

Identifying and Navigating the Technology Lifecycle Stages in your Business

AN E-BOOK BY WIN TECHNOLOGY



Identifying and Navigating the Technology Lifecycle Stages in your Business

We believe there are four technology lifecycle stages that all businesses experience. Often, they will experience two or three stages at a time. Each stage contains its own challenges and prescribed actions to achieve targeted outcomes. To help organizations effectively move through these stages, effective communication with your IT partner is critical. In this e-book we will share best practices we have learned in partnering with our clients.

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SECTION 1

Introduction

Who We Are

Your comprehensive Upper Midwest technology solutions provider

We work with our customers to provide comprehensive technology solutions that improve resilience, performance and uptime. Our 20,000+ miles of fiber network allow us to deliver pragmatic, robust solutions that eliminate the friction of dealing with one provider for network connectivity and a different provider for technology infrastructure deployment and managed IT services.



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Eau Claire, WI 54701



Des Moines Office
4432 114th St
Urbandale, IA 50322



Data Centers
Eau Claire, WI Green Bay, WI



Milwaukee Office
3315 N 124th St.
Brookfield, WI 53005

How We Can Help

We provide IT Services, AI-Ready Fiber Network and Data Center solutions for your business

Our capabilities span across the physical network connectivity layers, to managing your data assets and day-to-day IT operations. In addition, our acquisition of Digicorp expands and complements our offerings by including video surveillance, voice, structured cabling and software licensing.



Network Solutions

WIN has a fast, secure and resilient fiber network across Wisconsin, Iowa, and parts of Illinois and Minnesota. Additionally, our 24/7 Network Operations Center (NOC) proactively monitors the network and quickly responds to network issues.



IT Services

Our experienced team of IT professionals are available to augment your existing IT staff or fully manage your IT operations.



Data Center Services

WIN has three data centers in Wisconsin that offer colocation, cloud services, hosted infrastructure, and more. Our WIN network also extends to 20+ data centers across our footprint for when you need connectivity to another data center you partner with.

