

WHITEPAPER

# Amplify Your ROI with Infoblox Education Services



## Executive Summary

Here are some facts: According to Gartner, organizational investment in solutions such as those offered by Infoblox continues to accelerate at a pace well beyond overall IT<sup>1</sup>. Infoblox leads the DDI market by providing critical capabilities that organizations rely on, including faster and more accurate provisioning of DNS/DHCP services, securing DNS, and the move to hybrid clouds<sup>2</sup>. These high-value use cases enable organizations to reduce costs, increase service, secure the network, and migrate services to the cloud.

Yet while organizations can easily quantify the value of Infoblox solutions, many companies underinvest in product training around DDI/DNS security projects compared to their training investment in IT projects that provide less value and yield a lower return on investment (ROI). In fact, database and network management disciplines have developed a culture of technical training and certification that is practically required for employment.

Given the extreme importance of DDI/DNS security, and the value that Infoblox provides an organization, a strong case for training can and should be made to extend this value. The purpose of this paper is to help professionals responsible for DDI, DNS security, and Infoblox implementations provide a credible and defensible business justification for funding training using both quantitative and qualitative examples.

1. <http://www.gartner.com/newsroom/id/3084817>

2. <https://www.infoblox.com/wp-content/uploads/infoblox-white-paper-ad-dns-facts-and-fiction-1.pdf>

## Using Return on Investment to Justify Training Investments

Many IT leaders use ROI as a financial figure of merit to justify project cost. ROI is a widely understood concept and is popular in the IT community largely due to the ease of calculation. For example, if an investment of \$100 provides a profit of \$150 then the ROI calculates as  $\$150/\$100 \times 100 = 150\%$ . Nice and simple.

While the decision to fund the overall data management project that led to an investment in Infoblox was likely justified with net present value (NPV), internal rate of return (IRR), and other sophisticated measures, ROI is extremely useful to quickly and easily demonstrate the return on smaller investments with short payback periods, such as training and education.

Training can be justified by using one or more of three quantitative categories that provide a return on investment: *revenue generation, productivity and performance improvement, and cost-reduction*. This paper uses cost reduction exclusively as a valid means of justifying training, as it is comparatively easy to model and understand. Cost reduction also provides a compelling measure for programs that affect a small number of users.

Additionally, this paper introduces various qualitative results from training that can help make a persuasive case for a training investment.

## Quantitative Justification for Training: Cost Avoidance

Let's first focus on constructing the most compelling quantitative argument for training, i.e., cost avoidance due to savings from having trained employees. Avoiding or lessening the costs of using external resources is a very reasonable approach to justifying training. Using trained internal FTEs over outside contractors is usually significantly more cost effective for many projects, especially projects that will require additional work after the initial implementation.

Our model uses a small implementation of Infoblox, with the costs for ILT Infoblox training taken from the 2016 Infoblox Catalog for U.S.-based public training. The numbers, except for training course costs, are illustrative and can be used without modification. However, license, support, implementation costs, project NPV, and T&E costs can be modified if greater scrutiny is required. Additionally, the amount of training can be modified to match the organization's requirements as the model uses the most basic, entry-level training for Infoblox roles of Administrator. Implementation costs are assumed to be from Infoblox Professional Services or a third-party system integrator.

Our model uses the following numbers:

<b>Infoblox Expense</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Infoblox Appliance	\$200,000
Infoblox Support	\$50,000
Infoblox Project Implementation	\$65,000
NIOS Configuration Class and Advanced Admin	\$4,000
ADTC ILT	\$2,000
Training T&E	\$2,000
<b>Total Training Costs</b>	<b>\$8,000</b>

### Scenario One: 63% ROI During Initial Implementation

Our first justification scenario is a reduction in cost for an initial Infoblox implementation, using \$65,000 for the implementation cost. The implementation will involve administrative activities such as Infoblox installation and configuration as well as the development of business logic and workflow that act on the data.

On the initial implementation, using a trained internal employee to assist in the administration for even a small amount of their time can provide a compelling ROI. Training one administrator will cost \$8,000 according to our model above. A simple reduction of 20% of the \$65,000, or \$13,000, in the implementation costs by using trained internal resources to perform 20% of the project implementation would yield an ROI of **63%** (calculated as  $\$13,000 / \$8,000 \times 100$ ).

Presenting the ROI number of 63% and the new implementation cost of \$52,000 to senior management should be enough to justify training, but we can continue to expand the model over 18 months.

## Scenario Two: 363% ROI over 18 Months of Production Use

Consider that over the next 18 months of production use of Infoblox, there are two small business requirement changes and one minor upgrade. For the sake of simplicity, we will assume that each of these activities will require 40 hours, or approximately \$8,000 of outside consultant services, for a total of \$24,000.

Adding the avoided costs of the outside services from using trained employees to the original savings of \$5,000 in scenario one, the ROI is calculated as **363%** ( $\$5,000 + \$8,000 + \$8,000 + \$8,000 / \$8,000 \times 100$ ).

## Summary of Cost Avoidance ROI

Cost avoidance is a simple to use yet powerful tool to justify training. Cost avoidance results in a very tangible and quantitative benefit: reduced budgets.

