
The More Customers You Can Service Faster and More Efficiently the More Money You Make

Recruiting new customers, retaining them, and enabling profitability

By Howard M. Cohen

Since time is money, the more time you have the more money you can make. The question is how to get more time. Some say that time is the one thing that everyone wants more of but can't get.

But you can make more time available, and that works, too!

How to Make More Money

There really are only two ways to increase your profits. One is to generate more revenue, and the other is to reduce your costs. That's it. Not just for MSPs like you, but for everybody. It's all about customer success!!

Since time is money, it follows that you can double your return on effort if you reduce your costs by reducing the time it takes to get things done. This is how repeatable engagement model projects become more profitable even when you don't change your rate, but your people become more efficient and complete them in less time. That's a contribution but you're never going to create a significant profit increase simply by getting people to work faster.

Your best strategy is to automate as many operating processes as you can, dramatically increasing the speed at which those procedures are accomplished. Again, time is money! This also has the additional effect of freeing up your people to perform higher-level, more profitable activities.

Important to note that when you serve existing customers faster through more automation you can then add more customers to your installed base without increasing your costs. Perhaps even more important is how well you retain the customers you recruit. Given that the main reason customers change service providers is slow or poor service, this is the best way to keep them. More customers means more revenue, but more on all of this later.

The first step in this strategy is to critically survey all your customer's processes to determine which ones can most easily be automated.

Automation Examples

Almost anything that is scripted and done by people can be automated. As you take inventory of your processes and your customer's operating environment you will quickly identify many examples. Here are a few of the more popular time-savers that many companies automate to save time & money:

Note: How to Exceed 100% Utilization

One of the key components of your profit calculations is the utilization of your people. That is, of all the hours they work and get paid for, how many are billed out to customers. If you've calculated your totally burdened cost of a technician's hour to be \$55 but they are only billing 50% of their time you only have that 50% in which to recapture their cost, so you have to divide that \$55 by 50% which results in literally doubling your cost.

By automating processes, a technician is able to perform multiple tasks simultaneously. Even though it's automated your customer still receives the same value and is billed for the work. If a technician is performing five tasks, four of which are automated, you are billing five hours for every hour. Before long, that technician is billing in excess of 100% of their time. Food for thought.

Onboarding & Offboarding

Starting at a beginning is the onboarding, and unfortunate offboarding, of an employee when they join or leave the company. For all companies this is that all-important one opportunity to make a great first impression on a new employee, but there is much to do and many times some of the steps are stumbled over, even when the human doing the onboarding has done it over and over. This leaves the new employee unable to get much done in the early going.

Many of those steps are easily automated making them happen faster and assuring that they will get done. Creating a new network account and a new email account, issuing credentials, assigning resource rights, adding the new user to all the appropriate groups, adjusting security to include them, and many more onboarding tasks are quickly and easily added into a 'runbook' that starts with the click of a button. It then runs all by itself. Compare that to the hours it would take a technician to accomplish all these tasks, especially when having to access multiple SaaS applications and portals.

Even more important to the security of your network and your data is the offboarding of a departing employee. The last thing you want to do is neglect to remove their access to corporate resources. Automating the entire process, assures that they will be completely removed from everything and all data entities will be assigned to the appropriate manager for later access. An example of this is email archiving where such as setting up eDiscovery, litigation hold, and archiving the .pst. ." While this can be tedious work for a human operator moving between multiple repositories and subfolders, it is readily automated using a rules-based runbook.

Multi-Cloud and SaaS Integration

Choice is one of the great advantages of cloud computing and Software-as-a-Service (SaaS). If a customer doesn't like the features or performance of a particular cloud or SaaS service from a provider, they can readily change to another. You can adjust the current runbooks scripts to create new templates for the new SaaS applications and then you simply edit once, republish, and update to some or all your customers. Automating your automation!

Enabling choice is dependent upon how well the different services interoperate. Each has its own security protocols and other technical specifications. Keeping these working well together is the key to maintaining top performance. This often requires diligence and repeated adjustments, all of which can be automated.

Health and Status Checking

Effective network and security management requires regular review of performance statistics and testing of processes. Ordinarily an administrator can spend hours or days performing security assessments and performance reviews, visiting all the various consoles, running the required reports, and making necessary adjustments.

