SWEATING THE ASSET

HOW IMPROVING THE HEALTH AND PERFORMANCE OF YOUR PCS CAN EXTEND THEIR USEFUL LIFE EXPECTANCY BY TWO YEARS

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ABSTRACT: This whitepaper sets of the 1E view of how 1E Computer Health™ (as part of WakeUp™) can maintain the health and performance of your PCs, allowing you to extend their lifecycle by up to two years in an effort to reduce capital expenditure.

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A False Economy?

For better or worse, companies are keeping their desktops and laptops around for longer. Thanks to tighter IT budgets and more durable and powerful hardware, most companies no longer replace desktops every three years. Many now wait as long as five years.

But is this a good thing?

Most organizations are looking to extend the life of their current fleet of desktops and laptops in order to reduce capital expenditure. Many believe that if a system is still running, then there is no need to replace it. Capex saved now can be invested in more strategic areas of the business, or, as with many organizations, not spent at all in case of further economic turbulence.

According to Gartner, current PC hardware performance is more than adequate to handle the OS and software demands in most businesses and it is possible to extend desktop hardware life times and postpone investment. Gartner recommend that most organizations should consider extending the life of desktop PCs to five years.[1]

But what about the considerations usually associated with extending the life of desktops and laptops?

Gartner themselves stress that the obvious trade-off is a higher total cost of ownership (TCO) because older machines are more prone to hardware failure, instability and poor performance. Typically, as desktops and laptops age, higher maintenance and support costs result. The longer a fleet of PC hardware is maintained, the greater the chance of degraded performance and downtime.[2]

But it doesn't have to be this way.

By better maintaining the health of your machines from day one, or by employing a solution to manage computer health before you extend their useful life, organizations can effectively extend the useful life expectancy of both desktops and laptops by up to two more years. But they can do it without the costs and performance issues usually associated with that strategy.

The Increasing Cost of Ownership

"A five year old PC costs twice as much to maintain as a new one."
Using Total Cost of Ownership to Determine Optimal PC Refresh Lifecycles, Wipro Consulting, January 2010

Older machines cost more to maintain, so total cost of ownership (TCO) will increase. Fact. Or is it?

As PCs age, the number of IT issues they have typically begins to rise, increasing TCO through a combination of factors including the cost of keeping those machines patched and up-to-date and the diagnosis and repair of machines after hardware and software failures.

On average, the routine task of updating and maintaining PCs is the greatest cost driver. Failures become commonplace as machines age and manual resolution of these issues can become time consuming and expensive. Gartner estimate lifetime costs for repair and maintenance to be as high as $2,162.89 per PC, nearly half of the average PC TCO of $4,850.33.[3]

According to Wipro Consulting the average cost to manage and support both laptop and desktop PCs in North America, the UK and Germany steadily increases as systems age. For desktops, from $433 in year one to $688 in year four and $816 in year five, and for laptops from $716 in year one to $1,136 in year four and $1,368 in year five.[4]

If nothing is done to improve performance and system health, extending the life of those machines could become very expensive, very quickly. In a larger organization extending the life of 5,000 desktops by two years could cost over $7.5m, more than cost of replacing them.

But all these figures make an assumption that desktop and laptop performance will gradually degrade over time.

Through automated regular refreshes, periodic reboots, scheduled patching and dynamic maintenance, any organization can now proactively maintain the health of every PC on the network, new or old. This regular maintenance, which can be carried out overnight or at weekend so as not to impact users, removes many of the performance concerns associated with older machines.

By employing such tools, any organization can extend the life of their PCs beyond the usual limit of four years but without incurring the higher TCO associated with older machines.

Healthy Desktop, Lower Costs

"A well managed desktop can save money - a 42% saving for a locked and well-managed desktop PC compared with an unmanaged one."

Gartner, Inc

Computer Health™ is part of WakeUp™ from 1E. Computer Health proactively identifies issues with desktops and laptops and automatically remedies them, either on the network or across the Internet, by proactively checking and dynamically repairing components, ensuring that PCs are always available, healthy and ready to use.

Computer Health performs both instant and scheduled tests covering a range of areas including Microsoft Configuration Manager and SMS clients, OS security levels and system performance, ensuring that a complete picture of the health of every machine on your network emerges. By detecting signs of failure early and by allowing remedial action to be taken in advance, Computer Health can eliminate the risk of data loss, improving user productivity.

And by improving system startup and shutdown times, Computer Health also ensures that users are not waiting around unnecessarily for their PCs to boot up each morning, giving every user back up to 30 minutes of productive time every day.[5] Indeed WakeUp can be used to rouse every PC automatically each morning before users even reach their desks.

WakeUp also enables a 100% distribution success rate for patches and software deployments, by ensuring that every machine is powered on and ready to accept the deployment. This means PCs can be patched out of hours, reducing the burden on helpdesk support and IT administrators and improving the user experience still further. And when used in conjunction with tools like NightWatchman®, WakeUp supports the download, install and reboot cycle to ensure every patch is deployed successfully.

By minimising downtime, improving performance and proactively maintaining the health of desktops and laptops, the typical problems and costs associated with managing and maintaining older laptops and desktops are removed.

Computer Health can extend the life of desktops and laptops by around two years, but without increasing the total cost of ownership of those machines.

References

1   Cost Optimization: Re-evaluating Your PC Hardware Replacement Strategies | 27March 2009 | Gartner ID:
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2   Cost Optimization: Re-evaluating Your PC Hardware Replacement Strategies | 27March 2009 | Gartner ID:
        G00166285

3   How to Reduce Your PC TCO 30% in 2011 | 20 March 2009 | Gartner ID: G00166195

4   Using Total Cost of Ownership to Determine Optimal PC Refresh Lifecycles | Wipro Consulting Limited | January 2010

5   *'Users can spend up to 30 minutes every day just waiting for their PC's to load or reboot'* Find and Fix the Issues That Are
        Slowing Your Boot Process | 17 September 2009 | Gartner ID: G00169743