



Convincing Your Boss to Increase Your I.T. Budget



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You know I.T. security threats are on the rise. You know you need better tools to work more efficiently, train your employees, and defend your organization against cyber threats. Day after day, you see the potential for less waste and greater profits. Yet asking your boss to increase your I.T. budget can feel like a monumental task. There is an entire spectrum of methods that executives use to evaluate their budget needs. **The key is to take the right approach and present your case well. If you prepare correctly, you stand a much better chance of success.**

Prepare Your Case

It may seem easy and natural to say something like, “Hey boss, we need more I.T. resources.” But a quick mention of what you want is rarely effective.

You need to be able to explain exactly why you need it and how it would benefit your organization.

And in order to explain those reasons well, you need to spend some time researching so you back your case up with real data. It can be kind of tricky advocating for the return on investment (ROI) for certain things for which the benefits may not be immediately obvious.

Pinpoint the Problems

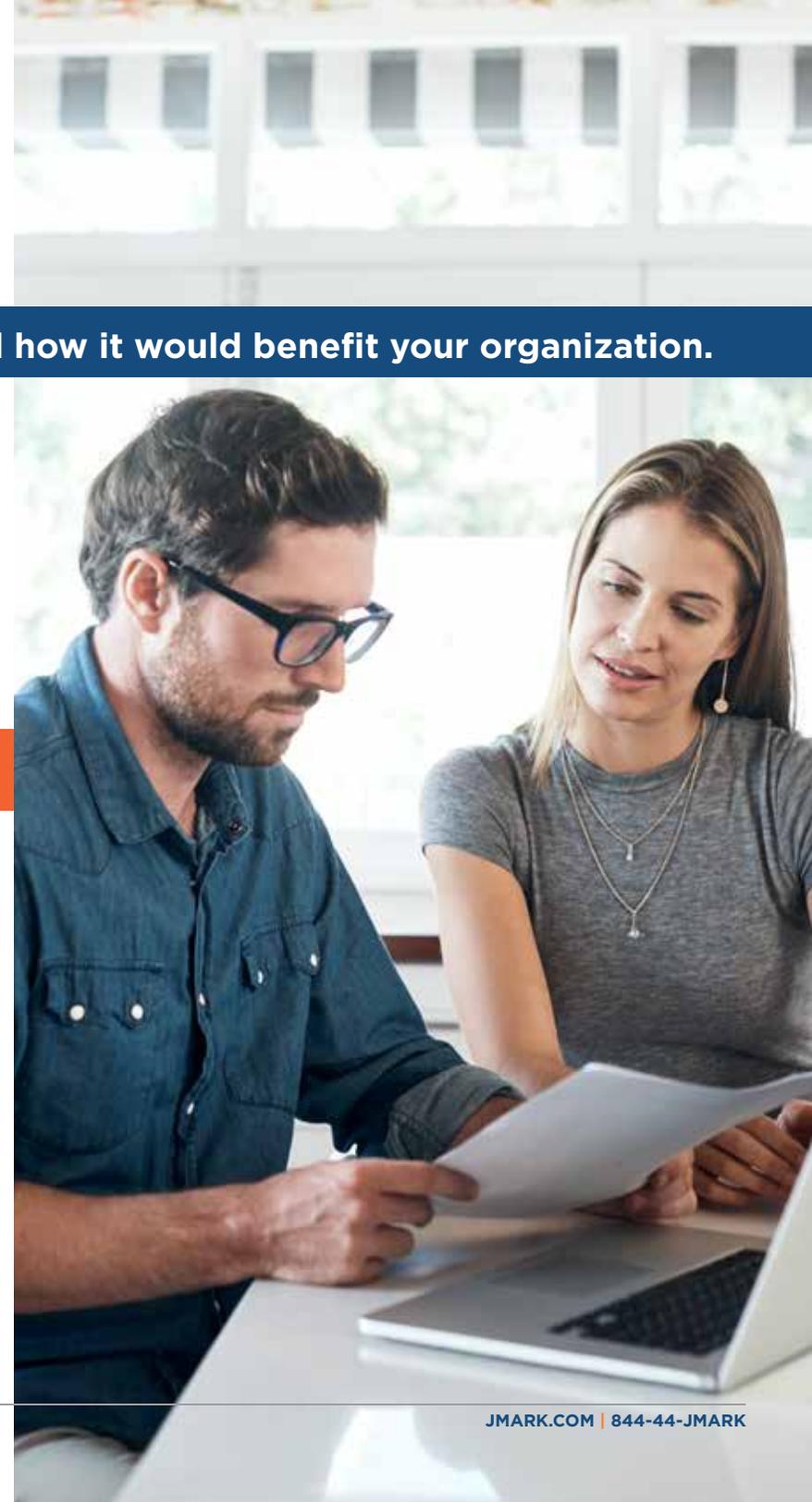
Start by making a list of the problems you’ve seen that you can attribute to a lack of adequate information technology resources—whether it be rising threats in the industry that require you to acquire more secure systems or day-to-day processes that could be made better by purchasing better tech. **Find the pain points.**

