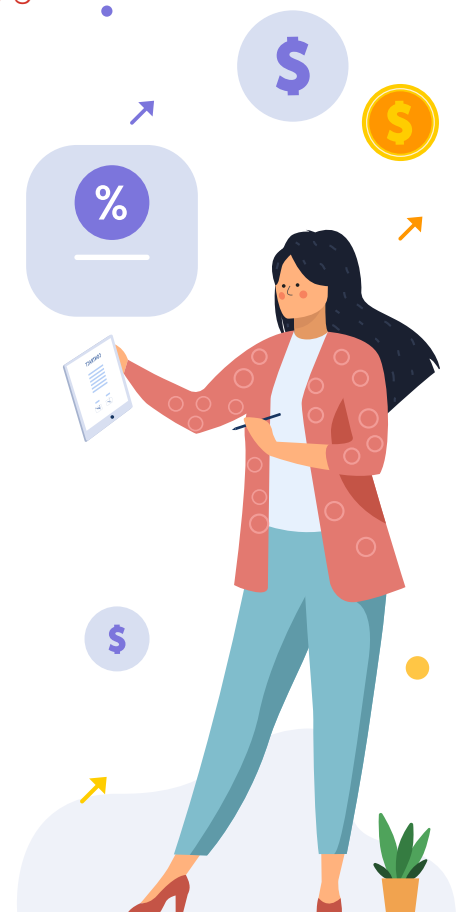
Just Google 'COVID-19 Support Grant and your state' for more information.

Resources:

service.nsw.gov.au (NSW)

business.vic.gov.au (VIC)

treasury.gov.au



**Download our
Overdue Payment Email
Template [here.](#)**

- At some point you will need to look closely at your team and how feasible it is to continue with staffing as usual. It just may not be sustainable. Richard Branson said that his entire team unanimously decided to have everyone's hours reduced in order to allow for every team member to continue being employed.
- If you want to keep all your team members because you feel that each and every one of them contribute to the success of your business, cutting hours is a great option. But if you feel that someone's time has come to an end, address the situation with empathy and let the employee go to make way for other employees who you believe still belong in your business.
- Branch out when it comes to sourcing work and don't be afraid to contact your network for any leads. Turn to your community for ideas and support and where possible, collaborate with other businesses in the industry looking to thrive during this pandemic.

Great—so your house is in order—what's next?



Section 02.

Securing the New Normal for Your Clients

By now, your clients have been living with the new business order as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic for a few months, and while the immediate solutions have sufficed—a more sustainable and permanent solution needs to be considered.

In the beginning, your clients were rushing to work from home to continue business as usual, but now as the dust has settled, you'll need to look at what is working and what needs to be altered to ensure the longevity and security of their business.

This is where you step in!

What are you offering?

Get a feel for and an understanding of where your client sees their business headed, so that you can figure out where you fit in that plan and how you can help.

Are they headed back to the office? Are they planning on continuing to work from home?

Many major tech companies such as Salesforce, Microsoft, and Amazon have allowed their employees to work from home for the rest of 2020—and others, as is the case for Twitter—have allowed employees to work from home indefinitely. If your client chooses the remote work option indefinitely, there are security and compliance issues that you will need to support your client in navigating.



With this transition comes a great opportunity for brand new revenue streams.

Identify what new service structures you can productise and offer your clients to save them time, money and streamline areas of their business through the use of cloud services that they may not be taking advantage of.

Technology—as an integral part of business continuity—will now begin to be on the forefront of your client's minds.

As part of your new services, teach your clients how to better utilise their existing systems, like Office 365 by maximising the potential of Microsoft Teams, OneDrive, and Sharepoint.