wintechnology.com

IT Services At-a-Glance

We Tame Technology so You can Thrive

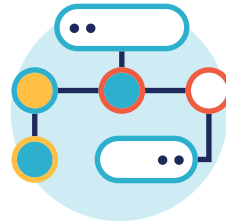
How We Work



Professional IT
Infrastructure
Services



Managed IT
Infrastructure
Services



Co-Managed IT
Infrastructure
Services



Data Center
Co-location



SECTION 2

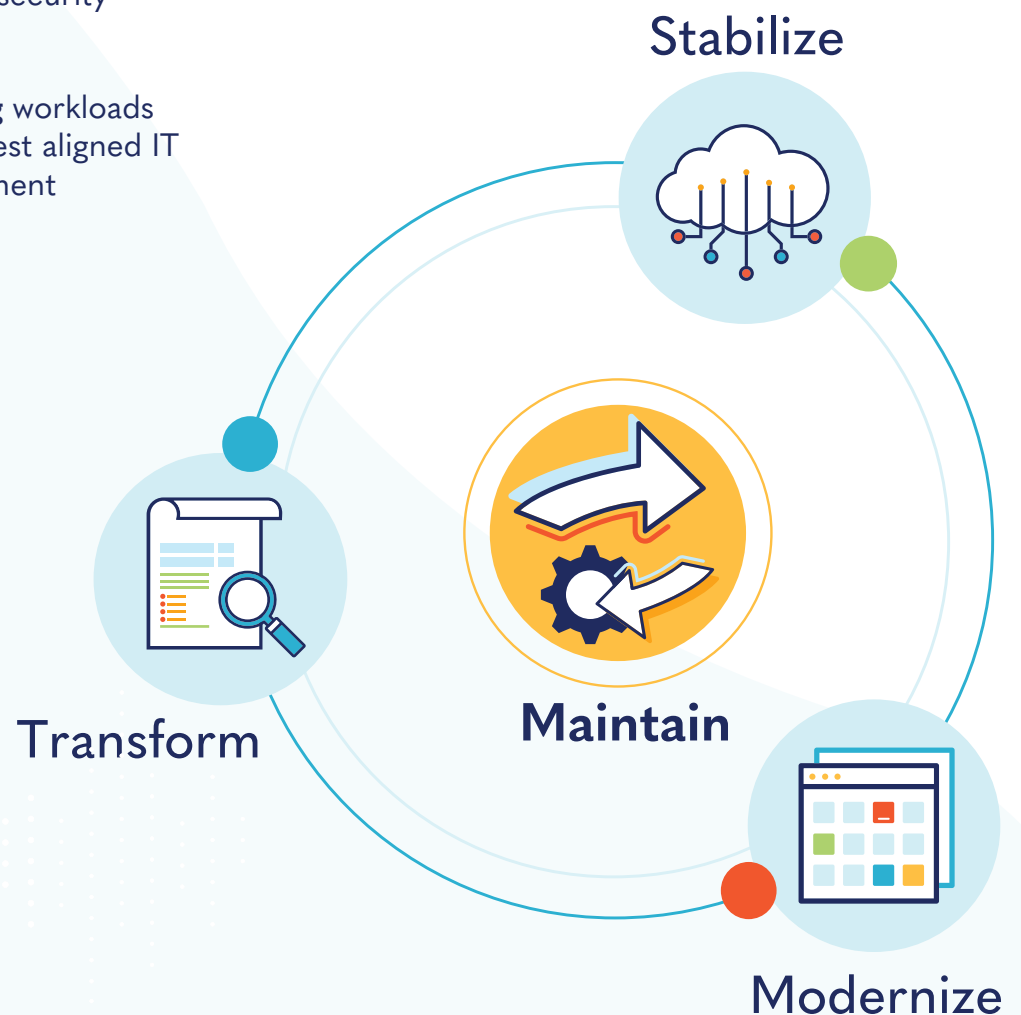
Stages of the Technology Lifecycle

Stages of a Technology Lifecycle

They Exist In Every Business

Businesses are constantly changing. Sometimes the use of technology leads, and other times it lags. To attain targeted business value from your use of technology, you need to recognize your current situation. We developed the following framework to help recognize the characteristics of each stage and prescribe pragmatic actions: stabilize, maintain, transform and modernize.

- Reliably maturing** turbulent, inefficient, and otherwise challenged IT infrastructure environments
- Sensibly managing** the continuous evolution of IT infrastructure and cybersecurity
- Thoughtfully updating** aged IT infrastructure and understated cybersecurity
- Continually evaluating** workloads and migrating to the best aligned IT infrastructure environment



The Technology Lifecycle In Any Business

The technology applications you use are directly connected to attaining business value. Because the reliability, usability, and security of those applications is reliant upon the underlying infrastructure, understanding the composition of those workloads and the impact on infrastructure is also an important consideration within the framework.

Remote Workforce Transformation

Collaboration tools and remote applications

- ✓ An expanded cybersecurity threat surface must be addressed
- ✓ Requires increased compute, storage, bandwidth and resiliency

Growth in Analytics

Finance and operations applications

- ✓ Combining operational and financial systems data to produce new insights creates new data movement and data protection scenarios
- ✓ Using artificial intelligence around these applications generates greater location-based needs for compute and storage

