

Interplay.

Interplay Helps Design Christopher Jones Architects' IT Plan for the Future

client

Christopher Jones Architects

challenge

Their break/fix team's a la carte pricing structure encouraged the architects to troubleshoot IT themselves, then they discovered that the break/fix team had not even handled the basics.

solution

Interplay's attentive, proactive IT care saves time and reduces vulnerability, and has finally freed Christopher Jones Architects to focus on architecture and design work.

Christopher Jones Architects is a full-service design firm in Seattle committed to guiding clients through every stage of their project for mixed-use and residential properties of all sizes. Their focus is on crafting creative solutions for challenging urban sites, promoting a clean and timeless design language, and maintaining a strong commitment to sustainability.

When the team at Christopher Jones Architects moved into a new shared office space, they inherited the IT provider for the building. At first they were satisfied with the IT provider's work, but then a new employee at the IT firm made them feel like an afterthought. When they discovered that the provider hadn't bothered to back up their data for 6 months, they knew it was time to find a new IT team.

Better Work, Better Pricing – The Blueprints of a Better Relationship

As a result of a prior working relationship with Interplay, Chris Jones, Principal at Christopher Jones Architects, knew exactly who to call. The transition was smooth and fast.

"The transition took place during the COVID pandemic, which wasn't ideal, but Blake [at Interplay] worked with us to get everything transferred quickly. Interplay made the process as painless as it could possibly be," explained Jones.

After Interplay took over IT management for Christopher Jones Architects, Jones was surprised to hear about various problems that had been overlooked by their previous IT provider. Interplay provided options for handling these issues, making sure to stay sensitive to Jones's timelines, budget, and workload.

"Blake was thoughtful, pleasant, and easy to work with – and he did a great job translating my suggestions into 'tech speak,'" laughed Jones.



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- Chris Jones, Principal at Christopher Jones Architects

Jones also appreciates Interplay’s “all-in” pricing structure, which helps him focus his attention where it’s needed: the business.

“When we worked with the previous provider it was an hourly agreement, so it was to our advantage not to call them because charges were a la carte,” Jones explained. “That left me in the position of tech support, which meant a huge portion of my mental bandwidth was spent researching and fixing technology. Interplay’s pricing and service model has made it possible for me to offload that. Now I don’t have to think about servers or Windows or VPNs... I can just use those tools instead of worrying about them. This frees me to focus on architecture instead of IT.”

The Structure of Good IT Support: Interplay Always Finds the Answers

Christopher Jones Architects, like all companies during the pandemic, had to deal with the day-to-day realities of remote work complications such as cybersecurity vulnerabilities. To provide a seamless remote work experience, Interplay set up MFA and better password policies for the architecture firm and they took over reprovisioning computers for new hires and setting up new equipment. Dealing with equipment used to take Jones an entire day.

“Our most frequent support call is about VPN issues and they’re very responsive about that,” Jones said. “The VPN is a critical element of our business, but VPNs can be very temperamental beasts. For a period, every time I tried to connect to the VPN from home it would fail and I would have to create a service ticket. Interplay’s techs always got me connected, but Blake went above and beyond to dive into the issue and find longer-term solutions that fixed the problem and made the connection more stable.”

The fact that the Interplay team takes personal responsibility for fixing IT problems is one of Jones’s favorite things about the IT services provider.

“When there’s a problem, Blake is like a dog with a bone,” Jones said. “He doesn’t give up and let ‘good enough’ be good enough; he wants to understand and fully resolve the issue. This level of commitment is big.”

Jones recommends that busy architecture firms reach out to Interplay because “they make dealing with technology understandable and predictable, so that it’s not an obstacle to design. [Interplay’s] attention frees us to focus on our design work, which is just as it should be.”