Now it’s research time! Be specific and thorough, because problems without solutions are just complaints.

And vague complaints to management are a surefire way to have your ideas ignored instead of getting them on the radar of decision-makers.

Here are some examples of data you can use to present the problems related to your current I.T.:

- Loss of revenue during downtime
- Tech-related customer/client complaints
- Specific dates and times when systems were down
- Definite instances of data security threats and breaches
- Number and amount of sales lost due to I.T. problems
- Employee mistakes that were due to inadequate help desk support
- Threats that affect your organization by entering through your vendors and partners
- Specific missed opportunities that due to inadequate I.T. and poor communication systems
- Potential losses that could result in millions in clean-up costs or in paying out ransoms to attackers





Set Up a Meeting

It's important to take a professional approach when asking your boss to increase your budget. If you nag about I.T. problems too much when you need to be working, your boss will discount you as an annoying whiner. But, if you make an appointment, your boss will more likely see you as someone interested in getting something accomplished.

The worst thing you can do is complain about the lack of I.T. resources in a time of crisis. Your boss may take it as an accusation that the problem is their fault. They're frustrated enough by what's happening. They don't need to feel singled out for blame. They need to know that you're a reliable part of their team.

Besides, when things are going wrong, your boss doesn't have time to deal with thoughts of the future. They're focused on what's going on right at that moment. So, while it makes sense to ask for any I.T. help you need during the emergency, you need to meet at a more neutral time to talk about long-term changes.

Don't assume you will be able to casually mention increasing the company's I.T. budget when the conversation comes up naturally, either. For one thing, that chance may never come. Or, it may happen when you are not prepared. Your boss may not even notice what you said.

You need to set up an actual meeting at a specific time and place to talk to your boss about your concerns and ideas.

Here are a few things you gain by getting on your boss's calendar:

- Time to prepare
- Your boss's undivided attention
- A chance to appear more serious and professional
- A specific amount of time to make your presentation

Ask your boss for a meeting. Don't pass this task to an administrative assistant. Do it in person, not by email or internal messaging.

Tell your boss you want to share some information you've gathered to help the company.

Then, let them know the payoff in general terms, like:

- Decreased long-term costs
- Increased productivity
- Higher employee retention rates
- Improved customer/client relationships
- Greater profits

Once the appointment is set, put it on your own calendar. While you're at it, schedule some of your own time to work on the presentation.



Present Your Ideas

When the meeting time comes, be there in your best work attire and with a positive, cooperative attitude. Be respectful, helpful, and professional as you present the ideas you've developed during your preparation.

HERE ARE SOME TIPS FOR BUILDING YOUR PRESENTATION.

Focus on the Top Concerns

You probably have a lot of ideas about how better technology can help your company. That's great. You'll be ready if your boss wants to have a long conversation about it. However, you don't want to overwhelm them right away.

Start with your top concerns. **Choose three or four of the most critical problems that can be solved with better resources.**

Think about the most obvious incidents where poor or failing I.T. created disruptions or waste.

Also, consider what's the most advantageous technology to propel your company forward. Narrow down your list and start with those few items.

Approach It from Your Boss's Perspective

Always remember that what matters in this discussion is how better technology will make your boss's life easier. **Everything you say in this meeting needs to address something that concerns your organization as a whole; focus on the payoff *your boss* will see when things are improved.**

Even if you do want to talk about how the technology will improve things for you and your coworkers, frame the conversation in a way makes that appealing to your boss. Some ideas include higher employee retention rates, better attitudes, greater productivity, and more loyalty.

