

Supporting Notebook Computers - How to Maximize Your ROI

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For a ROI
analysis tailored to
your company's
specific needs,
contact CommNet
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Supporting Notebook Computers - Vital to Your Company's Success

Mobility Empowers Your Workforce

Notebook computing has forever changed the way people work. Employees with laptops can do their jobs anytime, anywhere. They are empowered to respond to customers, partners, and colleagues faster and more effectively. Sales, service, marketing and logistics improve...generating a substantial ROI for your company.

Support and Security are Paramount

But these gains can be quickly erased by hidden support costs. When users migrate from desktops to laptops, the amount of time they spend supporting their own systems can increase exponentially. The opportunity cost of this lost time can directly impact your company's bottom line.

Moreover, notebook computing can dramatically increase your company's risk. Laptops raise many security issues by extending the perimeter of the corporate network -- to branch offices, airports, homes, hotels and other remote locations. This creates a need to improve data security, virus protection and asset management.

Wireless mobility is a key innovation that further increases this need. According to IT analysts at Meta Group, the installed base of wireless-enabled laptops will grow more than 200% in North America by 2006. Therefore, it's essential to develop a solid notebook computing support strategy that meets your company's needs now and in the future.

CommNet Delivers a 236% ROI

CommNet specializes in partnering with IT organizations to support their mobile workforces. **This paper reveals how this partnership delivers an ROI of more than 236% in a typical scenario -- by reducing costs, boosting productivity and minimizing risk.**

CommNet's help desk can boost knowledge worker productivity by more than \$134,000 per year for every 200 notebook users.

Supporting Notebook Computers - Cost/Benefit Analysis

Knowledge Worker Productivity

How much does it *really* cost to support notebook users? Almost all are considered "knowledge workers"- executives, consultants, managers, support staff and other professionals. According to research by Cisco Systems, knowledge workers are compensated at an average rate of \$70 per hour. Bonuses, benefits, facilities and other support costs can account for more than half of their hourly rate.

In terms of notebook computing, four factors play a major role in knowledge worker productivity and satisfaction:

- The amount of time users spend on the phone with your help desk;
- The productivity impact of your hardware repair program;
- The burden of installing security patches and software updates;
- The opportunity cost of lost productivity from the above activities.

Let's calculate these costs using two scenarios:

- An IT department "going it alone";
- An IT department in partnership with CommNet.

For analysis purposes, we'll base this study on a typical SMB (Small/Medium Business) scenario. Let's assume that we need to support 200 notebook users in this company.

Help Desk

Cost/Benefit Analysis - IT Alone

Most U.S. knowledge workers say they are on the phone with their help desk for a half an hour or more every week, according to a study commissioned by Siemens Business Services and published in Information Week. We want to be conservative in this analysis, so we'll assume that our sample help desk is especially efficient and able to cut this time in half -- to 15 minutes a week. What's the real cost of this time? A total of \$182,000 in lost knowledge worker productivity per year for every 200 notebook users. Here's the math:

- 15 minutes call duration x 200 notebook user calls per week = 3,000 minutes or 50 hours per week;
- 50 hours per week x 52 weeks per year = 2,600 hours per year;
- 2,600 hours per year x \$70 hour = \$182,000.

Cost/Benefit Analysis - CommNet Partnership

In contrast, users supported by the CommNet Help Desk call in an average of 1.3 times per month and are on the phone for an average of just 13 minutes. Your company can benefit from knowledge worker productivity gains of more than \$134,000 per year for

CommNet's hot spare program ensures that your user receives a fully configured replacement notebook computer the next day.

every 200 notebook users:

- 13 minutes call duration x 260 calls per month = 3,380 minutes or 57 hours per month;
- 57 hours per month x 12 months = 684 hours per year;
- 684 hours per year x \$70 per hour knowledge worker time = \$47,880.

CommNet can save your company \$134,120 in knowledge worker productivity a year by reducing the time users spend talking to the help desk.