By automating all these predictable, repeating activities that administrator attends to the better things they have to do with their time. When the automation runbooks finish, the administrator then receives all the results which they analyze and advise on.

Especially in highly feature-rich, complex applications and platforms these health-checks become extensive. When automated, even the most extensive examination requires little time from human resources.

Customer Retention: Why Customers Leave

[Customer Experience Insight](#) tells us that “70% of customers leave a company because of poor service” and advise that you “Give them the best service to keep them sticking around.”

Poor service may simply be slow and unresponsive, or it could be riddled with errors. The best way to avoid both ills is to automate. Automated processes run the same way every time and are not error-prone. They also run far more quickly than human operators could perform the same process. Problems solved!

In fact, Customer Experience Insight also [reports](#) that 82% of customers say they would switch suppliers after a bad call experience, while 91% say they would stay loyal to a supplier after a good call.

82% also happens to be the percentage of customers who have changed suppliers in the past five years.

Increase your odds of making every call a good call by leveraging automation and your customers will stay loyal.

Customer Recruitment: Attracting New Customers

Nothing succeeds like success, so the greater customer success stories you have to tell the easier it becomes to recruit new customers.

A great way to introduce prospects to your automation expertise is to offer your new prospect a Health Check and/or Security Assessment. This delivers real value to that prospect. Also use what you’ve learned here to help them understand the advantages of engaging you. Tell them how time equals money and by saving them time with consistent, reliable, rapid service you are contributing to their bottom line. Customers, especially C-Level contacts, love anybody who increases their profitability.

Keeping their network and data safe, secure, and running at peak performance through frequent health, performance, and security scanning services also encourages prospects who recognize that yours is far more than a “reactive” service organization. You go beyond “proactive” all the way to “predictive” as you use what you learn to prevent future problems.

As you enjoy increased profitability from all this new revenue from all these delighted new customers remember that you are also increasing your profitability through keeping costs down by leveraging automation. You’re doubling down on profitability!

Where is All this Automation Coming From?

At BitTitan, we have talked about the concept of The Complete MSP, the service provider who goes beyond monitoring everything, actioning alerts, and evaluating reports. The Complete MSP takes full responsibility for the full functioning of the customer’s information management environment beginning right at the initial point of deployment. The easiest way to provide optimal performance is to build it right the first time. With MSPComplete tools you create the kind of consistency that results in superior outcomes every time.

MSPComplete is BitTitan’s extensive toolkit for The Complete MSP. Included with MSPComplete are over 100 automation templates for automating everything from onboarding to provisioning to deployment to virtual machine management and many other everyday activities. You customize these templates for each of your customers to give them each the best possible customer experience designed specifically for their environment. You’ll also find yourself creating automation runbooks from your existing documentation and incorporating your best PowerShell scripts into the process.

Your own best tools include the Powershell scripts you have written to help support customers. MSPComplete serves as the one place to store all your scripts for all standard operating procedures and

best practices. You'll never need to take time to download from the web again. You'll always have your tools with you. And as you create your own templates, you'll find yourself servicing new customers faster and faster by simply using runbooks you've previously performed for other clients to serve more clients. These customizable, re-usable templates that you create are indeed your own intellectual property eligible for repeated re-sale.

With MSPComplete you automate as many processes as possible to dramatically reduce the amount of time your people spend on each activity. Since time equals money you reduce your costs. Your people are now free to perform more high-value work sooner, increasing your customer's level of satisfaction as you meet and exceed your Service Level Agreements (SLA) consistently, keeping more of your customers happily aboard your service offerings. With greater availability, your people are able to take on more customers.

Between reduced costs, improved SLA performance, greater retention of existing customers, and adding more customers you're delivering the one-two-three punch up to your bottom line.

A Good Way to Start

Making it very easy and inexpensive for you to get started automating your entire infrastructure, buy one license of MSPComplete and the BitTitan Customer Success Team will create your first template for you. Pick a procedure that has been particularly challenging and let the team help you simplify it.

There's no easier or more relevant way to see for yourself how becoming The Complete MSP enables you to recruit more customers, retain the ones you already have, and drive more profitability for you and your customers.

As Mack Hanan, who coined the phrase "Consultative Selling" says, "When you show customers that you're committed to increasing their profit, they're more than happy to help increase yours!"

If you are ready to automate your service and deployment process [contact us](#) or visit www.mspcomplete.com.