

Green your organization

How going green can lead to the perfect balance between shareholder value and stakeholder requirements

As the worldwide attention is focused on the need for organizations to reduce their carbon footprints and become more “green,” social and political forces are increasing the pressure on organizations to play an active part in green initiatives.

But “green” is best realized at the intersection of addressing an organization’s requirement to deliver shareholder value to its investors and stakeholders’ requirements to improve one’s eco footprint to help avoid potential global catastrophe.

“In this day and age, you have to strive to find the perfect balance between shareholder value and stakeholder requirements,” says Monty Ferdowski, the president of Broadcore.

Smart Business spoke with Ferdowski about the green movement and how making simple adjustments can benefit your company, the community and the world.

How can unified communications help a company ‘go green’?

Unified communications (UC), an integrated means of communications, is used to optimize the flow of information across an organization by integrating real-time and not-real-time communications components with a consistent unified user interface and experience across multiple devices and media types.

By utilizing UC services, you can make it possible for all of your employees to work from home one or more days per week. This can really improve employee morale and productivity, all while reducing CO2 emissions since employees will be driving less. Not only that, UC can enable you to keep key employees when they have to move to different cities. Instead of searching for new jobs in a difficult market, they can work from home all of the time. Not to mention the time, money and headaches you’ll save by not having to interview, hire and train new employees.

By eliminating the need for much of the in-house communications equipment, you’ll be able to help the environment in several other ways. First, due to economies of scale alone, UC services utilize less than half the energy an organization would require using any premises-based system. Second, by utilizing fewer machines to deliver the same service to your customers, there are far fewer machines



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manufactured and far fewer machines ending up in landfills. And last but not least, there is less emissions because UC services all but eliminate technician visits to customer sites by empowering them to perform their own moves and changes. Plus, much of the system maintenance is done remotely by fewer, but more qualified, engineers.

How can outside technology services help a green initiative?

Besides being easy and convenient, online banking services can be a great way to go green. By paying bills electronically and using automatic deposit for payroll, you can make your processes more efficient and save stacks of paper every month. It’s also a good idea to deploy an internal electronic knowledge base that enables knowledge workers to be more efficient with paperless access to process-related content, including reference materials, legal documentation, workflows, ticketing systems, etc.

What are other ways to go green?

There are obvious ways, such as turning off your desktops and monitors at the end of the day, but the real impact

comes from UC services, server consolidation, virtualization and implementing multicore blade server technology. All of these efforts will improve the utilization of your server hardware investments while reducing your data center footprint, power usage and heating and cable management costs.

Consolidating and virtualizing storage into shared storage pools can save disk space, which will reduce overall storage requirements and backup costs while simplifying data recovery. Also, by virtualizing the desktop infrastructure and implementing EnergyStar-compliant equipment, you can save power, reduce costs and become more green, all while running more smoothly and efficiently.

You should also squeeze every bit of life out of your equipment. But, if you do have to buy new, look for products that are energy efficient. There are new and improved air handlers, water-cooling systems, environmentally controlled computer racks and energy-efficient hardware available for data centers. You could also utilize raised floors to improve airflow, which leads to better cable management, meaning cable trays and/or air conduits are being utilized for more efficient cooling.

Why is it so important for IT companies in particular to embrace green initiatives?

Information and communications technology accounts for approximately 2 percent of global CO2 emissions. This is a figure equivalent to that of the aviation industry. As an IT or communications company, you have to do your part to reduce communications technology’s eco footprint. Every efficient technology solution requires proper design and fine-tuning to achieve the best level of performance per kilowatt hour when it is installed. The IT industry must make a concerted effort to design infrastructure around some of the most energy-efficient servers and components, while using virtualization technology to run many service applications to maximize the use of available resources. <<

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