fasthosts ProActive

The key to escaping vendor lock-in

In one of our previous blog posts, we talked about what vendor lock-in is. If you haven't read that post, we recommend checking it out before you continue, for a full in-depth look. But, as a brief summary, vendor lock-in is when a customer becomes dependent on a specific vendor's products or services, finding it incredibly difficult to switch vendors without cost, effort or disruption.

So, what comes next if you do find yourself in a vendor lock-in? We've covered what it is and how to avoid it, but what if that ship has sailed? We're here to tell you that all is not lost! You can escape and here's how.

Take a look at your current contract

The first step in getting out of your vendor lock-in is assessing the contract you have with that provider. Use this assessment to plan your exit strategy, and find out your notice period and any penalties you might incur from leaving early. So, when you're proposing a new provider to the business, you'll have a full picture of what's needed when leaving your current situation.

Your commercial argument needs to focus on contract length, the costs of getting out early and the costs of your new proposition.

This analysis will also help you in knowing what to look out for in a new provider, so you don't get stuck again.

Identify dependencies

What is keeping you with that vendor? What services do they provide that you depend on? List all of these services, systems and technologies that you need from that provider. This includes any software, hardware, data storage, or custom solutions. How many of those are vital to your business and are some of them actually optional? And what are your alternatives?

This will help you understand your business needs when it comes to looking for other MSPs.

Assess costs

Something else you'll need to be sure of is the financial implications of leaving your current MSP early, if there are any. Is there a break clause that you can make use of?

You also need to compare this cost with the lost-opportunity cost of staying. Will you get more opportunities elsewhere and therefore save yourself money and time?

Review alternatives

Do your research. That's the most important thing you can do when looking for a new MSP. You don't want to end up stuck in another vendor lock-in, causing more stress and wasting more time. Make sure to consider reputation, cost, scalability and what services they offer. But before you make the move anywhere, be clear about what you want to achieve by leaving.

Negotiate

You don't want this move to be a waste of time, so make sure you negotiate with your new MSP. The terms of your contract need to align exactly with your business needs and also include exit clauses, just in case.

Data migration

This can be the part that causes the most stress if you don't have the right MSP that is. An MSP, like ProActive, should plan the migration of your data and systems, with a smooth transition and minimal downtime, so no time or money is wasted. This will require the MSP to have a deep understanding of your business, including your peak times and what data you have to migrate.

Risk mitigation

Make sure you have a plan in place that accounts for any potential disruptions during migration. This might include redundancy measures or data backup strategies. Again, this is where your MSP should step in and help.

Legal and compliance

Something that's very important to remember during the transition is making sure you're legally compliant, especially concerning data protection and privacy. Start asking questions, like 'Where does this data reside?' or 'How will it be protected?'. Your MSP should help you keep compliant and secure at all times during the migration and beyond.

Communication

At the top of your priority list should be keeping your team, stakeholders and (if necessary) customers in the loop. This will minimise any disruption for them and maintain the trust between you.

Keep on top of things

Just because you've escaped the vendor lock-in this time, doesn't mean you can't get pulled back in. Keep up with performance reviews, check contract terms and make sure your new MSP allows ease of movement. You don't want to get stuck again.

Remember, breaking out of a vendor lock-in can be a complicated process and it may take some time and resources. But it's not as stressful as it sounds. Make sure you choose an MSP which can help you approach the migration strategically and securely, with a clear understanding of your business needs and goals.

We've got it covered

So you've got yourself stuck in a 'one-size-fits-all' solution with an MSP that's just not catering to your business and support needs. You need a provider that will listen to your business needs and tailor a solution to you. That's where ProActive comes in.

We'll work with you to develop a future-proof plan, just for you. Plus, we'll take the stress out of migration, with a smooth and secure transition that keeps your data safe. No more paying for something you don't need, or wasting time and resources where they're not needed. And you'll get all of this with a cloud platform that can grow as you do.

If you've got any questions or would like help getting out of your vendor lock-in, please get in touch. Give us a call on 0333 111 2000 or book a meeting with us to discuss your business needs. We'll be happy to help.