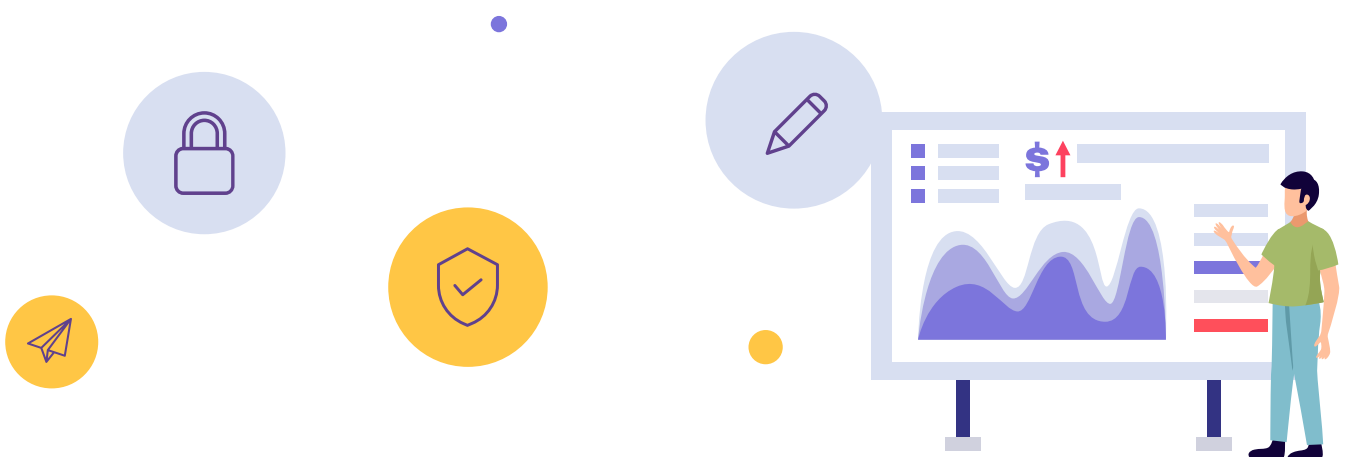
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While VDI, IaaS and VPN services can improve security as well as the productivity of your remote workers. You may consider offering the aforementioned services as a bundle charging client's a flat monthly rate.

The potential doesn't end there. Expand your way of thinking to create unique services that make adoption easy for your clients.



Marketing, is Now The Right Time?

Should you be Marketing at this time?

Absolutely, but your marketing message will need to change. We've touched on adaptability throughout this whitepaper and adapting your marketing strategy will ensure that your message is relevant.

Many of your potential clients are currently at home consuming a lot of information, looking to make good use of their time, and by offering that information you are organically putting yourself in front of the eyes of future clients.

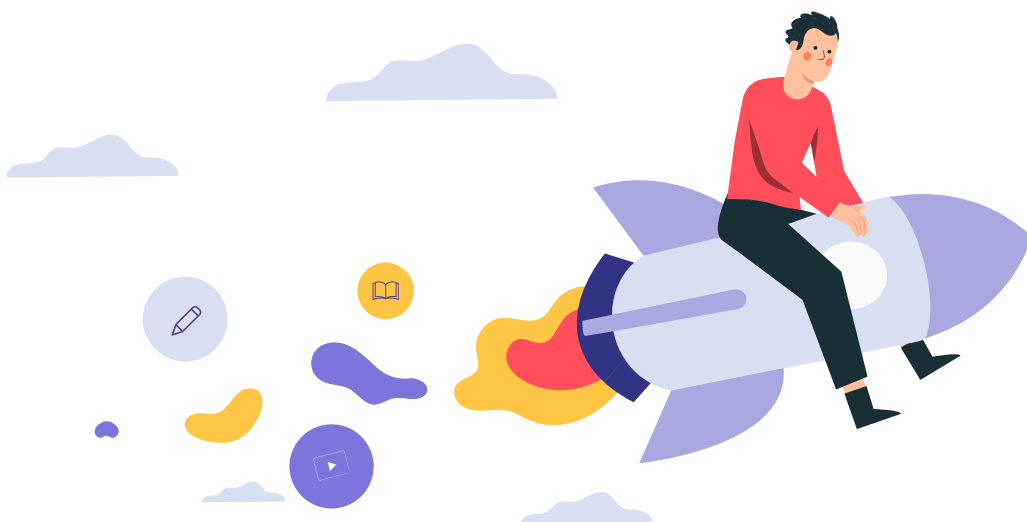
But do it with empathy as times are hard and not everyone is doing well.

