How Do I know if my MSP is proactive or just reactive?

Stop paying for reactive "break-fix" IT. Discover how proactive Managed IT in Phoenix drives productivity through the Coeus Codex framework. Read more about Coeus Consulting SMB offerings!

The real difference between proactive and reactive MSPs

You can tell whether your MSP is proactive or reactive by looking at how they spend their time, not how quickly tickets are closed.

In a truly proactive IT model, **60–80% of effort is focused on preventing issues** through maintenance, monitoring, security alignment, and system standardization. Only 20–40% of effort is spent responding to service desk tickets.

In a reactive model, those numbers are flipped. Even if response times are fast and customers are "happy," your employees lose hours each month dealing with IT issues that should never have happened. That difference directly impacts productivity, **security risk, and long-term cost**.

Most MSPs claim to be proactive, but the difference shows up in day-to-day operations.

Reactive MSPs

- Measure success by tickets closed
- Spend most of their time responding to issues
- Rely on users to report problems
- Fix the same issues repeatedly

From the outside, this can look like good service - tickets are resolved, and support is friendly. But problems continue to interrupt employee

Proactive MSPs

- Measure success by issues prevented
- Spend most of their time maintaining and aligning systems
- Identify and resolve problems before users notice
- Reduce ticket volume over time

The goal isn't faster fixes.

It's **fewer disruptions**.

Choose proactive IT support

The MSP staffing ratio test (a simple thought exercise)

Here's a simple way to evaluate whether your MSP is truly proactive.

Imagine your MSP employs 5 people supporting your business.

Reactive model

→   4 employees spend their time resolving tickets

→   1 employee focuses on proactive work

→   Support feels busy, and tickets close quickly

However, your employees are constantly interrupted by:

- Slow systems
- Recurring issues
- Security warnings
- Preventable outages

> **Result:**
> Lower productivity across your entire organization.

Proactive model

→   4 employees focus on proactive work:

- System maintenance
- Patch management
- Security alignment
- Environment standardization

→   1 employee handles service desk issues

Because problems are prevented early, fewer issues ever reach your staff.

> **Result:**
> Higher productivity, fewer interruptions, and more predictable IT performance.
> This is why proactive MSPs often cost more per user - but frequently **save money overall by protecting employee time**.

What should a proactive MSP be doing every month?

If your MSP is proactive, you should be able to get clear answers to what's happening behind the scenes.

At a minimum, proactive work should include:

Regular system maintenance and health checks

Patch and update verification

Security posture reviews

Asset and lifecycle management

Documentation updates

Environment standardization

If your MSP can't clearly explain these activities - or if they only happen "when there's an issue" - the service is likely reactive.

Why don't fast response times equal proactive IT

Fast response times are valuable - but they don't define proactive IT.

- Fast response = damage control
- Proactive work = damage prevention

An MSP can respond quickly and still allow:

- Frequent employee interruptions
- Repeating issues
- Growing security risk

High Frequency of Issues

Minimal Interruptions

Reactive   Proactive
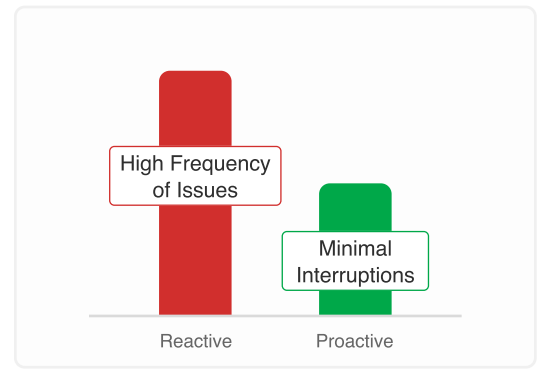
High customer satisfaction scores don't always mean high productivity. True proactivity shows up when employees **don't need to contact IT in the first place**.

Real example: moving from reactive to proactive IT

Miller Lumber, similar to many Phoenix SMBs, sought to improve their team's overall efficiency and production with less downtime from IT-related events and cybersecurity challenges.

By leveraging Coeus Consulting's proactive Codex framework, Miller Lumber experienced positive gains, including:

- Ticket volume dropped significantly
- Employees experienced fewer disruptions
- Systems became more stable
- Security posture became more resilient

The difference wasn't faster response - it was fewer problems overall

How Phoenix SMBs benefit from proactive IT?

Phoenix-area SMBs benefit most from proactive IT because downtime and interruptions impact everyone in a 30–50 employee organization.

Businesses choose Coeus because we focus on:

Prevention over reaction

Standardized service delivery via the **Coeus Codex**

White-glove support when issues do arise

100% customer satisfaction (CSAT)

50 5 Star Google Reviews

Deep focus on Phoenix and the Southwest SMB market

Our goal is simple: keep your employees productive by making IT problems rare, not just quickly resolved.