Introduction of SaaS

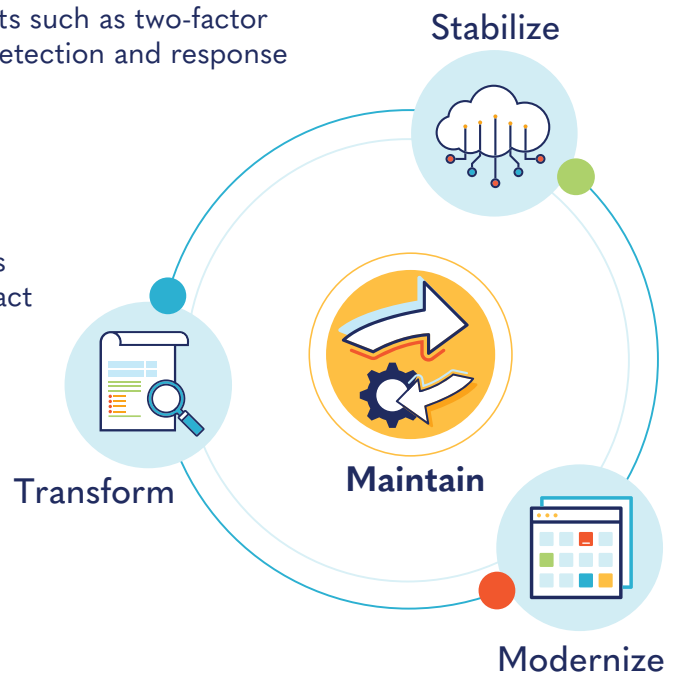
Sales and Marketing digital transformation

- ✓ Deprecation of replaced system critical for security and economics
- ✓ Backup and recovery for SaaS platforms often misunderstood or overlooked
- ✓ Maintaining security, productivity, and employee experience requires modifications to key infrastructure components such as two-factor authentication, single sign-on, and managed detection and response

Application Architectures Differ

Operational system modernization

- ✓ ERP, SCM and IoT systems are adding features that change workload characteristics and impact infrastructure differently
- ✓ Movement of homegrown systems to new hosted environments requires assessments and changes



Maintain

Sensibly managing the continuous evolution of IT infrastructure and cybersecurity

Technology is constantly progressing, and limited investment results in gaps in critical areas. The Maintain stage focuses on pragmatically adapting to change so you can hold your relative position. It is the goal to convert work occurring in all other stages back into a Maintain state once the unique characteristics of those stages have been successfully addressed.

What this Looks Like

- ✓ Comfortable with current state processes and technology
- ✓ Comfortable with current cybersecurity stance
- ✓ No destabilizing business events expected
- ✓ Resources are optimized from cost and use

Desired Outcomes

- ✓ Cost optimization and symmetry
- ✓ Sustain prevailing risk position
- ✓ Harvest ROI from IT investments

How an IT Services Partner Can Help

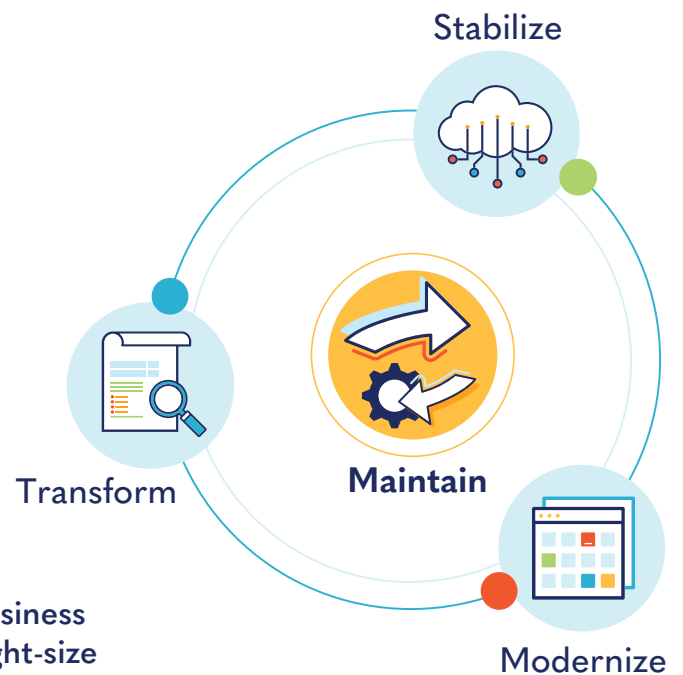
- ✓ Get the most out of the existing infrastructure
- ✓ Identify and eliminate areas of wasteful spending
- ✓ Moderate change in the environment to only “must have” items
- ✓ Form roadmap to allow proper planning and budgeting



