EXECUTIVE INTERVIEW

Designation	Head of Business Operations
Country	UK
Sector	Financial Services

Interviewer: **To what extent does your organisation use the services of an MSP and in which areas of IT? To manage all your IT? To run projects on ERP, virtualisation, SD WAN, Azure Stack, cloud migration or infrastructure, for example?**

Respondent: We are a financial institution and we have several service vendors that we work with. Specifically, we have been working with one top IT managed service provider providing us with the highly scalable solutions that we require. We have been using its data security services a lot and it has been a true partner in realising the required measures we need to keep our business up and running. The MSP came to us and showcased its power in creating a safe haven for our sensitive data.

Interviewer: **How has this helped in terms of cost benefits, such as removing capital expenditure, coping with skills shortages or with meeting specific targets, such as a merger or acquisition or perhaps a new product launch?**

Respondent: Since we were facing a lot of concerns over our data and email security, this appeared to be a marvellous opportunity to migrate whatever tasks we could not perform ourselves. Access to skills sets is definitely an important business variable that for a long time has caused issues. Considering service delivery from an accredited MSP was a no-brainer. We do not want to spend extra money and time on teaching and training.

Interviewer: **What other factors do you envisage influencing your decision on employing MSP services over the next 12 to 18 months? For example, opening offices in new regions, impending regulatory changes (if so which?) or necessary technology change (if so what?). How will an MSP help you overcome this particular challenge? I.e. What do you see are the key benefits of using an MSP for your organisation in the next 12 to 18 months?**

Respondent: It is more of an improvement programme than anything else and we have already considered all the factors where we need improvements. Everything is going to plan at this time. The risks and opportunities were discussed in detail during our

initial meetings. For us, data security and a reliable network giving us high availability was a must. All strategic pain points were discussed to get the best for our business. Key benefits of utilising them were: improved security solutions and reliability; better hardware and performance; and of course at the best possible cost. We changed our email from local provision to Microsoft's cloud-based Office 365. The email security platform has all the necessary elements to block or respond to any kind of intrusion. We also upgraded to the latest firewall systems with Unified Threat Management, which means far better security than before.

Interviewer: **What are the biggest pain points for your internal IT team? Skills shortages, too many IT projects, lack of management understanding, too much IT complexity? Maybe something else? How damaging could this be to your organisation and why? Has it ever led to failed IT projects or to over budget projects?**

Respondent: Email efficiency and data security. Reducing uptime. Low accessibility for staff and not able to help them in remotely accessing work and increasing their productivity. Heavy costs of maintaining systems. Not enough skills and time to manage technical issues. Security is an extremely important requirement for our business as a lot of sensitive data flows through our systems. If we do not manage that properly, our business could fall apart in a day.

Interviewer: **How is your organisation managing its data, on premise, in the public cloud, both? Do you envisage a shift in strategy over the next 12 to 18 months and if so how and why and where do you see an MSP helping you?**

Respondent: We manage data differently, depending on what it is. Emails are cloud-based (Office 365) and data backup is managed both internally and externally to ensure business continuity. Things are going fine. We want to check and update or upgrade technology on a consistent basis. If we are securely and efficiently managing business objectives with our current IT solutions, we will not go forward with anything new.

Interviewer: **In terms of percentage, how confident are you that your existing IT strategy is working well and where do you think it could be improved? Do you think there are aspects of IT that will never truly be managed well**

internally and will always require the expertise of an MSP? If so what? (Security? Cloud? Infrastructure?)

Respondent:

I think, 90% of our main concerns have been taken care of by the MSP. We are happy with the service.

Interviewer:

What aspects of IT in your organisation do you think should always be managed internally and not by an MSP? Are there any external or internal factors that could challenge this, such as skills shortages, M&A, business consolidation or regulation? If so what?

Respondent:

Data storage and backups and we need total control over business drivers. Like any company, we know what to outsource and what to keep without hampering accessibility and security.