

GOALS AND POLICIES FOR ALL CLIENTS

It is our goal to maintain a mutually beneficial, long-term relationship with you and your organization by providing fast, cost-effective solutions tailored to your requirements. We will respond honestly, promptly, and courteously to your requests; We will perform all work to the best of our ability and to the highest ethical standards. We will make every effort to respond immediately to catastrophic failures, even those that occur on weekends or nights.

Your data is confidential and will not be shared with anyone unless you authorize it in writing or via email first. If you need us to get data to one of your vendors, (the exception is for off site backup).

Some jobs are quoted by the job, but our labor rate is \$85.00 an hour, and work is done on a time + materials basis. For local clients, a one-hour minimum applies to work done, and a trip charge of \$25.00 will be billed for each visit of four hours or less to your site. Labor beyond 1 hour is billed in hourly increments at \$85.00 an hour. Holiday, weekend, and after-hours work must be prearranged and is billed at time-and-a-half. For long-distance clients, travel time greater than 45 minutes to and from your site is billed at our regular hourly rate of \$85.00 per hour, and no trip charge is billed.

In the event that you schedule us to come out and resolve something that cannot be fixed due to hardware failure or other system wide failure, we still bill you at our regular rate of \$85.00 an hour. Frequently something that should work but does not is a symptom of another issue and requires fixing first before allowing us to resolve whatever you called us to fix originally.

Up to 15 minutes each month of remote support is free. Any time exceeding the 15 minutes of free support is billed at our hourly rate of \$85.00 an hour. Since many problems can be solved remotely, we encourage you to invest in a remote control software package. Miscellaneous expenses, such as travel and long-distance telephone calls, will be billed at their actual cost. We will make every effort to minimize these costs when it is possible to do so without compromising our service.

We request payment up front for purchases that we make on your behalf using our vendor accounts or credit card. We typically charge 1 hour of labor for buying hardware for clients as vendor management, shipping, receiving, & equipment testing are frequently necessary. All amounts over 30 days past due are subject to a 1.5% per month finance charge. All amounts over 90 days past due for hardware purchases, loans to you, and unpaid labor charges will also be subject to collection costs and legal fees. Tidewater Technology Solutions retains title to merchandise bought for you until paid for in full. We reserve the right to reclaim merchandise delivered to you, if not paid for in full when payment is due or if your payment is dishonored. Dishonored checks are subject to a processing fee of \$40.00. Please let us know immediately if there is any question about an item which appears on an invoice, and please inform us immediately in writing or by email if there will be any delay in your payment.

Since we do not file sales & use tax, any money that we loan out to you in advance for ordering hardware/software/managed services is not taxable to us when you repay the loan. If you use an accounting program to track A/P expenses, please categorize the loan repayments as a loan, not as labor, computer service, or computer repair.

The terms of this contract are subject to change and you may be asked to sign a new contract or an addendum to this contract.

Basic Guide for keeping your Business up and Running Continuously

1. We urge you to have a reliable data back up solution and to use whatever resources you have to backup your data (daily) in case of catastrophic failure. **As a direct result of Obama's Stimulis package it is NO LONGER LEGAL to back up Accounting data or any data with customer information to a USB device.** If you are still backing up via Tape/Zip Disk **you are hereby warned that restoring data from tape backups fail 43% of the time.** While CDP (Continuous Live Data Protection) is cost prohibitive to some small businesses its value cannot be underestimated. Have a plan in place to address how your company will recover from potential fire, theft, floods, or electrical related damage before you lose access to your data, not after the fact.

2. We urge you to take electricity very seriously as we live in an area that experiences grid switching, occasional blackouts, surges, & brownouts on a regular basis. Power Sags account for most hardware failure over time. All it takes is a 30 MPH wind to blow the power lines/cable lines/phone lines around that connect to your building. If your server or any equipment that plugs into an electrical outlet (like a TV/Stereo/Server/Switch/Printer/copy machine/PC) is important to you – then use a good quality surge suppressor with a minimum Joule Protection rating of 3,500 Joules for your computer and all other devices. Surges/Sags in power regularly cause hardware to fail outright or intermittently over time. **The best way to protect equipment is to connect a backup battery into the wall outlet, and then a surge suppressor into the backup battery. Then plug your device(s) into the surge suppressor.**

3. We urge you to take Anti-Virus & Mal-Ware measures seriously. Just having an Anti-Virus or software firewall is not a good enough solution to protect your computer(s) and your data from threats. It is imperative that you update the Anti-Virus *.def file daily. **Software firewalls & Anti-Virus programs can NO LONGER EFFECTIVELY PROTECT YOU against "BOT-NETS" or "ZOMBIES".** Even Linux & MAC OS are susceptible to threats now. **The most effective way to fight this is at the Network Edge via an appliance, not just using Firewall/Anti-Virus software inside your network.**

4. Many businesses do not realize that the vast majority of threats and loss of Internet Bandwidth is caused by SPAM emails. If you can eliminate the spam before it gets to your building then your bandwidth will increase and your incoming threat ratio will significantly decrease. The most effective way to do this currently is by routing your company emails through a “scrubber” that is off site. Current pricing is around \$4 to \$5 a month per email account for this type of service. While you might think that a great Firewall at the Network Edge would deal with SPAM emails effectively – the industry has discovered that is not the case in practice and special appliances that only clean emails have been successfully implemented to address the issue.

5. If you do not have an “Acceptable LAN Usage Policy” document signed by your employees then your business can be held liable for any crimes or harassment that your employees or guests using your network commit. See the Supreme Court’s Rule 24, 25, & 26 for recent changes to this law.

6. If your income and or productivity depends on your computer/network equipment, replace computers every 5 years BEFORE they die on your schedule, not as an emergency.

I have read, understand, and agree to the above stated goals, policies, and guide for keeping my business up and running continuously.

SIGNATURE

Date

PRINTED NAME

Organization