	IT alone	IT with CommNet	Savings with CommNet
Knowledge Worker time on the phone with the Help Desk	\$ 182,000	\$ 47,880	\$ 134,120

Here's why notebook users spend much less time with CommNet's help desk:

- CommNet's help desk team specializes in supporting mobile computer users;
- CommNet provides proactive maintenance so users have less problems;
- CommNet's experts deliver a superior level of service with an **85% first-call-fix rate**, thereby reducing return calls and escalations;
- CommNet uses real time asset tracking and discovery to expedite calls;
- CommNet also uses remote control tools for diagnostics and repairs - instead of the time-consuming and error-prone process of talking callers through these operations.

Hardware Repair

Hardware repairs are another major factor. **Gartner Group reports that an average of 25% to 35% of notebook computers will fail over a "normal" 3-year life span.** This range is driven by several variables including usage, make and age. In terms of damage, drops are the number one cause, followed by spills, being crushed, dirt, heat and vibration.

Failed laptops can create major disruptions for end-users and headaches for IT staff. Typically, manufacturers will replace hard drives under warranties and service contracts. But the new notebooks aren't configured for your users. Someone has to load all their applications and restore all their data.

A partnership with CommNet ensures that your user receives a fully configured replacement notebook the next day. "Hot spares" are restored to the latest image -- with the operating system, system configuration and all software programs. All data is restored to the last backup. This advantage increases user satisfaction and saves hours of valuable time.

CommNet proactively monitors the configuration of each PC and deploys security patches and software updates with little or no user interaction.

In terms of ROI, the total cost of hardware repair varies greatly by company. CommNet would be happy to calculate these costs for you during an in-depth ROI analysis. The type of system, the conditions under which it was used, and the age of the equipment are all key variables. Instead of analyzing these variables now, we'll move on to the next productivity drain - software and patch updates.

Software and Patch Updates

A Variety of Methods

Installing software and patch updates can be frustrating and time-consuming - for notebook users and IT staff. Yet, it's critical to update computers weekly or even more often. Typical methods are labor-intensive:

- Contacting end-users and asking them to bring their laptops into the main office;
- Traveling to branch offices to install software for remote users;
- Mailing CDs to end-users and asking them to install the software updates from the CDs;
- Asking end-users to download updates over the Internet.

In the last two methods, end-users are expected to install updates on their own. Across a wide population, there is a high risk that one or more users will not successfully install the update. This can create maintenance problems and leave the network vulnerable to attack. Some IT organizations are using automated methods to improve the update process. IT can "push" software updates to end-user laptops using centralized tools such as Microsoft's SMS. But this technology "locks up" the notebook during the update and it is essentially unavailable to the user. Therefore, this method can be as much of a productivity drain as asking users to install updates themselves.

A better approach is to install agent technology on end-user laptops to "pull" updates tested and approved by your IT Department for deployment. CommNet provides this technology as a Managed Service, but we'll expand on this concept later in this paper.

Cost/Benefit Analysis - IT Alone

For analysis purposes, let's assume that we send out one update per month to each of our 200 notebook users. The amount of time it takes to install the update will vary by the size of the service pack and whether or not it requires a reboot. We'll estimate that it takes an average of 30 minutes for our users to install updates every month. Therefore it costs \$84,000 in productivity losses to install one update per month per 200 notebook users:

- 200 users x 30 minutes lost productivity = 6,000 minutes or 100 hours;
- 100 hours per month x 12 months = 1,200 hours per year;
- 1,200 hours per year x \$70 per hour = \$84,000 per year.

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Cost/Benefit Analysis - IT and CommNet

CommNet works in partnership with your IT Department to deploy tested and approved software updates to your systems with no or minimal user interaction. **This can save your company \$84,000 annually in user productivity gains for every 200 notebooks you support.**

CommNet can deliver a 236% return on your company's investment in supporting notebook users.