Business Event	Total Saved	Total ROI
Initial Implementation	\$5,000	63%
First Business Change	\$13,000	163%
Second Business Change	\$21,000	263%
Minor Upgrade	\$29,000	363%

In our example of a small implementation where initial administration and development training was used with an investment of \$8,000, the savings over 18 months was \$29,000. This represents an outstanding ROI of 363% of real savings – money that can be removed from the budget and allocated elsewhere.

Using the model with organization-specific numbers will yield different results, and using two or three different training and savings scenarios may be required to determine a ROI that management requires to justify the training expense.

## Qualitative Justifications for Training: Compliance and Availability

Training provides other benefits that, while they can be described and observed, are more difficult to quantify, as their many variables can be specific to both industry and organization. Examples of such qualitative benefits that are very top of mind to senior management are *adherence to compliance requirements and system availability*.

Even a quick glance at the issues involved with compliance and availability shows that any serious attempt at managing these critical business requirements without the benefit of training will put a project at serious risk, resulting in more costs and lost revenue.

### Compliance

The protection of data by the enforcement of policies and security is a benefit that can be increased from training. Compliance training revolves around such issues as:

- What controls are required by regulations such as Sarbanes-Oxley, HIPAA, PCI DSS, etc.? This type of training is beyond the scope of Infoblox training.
- How can security controls be implemented, maintained, controlled and reported on? Infoblox Administrator training addresses these concepts thoroughly.

There are a number of issues, but protecting data subject to exfiltration via DNS is top of mind. While Infoblox can prevent and stop such attacks with the Infoblox DNS Threat Analytics solution, an effective and ongoing deployment requires knowledge and training to minimize the threat due to the sophistication and ever-changing nature of the attacks.

If auditors discover weaknesses in the policies and controls over data access, including a vulnerable DNS implementation, the consequences will likely involve outside consultants to remediate the lack of controls, resulting in significant expense. Of course, if an attack is successful, the financial consequences of data losses run into millions of dollars per incident depending on the amount of data compromised<sup>3</sup>. It's intuitive that a small investment in training can provide the Infoblox Administrator with the knowledge and tools required to avoid potentially expensive and damaging data security issues.

3. The Ponemon Institute is an excellent place to learn more. [www.ponemon.org](http://www.ponemon.org)

## System Availability

High availability is typically a requirement for mission-critical production applications. The cost avoidance of system availability can be expressed as the amount of revenue lost due to a system outage plus the costs associated with system remediation and the value of employee time wasted. Most outage costs are significant and vary by industry and organization size.

Dunn & Bradstreet reports that 59% of Fortune 500 companies experience at least 1.6 hours of unplanned downtime per week<sup>4</sup>. That translates into more than 80 hours annually.

When Infoblox is configured for high availability for a domain, the system can continue running despite temporary network, hardware, or service failures. Yet configuring, testing, and maintaining a high-availability system is not a trivial task, and errors are often caused by a mistake in configuring the high-availability system. Training is an obvious strategy to mitigate the risks of an unplanned outage causing a production system to go offline and triggering a cascade of costs.

## Putting It All Together

Training will reduce real costs and have a positive impact on an organization in numerous ways. Too often however, IT professionals are not equipped to justify training. The examples presented in this paper can be utilized in real-world settings to illustrate and justify the value of training.

Cost avoidance is an excellent way to justify training, as the education provided by Infoblox Education Services can be immediately put to use on initial implementations as well as on managing subsequent changes due to evolving business requirements. Without training, organizations are left to rely on outside implementation services, which, while providing immense value on large projects, will considerably add to project expense. An investment in training from Infoblox Education Services will reduce these expenses and provide a compelling ROI that will meet the scrutiny of financial decision makers.

Other extremely valuable business requirements can also be used to justify training. Requirements such as insuring compliance and system availability are likewise facilitated by trained personnel maintaining the system on an ongoing basis, and are a small price to pay for avoiding massive penalties and expenses.

Use this paper to create a business discussion with the decision makers who approve budget for training. While the model and cost examples used in this paper should be adequate for getting the funding approved, using real-world cost examples should be an even more powerful argument and can easily fit into the model.

4. <http://www.businesscomputingworld.co.uk/assessing-the-financial-impact-of-downtime/>

## Additional Infoblox Resources

- **Infoblox Education Services Web Site**  
<https://www.infoblox.com/support/training/infoblox-education-services/>
- **Why Choose Infoblox Education Services Brochure**  
<https://www.infoblox.com/resources/brochures/why-choose-infoblox-education-services>
- **Infoblox Course Catalog**  
<https://www.infoblox.com/resources/datasheet/infoblox-education-services-course-catalog>
- **Infoblox Professional Accreditations**  
<https://www.infoblox.com/support/training/infoblox-accreditations/>





Infoblox is the leader in modern, cloud-first networking and security services. Through extensive integrations, its solutions empower organizations to realize the full advantages of cloud networking today, while maximizing their existing infrastructure investments. Infoblox has over 12,000 customers, including 70 percent of the Fortune 500.

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