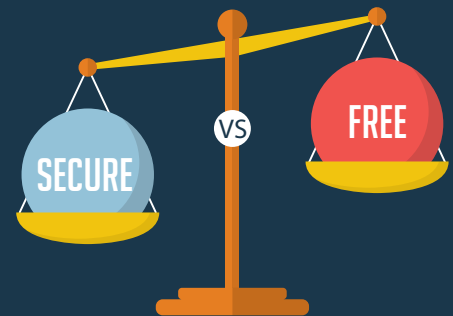


THE TRUE COST OF FREE

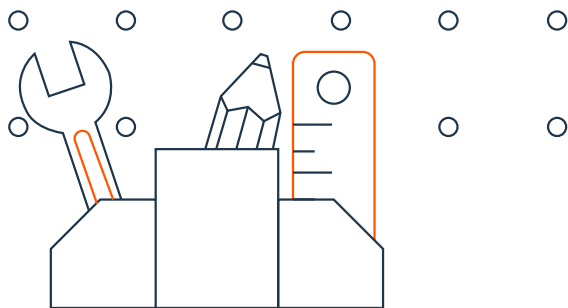
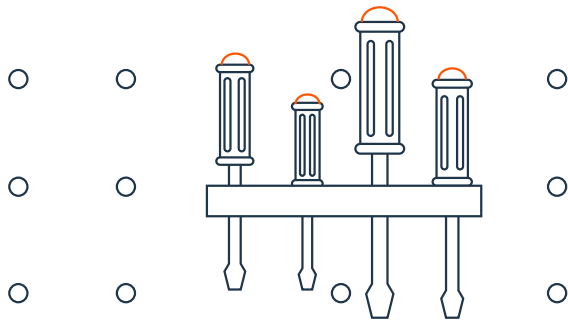
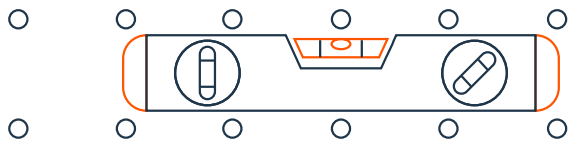
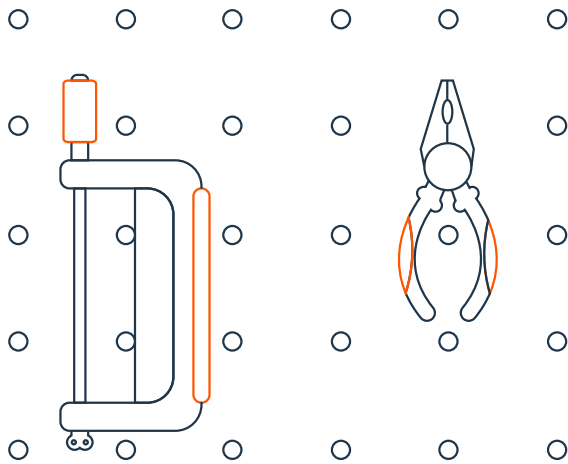
Free or basic remote support tools can cost your organization more in the long term

Free and basic remote support tools are everywhere, but they have very limited use cases that often don't meet the needs of today's highly networked and technology dependent companies. If you are trying to remote into your desktop for personal use, or running basic support for a very small company, a free support tool may be able to get the job done. But when these tools are being used for more complex support cases, or to support larger organizations, support may go awry. While basic remote access tools may work for minor issues, trying to stretch the capabilities of these tools comes at a cost.

These costs come in all shapes and sizes. Some come in smaller amounts that are difficult to notice, such as loss of time or productivity. These are like your daily latte, which individually may not seem like a big expense, but when you look at it from a monthly view is a bigger chunk of change than you thought. And others are a big, red, alarming price tag such as dealing with the fallout of a security breach. It's like if your furnace broke — it's expensive, unexpected, and usually a huge pain with which to deal.



Want to get a better idea of what free tools may actually be costing your business? We've analyzed the details and costs associated with free and basic tools while thinking about how they impact security, flexibility, reliability, and your organization's reputation.



What Remote Access Tools Are You Using?

When we talk about free, budget, or basic remote access tools, these can fall in to a variety of categories. And if you're the typical IT support organization, you're probably using at least one. Many of these tools fit a specific purpose, but can they meet all the needs of your organization?

MICROSOFT BASED TOOLS

RDP, SCCM, and Remote Assistance are all common tools used by IT departments to access remote machines. The problem with these tools lie in transparency. It is nearly impossible to tell, let alone record, who is accessing what machines, for how long, and what they did. In addition, since these connections need to be made using a VPN, it makes it easier for attackers to compromise the connection and gain access to your network.