Show You're a Problem-Solver

From the outset of the discussion, make it clear that the reason you're bringing up problems is that you have a solution. Once the conversation gets started, listen to what your boss is saying. Ask questions. Be a team player, not someone who wants to come in and take over. Instead, be a person who wants to help in whatever way your boss needs you to contribute.

Be positive about the situation, even as you're pointing out problems.

Be collaborative, not pushy. Your boss will likely appreciate your input, but remember that they are in charge, after all. Show respect for that position, and you'll get farther in your quest to improve your company.

Keep It Interesting

Your boss has a lot on their mind. They may be juggling several issues with major clients on the day you speak with them. You're talking to them about a matter that, no matter how urgent it seems to you, may seem less critical to your boss. After all, you've been surviving this way for a while. What's so different today?

So, it's a good idea to spend some time creating an interesting presentation.

Remember that the human mind tells stories. So instead of only presenting dry facts and general impressions, tell specific stories about incidents that have happened.

Describe potential scenarios as vividly as you can without exaggerating. Capture your boss's attention quickly and keep them focused on the issue of acquiring better I.T. resources.

Be Concise but Complete

Be concise whether you're just starting your meeting and hitting the high points or delving more deeply into your I.T. issues. If you are unprepared, it's easy to ramble and go off on tangents. If you get a chance, do a test run with a friend or family member playing the role of your boss. **Think of the best way to present the problems and solutions in the fewest words possible. Then, follow your boss's lead when deciding how thorough to be.**

Get to the Bottom Line

Hit the drumbeat of the bottom line all through your presentation. **From start to finish, remind the boss that**

improving your I.T. is a money-saving, money-making proposition.

Better I.T. will help the company by:

- Reducing waste to save money
- Protect the investment the company has already made in I.T.
- Increase efficiency and reducing downtime so everyone can accomplish more
- Helping avoid noncompliance issues
- Helping maintain a good reputation, so the company gets more clients
- Improving services and the customer experience to keep current clients and gain more
- Improving security





Be Ready for Resistance

It's easy to get discouraged when you're presenting a new idea. That's especially true if your boss doesn't seem excited or doesn't jump on board immediately. Don't give up. Just do your part and trust that your boss will consider it and make the best decision they can. It might take days, weeks, or even months before they decide to follow through. That's okay. You've planted the seed. Now, it's up to your boss to decide what to do next.

Leave Information They Can Refer to While Deciding

Your boss may need to think about your ideas for a while before deciding. To keep the subject clear in their mind, leave them with some information they can look over at their leisure. Give them a brochure or a website link to a managed services company. Let them explore it on their own as they choose.

Don't Neglect to Present Solutions

Communicating the problem with clarity is important, but you also need to present a solid understanding of the solution. Take some time to really think about exactly what resources will help you manage or solve your ongoing I.T. problems.

HOW BETTER I.T. RESOURCES CAN HELP

Avoid Technology Breakdowns

Maintaining your hardware takes time and attention. If you aren't doing routine maintenance, a simple thing like a dead battery can keep your equipment from running smoothly or maybe even at all. That could mean downtime for your organization, which results in a loss of revenue—something every business owner fears. **With I.T. experts on the job, these and other equipment failures are much less likely to happen.**

Keep Your Servers and Network Running Smoothly

It's easy to assume that your company's servers will always do their job quietly in the background. But what happens if you become a victim of social engineering attacks, ransomware, or other cyberattacks? What you need is a competent I.T. team that will keep an eye on your servers and respond immediately whenever there's a problem.

Then, with your servers secure, you can take advantage of the latest technology to build a better network. **With the expert advice and help of an MSP, you can develop an easily-manageable network that does everything you need it to do to support your company's operations.**

Secure Your Data

Your company probably stores an enormous amount of data. Some of it is sensitive, personal customer information such as credit card numbers or passwords. **Every day, cybercriminals target businesses like yours, trying to take your data for their own purposes. A data breach could cost you time, money, and your reputation.** A managed services provider can ensure your data is safe.

