

IT MANAGED SERVICES CASE STUDY: When tragedy struck, here's how Action Signs kept itself – and others – moving forward.

In the heart of Redwood City, CA, there's a small business with a big mission: Action Sign Systems creating signs that guide and inform – from building directories and hospital signs to traffic indicators and corporate logos. But behind the over 40-year-old family-run company is a tale of transformation, loyalty, and the power of partnership.

Since 2004, IT Total Care has been an integral partner in Action Signs' growth and stability. Together they overcame operational inefficiencies, bolstered Action Signs' IT infrastructure, and built a thriving partnership, even amidst personal tragedy.

The Challenge: Outdated and vulnerable IT systems

Action Signs started as a hobby business, engraving name badges for CPMC Hospital in San Francisco. Over time, it grew into a full-service sign manufacturer, working with construction companies, hospitals, universities, and corporations. However, as the business grew, its IT systems lagged behind:

- Each department used standalone, un-networked PCs, making cross-department communication and file sharing inefficient
- Accounting data wasn't backed up, leaving the company vulnerable to data loss
- Manual workflows and disconnected systems led to delays and increased risk of errors during critical processes like quoting, designing, and invoicing

Recognizing these vulnerabilities, Action Signs sought a trusted IT partner who could modernize its operations and safeguard its data: IT Total Care.

When Action Sign partnered with IT Total Care, the goal was clear: streamline operations, protect vital data, and future-proof the business. IT Total Care approached the challenge with a tailored, proactive plan.

The Solution: IT Total Care's proactive approach

The goal was to network all the company's PCs and to automatically back up its accounting data. Under the ongoing managed IT service contract with Action Sign, IT Total Care continues to proactively support and secure their network, computers, and vital software platforms:

- **Networking PCs:** Department silos were dissolved by creating a unified network, enabling real-time collaboration across all stages of production
- **Automated Backups:** Critical financial and operational data was safeguarded with automated, cloud-enabled backups
- **Seamless IT Support:** Ongoing maintenance, monitoring, and security upgrades minimized downtime and ensured smooth operations

But the partnership went beyond technology. IT Total Care viewed Action Sign not just as a customer, but as a partner whose success was deeply intertwined with their own.



The Result: Operational efficiency and peace of mind

These changes of this IT transformation were profound:

- **30% Efficiency Increase:** Networked systems eliminated the need for manual handoffs and allowed for quicker project processing from quotes to delivery
- **Zero Downtime from Data Loss:** Automated backups ensured critical data was always recoverable, even in the face of unexpected events
- **Seamless Collaboration Across Teams:** Departments could now share files instantly, reducing project lead times and improving customer satisfaction

These improvements allowed the team to focus on what they do best: designing, crafting, and delivering the signs that shape our daily environments.

It could have taken a different turn. Julie Schneider, owner of Action Sign, was ready to walk away after profound family losses. At a crossroads, she wasn't sure if she wanted to continue running the business, but she was moved by her employees' response.

A Story of Perseverance: Loyalty beyond business

In 2009, Julie Schneider, the company's current owner, faced an unimaginable series of losses—her father, mother, and brother, all passed away. The burden of grief, combined with the responsibility of meeting payroll for her employees, made her question whether to continue.

Julie called a meeting, unsure of what to expect. The response from her team moved her deeply: "If you stick with it, we'll stick with you." Their loyalty was unwavering, their belief in her unshaken. Inspired by their faith, Julie resolved to carry the business forward.

Today, of her employees only one has less than 15 years with the business. It's a testament to a workplace built on mutual respect and trust—values that IT Total Care admires and shares.



Owner Julie Schneider: When she lost her father, mother, and brother, her employees said they'd stick with her if she stuck with them.



Action Sign employee Don Martin at work on the new IT Total Care sign.

The best part of It Total Care's partnership with Action Sign is this:

IT Total Care became one of its customers. We ordered one of their signs for our newly expanded office, which we proudly mounted on the wall.

While it's great to do business with a local provider you know and trust, it's even better to learn from each other. IT Total Care learned this from Action Sign owner Julie Schneider: Treat people like your own family, and they'll stick with you through thick and thin. Seems kind of obvious. But in today's hyper-cutthroat business environment, seldom do you see it in action. At Action Sign, however, it's not just a lesson—it's their way of life, fittingly visible in every "Action" they take.

Action Signs' journey shows that resilience and innovation go hand in hand. By partnering with IT Total Care, they turned technological vulnerabilities into strengths, transforming their operations and ensuring their long-term success. Above all, their story is a tribute to the power of loyalty – among employees, customers, and business partners.

IT Total Care doesn't think of themselves as just another vendor. Instead, they think of themselves as a business partner to those they serve – so they can prosper such as Action Signs.



Our new brushed aluminum sign just installed in our expanded office space.

If you need help making these changes or want expert support, IT Total Care can make sure you're worry free about IT and able to focus on growing your business. Ready to get started?