Q&A with Witold Stanislawski, President of Network It Easy, Inc. providing Affordable and Professional IT Support for Chicago Small and Medium Sized Businesses with Cloud hosted, Premise based and Hybrid Solutions and Telephony

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CEOCFO: *Mr. Stanislawski, what is the concept and value proposition at Network IT Easy?*

Mr. Stanislawski: The concept is that we are a Managed Services Provider (MSP) and a Managed Services a Security Provider (MSSP) for small businesses in the Chicago Land area. We have been doing this since 2000. Basically, we become an IT department for small organizations; people who would like to outsource their IT. Instead of having one full time resource they get access to our entire team of IT experts. We are a small organization of fifteen employees and we service over two hundred small business. The relationships are based on a managed service provider monthly agreement. Our support packages are not just labor and support. It is a combination of tools and services. It is powered by a blend of software that allow a small business to operate smoothly and always have access to the latest and the greatest IT resources. This approach helps SMBs to gain competitive advantage through technology. Our solutions also allow them to automate certain tasks so that the processes within their operation are greatly improved.

CEOCFO: *You mentioned security. Are many people coming to you separately for a security solution? How did you decide to go in that direction along with your MSP?*

Mr. Stanislawski: We started seeing a huge increase of cyberattacks at the beginning of 2016, the reason we decided to get into security was because it was a logical step for us. In the beginning of 2016 we started noticing an increasing number of hacking attempts and a lot of email security breaches targeting SMB including our customer base. We not only started working with the existing vendors to increase the security for the existing solutions, but along the way we also onboarded a bunch of new solutions and new tools which help us with a layered security approach. That layered security product is very dynamic, and we constantly keep looking for better, more economical and the most secure. Sometimes I refer to our services as an Adaptive MSP organization, because we keep plugging in new solutions. We keep testing. We keep an eye on everything that is going on. After all we support almost five thousand computers. We recognize new trends. If one year we use a vendor to provide an antivirus it does not mean that the following year we will be using the same program. That is because that vendor may not be doing such a good job any longer. Maybe there is someone new on the market that does a better job. That is why we always refer to the service as adaptive, because we always try to be, on the bleeding edge of technology. Because of our compact size, we are small enough to be flexible and to react to our Customers' needs quicker. What sets us apart is the speedy turnaround and the superior customer service we provide.

CEOCFO: *Do your customers recognize that going in or do they realize over time that you are a cut above?*

Mr. Stanislawski: There is no way to show a customer exactly who we are the first time we meet them. This is a big problem, because there are so many MSPs out there. The competition is tremendous now. However, my advice to

anyone looking for services is to go with the heart and ask for references. You need to choose the people you like when you meet with them face to face, because the vibe you get during the initial meeting is very, very important. Small Businesses are not as rigid as big corporation and the chemistry within the office, customers and vendors is extremely important. We don't propose solutions that we don't believe in and we stand behind those products and the quality of our work. Most MSPs use similar combination of tools and utilities. What is setting our organization apart is the human factor, not how everything is bundled up. Pricing is usually very, very similar too. Unfortunately, the customer is going to learn later how everything flows and ultimately what's important is how easy it is to get the support. I feel bad for some of those people who make the wrong choice. There is a ton of competition out there. However, I would say that eighty percent of those companies are "new born" companies, where there were two guys coming with an idea of starting their own IT consulting business. Unfortunately, very rarely those two or three men shops can afford the technology that they need to invest into to provide an adequate MSP service, especially when it comes to security. All those tools, every single one of them, are a substantial monthly investment. Most of those vendors require a commitment of one thousand computers to start with. Therefore, it is most likely very difficult for a startup MSP to provide a good quality service. Even though at the beginning I said that all of us provide similar MSP bundles, I was referring to all the MSPs with more than 10 technicians. Unfortunately, SMB owners often get burned by choosing those super small affordable IT support services. I know that sooner than later they are not going to be happy and they will be looking for someone with more experience who is very well established on the market but small enough to care.

> **"For someone looking for a personal touch, we are a boutique type of IT support. Even for business owners who are used to having an onsite person, we take it to the next level."- Witold Stanislawski**

CEOCFO: *When you are working with a company, especially in the beginning, how do you assess what they really need? You have a variety of solutions available, how do you know what might be right for a customer?*
Mr. Stanislawski: Nowadays (from an IT perspective) most owners need a strong IT foundation to run a successful small business. The core of any SMB is electronic collaboration, email and easily accessible and sharable storage. Usually it is also a phone system and a critical business application (financial, CRM, ERP). Remote accessibility to those resources is also a 'must have' these days. Once we know what the above components consist of then we start a network discovery using our IT audit and assessment software tools. During the entire process we also ask a ton of business related questions: likes, dislikes, problem areas, vision. We learn as much as possible how the business is structured and how the processes flow. Based on the findings, we put together a software and service bundle, which will not only suit that specific business model but will also improve many processes assuring top notch security at the same time.

CEOCFO: *What do you look for in your people? How do you know when someone is right for your organization?*
Mr. Stanislawski: I would be lying to you if I said that whoever we pick is always the best candidate and in the long term would be working out for us. However, we have been very fortunate with our staff. That is because the retention rate is amazing. We only had one person who just started with us and I think the second shortest employment is probably four years. We have a few team members who have been with us almost since the beginning. We started back in May of 2000 and some of our guys have been with since 2002. What am I looking for in an employee…? It depends on the position we are hiring for. If it is a level\Tier III project engineer, we obviously must look at the previous experience and skill-set and certifications (all our employees hold certification from well knows industry vendors). However, it is a person who will be starting out at the Help Desk or maybe helping the project managers, the skill set is only fifty percent of the success. Everything else is that passion for the technology and their work ethics and attitude. You can usually tell based on the face to face interview whether someone enjoys working and helping people and is eager to learn. We start with the phone interview and if the person passes the phone interview, we usually invite them to a face to face meeting. We have been doing this for so many years that very often we can just tell from their body language. I get those "gut feelings" all the time. Of course, we also do background checks.

CEOCFO: *How do you reach out to potential customers?*
Mr. Stanislawski: I am proud to tell you that only a year ago we hired a sales professional. That is because we have built this business on high customer retention and referrals. Of course, as a technology company we also have big presence within Social Media, do digital marketing. You can also see our 5-star reviews on Google and Facebook. Also, as a top performer, we receive referrals from many of our vendors.

CEOCFO: *Why choose Network IT Easy?*
Mr. Stanislawski: In a nutshell, we focus on providing affordable and professional IT support for small and medium sized businesses. Whether you are frustrated with your current service provider, have decided it is time to hire a professional IT

service company or looking for back-up for your in-house person, we can help. You will be amazed how easy the transition is and regret not doing it sooner.

We are small enough to care. As I told you Lynn, we are small enough to be flexible and adaptive. For someone looking for a personal touch, we are a boutique type of IT support. Even for business owners who are used to having an onsite person, we take it to the next level.

The Customer Service is our top priority. We respond quickly, and we always listen. We do not try to force a customer to go with a certain solution. We listen, we recommend, we have a dialog first and when there is an agreement then we implement the services.