You can take leadership in your industry and provide solutions to the needs of your potential clients in the way of online workshops, webinars, blogs, videos, podcasts, and e-books.



Download our free whitepaper 'Marketing 101 for MSPs' and discover how to target, reach, engage, convert and nurture your leads today.

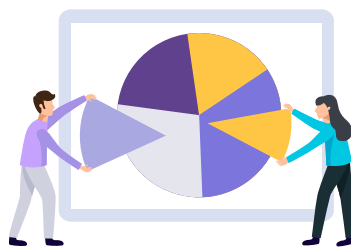
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Adding Value to Customer Experience

The best way to be front of mind with your clients is by providing an excellent customer service experience—which in turn—will separate you from your competitors. And now more than ever, this level of service will really cement your professional relationships and encourage your clients during these challenging times.



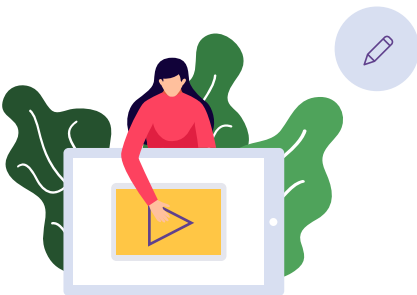
Encourage your employees to go the extra mile, and going the extra mile is all about the little details such as checking in with your clients, following up after a meeting or sending out information as promised, and offering a little extra support that they may want and need but don't necessarily expect.

When your clients are happy, they are your best walking advertisement.

Nothing speaks louder to your success than a customer who is happy and willing to recommend you.

You can also help increase the user experience in other ways such as:

- Professional, friendly, and empathetic online and face-to-face interaction.
- An optimised website; with users on top of mind.
- Humanise your communication with your clients. Get to know your client and personalise messages that you send to them so that it better resonates with them.



- Celebrate each and every one of your client's wins as if they were your own.
- One of the greatest ways to enhance a client's experience is by offering training. Sometimes clients can become frustrated when they don't have all the information they need and as a business, you should be concerned about how well they are digesting the information you provide to them.
- Your products and services should hopefully solve a problem or meet a demand. When it comes to pitching or describing your services on your website, make sure the language conveys the solution you're providing.



Next Steps

We encourage you to remain positive during this difficult period. Using this time wisely to improve your business will set you up for success when we all come out the other side. Take the time to build your team, expand and build on your services, and nurture professional relationships with your clients.

We love this quote by Jessica Herrin and believe that it is transferable to our current times.



"You have to see failure as the beginning and the middle, but never entertain it as an end."

— Jessica Herrin, founder and CEO of Stella & Dot.

Use this time to your advantage and secure your place in the industry post COVID-19.





About Hosted Network

Everything we do is based around building solutions for our partners to enable them to grow and succeed.

Starting off as a traditional MSP in 2003 and launching a number of direct to market cloud offerings, we quickly gained traction in the SMB market and were approached by a number of other MSPs asking if we could provide our services at a wholesale level.

We quickly realised a gap in the market for wholesale cloud services designed for MSPs to grow their service offering and reach new markets.


In 2013, Hosted Network transitioned to an entirely channel-only model, working hand-in-hand with MSPs to grow their business and win new deals.

Since then, our success is credited to and driven by the success of our partners. This has led to us adopting a simple mantra of BUILD – GROW – SUCCEED. Building successful partnerships and solutions, growing together, succeeding together.

Got a Question? We are Here to Help

Contact Us



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