How WIN Technology Upgraded Our Client to the Maintain Stage

After initially stabilizing the environment at an equipment leasing firm, we shifted into the Maintain stage. Over a 2+ year period, we guided many changes including:

- ✓ Migration to a new Operating System
- ✓ Renewal of support agreements for servers and network gear
- ✓ Implementation of dozens of zero-day and other critical patches and firmware updates
- ✓ Employee onboarding/offboarding support
- ✓ Software lifecycle support (licensing modifications)
- ✓ Lifecycle management of desktops and laptops to distribute the cost of asset renewal over several years



By sharing our time data alongside our time-based business model, we were able to successfully collaborate to right-size the value equation for this client.

These efforts established the following:



User experience improved by decreased incidents and downtime



Customer experience enriched by greater systems availability



Productivity increased by reliability of systems environment

Stabilize

Reliably maturing turbulent, inefficient, and otherwise challenged IT infrastructure environments and cybersecurity

All organizations face events that create disorder in their IT systems. The disorder is tolerable for some time and later surfaces as a substantial pain point impacting employee experience, profitability and customer experience. The Stabilize stage focuses on near term actions combined with longer-term planning to deliver your IT environment into a more orderly state.

What this Looks Like

- ✓ Current state is chaotic
- ✓ Technology sprawl is a challenge
- ✓ Security not where you want it
- ✓ Business is not receiving proper value from IT infrastructure investments
- ✓ Business events have created some level of disruption
- ✓ Line of Business applications not performing as needed

Desired Outcomes

- ✓ Cost containment and predictability
- ✓ Improve risk position
- ✓ Increase productivity and employee experience
- ✓ Enrich customer experience
- ✓ Expand visibility of efforts and boost decision making confidence and pace

How an IT Services Partner Can Help

- ✓ Standardize the existing infrastructure stack to enable efficiency
- ✓ Identify and eliminate areas of wasteful spending
- ✓ Instill industry best practices
- ✓ Leverage data to prioritize areas for improvement
- ✓ Form roadmap to allow proper planning and budgeting
- ✓ Form and deliver paced stabilization projects
- ✓ Effectively manage infrastructure environment through change

How WIN Technology Stabilized Our Client's IT Environment

A healthcare client was experiencing inconsistent user experiences and hardware problems with aging endpoints. We implemented a lifecycle management plan to refresh user endpoints on a predictable schedule with standard equipment.



Stabilization of the environment resulted in:



User experience improved
by a 30% decrease in
support incidents



Cost of services reduced
because less overall systems
support was required



Employee productivity
increased by greater
systems availability

In addition, the management plan created a predictable and easily budgeted operational expense that keeps endpoint replacements on schedule and out of the capital budget.

Modernize

Thoughtfully updating aged IT infrastructure and understated cybersecurity

The Modernize stage focuses on accelerating upgrades to infrastructure to extend beyond minimal maintenance of your relative state. Changing marketplace conditions such as regulatory enforcement, insurance renewal requirements, client-driven security expectations and shifting application architectures drive the need to upgrade your infrastructure.

What this Looks Like

- ✓ Current state is stable but deteriorating
- ✓ Technology scalability is a challenge
- ✓ Security is not utilizing modern tools or methods
- ✓ Business is not receiving proper value from IT infrastructure investments
- ✓ Business events have surfaced shortcomings of current infrastructure stance

Desired Outcomes

- ✓ Cost normalization
- ✓ Reduce risk
- ✓ Improve scalability to unlock growth, revenue, and profitability acceleration
- ✓ Accelerate productivity and employee experience
- ✓ Enrich customer experience