Get Expert Help Desk Support

When users trying to minimize technology-related employee downtime without adequate help desk support is nearly impossible. There will be times when users don't know how to use an application. There will be times when they need to talk to support about a bug or a maintenance issue. **With better I.T. services, you'll have I.T. support technicians who know your systems available 24/7 and can guide users through any difficulties.**

Take Advantage of Cloud Computing

If your company isn't using cloud computing, they're leaving a wonderful resource on the table. Between the peace of mind that comes with networked backups and the thousands of dollars saved by using remote resources, it's a no-brainer. The cloud gives you a greater capacity to store more data without increasing your physical infrastructure.

Cloud computing also makes collaboration easier, since users have access to all documents, data, and software at all times. **Explain to your boss the security, functionality, and cost benefits of cloud computing, demonstrating that moving to the cloud will make the business more profitable and easily managed.**

Make Mobile Devices More Secure

Companies are using mobile devices more than ever before. Of course, that's very convenient and can increase productivity; yet, your boss may not have thought about what a security risk this poses.

You need to know who's using your company data on their devices and manage the way they use it so that it remains secure. Show your boss

that there's a way to do that simply and effectively through a reputable managed services provider.

Make Sure Everything Is Always Backed Up

The type of backup your system administrators use is almost always based on the resources they have. Anything from a full backup to a mirror backup carries with it certain "what if" scenarios. Near-disasters happen all the time in the business world. **Data loss can be a gigantic setback for any business. So be sure to recommend to your boss only the procedures and tools that use industry-standard best practices in the backup process.**

Keep the Business Going

No one can prevent every I.T. problem. For example, if there were a natural disaster in your area, your systems might go down. Your system administrators should already have business continuity and disaster recovery plan in place. In the event that an unexpected interruption occurs—whether from a natural disaster or a cyber threat—you will need adequate I.T. personnel to set up a hot or cold site quickly so that you can avoid downtime and loss of revenue.



Your business continuity and disaster recovery solution also affects your compliance standards.

Your boss would be remiss to overlook any industry requirements for MSPs to also be compliant.

Make sure you both know the established plan your risk management team has in place to keep your organization running.

Gain Insight from Data Analysis

Again, **your company likely already gathers a lot of data. Ask your boss how the company is putting that to use.** Have they considered that they can gain insights from that data to make better business decisions? Do they know about how to gather more data to find their ideal customers? Help them understand how data analysis can move your company forward, reach more customers, and increase revenue.

Improve Communications

Is your company still running on a legacy phone system? Tell your boss how voice over internet protocol (VoIP) can reduce costs and keep everyone working together more efficiently, both at the office and on the go. Then, explain to them that setting up and managing VoIP systems requires expert-level I.T. knowledge that you can get from a managed services provider.

