



Case Study

Intel® vPro™ Processor
Technology
masterIT



masterIT
technology working for business

Leading Managed Services Provider Forecasts “The Perfect Storm” for Small Business Services

A confluence of market maturity and new tools means significant new growth

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Michael Drake
CEO, masterIT

Michael Drake and Gary Wiseman definitely believe in the potential for managed services: the two technology veterans founded their company, master IT, two years ago to focus solely on this growing market. “True managed services is a completely different mind set and culture versus the traditional reselling and maintenance of IT infrastructure,” says Drake, CEO of masterIT. “We’re offering a very different value to our customers, and we wanted to build that difference into the foundations of our company.” This business model requires both high efficiency and the ability to play a strategic role for the customer. “With the right processes and the right tools, you *can* become the customer’s high-value IT department,” explains Wiseman, president of masterIT. “But ‘high-value’ doesn’t mean ‘fix it when it breaks.’ It means an enterprise level of service for small businesses that puts the right infrastructure in place, keeps it working with very few disruptions, and grows it carefully as the customer’s needs and challenges change.”

For masterIT, this model has found traction in the southeastern U.S.: the company is currently serving more than 100 customers with an average installation size of 40 seats. Drake and Wiseman believe that the market growth for this model has only begun. Two factors lead them to believe that a significant market change – in their words, “the perfect storm” – is breaking. The first is new customer demands. “More and more small businesses understand how critical their IT is to their business today and to their competitiveness tomorrow,” explains Wiseman. “They just get it. At the same time, they understand through their experience that managing their IT themselves can be a major distraction from running their business.” So increasingly, small businesses are looking to outsource their IT functions.



The second factor is better tools for managed service providers (MSPs). "Even two years ago, the tools were not mature enough to support our business model effectively," says Drake. "But now our current managed services infrastructure – built on N-able's software's management console, N-Central*, and PCs with Intel® vPro™ processor technology – gives us the capability to deliver very comprehensive, very high-value services to our customers at a reasonable cost."

Taking Advantage of the Advances

The introduction of Intel vPro processor technology in 2006 was one of the key developments that masterIT believes will drive accelerated growth. PCs with Intel vPro processor technology have unique hardware-based management and security capabilities that extend N-central's functionality to further streamline PC management and increase security. They also deliver up to 40% performance improvement and greater energy efficiency.¹ masterIT is installing Dell OptiPlex* 755 desktops, and has been an almost exclusively Dell shop for a number of years. "Dell has excellent reliability and great customer service, so the OptiPlex 755 is a natural choice for our vPro systems," notes Wiseman.

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Gary Wiseman
President, masterIT

The power of this solution has four elements:

- Increased abilities to monitor, manage, and repair PCs remotely – regardless of power state or operating system health – that greatly reduce maintenance and management costs and increase the utilization of masterIT's personnel.
- Advanced, flexible notifications that can prevent developing issues from becoming disruptive problems, thus significantly reducing customer downtime.
- Increased security capabilities that better protect the customer's critical data while reducing downtime.
- A standardized, energy-efficient platform that can meet the developing demands of the customer's business while reducing total cost of ownership (TCO).

These advances help masterIT deliver the strategic value that differentiates it. "There are two things we exist for," notes Drake. "To reduce the total cost of IT and to eliminate the operational headache of IT. The vPro-based solution increases our ability to do both." The impacts on masterIT's business are broad.

Advanced remote capabilities that significantly raise efficiency and lower costs.

When masterIT engages a prospective customer, the first thing it does is a complete audit and benchmarking of the customer's IT infrastructure. The company can then give the customer a very solid estimate of overall IT cost savings if they utilize masterIT's services. "The average IT cost savings our customers experience is 20%, and can be as high as 50%," notes Drake. "The increased efficiency of our vPro plus N-able solution is key to delivering that level of savings." This solution allows masterIT to remotely monitor, diagnose, and repair PCs – even if the PC is powered off or the operating system is disabled. Previously, masterIT had no way to repair a blue-screened PC without an expensive field visit. "At a minimum, a truck roll will cost \$100 and two hours of effort," explains Wiseman. masterIT can now power PCs up and down remotely, allowing them to do patching and updating after hours. At the same time, the engineers in masterIT's NOC can work on three open tickets at once, further reducing the cost of service delivery. In addition, remote hardware and software inventory capabilities reduce the need for expensive (and inaccurate) manual inventories.

An improved customer experience. "Customers don't want us to install a great network and take the call when it breaks," notes Wiseman. "They really want a proactive service that keeps it from breaking in the first place." The capabilities of masterIT's solution help them deliver on that customer need. Proactive monitoring of network and PC conditions such as hard disk health, system temperatures, and memory usage help masterIT to identify and remediate many issues before they cause downtime. When a PC does go down, the advanced hardware-based capabilities of Intel vPro processor technology allow masterIT to fix the problem faster. In addition, the advanced security capabilities of these PCs – including hardware-based filters and accelerated, remote patch management – can mean less downtime caused by viruses and malware. To the customer, the end result is a managed IT infrastructure that better supports their business.

A standardized infrastructure that lowers cost and supports growing needs. “We present every customer with a plan to move them to a standardized infrastructure,” explains Wiseman. “This is essential for cost containment and for adequate business capabilities. PCs based on Intel vPro processor technology are ideal for this.” These advanced PCs have the performance to handle today’s demanding business applications and multitasking, and provide headroom for the future. In addition, their energy efficiency can yield substantial savings on energy costs. “Given vPro’s capabilities and performance, it’s a natural choice as our standard business PC,” notes Wiseman.

