

Eight benefits of managed services in the maritime industry, from Dynama

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- Thriving in today's competitive cruise industry is tough so why go it alone? Be free to focus on the big picture while others worry about the everyday complexities of managing systems. Lee Clarke of [Dynama](#) presents the case for working with a specialist managed service provider (MSP) to support IT systems at sea.

You only have to watch the TV ads to grasp the popularity of cruise holidays. From large, luxury ocean-liners carrying whole cities of passengers to the more intimate surroundings of specialist small

luxury ships – everyone appears to be enjoying a cruise adventure. It's a trend that is likely to continue, bringing with it increased competition to deliver an unparalleled guest experience. To achieve this level of customer satisfaction the most advanced technologies are required, however, finding the right people to support modern systems is a challenge across all industries.



A carefully chosen managed service provider gives you freedom to act strategically and the power to stay in control”

*Lee Clarke, Regional Director
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The advent of cloud computing coupled with modern automated technology is already making lighter work of managing crew movements and rotation planning. The latest crewing solutions automate a wide range of activities from crew readiness, contracts, travel administration and crew rotation planning to managing budgets, payroll/benefits, communicating uniforms policies and facilitating appraisals and training. They provide a birds-eye view of resources to help organizations maximize their existing crew talents and

provide a longer planning horizon which, in turn, helps keep staff happy and prevent them from straying to the competition. Along the way, they also keep crew members safe and aid compliance with important quality, safety, health and environment regulations.

From tactics to strategy – the art of making technology work for you

Every ship is unique and the technical challenges are even greater at sea, so it pays to have a technical team on hand that is capable, fully engaged, immensely experienced and exceptionally driven to meet the individual needs of your business. However, many cruise organizations' IT departments are often stretched to the hilt with a wide variety of specialist systems to manage at a distance and a limited budget that necessitates a 'do more with less' culture driven from the top. This is understandable but treating shipboard IT like any other back office operation can be a costly mistake as anyone who has attempted to support IT systems ship and shore, will tell you.



Maximizing the capabilities of today's crewing software requires careful planning, time and considerable expertise that can put extra pressure on IT departments already struggling to cope with the increasing number of IT systems required on new, more technically advanced cruise ships.

The benefits of managed services
It's time to expand your horizons and look outside for a partner with the bandwidth and know-how to make technology work for you in the following ways:



- 1) Focus on the big picture - frees up your own internal IT resources to play to their strengths for example, strategic infrastructure, data and systems security, general business and system improvements
- 2) Improve response times - resources assigned by a MSP are dedicated to you and should include a team of product experts who understand your products and system
- 3) Add certainty to budgeting requirements – because you no longer have to recruit, train and pay for internal resources to manage your technology you can work to a fixed budget and a known contract cycle therefore reducing uncertainty
- 4) Regular maintenance - no more dependence on internal resourcing to schedule maintenance checks around other activities. Using a managed service provider allows for regular maintenance of the system to ensure it is always at peak performance
- 5) Avoid expensive upgrade costs - your system is updated regularly through the provision of modifications, service packs or other improvements as part of the managed service contract. This avoids expensive upgrade costs because systems are out of date
- 6) Have a real say in future innovations – to support your business now and in the future. Opting for a managed service arrangement creates a direct path for facilitating product enhancements and suggestions to the vendor's Product Management team
- 7) Drive business efficiencies – a managed service provider understands business processes and can translate those into product requirements and change requests that can drive efficiencies within your business
- 8) Increased speed and agility – by developing changes required by the business as part of on-going improvement process and assist with testing. This helps recognise business benefits more swiftly.

Choose carefully

Whether you choose Software as a Service (SaaS) or a fully managed hosted environment, it pays to select your partner carefully. Look for a company with experience of providing support for both ship and shore side crewing solutions in the maritime industry. It will need a support team made up of highly skilled and knowledgeable individuals trained on the latest technologies and that understands the ramifications of deploying solutions in a mission critical environment that may only be accessible remotely.

The nature of the high seas means any managed service provider should offer follow-the-sun support through a dedicated telephone technical helpdesk during business working hours that span different countries, backed up with a secure customer portal to provide 24-hour access to self-service

knowledgebase, regular scorecard reports and SLA monitoring.

Look for guaranteed confidentiality. Choose an ISO27000 certified MSP partner that will continuously respect your data and its security. Finally ensure transparency and that contracts are easy to understand, clearly state the number of resources and days provided and offer a clear breakdown of costs.

A carefully chosen managed service provider is a welcome addition to the team. It gives you freedom to act strategically and the power to stay in control. Why go it alone, when you can achieve so much more with the right partner? Give it try!

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