

# ***Maximizing Profitability with Managed Security Services***

*Key elements to an effective  
MSP cybersecurity approach*

## Introduction

For decades, small- and medium-sized businesses (SMBs) have relied solely on their in-house IT department to source, install, and manage the technology systems that support their business functions. Even scarier are the instances where the “in-house IT pro” for an SMB is simply a good friend or relative with a knack for technology. With so many business functions being digitized in order to meet consumer demands this puts significantly more added pressure on in-house IT in order to ensure everything is kept up-to-date and running properly. All of these trends, plus the growing targeting of SMBs for malicious attacks, is driving a lot of businesses towards managed services.

According to a 2019 report on the state of SMB cybersecurity<sup>1</sup>, over 75% of SMBs place cybersecurity as a top investment priority. This shift is due to SMBs being the increasing target of so many cyber incidents. The reality is that SMBs simply lack the in-depth tools and in-house expertise to harden their systems and networks against today's cybersecurity threats.



Graph source: Underserved and Unprepared: The State of SMB Cybersecurity in 2019 [Vanson Bourne]

With the growing concern about cyber attacks, more companies are outsourcing their IT functions to managed service providers (MSPs). This trend has created an opportunity for MSPs to help their customers, while increasing their profitability.

## Leading With Security

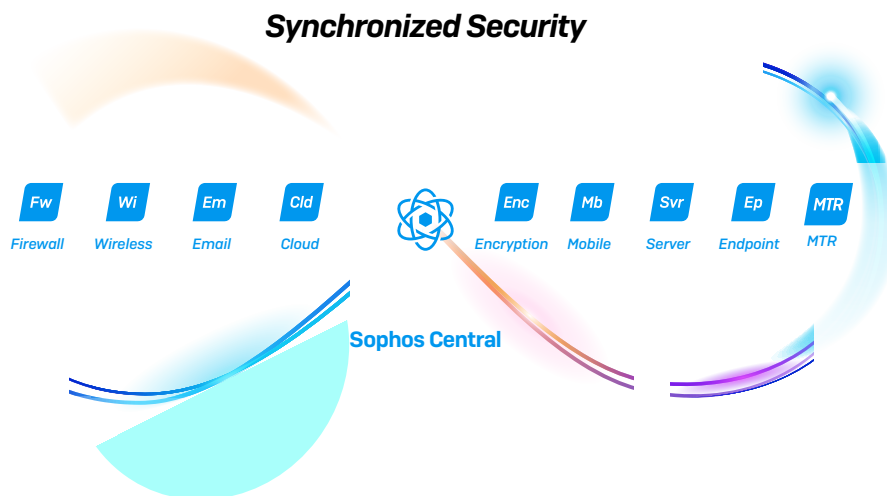
Managed service providers (MSPs) are strategically positioned to help SMBs with their security needs. Cybersecurity has become a determining factor in whether an SMB is likely to work with a MSP. A managed service provider who demonstrates a clear understanding of cybersecurity and can prescribe a structured plan to prospective businesses on the ability to secure their assets will be much more favorable. Industry trends have shown that a majority of businesses would consider moving to a new MSP if they offered the “right” cyber security solution, even if they weren’t planning to change. Now is the perfect time for you to differentiate your MSP by offering next-gen cybersecurity that is not only easy for you to manage but one that is proven to stop threats.

**“SMBs will not hesitate to change providers for the “right” cyber security offering and they will pay more to do so.” <sup>2</sup>**

MSPs should be working with their clients to ensure that they are educated on the always changing threat landscape and the solutions that are needed to stay protected. It is also important to articulate risks involved if a layered security strategy is not in place. MSPs that offer clients a full portfolio of security solutions greatly reduce.

## Achieve Security at Scale

Growth and profitability are keystones to every MSP as they set out to solve the technological concerns of their clients. However, a common issue with MSPs is that they grow too much, too fast without the proper tools in place to sufficiently support their client environments. In order to achieve growth and high profitability, MSPs need to employ automation wherever possible with very little disparity between products. A cloud based management console such as [Sophos Central](#) allows MSPs to effectively and efficiently protect clients by combining a full breadth of protection that covers the endpoint, network, mobile, Wi-Fi, email, encryption, and cloud. All of this functionality from one console means you can reduce your vendor management overhead and increase time spent with clients and prospects. Sophos Central combines the power of many different security products to function as one using [Synchronized Security](#). With Sophos Central, MSPs get a single, intuitive management dashboard to manage multiple client installations, respond to alerts, manage licenses, and track upcoming renewal dates.



## Automation Is Key

One of the most effective ways for MSPs to increase operational and management efficiency is to introduce automation into their workflow. The value proposition of automation is straightforward: reduce the amount of time you are spend handling routine tasks, cutting the costs for service delivery, and freeing up technicians to devote more attention to revenue-generating activities that will boost your MSP's profitability.

As every business model is unique, with its own particular blend of services and processes, the implementation of automation can vary. First, in order to take advantage of the benefits that automation can deliver, MSPs need to evaluate their business and identify areas that are most capable of being automated. By adding automation tools and other support apps, an MSP can provide a wide range of proactive services to clients that demand only limited resources. For example, remote monitoring and management (RMM) tools enable smaller MSPs to automatically perform a variety of diagnostic and preventative maintenance routines, ensuring potential difficulties are identified before they become major problems.

With Sophos Central, MSPs benefit from a [wide range of integrations](#) with key RMM, PSA, and IT documentation vendors to supply MSPs with advanced automation functionality that results in a huge time savings. To further expand the benefits of automation, many MSPs are taking advantage of the increased flexibility that Application Programming Interface (API) and scripting tools offer. An API enables MSPs to drill down deeper into specific functions of their software solutions, making it possible to automate commands and processes on a more granular level. You can find a great amount of information about Sophos' APIs, including various use cases, at the [Sophos API Community](#).

## Organizations want to focus on business, not security

Small business owners are generally very passionate about what it is that they provide to their customers. At the end of the day a small business owner simply wants the assurance that they are protected so they can focus on their business, not security. This is the opportunity for MSPs today. By educating SMBs on security best practices and what good security looks like MSPs can help increase that organization's sense of protection. With more than half of organizations prioritizing cyber security in the next two years, and a significant proportion seeking out better protections, the SMB security space presents an important opportunity for MSPs. to step in and better educate organizations on the nature of the threat landscape, and the types of protections that should be implemented.

## Sophos MSP Connect Flex Benefits



MSPs must deliver security services that are easy for SMBs to use but still provide enterprise-grade security efficacy. The MSP of today is essentially the virtual CIO of any client that they manage. This trusted partnership will build a strong relationship and lead to higher retention rates and increased profitability for the MSP. At the same time, MSPs must ensure that the security services they offer are integrated, scalable and easy to manage across an increasing number of sites and customers. Employing Sophos' next-gen cloud based security solutions gives MSPs the edge over the competition by providing industry leading solutions that you can easily deploy and manage.

For more information on the Sophos MSP Connect Flex Program or to sign up for a free trial visit [www.sophos.com/MSP](http://www.sophos.com/MSP).

## Sources :

1. Vanson Bourne - Underserved and Unprepared: The State of SMB Cyber Security in 2019
2. Vanson Bourne - Underserved and Unprepared: The State of SMB Cyber Security in 2019

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