High-value customer communication enabled by rich data on usage and trending. An essential part of masterIT’s service is regular, comprehensive communication with the customer. “We meet monthly with each customer’s management team,” says Drake, “and this is central to the value we deliver.” Because the N-able plus Intel vPro processor technology solution gives masterIT extensive reporting capabilities, the company is able to show its customers usage trends, services delivered, and remediation performance. In addition to tracking the customer’s true IT cost structure, this extensive data helps masterIT recommend strategic IT upgrades and deliver more accurate IT budgeting input.

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Michael Drake
CEO, masterIT

Better utilization of key talent. “Almost exclusively, we hire more-senior engineers and technicians,” says Wiseman. masterIT has found that to deliver its brand of high-value, fast-response services, it needs senior players that have broad skill sets, deep experience, and excellent customer presence. Naturally, these team members are more expensive. “These people are our key asset,” Wiseman explains, “and our N-able plus vPro solution allows us to more fully utilize them. It allows them deliver on tasks more quickly and to multitask more effectively.” This leverage helps masterIT to drive higher margins.

Increased revenue. masterIT’s service delivery model, built on the N-able plus Intel vPro processor technology solution, allows them to increase revenue in three ways. First, the ability to multi-task means the company can bill more work in the same period of

N-central Fuels Managed Services

N-central from N-able Technologies is the leading remote monitoring and management platform deployed globally by managed service providers (MSPs) servicing the small- and medium-sized business market. In addition to providing full support for the capabilities of Intel vPro processor technology, N-central accelerates growing managed services businesses with unique offerings.

Unparalleled business support. N-able’s state-of-the-art knowledge management portal provides the training, tools, and materials you need to build a profitable, high-value managed services business.

A low-risk, proven solution. N-central is deployed by 1,300 MSPs who together generate more than \$360 million in annual revenue from 36,000 customers.

Powerful PC and server management features.

N-central delivers three tiers of powerful management – Core, Remote Support, and Remote Environment – that allow you to tailor your service delivery to deploy the most cost-effective approach.

Lowest cost of service delivery. The combination of N-central, best-practice tutorials, Automated Configuration Management, and optional Remote Support Manager reduce your cost of service delivery.

Agent and agent-less monitoring. Only N-able offers the flexibility of both agent- and probe-based network monitoring, allowing you to select the most efficient way to manage your customer’s environment.

Available as a hosted or non-hosted solution. N-able’s remote monitoring and management technology is offered both as a platform and as a hosted subscription service, allowing you to pick the option that best fits your needs.

For more information on N-central, visit www.n-able.com.

time. Second, the increased clarity of communication with the customer about their IT situation naturally leads to discussions of upgraded or additional services. And third, the strategic view of IT that masterIT is able to present – essentially a comprehensive CIO roadmap – leads to a significant amount of project work to extend the customer’s capabilities. “In the IT services industry, it’s fairly standard that one dollar of recurring revenue leads to about 30 cents in additional project work,” observes Drake. “We’re seeing three times that level.”

Riding the Wave

Drake and Wiseman see a broad expanse of opportunity as they build their customer base and expand their outsourcing offering. But they always see the right capabilities as key to success. “The key to this business is excellence in execution,” observes Drake, “and your execution is dependent on your tools.” The extended remote capabilities of management tools leveraging Intel vPro processor technology are essential. “Intel vPro processor technology helps us deliver better response times, better remediation times, and better reporting,” he says. “That’s at the heart of this perfect storm.”

For More Information

For more information on the benefits of Intel vPro processor technology for small and medium business, visit <http://msp.intel.com>.

For more information on masterIT, visit www.master-it.com.

For more information on N-able Software, visit www.n-able.com.

Overview of Intel® vPro™ Processor Technology

PCs based on Intel vPro processor technology, combined with a leading software management application such as N-able Technologies’ N-central, provide unprecedented capabilities that allow you to deliver more value to your managed services customers.

Remote diagnosis and repair reduce costly and time-consuming desk-side visits by resolving problems and repairing PCs quickly from the console – even if the PC is powered off or the OS is down.

Automated proactive alerts identify issues before they become problems or costly repairs. These include alerts about missing or disabled software, memory usage, hard drive health, fans, and power supplies.

Secure remote power up and power cycling allow you to perform scheduled maintenance, backups, and monitoring after hours.

Encrypted, remote security updates ensure that security patches are up to date and speeds the deployment of critical patches, even to systems that are off or down.²

Remote asset tracking eliminates time-consuming manual inventory of hardware and software with remote inventory management, even if the system is off or down.²

Solution provided by:



¹Performance measured on Intel® Core™2 Duo desktop processors compared to Intel® Pentium® D processor 805 on SPECint_base2000 and SPECint_rate_base2000 (2 copies.) Actual performance may vary. See www.intel.com/performance/ for more information.

²PCs with Intel® vPro™ processor technology include Intel® Active Management Technology (Intel® AMT). Intel Active Management Technology requires the computer system to have an Intel® AMT-enabled chipset, network hardware, and software, as well as connection with a power source and a corporate network connection. Setup requires configuration by the purchaser and may require scripting with the management console or further integration into existing security frameworks to enable certain functionality. It may also require modifications of implementation of new business processes. For more information, see <http://www.intel.com/technology/manage/iamt/>.

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