



Using IT partners can raise staff morale and productivity.

general manager. "Many providers look at their IT provider as a vendor, not a partner. It's important to remember we're sitting on the same side of the table."

Technology mistakes cost providers money, time and possibilities.

It's time to experience a technology breakthrough with an IT partner that knows senior care well enough to help providers bust these four common myths:

#### **Myth 1: You should never rent hardware.**

Purchasing devices, be it touch-screen kiosks, tablets or other mobile devices, was once standard operating procedure. But with rapidly changing capabilities, today's technology is often outmoded before facilities are finished paying for it.

With a rental agreement instead, providers get the latest devices to their staff, keep costs off the books and add more value at the point-of-care. If a device isn't right, a switch doesn't have to break the budget all over again.

Viewing technology as a routine operating cost — rather than a one-time, significant capital expense — has become more realistic

# Dousing tech myths

With the right support, providers can discover the real truth about information technology — and how to get the most out of it

**C**onnectivity has become a central part of modern skilled nursing care.

But even as the industry finally embraces the power of technology to improve resident care, bolster employee productivity and attract new partners, many myths persist.

Accepted as fact, these falsehoods can threaten a facility's livelihood, limit potential and undermine investments through their short-sightedness. Outdated opinions also have left some operators afraid to move forward with changes that could enhance daily performance.

CareWorx, a top 100 global managed service provider

and market-leader in senior care technology solutions, forms partnerships that help long-term care providers cut through the clutter.

"The misconceptions are that a) technology doesn't work the way it should, and b) it's always going to be expensive," says Mark McIntyre, CareWorx's executive vice president and



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in today's market.

CareWorx offers end-user devices with exceptional value, building rental contracts that deliver round-the-clock customer support and the flexibility to upgrade.

Stonerise Healthcare is shifting two of the centers it manages away from wall-mounted kiosks for its Point-ClickCare services to mobile devices. Before, the company would buy new hardware whenever its network grew.

"Renting forced us to consider purposefully a device's lifecycle," says coordinator Stacey Lynch. "We also realize that any device is going to need updates, whether it be to the operating system or the applications on it."

In the case of broken hardware, replacements are easily accessible — no waiting for repairs to be completed.

## **Myth 2: Wi-Fi will always be a struggle.**

It's true: Consumer-grade Wi-Fi won't cut it. Interruptions are almost certain to happen when nurses, administrators, residents and visitors are clamoring to use a system designed to support just a few access points.

But with an initial investment in professional-grade Wi-Fi and the necessary infrastructure to support it, wireless service becomes fast and consistent.

CareWorx's team of IT pros conduct on-site assessments, using floor plans and heat mapping to evaluate the reach of a signal, calculate the number of needed access points and guide facilities to a healthcare-oriented internet provider.

"If it's working well, no one notices," says Jason Brown, CareWorx's vice president of technical services. "But if it goes down, everyone notices."

without nagging password issues. The dollars invested, he says, brought a "significant amount of accountability" and freed in-house staff to focus on other imperatives.

Putting problems in the hands of a trained team, available 24 hours a day, can mean the difference between a smooth-running tech operation and a frustrating, underutilized one.

With more than 170 employees, CareWorx aver-

its clients are doing far more.

CareWorx reps easily help incorporate nurse-call systems, staff training, human resources and even food service applications onto common devices, making them multipurpose tools. More importantly, reps help clients decide which device type might best meet their needs now — and months or years down the line.

The critical function of monitoring these devices doesn't have to be a burden. By outsourcing to a remote management company — or renting equipment that includes monitoring services — staying on top of operational and security threats is made simple.

CareWorx offers a range of monitoring services that can include hardware alarms for CPU load or lengthy offline times, triggering automatic tickets to get solutions started. A premium service will oversee infrastructure like servers, provide firewalls and anti-virus protection, helping senior care communities ensure data security and resident privacy.

Applied across a variety of devices and buildings, such services ensure that technology investment, employees and residents stay online and safe. ■

***"The breadth and depth of knowledge they have is impossible to match in-house."***

— Jason Brown, CareWorx

Knocked off their devices, staff members may skip key documentation steps.

The next generation of residents is also more likely to expect resident-facing Wi-Fi to power their phones, tablets and wearable tech.

## **Myth 3: In-house technology operations save money.**

As director of procurement and technology for Canada's 12 AgeTech communities, Kassim Dossa fought this myth constantly.

By outsourcing help desk services alone, he saw major improvements in response time and kept his staff online

ages a 30-second response time for technical issues, with Level 1 requests typically closed in 15 to 20 minutes.

"You're getting a huge team. The breadth and depth of knowledge they have is impossible to match in-house," Brown says.

## **Myth 4: More technology means more devices, and they'll be impossible to monitor.**

More than 5,000 facilities currently operate more than 70,000 CareWorx touch-screens and mobile devices for electronic health record documentation. But many of

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