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Managed IT Services Buyer's Guide

Things to Consider Before Partnering With
a Managed Services Provider

Managed IT Services Buyer's Guide

In today's crowded marketplace, it can be challenging to find a managed service provider (MSP). The ideal situation is to find a partner whose company values and culture align with those of your organization, with an emphasis on providing flexible services that can scale alongside your growth.

During your search, you may discover that despite offering a similar suite of services, there are a wide variety of options available from MSPs. This often complicates the MSP selection process.

Despite that, you should not lose sight of the fact that not all MSPs are created equally. Some providers might offer a limited scope of services, which include – but are not limited to – tech support, cybersecurity, networking services, and helpdesk support.

Your decision-making process should also focus on specialization. Examine areas including specific industry experience, knowledge of certain types of cloud computing environments, and the ability to prepare your business for compliance audits while ensuring it achieves and maintains compliance with key industry standards.

As you analyze your options, you'll eventually have to narrow down your list to determine which MSPs services adhere to your budget and needs. That may seem like a simple process, but it's anything but. You will find that every MSP has unique ways of managing how they deliver their managed services, IT support and payment models, which can include:

- Flat rate
- Total number of users
- Required service time
- Quantity of data managed

When working through your list, you'll also have to determine whether or not each MSP offers scalable services that can grow alongside your business. Can they offer flexible support during different phases of growth? This is something that should be imperative to your final decision.

MSPs bring clarity to IT management though a complete suite of service offerings from a single source. From hardware and software upgrades to advanced cybersecurity protection, and network support that eliminates costly outages and downtime.

To streamline the MSP selection process, we've compiled a list of questions to ask when considering your options.

Buying Guide Checklist

☑ ## Do they have a dedicated help desk or do they outsource IT assistance?

Do they staff their own help desk or outsource it? What is their average response time for IT issues and support tickets? How many dedicated help desk technicians do they have on staff? Do they have localized IT technicians or do they rely on outsourcing?

☑ ## Do they offer 24/7/365 technical support?

Are on-site and remote technical support options available? How quickly can they dispatch an on-site technician to your location? Can they describe the process a support request goes through start to finish? Is their dedicated help desk available to assist with issues on weekends and/or outside of regular business hours?

☑ ## Do they provide cybersecurity services, and what do they cover?

Do they have industry-specific cybersecurity experience? Do they specialize in CMMC, NIST, and other compliance frameworks? Do they offer Security Operations Centre (SOC) services that are SOC 2 compliant? Do they provide proactive solutions for malware, ransomware and virus attacks? Do they offer endpoint and server protection? Do they offer firewall management services? Can they assist with regulatory compliance? Can they prepare you for compliance audits?

☑ ## Do they offer a full slate of cloud services?

Can they assist with cloud migrations? Can they move your tools, processes, and storage to the cloud? Do they offer virtualization services? Do they offer localized cloud hosting? Do they provide managed data backups and disaster recovery? Do they offer support for major cloud platforms, such as AWS, Google, Microsoft Azure and Lync, and Sharepoint? Do they have any cloud-specific certifications, such as SSAE 16?

☑ ## Do they create IT roadmaps that are specific to your needs?

Can the roadmaps be customized to your specific goals and pain points? Do they rely on a templated approach for this process? Do they have any references that can show proof-of-concept or prior success?

☑ ## Are they staffed by fully certified technicians?

What certifications do they have, and are they company-wide? Is their staff trained and certified to meet industry regulations? Are they compliant with critical industry standards? Does their staff have critical industry certifications from HIPAA, ITIL, AICPA, CCIE, Apple, Microsoft, Fortinet, etc.?

☑ Do they offer hardware lifecycle services?

Do they provide ongoing maintenance for computing and networking hardware? Can they identify and alert you of any outdated or underperforming hardware that requires upgrades or replacement? Can they seamlessly integrate new technologies into your day-to-day operations? Are server hosting and rental services offered?

☑ Can they assist with vendor management issues?

Do they have strong partnerships with prominent IT vendors (i.e.: Microsoft, Apple, etc.)? Can they manage the communication between you and the vendor? Can they cultivate strong relationships between you and their vendors?

☑ Can they help you generate more value from your technology?

Do they provide precise assessments and recommendations? Are their staff solutions specialists? Do they offer data recovery and restoration? Can they improve the performance of your data center? Can they assist with Microsoft 365 transitions and migrations?

Advanced Networks is a managed services provider that helps businesses in Los Angeles and Orange County master technology management through a wide range of managed IT services.

Backed by over 20 years of combined IT experience, we focus on delivering a superior customer service experience by building and maintaining strong relationships with an effective combination of dependable support, valuable insight, and access to a team of fully certified IT industry experts.

Rethink infrastructure management today by bringing more value to your IT with a trustworthy technology partner devoted to your short- and long-term success.

Get in touch with us today to learn more about our managed IT services.

Get a FREE 30 Minute Consultation

Connect with us

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