	IT alone	IT with CommNet	Savings with CommNet
Knowledge Worker time installing updates (IT Staff costs are developed later)	\$ 84,000	\$ 0	\$ 84,000

CommNet manages the distribution of approved software from the company's data center in Voorhees, NJ. Software agents are used to install approved software updates on your client PCs and notebooks including:

- Operating System patches;
- Anti-virus updates;
- Updates to proprietary software applications, templates, and utilities.

This process ensures that users remain productive during downloads. Data transfers happen in the background - so users can keep right on working. Automatic restart and recovery enable users to be disconnected or manually disconnect if they need to. For optimum flexibility, CommNet also enables software updates over wireless networks using bandwidth throttling technology. **Users can continue to be productive while their software updates are transferred in the background.**

CommNet makes it easy to track the status of each update or PC configuration. The system reports back to a Web Portal, where the status can be easily reviewed by CommNet's engineers and your IT staff.

By partnering with CommNet, your company can significantly improve the productivity of your notebook users. Here's how it adds up in our 200 notebook scenario

Knowledge Worker Productivity - Supporting 200 Notebooks

	IT alone	IT with CommNet	Savings with CommNet
Knowledge Worker time on the phone with the Help Desk	\$ 182,000	\$ 47,880	\$ 134,120
Knowledge Worker time installing updates	\$ 84,000	\$ 0	\$ 84,000
Total Knowledge Worker productivity savings with CommNet Partnership			\$ 218,120

CommNet's help desk can boost knowledge worker productivity by more than \$134,000 per year for every 200 notebook users.

Knowledge Worker Opportunity Cost

We've just calculated that 200 knowledge workers spend more than 3,114 hours a year supporting their notebooks. This adds up to \$266,000 in lost productivity. What's the opportunity cost of this valuable time in your company?

Most professionals agree that this time is better spent:

- Making sales calls;
- Expediting decision-making;
- Handling urgent messages;
- Supporting customers;
- Staying in touch with the home office;
- Responding to e-mails and voicemails;
- Other business-critical activities.

Technical Support Cost

Cost/Benefit Analysis - IT Alone

Next, let's turn our attention to the IT department. Increased demand for IT staff time should also be considered when calculating ROI. **Gartner reports that it costs an IT department \$1,130 per year to support the average notebook.** This includes technical staff costs for notebook and service desk support - hardware and software maintenance as well as Tier II and III support.

Therefore it will cost \$226,000 per year to support the 200 notebooks in our analysis scenario.

- \$1,130 per year x 200 notebooks = \$226,000.

Cost/Benefit Analysis - IT and CommNet

A partnership with CommNet can significantly reduce this cost. CommNet's suite of services typically costs between \$45 and \$65 per notebook per month. You can select from these services to meet your company's needs and budget.

Let's calculate how much it costs to partner with CommNet. We'll assume an average price of \$55 per seat per month for the 200 notebooks:

- \$55 per seat x 200 notebooks = \$11,000 per month;
- \$11,000 per month x 12 months = \$132,000 per year.

By partnering with CommNet, your IT department can save \$94,000 per year for every 200 notebooks you support.

	IT alone (Internal IT Costs)	IT partnering with CommNet	Savings with CommNet
Technical Support costs (Help Desk, hardware and software maintenance including patches and updates)	\$ 226,000	\$ 132,000	\$ 94,000

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CommNet complements your IT team by adding the mobile computing expertise you need. Your IT resources can focus on other business-critical projects. Plus, your company will gain the following benefits:

- Centralized, updated, and accurate reporting on the hardware and software configuration of all managed PCs;
- Proactive management, including reliable and consistent deployment of operating system patches and anti-virus updates, thereby reducing the risks of viruses, worms, and other malware;
- Significantly fewer problems per notebook user;
- IT resources are freed from staffing help desk and hardware “hot spare” needs.

