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Top 10 IT Supply Frustrations

Discover common problems with IT supply in the UK and reduce your risk of ever being exposed to them.

In a world where business now relies on the seamless integration of IT and use of Information Systems, supply frustrations can be commonly experienced from business to business as the reliance on the technology is fundamental to the operations itself.

Every business owner and employee can empathise with those businesses that experience problems with their IT supply, simply because we are all so entwined with the technology we now use that when a problem arises it is incredibly frustrating.

Here we look at the top 10 frustrations and annoyances experienced by businesses with their supply of IT services.

1. Responsiveness of supplier

In the world of IT services, it is a common frustration that when you have an issue with your supply, the provider requests that “you log a ticket via email or an online portal” and then await a response. The time it takes to receive a response can often feel like an eternity especially if the problem is critical to your business activities. The response may also be provided in an undefined timeframe, if the service is not backed by an SLA, and when the response is finally provided it can often be just a holding message update instead of an action to resolve the issue – all of which can affect your business operationally and cause severe frustrations. It may be that they are adhering to their SLA’s but you need to be sure that the criticality is driven by your business requirements.

2. Supplier does not meet expectations

A situation that we have all experienced... you come to an agreement for a service or solution, you sign the agreement with the supplier then during the term of the contract the service levels are not met. The understandable outcome from this is that the expectations from the initial agreement quickly disintegrate into something very different and you’re left questioning what happened and where do you go from here.

3. Continual internet problems

As the internet quickly becomes the main method to access everything in our lives – both personally and professionally – reliability of that connection is critical. Any internet outage experienced, especially within a business, quickly escalates within seconds of the outage into a frantic world where everyone’s main focus is “The internet is not working??”. The problem can sometimes be out of the providers’ hands as they may not be the main reason for the issue as the true cause of the outage may be further down the line such as failure at the national telecom provider. Regardless of where the fault lies in individual occurrences, if ongoing issues arise with the provision of the internet then you should question what the supplier has actually put in place. Few, if any, businesses can operate these days without good, stable access to the internet therefore downtime leads to frustration of the highest degree.

4. Reliability of service

There is nothing worse than adopting a solution from your IT service provider and then experiencing repeated outages and disruptions to the service. It is easy to understand that these problems could be caused by a whole host of reasons, from elements of the service not being configured correctly, issues with the supplier's own infrastructure to problems with the licencing of the service. Whatever the reason or justification provided by the supplier, if a service you are paying for is not reliable it is just simply frustrating.

5. The service(s) / solution has grown in complexity

It's common as a business grows that the needs of that business evolve and change. With that, the needs of staff, customers and stakeholders which need to be supported also changes and the variety of different technologies, services and solutions used can become far more complex. In the organic growth of the business additional elements of IT services are often added and bolted on, with the business becoming increasingly reliant on the existing IT service provider, largely because it is the easiest option, by trusting their approach to the evolution of the service. However, a common occurrence is that this trust is misplaced, as the service provided becomes so complex that it becomes unclear whether the IT provider is still fit for purpose, or whether they are the right partner to take the business to the next stage of evolution, as the services can no longer be easily understood or evaluated.

6. Multiple suppliers to provide all IT requirements

Today's IT requirements are inherently complex due to the interaction and integration of the services we consume across multiple devices, apps, hardware and software. This often leads to a business having multiple providers within their IT supply chain, which means that when a problem arises a huge frustration is experienced as many suppliers tend to adopt the blame game – “it's not the software it's the hardware”, “it's not the telephone system, it's your lines and calls provider”, “it's not the application it's an issue on the server of your hosting company”. The real outcome is that this approach only makes the matter worse from the customer's perspective, as the main concern is not who is at fault but how a speedy resolution can be found.

7. Can't grow with your current supplier

With the ongoing evolution of cloud based services in combination with an increasing choice of services to consume and our need for unified devices, it can quickly become clear that as an IT consumer your needs can easily outgrow the capabilities of the providers you currently use – especially if they do not grow with you. For instance, your current IT partner may be just a provider of IT services and not what you need in terms of an all-encompassing offering that your business now needs, so frustrations manifest and the relationship becomes strained as they cannot serve you with what your business now needs.

8. Services impact customer experience

All too often, poor IT service provision has a knock on effect to your own customers and their experience of your business, which is incredibly frustrating and ultimately “bad for business”. In a world reliant on IT, any disturbance to your systems could

invariably effect the service you too are able to deliver – for example, an intermittent, poor internet connection may often restrict the ability of connecting users, applications and services as well as in many cases inhibit communications with your customers in ways that they have come to expect (online, email etc.).

9. Paying too much

When you are buying services from the same provider over an extended period of time, a common frustration felt by businesses is that it can become hard to assess if you are really getting true value for money and the assumption that you are paying too much will build. Without a proper framework to measure the service received alongside monitoring what the market is actually offering, it can be very difficult to determine value for money received. In addition if you are buying adjacent services from different suppliers the risk factor built into their charges will be bigger than if you collapse services to fewer suppliers who will take a wider view of the risks.

10. Discovering technology is not “fit for purpose”

As the saying goes...”buy cheap, buy twice”. It could be argued that the saying has never been so pertinent than in the IT industry. The best deal is all too often considered to be the one with the best price, especially if on face value the service or solution seemingly fits with your immediate needs. However, in an industry as technical as IT, face value is insufficient as a means of ensuring the service/product delivered is “fit for purpose”. Too frequently, businesses are left frustrated by the providers not illustrating all eventualities of the solutions they have adopted and therefore leaving the business in a position whereby they have paid for a service or solution which can quite quickly serve no purpose. Buyer beware though as sometimes this is actually the fault of the purchaser not the seller trying to save money.

We're always available to discuss any IT Project and would welcome the opportunity to talk it through. Get in touch now and we're confident we will find the perfect solution for your business.

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