

TAZ Technology Report

January 2016

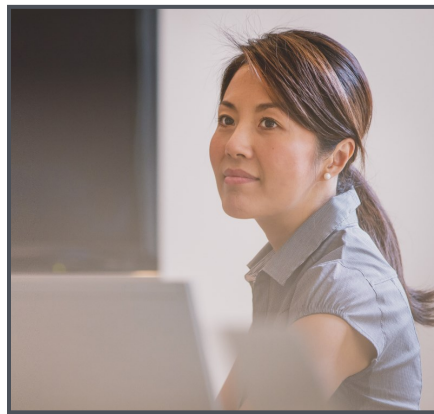
Volume 10, Issue 1

The Change to Complete IT Care

What it means for your business

It's been over 10 years since we started offering managed IT services. In that time, we've seen the rise of social media and smartphones, and whole new threats to business computer networks.

Since our first managed services contract in 2005, we've modified and added a variety of progressive contracts covering different levels of service. These have ranged from bare-bones, monitoring-only contracts to full, on-demand, onsite services. For 2016, we're rolling out a new set of managed service plans that will protect business computer networks at a variety of service levels.



Get the right level of network protection for your business with one of our three new service plans.

As we've done in the past, we're offering a progressive-protection plan that covers three levels of business computer network protection:

Complete IT Care. This roughly corresponds to our previous Platinum-level Computer Care Advantage, but includes some new features for added network maintenance and protection. We handle all of the day-to-day hassle of managing and maintaining your computer network. You get all the benefits of a highly-trained, full-time computer support and services technology department at only a fraction of the cost of hiring your own technician.

Managed Firewall. Your network firewall separates your vital business data from threats coming via the Internet. However, did you know that

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Microsoft Partner

Silver Midmarket Solution Provider

Our Mission:

To provide the highest quality service and technology solutions for our clients, while pushing ourselves to greater knowledge and understanding.

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most firewalls are out of date, especially in small-to-medium sized businesses? Our most basic level of service plan protects your business with a managed firewall plan that includes a brand-new device every three years, intrusion protection service, daily monitoring, web activity monitoring (track what your staff is doing online), and gateway anti-

virus to stop threats before they reach your network.

Managed Network Security. This service includes all the benefits and services of Managed Firewall, with the addition of critical server backups, with an offsite backup option if desired. It's a good "in-between" for companies that have their own IT person on staff, but

wish for some extra protection and monitoring.

Our existing contracts will be migrated over to the new formats over the course of 2016. We're excited to provide a renewed level of service, protecting your critical business data.

How Did We Do in 2015?

A local fire station used to have a display board where they posted ongoing statistics regarding the number of runs made, fires put out, etc., for each year.

We thought that was a pretty neat idea, and wanted to do something similar. So, here are some ticket stats and other numbers from 2015 that you might find interesting.

- We have 113 recurring service contracts, covering 51 clients.*
- Under those contracts, we monitored 641 workstations and 140 servers.

- In addition, we performed 889 on-site service calls.

Here are the numbers for tickets only:

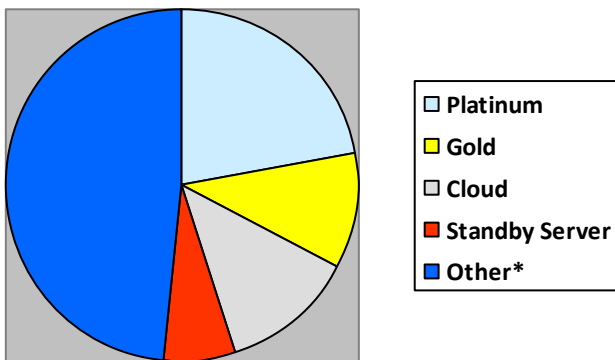
- 20,939 total tickets completed
- 24 critical-priority tickets
- 2617 high-priority tickets
- 16,860 medium-priority tickets
- 1,438 low-priority tickets

(Please note that ticket priorities are generally set by clients; we would not "demote" someone's ticket to Low priority!)

We're also still running our displays in the office that give us numbers for metrics like tickets completed today (35), our SLA first response percentage (93.3%), and average customer survey score for the past 90 days (4.82/5).

