

Make sure you move forwards

A **control[^]shift** guide to office relocation



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It's not just equipment that might be lost if your move is not done correctly...

Introduction

On first consideration an office move might seem like one task. In reality, it's more appropriate to think of it like a jigsaw puzzle. Each move consists of a number of intricate components that inter-lock to influence every aspect of your organisation. And just like a jigsaw, it only takes one missing part for the whole thing to be ruined.

Key to the success of any relocation is the capacity to identify, anticipate and synchronise each critical element. This ensures the move is executed as a fluid motion, taking you to new premises, and onto an efficient and exiting future.

Fit the pieces and see the bigger picture...

Technology is now critical to just about every workplace. Relocating or opening a new office can cause serious disruption as you try and juggle the equipment and services you rely on to stay competitive.

To ensure the process is painless, you need to consider three key questions. Before the ink is dry on the new lease or deed, you need to ask yourself:

Where am I moving too?

Not the actual address, but the vital characteristics of the building or office you are moving into. It would be unusual, for example, if the new location was exactly the same as your old one. So, how will your people, teams or departments be arranged? Will this require extra equipment, longer cables, more servers, a new rack for the servers? Will there actually be enough space straight away? Do you need to store any equipment? Will the information stored on the equipment be safe? How do you dispose of old equipment?

Who is doing the move?

Ensuring your move is completed with the minimum amount of disruption and fuss means employing both thorough management and technical know-how. The logistics involved in relocating an entire communication infrastructure are often, even for smaller enterprises, extremely complicated.

It's not just an issue of efficiency; security must also be a key consideration. Many people believe the lifeblood of their organisation is its financial resources. In most cases, however, the vital element is actually its data. A wealth of financial, commercially sensitive, customer and even personal information could be stored on your equipment. It is, therefore, vital you can trust in the security and integrity of those carrying out the move.

You'll need to consider every possibility to ensure your new office runs smoothly, straight away...

Why am I moving?

An office move will almost certainly centre on enhancing your business. It can also go hand in hand with a great deal of other decisions regarding the future of your organisation, especially when it comes to your technology. A move could spell the perfect time to upgrade or implement a new communication network or initiate new services.

For example, you may wish to:

- Use the internet to reduce the cost of telephony?
- Implement a larger, more capable or scalable network.
- Expand your broadband width to ensure your new office is firing on all cylinders as soon as possible?

Moving your business where it needs to be...

As should have become apparent, moving office isn't quite as simple as hiring a van. It takes a great deal of technical know-how and management talent to ensure the smooth transition of your equipment from one location to another – regardless of whether it's to another part of the UK, or simply next door.

By outsourcing your office move, you bypass many of the problems that could otherwise be overlooked. By handing over responsibility to an experienced organisation you effectively remove the headaches involved in moving everything yourselves. You're also gaining a company with the experience to have each and every base covered, every step of the way.

The pivotal role of IT Support...

You'll need a company who has the necessary resources and experience to offer you the complete IT package. It's more than just transporting and installing your servers, PCs printers, faxes and peripherals. The right provider can consult with you on every aspect of your network: from providing new hardware, software and training, to ensuring your new communications infrastructure can evolve efficiently and cost-effectively.

It is also vital that your networks, servers, telephony etc are all tested and configured to ensure efficiency and longevity. The longer your office is out of action, the more time and money goes down the drain.

It's not always about who has the right answers; it's also about who asks the right questions...

An eye for detail...

Your cabling, for example, may seem insignificant, but it is actually the string that binds your operations together. For your move to be successful a comprehensive cable management system will need to be employed. This must cover coding, labelling, removing and even replacing sections of an entire birds-nest of wires and plugs. This guarantees everything can be connected at your new location with the minimum of fuss.

In the event of needing to discard old equipment, you should ensure whoever you use has the means dispose or recycle it in accordance with the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive (WEEE). The experience and connections of the right IT support provider can pay dividends when it comes to keeping you compliant and avoiding fines, or adverse publicity. If you'd rather your surplus equipment was simply stored? Ensure your movers have access to a secure and insured location.