How an IT Services Partner Can Help

- ✓ Prioritize high business impact, low complexity modernization gaps
- ✓ Surface options for shifts from Capex to Opex
- ✓ Identify and eliminate areas of wasteful spending
- ✓ Form roadmap to allow proper planning and budgeting
- ✓ Form and deliver paced modernization projects
- ✓ Effectively manage infrastructure environment through change

How WIN Technology Modernized a Client's Cybersecurity Posture

As the number of successful cybersecurity incidents increased over the last few years, regulatory agencies and insurance underwriters began to increase requirements for modernized cybersecurity practices, including two-factor authentication, advanced antivirus and EDR/MDR. In response to these requirements, we helped numerous clients from across multiple industries substantially improve their risk profile by upgrading their cybersecurity posture with modern tools and services.



Modernization of the environment resulted in:



100% of our clients achieving timely renewal of their cybersecurity insurance policies



Substantially improved alignment to regulatory and compliance advisories and requirements



0 breaches for our clients

Transform

Continually evaluating workloads and migrating to the best aligned IT infrastructure environment and cybersecurity

The Transform stage focuses on planning, architecting, delivering, and supporting IT infrastructure geared to each phase of the digital transformation journey. Successful digital transformations are not events, but rather occur over longer time windows and therefore require a more holistic and intentional planning approach. Forming, and executing upon, a multiyear roadmap facilitates informed decisions on primary and secondary objectives including workload placement, integration, tech debt deprecation, risk management and application performance.

What this Looks Like

- ✓ Current state is not optimized – business and supporting technology
- ✓ Technology support of digital transformation is a challenge
- ✓ Security paradigms are shifting with workload locations
- ✓ Business is embracing digital transformation and needs technology to enable it
- ✓ Business events are imposing the need for change on people, process, and technology

Desired Outcomes

- ✓ Cost alignment
- ✓ Improve overall risk profile through expanded risk management paths and methods
- ✓ Accelerate productivity and employee experience
- ✓ Enrich customer experience
- ✓ Expand visibility of efforts and boost decision making confidence and pace

How an IT Services Partner Can Help

- ✓ Assess IT workloads and propose optimal migration options
- ✓ Illustrate a more holistic view of IT workload and bandwidth interactions
- ✓ Guide and assist on new paradigms for DevOps and cybersecurity
- ✓ Form roadmap to allow proper planning and budgeting
- ✓ Form and deliver paced transformation projects
- ✓ Effectively manage infrastructure environment through change

How WIN Technology Transformed Our Client's Global Data Storage

After guiding our high-tech engineering client to widen their planning time horizons and view their IT systems more comprehensively, we developed a roadmap that:

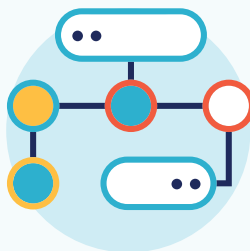
- ✓ Highlighted infrastructure modifications better aligned to current state and future state needs
- ✓ Increased predictability in the budget
- ✓ Shifted CapEx costs to OpEx and spread out the incurrence of CapEx costs
- ✓ Integrated continuous improvement in cybersecurity and risk management stances
- ✓ Staged implementation of much needed new key systems in the environment



These efforts resulted in:



CFO delighted with financial planning and impact on use of cash



Parent company and cybersecurity auditors pleased with advancement of cybersecurity initiatives and compliance scores



User experience improved by planning and implementation of global file cache system



SECTION 3

Communication

Thrive Through All Stages

The Communication Framework

Our proven approach to communicating keeps all members of the team aligned and in the know

Recognizing business value from technology usage is often elusive. One path to surfacing these values is brought about by continuous communication highlighting operational data in context. Regular communications with key contributors ensures awareness and drives action designed to attain targeted business value.

There is a specific communication framework that drives success.



Inform

Informative communications is delivered as the baseline data to convey what's transpiring in your environment with your systems and our services.



Guide

Guided communications adds benchmarks and other reference points to turn data into knowledge and insights to support your decisions.