Provide Training to Employees

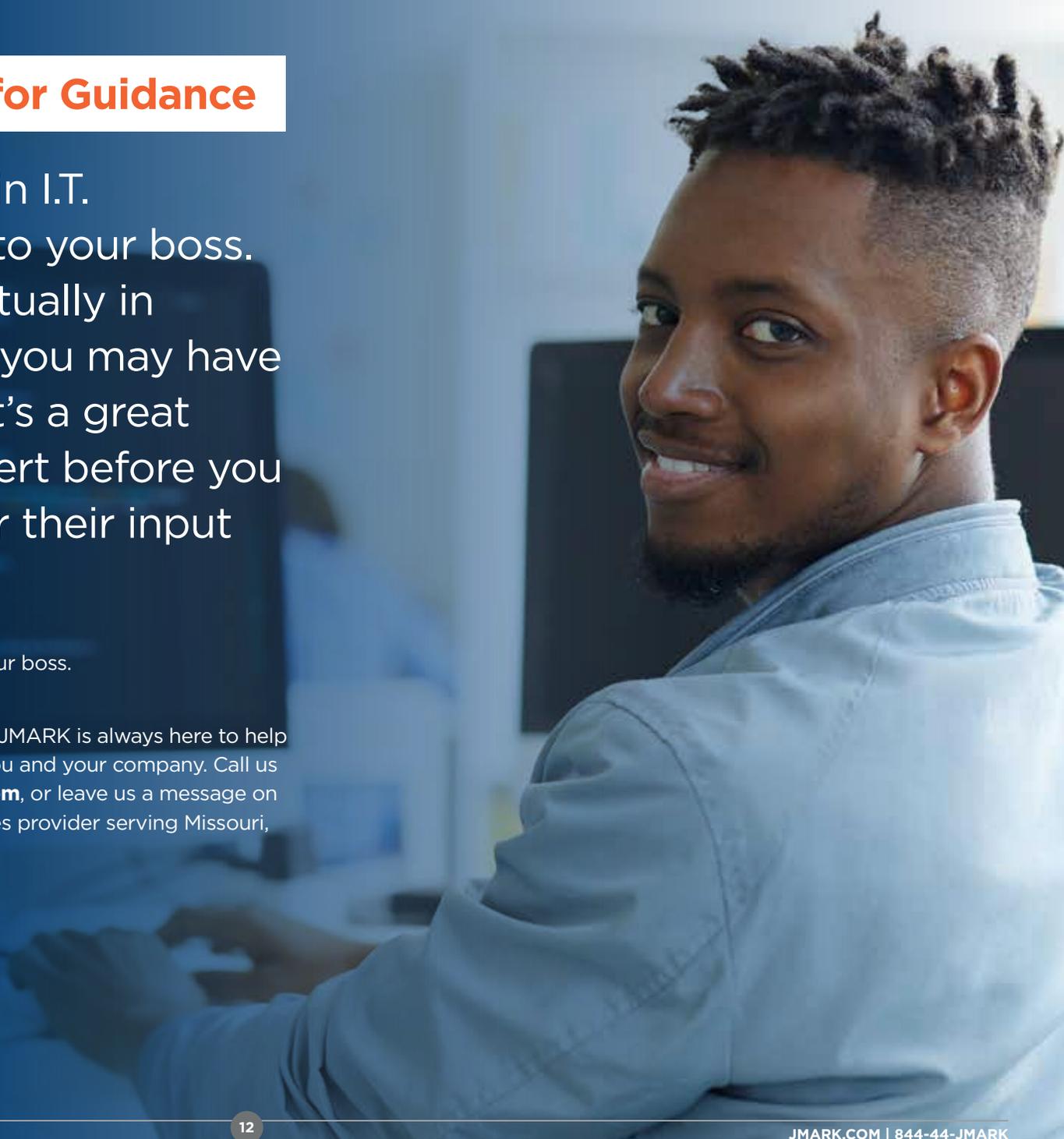
Human error accounts for most cyberattacks. An untrained employee unwittingly clicks on a phishing link or opens an infected attachment. Simple new school security awareness training would have alerted them to the red flags associated with this type of attack. Managed service providers know exactly the training employees need in order to learn how to avoid social engineering tactics. **With the prevalence of social engineering hacks, it just makes good sense for your boss to invest in security training.**

Ask an I.T. Professional for Guidance

You're planning to explain I.T. problems and solutions to your boss. But unless your job is actually in information technology, you may have questions of your own. It's a great idea to talk to an I.T. expert before you talk to your boss. Ask for their input and suggestions.

Then, keep their name handy to recommend to your boss.

Are you ready to get the ball rolling for better I.T.? JMARK is always here to help you understand what our I.T. services can do for you and your company. Call us at **844-44-JMARK**, email us at jmarkit@JMARK.com, or leave us a message on our Contact Us page. JMARK is a managed services provider serving Missouri, Oklahoma, and Arkansas.



People First. Technology Second.

For thirty years, JMARK has been providing innovative I.T. solutions to organizations of all sizes. With all that experience comes extensive expertise. We understand the challenges that modern businesses face and can help you maintain continuity and efficiency, even in the midst of the continual changes occurring in technology needs and expectations. It is our mission to ensure that your technology supports your vision and goals.

Most importantly, at JMARK, we put people before technology. Everything we do, every service we offer, is a reflection of our “People First, Technology Second” philosophy. Because while we love technology, we also understand that I.T. is only useful when it serves to empower people and enhance the work they do; work that, in turn, can facilitate growth, spur innovation, increase opportunity, and open up new paths to success.

Contact JMARK today and let us show you what our I.T. services can do for your business.

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