Will IT support alone be enough?

As we all become reliant on the internet to maintain our operations and communication networks, the expertise and advice of an Internet Service Provider (ISP) can be integral to your office move.

The services of an ISP offer you a clear insight into how your organisation can operate to maximum efficiency in its new location. They should be able to consult with you every step of the way on vital matters such as:

What type of telephony services you need?

- **ISDN (Integrated Services Digital Network)**
- **VoIP (Voice-over Internet Protocol)**
- **Skype**
- **Call features:** Hunt groups etc

What kind broadband you need? You may want to consider:

- **ADSL (Asymmetrical Digital Subscriber Line)**
- **SDSL (Symmetrical Digital Subscriber Line)**
- **Connection speed:** 1MB, 2MB, 8MB...etc?
- **Contention**

You may also need to make special arrangements to keep your existing phone number or make provision for call re-direction from your old location. The people you use should also advise on the timescales involved when implementing or changing such features or equipment.

It's vital the people you use understand your business inside out...

The physical move...

There are many things to consider before the actual move takes place. When the day finally arrives nothing should have been left to chance. On top of the sheer amount of technical expertise you'll need to have at your disposal, management experience and precision will also be key.

Chances are, your organisation already receives myriad services from many different 3rd party providers (IT Support, ISP, maintenance etc). In which case your move must be carried out by people able to implement and manage a precise timetable of activities. They must be able to understand the role of each 3rd party provider you use in minute detail – and that's before your PCs are even packed!

While it's true that modern computer equipment is far more robust than in years gone by, it's still vital that nothing is left to chance. Everything should be packed up professionally (preferably in anti-static crates) and arranged to ensure it can be unpacked and booted-up as quickly as possible on arrival.



The meticulous planning and management of your office move is vital to ensuring that nothing goes missing or gets broken. The data stored within a machines' hard drive is often vital, not only to an individual, but to your business as a whole. Not only does this mean that your information must be 'backed-up' by experts before the move, you need to consider how safe your information will be during the move.

Identifying signs of reliability and experience might appear difficult for standard removals. Using an established IT provider, however, should offer greater clarity as to both capability and integrity.

Those with the required level of pedigree will almost certainly have achieved accreditation from a number of official organisations. While these may not be directly linked to office moving, anyone who has received backing from organisations such as the British Association of Removals should prove to be beyond reproach.

A mixture of expertise, services and equipment, but only one aim – the right people should be able to bring it all together...

Summary...

Moving office could realistically mean shutting down your entire workplace, disconnecting all the specially configured, integrated equipment and packing it all away. Then safely transporting it somewhere else, un-packing it, putting it all together again, possibly adding in new features and equipment and seeing if it all works properly!

The capacity to manage every aspect of both your move and your technical infrastructure is critical to completing the move effectively. The people you need must understand the role an IT support provider and a removal firm. They must also have the capacity to understand and manage the many service providers modern organisations rely on, such as ISP.

An office move also represents a unique opportunity to analyse and evaluate your existing network. In the current economic climate, you may consider it prudent to integrate your internet and IT support into one cost-effective service from one single provider. This should be a key consideration when looking for an organisation to move your office.

Moving office with control^shift...

Control^shift is a partnership between industry leaders. IT Lab brings award-winning IT support and ISP expertise, Alexanders brings recognised removal expertise...both bring Service Obsession™.

This innovative relationship blends together in-depth IT knowledge with professional transportation and packing, insurance and secure storage facilities.

With us looking after your office move, nothing is left to chance, nothing is overlooked and everything works as one. We'll cover:

- Project management
- Server and PC relocation
- Data centre relocation
- IT storage
- Professional packing and crate hire
- Standard removals and storage
- Green IT disposal
- Managed IT services
- Anything else you need

IT Lab.net: an ISP service that offers both quality and quantity. As part of our stable of services, it can cover both connectivity and telephony to ensure your new location is fully equipped with everything it needs.