



**Maintenance Perspectives**  
Ways to get more from your hardware agreements

## Use corrective action to recover budget and productivity

Third Party Maintenance can help overcome hardware service missteps

May 31, 2011

### Keep an eye out for typos.

Details are at the bottom of this newsletter's content.

## Get out of the rough and back on the fairway



Photo Credit: Marty Qualls

The pursuit of better solutions and systems is an inexact science, and from time to time every business must recover from a failed project or ill-timed purchase. When it comes to IT hardware in the datacenter, naturally conservative approaches that serve the business well in other capacities can allow failed projects to limp on for years, resulting in hampered productivity, higher

costs, and less success over that term and dragging down the company's ability to set higher and more challenging business objectives.

For IT in particular, the repercussions of pursuing failure in the name of preserving the status quo can be life-threatening to a business because it strikes at the nerve center and communication infrastructure of the entire company rather than an insulated subset of persons and projects. How can you get a datacenter out of the rough and back onto the green when it comes to dealing with, for instance, a bad merger, a short-sighted rip-and-replace project, or even something as simple as getting stung by vendor lock when a provider makes policy or service life changes that adversely affect your business?

Even professionals occasionally muff a shot. Reassuring yourself falsely that you're not in the rough will do nothing to improve your scores, however, and using a 4-wood will never turn a sand trap into a fairway. The first step in any recovery project is to fairly and objectively assess what has happened and determine where the problem is. Not to assign blame, however; spending time and resources on finger-pointing doesn't correct a problem or improve morale any more than coddling or playing pretend does. Often, simply looking at reality for what it is will show the best place to cut the cord and get back on track - this is true for IT projects as well as virtually any other sort of project from a hiring initiative to a remodeling. Setting aside who planned a thing, who authorized it, what the vendors said, what the users say - what is wrong? It can be a deceptively simple question, but answering it accurately requires a clear head and complete rejection of any bias regarding the project.

## **A good shot off a bad lie**

But knowing what went wrong and knowing how to fix it is too often where businesses stop, believing that course corrections come naturally once a problem has been fairly assessed and a solution identified. Unfortunately implementation is not always carried out with equal care and attention.

Here is where having a third party maintenance provider with a multi-spectrum offering can be incredibly helpful. While an OEM will be of limited assistance in sorting out a problem or implementing a solution, especially if it involves that OEM's own hardware products, a third party provider can often assess global issues and provide custom fixes, or offer other consultative assistance free from a bias towards a specific brand or line of hardware products. An OEM can only help in a rip and replace situation, where the old machines are coming out and new ones are going in, but this is rarely the best solution for a given problem and should never be undertaken until intensive research into other solutions has been completed. If your OEM tells you there's no time to do all the research, that's a red light unto itself; a rip and replace cannot be based on a deadline or a threat of end of support, and should only be undertaken when it has been shown to be the best solution. It should also only be undertaken on a company's own timeline, not one put forth by an OEM with every incentive to sell new hardware and declare existing models end-of-service.

At the practice range, everyone likes to work on their driver; when it comes to support, OEMs like to talk about upgrades and new purchases rather than maintaining current systems for as long as you have need. But remember that you're only using the driver about eighteen times in a given round, and the rest of the game depends on having a solid understanding of the other clubs. In the same way, Third Party hardware maintenance providers leave

the manufacturing of hardware solutions up to the OEMs, and specialize instead on long-term, day-to-day break-fix and project management services. In general they can provide an equivalent service level at a much lower price, and can free up your internal staff from spending so much time on maintenance management.

Recovering from mistakes is never enjoyable and seldom pretty, but when hardware issues are making more and more trouble in the data center, enlisting the aid of businesses that specialize on that specific aspect makes smart business sense. By learning from mistakes, businesses can transform problems into real opportunities and save budget, HR resources and valuable time in the process.

### Free Maintenance Consultation

TERiX can help steer your business back from the edge of a project gone bad, with industry-leading hardware maintenance and special project management services available above and beyond hardware break-fix. Click the appropriate links below to connect with a TERiX sales consultant. Let us know some [basic information](#) about your business and your datacenter locations, and we'll respond with relevant information so you can compare vendors and capabilities to meet your specific requirements. [Click through](#) to find out more!

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