SCREEN SHARING AND CHAT TOOLS

Many free or basic tools are centered around chat and screen sharing, such as Skype. These tools can be great for a quick "let me see what you are seeing," but there are many holes when it comes to security and meeting compliance. Many of these tools do not record session activity, or capture which parties participated. Without application blacklisting, the end user's entire machine can be viewed and accessed. Additionally, support technicians can provide only a basic tier of troubleshooting with no succinct way to escalate a chat or record session notes to a support ticket.

CONSUMER-GRADE SUPPORT AND ACCESS TOOLS

There are many consumer-grade remote access tools out there such as VNC, DameWare, and certain versions of TeamViewer and LogMeIn, but many of them do not provide the flexibility and security that organizations need. Some of them may not be able to support all the operating systems you have, or maybe they cannot integrate with the ticketing or SIEM tool you're already using. Or maybe you have been a victim of the classic "bait and switch" where you realize how many add-ons and upgrades you need to pay for on top of the license fee to get the product to do what you really need.

Breaking Down the Costs

Price often becomes the deciding factor in any decision-making process. But the actual cost is often a lot more than you expected once you begin implementation. These additional costs beyond the product price may significantly impact your business.

1 SECURITY AND REPUTATIONAL TRUST

Free and basic remote access tools are not as secure as enterprise-grade solutions. There are typically no granular permission setting options, firewalls settings are weakened, and there is no session logging and recording. Free solutions usually require a VPN for a connection, which creates security vulnerabilities, particularly when you have to give that VPN access to third-party vendors.

Many technology professionals select BeyondTrust Remote Support because security is a top priority. Support technicians take comfort in knowing that they are using a secure solution, and one that works every time. When organizations use a freemium tool that has been associated with breaches, it could make end-users uneasy and even less confident in working with you altogether.

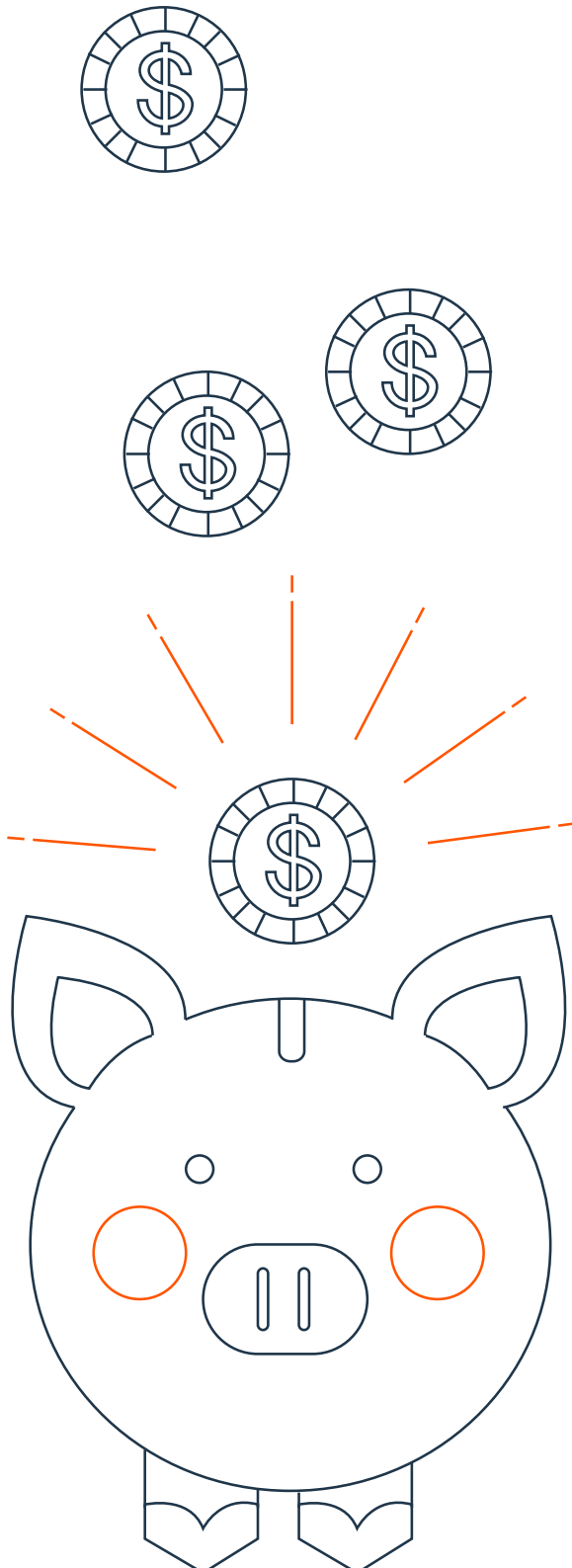
The Cost: A data breach means an expensive investigation and a potential loss of customers. According to a [2016 IBM report from the Ponemon Institute](#), the average consolidated total cost of a data breach hovers around **\$4 million dollars**. In addition, without a thorough log of activity and data handled, it will be difficult to pass a compliance audit which may result in varying fines.

