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Pay Attention To Office Technology When Planning A Move - A Checklist For Success

No longer can you move a firm without planning how to properly move your technology. Your goal is a seamless change of location to ensure staff can work with the least disruption and you don't lose business opportunities or upset clients.

[ ] 1. Confirm if any Internet Service is available at the new location and can it deliver enough speed and capacity for your needs. If it needs to be installed, then there will be added construction costs and you need to factor in time for the work to be completed.

[ ] 2. Keep your old phone numbers. They are important but there are cases where you can't bring them along such as having old analog service at your previous location. Check with your service provider.

[ ] 3. Should your phone system be converted to Internet-based Voice Over IP to reduce costs and increase capacity? Will it need to be expanded? The change can be made before you move so that your phone system is up and running when you arrive at the new location.

[ ] 4. Create a floor plan. Your planning committee can review the network and electrical cabling with an eye to servicing all work-stations with separate phone and data lines. Discuss with your landlord providing you time before the move for all installation work.

[ ] 5. Choose your equipment room. You need a location for your data and telecom equipment such as servers, routers, WiFi. A tiny closest won't work. The room needs good air flow to keep the equipment cool. Is there easy access to the room for cabling and can the room be locked? To meet some regulations you must be able to limit access to the room.

[ ] 6. Review your devices. Do computers, printers, etc. need to be upgraded? If so, then equipment can be installed and tested ahead of time at the new location. If old equipment belongs to suppliers and they are responsible for moving, alert them to your plans.

[ ] 7. Internet installed and tested. Before the move book the Internet installation. Your move is not a priority for suppliers so plan installation early enough to allow for possible delays and lots of time for testing. Realize that with any new installations of cables and systems there will be errors made and it will take time to find and fix.

[ ] 8. Install a new router and if needed WiFi. The early installation will ensure proper configuration and you can even use the same passwords as the old location. If you believe it can be installed and tested on moving day you run a real risk of unexpected problems. The cost of buying new equipment and early installation will be much less than the cost of lost business.

[ ] 9. WiFi coverage. Another key element to have in place and working in advance of the move. Don't assume that WiFi will work flawlessly when you turn it on. There may be too many walls, interference from other networks, and you may find you need to add more access points to ensure full signal coverage.

[ ] 10. Conduct a complete data backup of the old system. It should be to an off-site facility. Check that it is in fact a good backup. If some key equipment crashes and you lose your data, the backup will save your firm.

[ ] 11. Moving day. If you do not have your own IT staff, then reserve a skilled IT person(s) to properly disconnect and reconnect equipment. Putting a wire in a wrong port can create a rash of problems. Also, there is a proper way to transport equipment such as servers to reduce the risk that vibrations may break connections on equipment that has not moved for years. Consider keeping the IT help for the day after the move to fix unexpected problems.