

Rethinking support

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Windows 10 Pro for business.

Shifting the pendulum from cure to prevention

We're all familiar with traditional IT support. In simple terms, they're the people who fix stuff when it breaks. But what about support in a broader sense?

We're moving from a world where support is about fixing broken things – devices, software, processes – to one where it will exist to make our working lives easier, richer, and more productive.

In this new world, machines and devices will automatically adapt to our changing needs and circumstances.

Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence are already showing us the way ahead. In the future, they will change the way we support ourselves, says Carolina Milanesi, Analyst at Creative Strategies.

Why is this important?

Because support impacts productivity. The tools, devices and software we use in our everyday working lives have become more reliable, and more intuitive in their use.

The easier it is to use a device or a piece of software, the less it intrudes on what we're doing, so the more we can achieve.

That's one form of pre-emptive support. Another will come from devices that

anticipate our activities, and adjust their behaviours accordingly, saving an individual user time. And because time is money, collectively those savings will impact substantially on an organisation's bottom line.

Support also impacts business continuity. Not only in disaster recovery, but also in the way it affects how well a business can continue to operate in the face of ongoing adverse conditions, such as the sudden change to a distributed workforce.

That highlighted many challenges, but it also showed how support at a human level could keep the wheels of commerce turning.





As an example, take the now-ubiquitous video conference

For many newly-remote workers, it was a fresh experience, and one they encountered with no IT contact. Instead, support came from their colleagues in how to manage the software, how to run a call effectively, even in the niceties of virtual meeting-room etiquette. In turn, they passed on their newly-acquired knowledge to others.

Everyone involved was aided by modern technology – which by its very usability, has diminished the need for traditional IT support. But the real benefit was the level of engagement inspired by peer support.



Modern technology has diminished the need for traditional IT support.

So is traditional IT support obsolete?

There will always be a requirement for expert assistance to get machines and employees back up and running.

Outsourcing support – or part of its function – also makes sense. Core teams can be retained to concentrate on innovation and growth, while budgets can be spent more effectively with support partners. This allows companies to scale support up and down when needed, without incurring the cost of a huge team.

But really, this is more about seeing the bigger picture and channelling the right levels of support to exactly where they're needed. Increasingly, that will be machine to machine support – the part humans don't see – to prevent problems in the first place.

And as we all know, prevention is better – and considerably less expensive – than cure.



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