

IT is Stressful - Official!

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Ramsac, an independent IT consultancy has revealed that 61% of business owners with responsibility for IT in the workplace cite IT as either more stressful or much more stressful than other day-to-day aspects of management. The survey of 237 businesses also highlighted that 35% of manager's worry about their IT provision on a daily basis. The survey was commissioned by ramsac in December 2006 and conducted by Surrey-based marketing agency, Journey to Market.

Much of the stress revolves around the ever-escalating importance of IT within the business. Respondents stated that in the event of a short-term IT failure nearly 90% of business managers would consider it at best, 'a serious pain' and at worst 'a disaster' for their business.

If there is one main factor underlying this stress it would appear to be cost of support, 69% of respondents agreeing with the statement 'our business can't justify the sort of full time expertise we need when things go wrong'.

In a concurrent piece of research also commissioned by ramsac, conducted by telephone interview among a sample of businesses who outsourced their IT management, strategy and support, not one business manager reported any feelings of stress with regard to IT. Having moved ownership of the problem outside the business, to a specialist with a much broader based skill set, most respondents claimed not to have to devote time to thinking about IT at all.

Managing Director of ramsac, Robert May, who commissioned the research, says that business managers face an increasing challenge in aligning the strategic business plan with effective in-house IT delivery, "The ever changing IT landscape means that at one end 'solutions' are becoming increasingly commoditised, 'off-the-shelf' and intuitive, and the actual complexity of the IT product dictates that, if it breaks, the level of skill set needed to fix it is often greater than that of the dedicated in-house IT expertise." The same is true when it comes to issues such as strategic joined-up, grown-up, planning for the future, as May continues, "With a wide diversity of IT products available, and an increasing tendency for customisation, it is becoming exponentially difficult for a dedicated IT resource, that may already be running to keep up in order to know what to do now, to have the broad view required to work out 'what to do next.'"

"Faced with these challenges (and in many cases faced with legacy IT problems into the bargain) it is no surprise that businesses are increasingly turning to high level IT specialists for advice about what to do at the leading edge of technology," concludes May. "Outsourcing offers the opportunity of buying in the expert support required on a daily or retained basis."