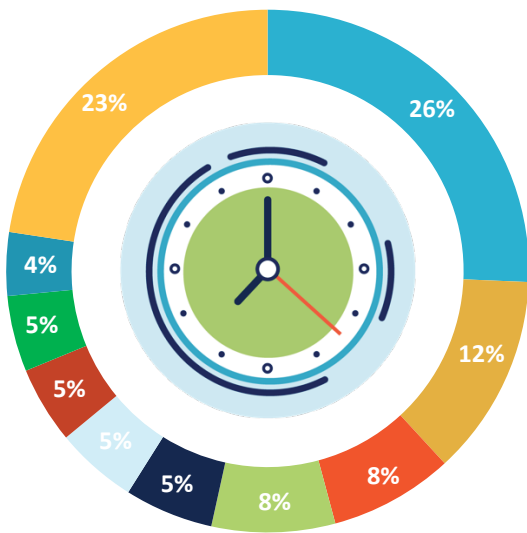
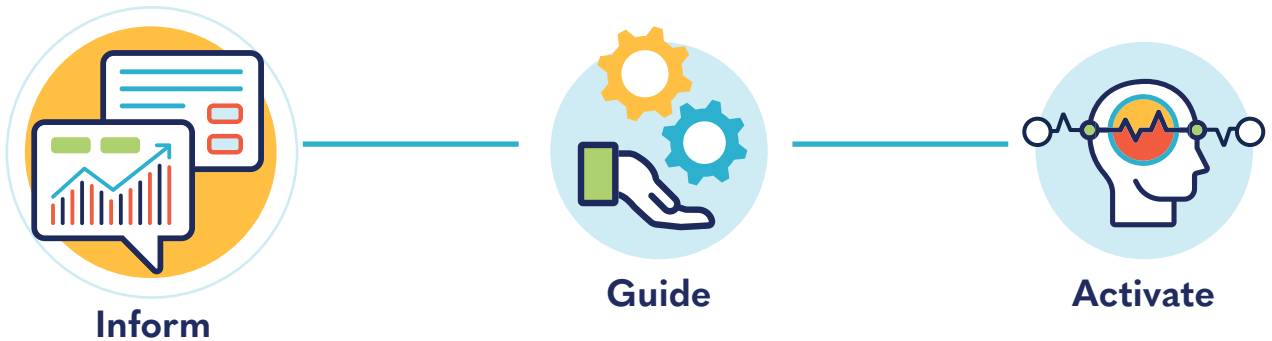


Activate

Activated communications extend guided insights into pragmatic planning and actions that produce value you can recognize and attain.

Inform

Quarterly Business Reviews focused on information through dashboards provide visibility to Senior Level Executives on the wellness of their technology spend, the maturation of their users, and areas of improvement. Information allows for decision making on IT priorities.

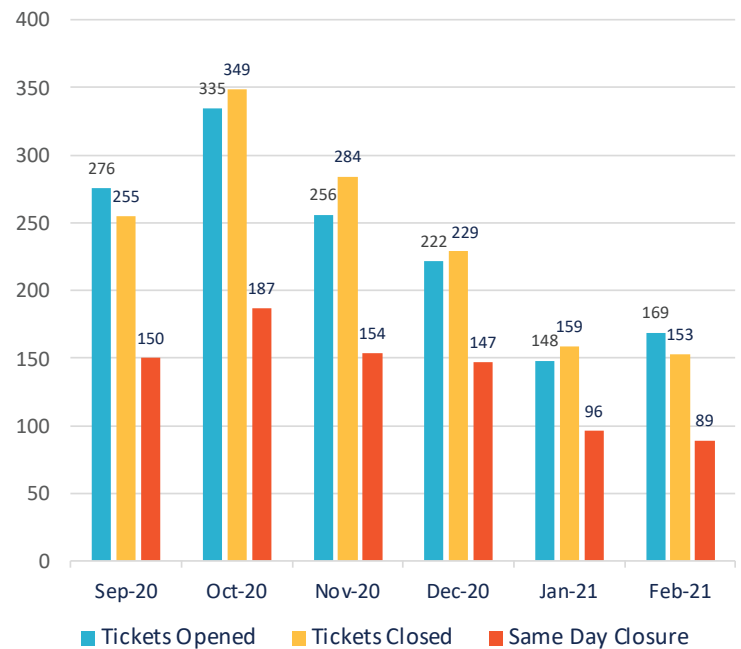


Time by Category

- Desktop Support
- Server Support
- Email
- Application Support
- Security/Data Protection
- System Alert Server
- Application Support - Productivity
- Helpdesk Support
- Security Issue
- Other

