



A guide to effective office relocations from an IT point of view

Businesses grow and at times are required to relocate to new premises. Office relocations are often considered similar to the commissioning of a new office/branch. The characteristics of the tasks involved are similar and in both cases the expectations are that all existing IT components of an office environment will continue to work. These expectations coupled with short notification / preparation period and limited knowledge exchange can lead to IT disasters that cost money, time and the confidence the business has in its capacity to handle an otherwise simple business change.

Avoiding such disasters is relatively simple, however it does require that all relevant stakeholders engage and consider the following steps prior to any change:

1. Ensure that all aspects of the physical change are covered and all IT assets are accounted for. Define the target location of all computers, servers, printers and phones and develop checklists to ensure that each asset has reached its final destination.
2. Ensure that the new office has all the required IT infrastructure to host the users. All voice, data and cabling installations need to be arranged prior to the move. In the case that servers are to be hosted at the new location, ensure that there is a computer room with the necessary racking equipment. Do not under-estimate even simple matters such as specific electrical requirements (for the UPS), air conditioning and dimensions of doorways which equipment must fit through.
3. Treat the move as a project and assign one person as the lead. Give the authority to this resource to manage all aspects of the move. Organise meetings prior to the move to ensure that all elements are accounted and also to generally communicate any changes to the rest of the staff.
4. Develop a risk management matrix and list of possible disasters and describe how you plan to mitigate this risk.

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