Adding It Up

We’ve just uncovered the real cost of supporting 200 notebooks - with and without CommNet. This conservative analysis was based on reduced cost estimates from leading industry analysts including Meta, Gartner, and Yankee. Here’s how it all adds up:

Total Costs -- Supporting 200 Notebooks

	IT alone	IT with CommNet	Savings with CommNet
Knowledge Worker time on the phone with the Help Desk	\$ 182,000	\$ 47,880	\$ 134,120
Knowledge Worker time installing updates	\$ 84,000	\$ 0	\$ 84,000
Technical Support costs (Help Desk, hardware and software maintenance including patches and updates)	\$ 226,000	\$ 132,000	\$ 94,000
Total	\$ 492,000	\$ 179,000	\$ 312,120

By partnering with CommNet, our sample company can save \$312,120 per year for every 200 notebooks we support. **This represents a 236% return on our \$132,000 investment in purchasing CommNet’s services.** As our sample company continues to add more laptops, the savings will increase incrementally.

Of course, these numbers will vary by company. Your company’s help desk call frequency and duration, software and patch update processes and IT staff costs may be higher or lower than what we calculated here. CommNet can calculate these exact costs for you during an in-depth ROI analysis.

But controlling costs is only half of the story. The other half is risk management.

CommNet's automated patch distribution protects your network from viruses and security attacks.

Security Exposure

Notebook computers increase your security exposure in several ways. When notebooks move outside the corporate firewall, your data becomes more vulnerable to unauthorized access, theft and corruption. There is an increased possibility that your network will be attacked.

Is your company at risk? By partnering with CommNet, you can ensure:

- Automated patch distribution of security and virus updates;
- Automated data backup and restore using a standard Internet connection;
- A customer portal that puts asset tracking and management at your fingertips;
- Support for complying with part of HIPAA (Health Information Portability and Accountability Act), GLBA (Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act), and Sarbanes-Oxley requirements for records retention and privacy.

Data Security and Virus Updates

Security is a top priority for IT organizations today. A recent FBI survey reports that unauthorized access to computer systems resulted in \$141.5 million in business losses in 2003. This survey concludes that eliminating known open vulnerabilities could have prevented nearly all of these costly events.

Known Operating System (OS) and application vulnerabilities are the target of more than 90% of digital attacks, according to Intel Corp.

Companies that fail to regularly deploy security and virus updates expose themselves to financial and legal risk.

CommNet ensures virus protection and data security using a managed software configuration process. CommNet works in partnership with your IT department to test patches and certify them in your environment. Scripting services range from completely automated to fully interactive and menu-driven -- so you can choose if, how and when you want your users to participate in the update process.

You also benefit from secure access to information and reports about the status of all updates using CommNet's customer portal.

Data Integrity

If end-user data integrity is a challenge in the LAN environment, then it's a near impossibility in a mobile workforce. Backing up data "on the road" can be haphazard at best, especially when a VPN connection is needed. Trying to recreate lost or damaged files can be frustrating, time consuming, even impossible. It's easy to see how a missing file or computer can lead to lost opportunity, business and revenue.

CommNet's backup and recovery software automatically backs up business-critical selected directories and files using a standard Internet connection.

A local backup solution that depends upon manual activation will eventually fail for one of these reasons:

- The local backup copy is lost by the same root problem that prompted a need for a restoration of a file;
- The user was unable to run the backup of changed files at frequent enough intervals restore the data.

CommNet's Backup and Recovery software virtually eliminates this risk.

This secure, encrypted technology automatically backs up all mobile data using a standard Internet connection. The backup runs on the schedule you choose...daily, weekly or even hourly.

This solution is based upon intelligent agent technology. CommNet transparently configures and installs the software on each client PC or notebook -- according to your corporate guidelines for which directories and files to back up, and how often they should be backed up. The recovery of lost files requires a user ID, password and an encryption key. They are kept centrally by CommNet and your IT Department to further ensure data integrity.

Asset Management

Do you have an up-to-date inventory of your mobile assets? It's difficult and time-consuming to keep track of the location of every notebook, what's installed on it and who's using it. Your company risks buying hardware and software that you don't need.

What's more, there's no way of knowing if you are complying with software licensing agreements. This can result in substantial fines to your company. The Business Software Alliance -- an organization that conducts license compliance audits for the software industry - collected an average fine of \$87,750 in 2001.