Ticket Creation/Resolution

Sept. 2020 – Feb. 2021

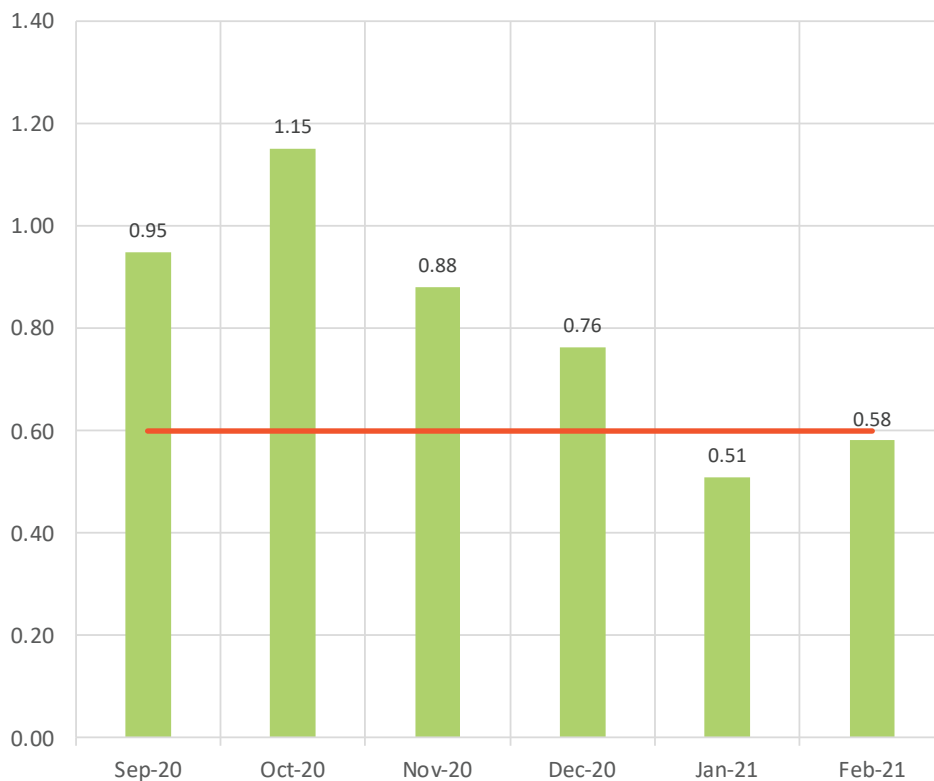


Guide

Trends in tickets/user/month show a successful trend, yet guidance is provided by tying industry benchmarks demonstrating achievement below a 0.6 industry checkpoint. The achievement provides the ability to guide priorities toward more forward-facing initiatives with confidence.



Tickets/User per Month



- Self-Help**
 - KB Go-Live
 - Feedback from end users
 - Refine Documentation
- IT Governance**
 - Policy Review
 - Disaster Recovery Plan
 - Asset Management
- Cybersecurity**
 - Prioritize Actions
 - Budget for Solutions
 - Coordinate with CS SMEs

Activate

Managed IT Services provided by WIN are integrated into the business model at this client with clear delineation of accountabilities and demonstrating thoughtful collaboration. Activation is achieved through a hybrid model which provides both efficiencies and effectiveness.





Want to Learn More?

If you found this ebook interesting...

WIN Website

wintechnology.com

Additional Resources

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