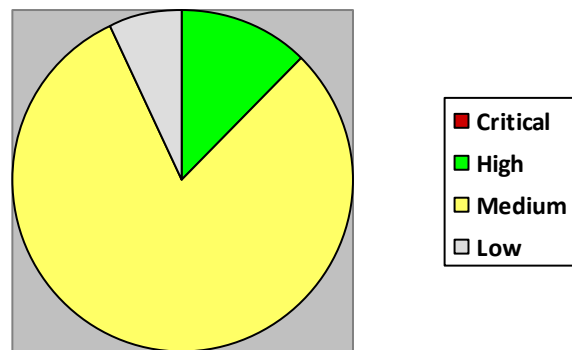
While our focus is always on helping *people* first, having these numbers handy helps us do our best to handle issues in a timely manner.

2015 Contracts



*Most of these "Other" contracts will be rolled into our new Complete IT Plans during 2016. Next year's contract chart will be much different.

2015 Completed Tickets



We completed 20,939 tickets in 2015, and only 24 of them were Critical level. That means our monitoring works!

The President's Corner – Want to Be Out of the Server Business?

Well, I'm starting to long for warm days and camping trips again, so it must be the dead of winter. Don't get me wrong; we've had it pretty good here in Michigan up to this point, but for me two weeks of winter is too long. But what are you going to do? In talking to a client this week, he asked his dad why in the world did his relatives decide to settle in Michigan and not somewhere really warm? Yup, family is the key, we all know that! And besides, Michigan is beautiful in the spring, summer and fall.

As I visit clients, the word on the street has gotten more pronounced that business owners no longer want to be in the "server business". IT is taking on a different look these days with

most line-of-business vendors using the "Software as a Service" model and providing their software as a cloud or hybrid cloud service. What we find is that it's very hard for existing software owners to change course but those starting up are using this new software model in droves. And most software companies don't even offer an on-premise solution anymore.

Which begs the question: What about the rest of your servers or network? Can it be moved to the cloud or at the very least a private hosted data center? The answer is... it depends. Sorry to ride the fence there, but it really does depend on your software and your users.

What we are finding is that a *hybrid* approach to the cloud is great. So what does that mean? Most manufacturing businesses we deal with have engineering or CAD users that demand horsepower and lots of data. Not great to push through to the cloud. However, by hosting your servers for the most part in our data center and then having one connection back to the office that synchronizes the CAD data, you get the best of both worlds. You're out of the server business. We take on the risk and monitoring. You can focus on what you do best and leave the hard stuff to us.— **Tavis**

Tavis Patterson is the President and founder of TAZ Networks.



How Your Firewall Protects Your Network From Ransomware

With the rise in Cryptowall and other ransomware infections, making sure your firewall is up-to-date with the latest firmware upgrade should be a huge priority for any business owner.

(Remember that ransomware is a particularly nasty strain of computer virus. It encrypts your files and demands a fee to get them back. See our October 2015 newsletter for more information.)

Why? Your firewall is your computer network's first line of defense against all the nastiness that lurks on the Internet. While antivirus and other software can clean up viruses that have already invaded your network, an up-to-

date firewall can help in the detection stage, as well as prevent unwanted elements from getting through to your system in the first place.

So, if you see a quote come through email from Tavis for a SonicWALL renewal, definitely find a place for it in your budget.

For more information on why you should renew and update your

SonicWALL firewall, see our April 2015 newsletter.



A firewall is your network's first line of defense against viruses like Cryptowall.



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*Tell us what you think! Tweet to
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Why Buy From TAZ Networks?

Occasionally we'll get a phone call from a random citizen looking for a size 24 widget cable or some other obscure piece of technology. As much as we hate to turn away any business, we are not a retail shop. We just don't have the space or the budget to carry an extensive inventory.

What we will do, however, is provide hardware quotes and purchasing services for our clients and potential clients. We do this, not only to be helpful, but so that we can make sure that any equipment we install meets business and security standards.

First of all, any computers we quote will be specific to the way

your staff works. As Tavis pointed out in our newsletter last February, "The user might be a general office worker or a heavy-duty CAD worker... we will specify the right equipment and software."

Secondly, businesses have different technology needs than the average home user. That's why most standard computer products simply won't work right in a business environment.

The warranty is also better on business-grade equipment. Many consumer-level items are only covered for 30 days to 1 year. Any workstations we quote come with at least a 3-year warranty.

We feel so strongly about making sure you have the right equipment that **we have recently implemented a lower installation fee for equipment purchased through us.**

If you're looking to purchase new workstations, let us in on the conversation at the beginning. That's the best way to save money on your computers in the long run.



Enjoy your new business laptop — but please let us quote & order it for you.