2 FLEXIBILITY AND PRODUCTIVITY

Free and basic tools typically have limited or non-existent integrations with third-party solutions, such as ITSM tools. Without integrations, time is spent manually dictating notes on a session, and even launching and closing sessions. BeyondTrust integrations help BeyondTrust fit in with the rest of your environment and processes to increase productivity and efficiency, and maximize your investment. From starting a chat, to opening a ticket, troubleshooting, and logging the session recording, all of this can seamlessly be done with BeyondTrust.

The Cost: Less productivity means wasted time, and time is money. According to the [Metrics That Matter 2016 ITSP Benchmarking Study](#), 52% of companies report wasting as much as five hours per week on tasks such as entering data into multiple systems, scheduling and dispatching techs, capturing billable hours, and managing disparate operating systems. Even if your company is performing at its peak, losing just one hour in productivity per task each week results in an average of nearly \$29,000 in lost revenue. And that's for each employee.





3 STAFF RETENTION

Free and basic remote access tools do not generally support the entire variety of devices and operating systems in a typical company. In response, support reps are often forced to “bring your own support tool” or use a patchwork of multiple products. This situation creates inefficiencies that can add up to a lot of frustration for your support team. BeyondTrust works every time, and connects to anyone, anywhere, on any device.

Additionally, employees want to feel confident that the companies they work for are using the most current and secure technologies, including remote support tools.

The Cost: When a solution isn’t reliable, not only is time wasted trying to correct the issue, but there can even be a threat of staff turnover. In a poll of 55 BeyondTrust customers, 98% said it was important to extremely important to have access to the best tools and technology for their job, and 49% went on to say they would consider changing companies if it meant access to better technology. When employees are not armed with the proper tools for their job, it could harm your chance of retaining the best talent available.

According to a [2013 MetricNet report](#), the average voluntary and involuntary turnover of a helpdesk is 38.3% and the average cost of replacing an agent is roughly \$10,000 in North America. Of course, many additional factors contribute to staff turnover such as work environment, career opportunity, and pay, but as the numbers add up it is important to look at all avenues to retain staff.

4 SUPPORT RESOURCES

If there is an issue with the remote access tools you are using, how easy is it to get help — do you need to browse hundreds of forums or wait on hold on a support line? Wasted time means downtime on your productivity.

At BeyondTrust, our customers rave about our support team. No matter what your issue, you have a trove of organized and easy-to-find technical guides, help articles, and tutorials, and you can talk to a real person to help you troubleshoot the problem. Many free tools do not provide any live support at all, or just don’t have the capabilities to go in-depth to solve a problem.

The Cost: Similar to flexibility and productivity, every minute of unnecessary time trying to troubleshoot a problem adds up. The average American spends around 13 hours a year on hold with customer service according to a [Time Magazine article](#). Minimize those hours spent on troubleshooting and getting help with the remote support solution you use.

It All Adds Up

The true cost of any solution can come as a surprise once you think about the impact it may have on your total business. Free and basic tools often seem appealing at the start, but if they can't meet the security, reliability, and productivity requirements that your organization demands, then it is time to look at solutions that approach support differently.

Invest Smarter with BeyondTrust

BeyondTrust Remote Support enables you to quickly access and fix nearly any remote device, running any platform, located anywhere in the world. BeyondTrust offers the security, integration, and management capabilities your IT and customer support organizations need to increase productivity, improve performance, and deliver a superior customer experience.

BeyondTrust lets you support all of your systems over the web, even if they are behind firewalls you don't control. Supporting everything with one solution expedites incident handling time and supports rep productivity. Support remote computers running Windows, Mac, and Linux or mobile devices running Android or iOS. Unlike some other vendors, we don't charge more for important features like remote camera sharing or mobile device support – it's all included with your license. Plus, technicians can offer support from their preferred device, even an Android tablet or iPad. With the HTML 5 web console, users can launch a session with no required downloads or plugins, allowing you to connect faster and easier.

▶ **Learn more about BeyondTrust Remote Support**
[BeyondTrust.com/remotel-support](https://beyondtrust.com/remotel-support)

Don't pay more over time for solutions that cannot ultimately meet the needs of your service desk.



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BeyondTrust is the worldwide leader in Privileged Access Management, offering the most seamless approach to preventing privilege-related breaches. Our extensible platform empowers organizations to easily scale privilege security as threats evolve across endpoint, server, cloud, DevOps, and network device environments. We are trusted by 20,000 customers.

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