It's also critical to know where your notebook computers are installed and what programs and data are stored on them. In the event of an audit or lawsuit, your company might need this information.

A partnership with CommNet delivers a comprehensive, easy-to-use asset management system. This enables your company to save money by:

- Freeing up software licenses and eliminating unused software;
- Reducing maintenance costs;
- Avoiding fines by ensuring compliance with software license agreements;
- Avoiding fines by ensuring leased notebooks are returned in their original condition.

It's also critical to properly decommission laptops at their end-of-lifecycle to protect sensitive corporate data. To meet this need, CommNet provides a range of proprietary data removal services.

CommNet's asset management software keeps an up-to-date inventory of all your notebook computers and installed software.

Regulatory Compliance

Notebook computing can make it more difficult to comply with HIPAA, GLBA and Sarbanes-Oxley. CommNet can assist in three ways:

- If you are required to maintain copies of documents created and maintained on local client PCs, then CommNet can back up those documents to an off-site storage location to ensure against loss or unauthorized modification;
- Saved documents are compressed and encrypted before they are transferred and stored remotely, also helping to ensure privacy of the saved information;
- Finally, when it is time to dispose of your computing assets, CommNet can ensure that proprietary and confidential information stored on the computer's hard disk is safely destroyed by performing a DOD (Department of Defense) Level 7 wiping process on the hard disk drive.

Conclusion

Notebook computing empowers professionals to work anytime, anywhere. But laptops increase security risks and support costs. Software and patch updates, help desk calls and hardware repairs can drain knowledge worker productivity and IT staff time. Moreover, the opportunity cost of this time can negatively impact your company's bottom line.

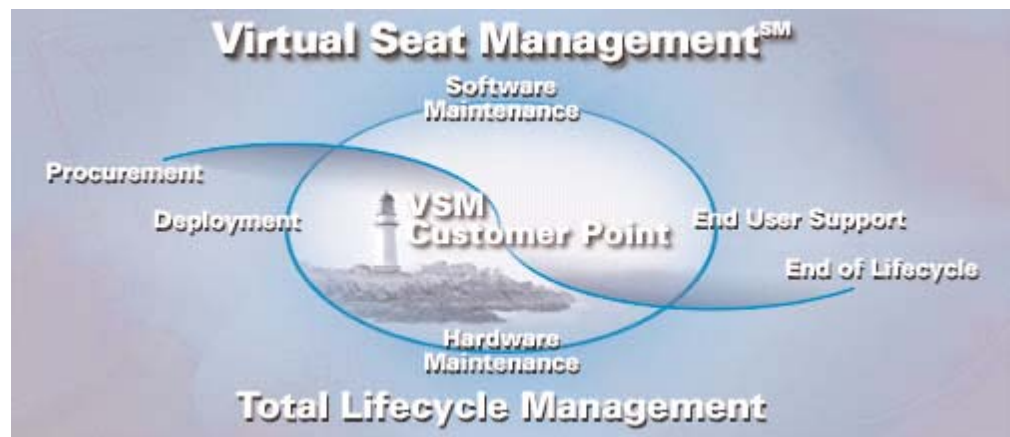
CommNet specializes in partnering with companies like yours to support notebook users. This partnership significantly boosts productivity, reduces exposure to security risk, and increases the business value of your IT organization. The result? A return of more than 200% on your company's investment in supporting notebook computers.

CommNet offers a la carte pricing and services that are scalable to your company's needs and budget. For a 30-minute in-depth ROI analysis tailored to your requirements, contact CommNet today at 800-345-8988 or sales@commnetinternational.com.

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Virtual Seat ManagementSM (VSM) is a suite of tools and services which provide a Total Lifecycle Management solution for mobile and desktop computers. At the core of VSM is the VSM Customer Point, a private portal, where users can access these different components and functions within the VSM suite of services:

- Procure and Deploy
- Asset Track
- Hardware Support
- Software Update
- Backup and Recovery
- Global Assist Help Desk
- Decommission