



» STEVE KNUTSON  
Chief Information Officer  
Marco  
[www.marconet.com](http://www.marconet.com)

## Technology Turf War Benefits Users

A **TECHNOLOGY TURF** war is brewing and bringing businesses sometimes free software and services to create a virtual world where their employees can access and share information from anywhere at any time. It's changing the face of the hosted model.

Industry big dogs – Amazon, Microsoft and Google – are fighting for consumers' attention and the result are free or low-cost basic software programs, including some of the most popular software packages such as Microsoft Office and Google Apps.

Even when companies pay a monthly fee for products such as Microsoft's Business Productivity Online Suite, they can get it integrated into their specific operations easily by going online and selecting a local partner such as Marco. There is no additional fee for selecting a local partner and it gives businesses local experts to call for assistance.

It's the new face of hosting, which creates on the fly virtual servers that allow users on a company's network to easily access and share software, files and other data through an Internet connection.

While the basic operating software has become a commodity, businesses continue to depend on local technology providers such as Marco for implementation and hosting of specific software for their industry or custom applications. In these cases, expertise and hands-on help is still needed to install and integrate the software into the company's specific work environment.

But the return remains high. Here's a look at what hosting means for businesses.

### **More money in the bank.**

Because hosting creates a business cooperative of sorts, it allows businesses to share the costs of the

data center. They save by purchasing technology on a monthly basis, instead of buying a server and the all the necessary equipment up front. Budgeting for technology now becomes a thing of the past. Monthly IT expenses are determined per user and only change when the user count does

### **Keep content fresh.**

Updating content can become daunting. With hosted services, businesses can rely on their local provider to make changes to their digital signs or other hosted technology as a part of the cost of their monthly service.

### **The latest and greatest is yours.**

The time of business leaders can be better spent keeping up with their industry and operations, rather than technology. Hosting allows them to move technology upgrades from their to-do lists and focus on their core business functions. Businesses also do not have to spend time or money disposing of the old technology.

### **No more maintenance meltdowns.**

By partnering with a local hosting provider, businesses leverage the expertise of highly trained maintenance and repair professionals who monitor their servers and often proactively make adjustments to prevent any disruptions.

It's now easier than ever for businesses – large and small – to have the technology they need to stay connected, manage their information and prosper during these tightening times. They just need to know where to look.