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20 Signs That Your Business is Ready for Managed Services

Find out when your business will truly benefit from a technology partner

Are managed services necessary for your business?

Any company doing business today is tied to their technology in a way that was unprecedented just a few short years ago. Without computers to streamline your work processes, your business wouldn't be able to move forward and you'd be left far behind your competitors. To run smoothly, you need the collaboration and networking advantages that the web brings, such as integrated email for communications.

This vital technology is constantly evolving as new innovations are made. Even small companies with only one or two staff members might be using several computers and a range of software programs and mobile devices. The more employees you have, the bigger the headache of taking care of all this becomes. All of this hassle is before you factor in keeping up with all the latest developments in hardware and software that could impact your industry.

If you run a small or medium enterprise, IT is the backbone of your industry. Trying to oversee it all alone is a stressful and complex endeavor that eats into time better spent with your customers and staff and growing your business. You didn't set out to become an IT expert; you just want to offer your goods and services to people who need them.

Having to sit and learn the minutiae of Microsoft's many upgrades, how to unjam the printer, and the best ways to stop hackers from getting your data can feel incredibly frustrating when you've a thousand other things requiring your attention.

So what are your options? One answer is to build a dedicated IT team for your company. On the surface this sounds great, but money is tight in most small and medium companies, and building an in-house team of troubleshooters can be expensive. Another answer is to hire companies to supply IT technicians to come in and fix things when they go wrong. The problem with this "solution" is that this technician relies on you for future work and may not be proactive in making sure things stay fixed. Even more frustrating is the loss of revenue during computer downtime while you are waiting for repairs to be made.

This is where MSPs come in. A Managed Service Provider can offer services and solutions to optimize your business's IT infrastructure. What's more, they can actively monitor your systems 24/7 to keep problems at bay. Their services are covered under a fixed monthly fee, making it easy to incorporate them into your monthly budget. Of course, understanding when it's time to contact an MSP provider depends on your size, your needs, and your future plans for company growth. To help you learn more and understand the benefits, we've put together these **20 Signs That Your Business is Ready for Managed Services**. They will help you to decide whether you're currently getting the most suitable tech support for your business, and to establish your other options.

1

Your technology infrastructure is not up-to-date

Hardware and software components of technologies IT systems are quickly evolving and developing. Small businesses often find themselves not being able to keep up or, worse still, can find themselves held back by the prohibitive cost of upgrades. Thanks to providers' close links with vendors that can result in procurement discounts, Managed Services allow you to enjoy the advantages of the latest IT solutions without breaking the bank. You get more out of your current setup as software and patches are updated automatically, allowing you to benefit from robust security and enhanced IT performance.

2

Your IT infrastructure isn't as scalable or flexible as you'd like it to be

Managed Services make use of technologies and equipment that are scalable. This means that as you expand and need more IT capacity or new services, they will be added. And this scalability covers everything from services and solutions to hardware and software. Expert providers learn your goals and needs, and customize current and future technologies and equipment so that they best fit your business. This saves you from making the mistake of investing in expensive technology solutions that don't generate sufficient return on investment.

3

You find it difficult to learn about and implement new technology

MSPs will take the time to learn about your business's strengths, weaknesses and goals, in order to determine which services and solutions are necessary to maximize work efficiency and boost client satisfaction. They tailor a plan that fits your needs both now and in the future. This allows you to set long-term goals with more confidence, and focus your time on current business endeavors. An MSP ensures that you're equipped with the tools you need to succeed.

4

You lack mobility

Large enterprises reap the benefits of having a single converged connection, resulting in mobility and cost savings on their IT infrastructure. This also allows employees to work from home or remote locations without compromising access to all the voice and data applications they need to do their jobs. An MSP will make sure your staff has access to all this through VoIP and cloud solutions.

5

You lack a centralized network

With a managed network, you can centralize all your applications and servers within managed data centers. This gives your staff access through the office intranet to centralized data centers within the network while providing access to virtual services like storage and backups.

6

You don't have a disaster recovery plan in place

The truth is that disasters, both natural or man-made, can happen at any time. Disasters often result in catastrophic data loss and expensive downtime for companies. MSPs know just how badly a data breach or disaster can impact a small business. They can formulate a plan to keep your business's data and critical files safe and secure through a combination of encryption, security protection, and off-site data backup. This multi-level approach means your data's accessibility and security is never compromised.

7

You need access to IT expertise

One of the best things about Managed Services is the access to a wealth of knowledge when it comes to technology. Even a small MSP team will boast specialists with expertise in a wide range of IT areas. MSPs will rid you of technology headaches and make sure your IT is optimized for peak performance. They will provide IT consultant services including insights and advice (in plain English) whenever you need it while leveraging current technologies to best support your business goals. Their knowledge and experience saves you time and money, and keeps you from making poorly judged technology investments.

8

You experience a lot of downtime

An MSP can track and begin remediation of a technical issue more quickly and efficiently than your in-house IT personnel. An entire team of professional technicians will be able to detect and resolve problems before they have the chance to lead to downtime. MSPs proactively manage and monitor your IT infrastructure 24/7 to maximize uptime and productivity.

9

You lack capacity-planning information

Managed Services provide tools that constantly monitor the performance and capacity of your file system space, database size, network bandwidth and more. This means you have real-time data that can be used to analyze trends in performance or capacity associated with a specific database or device. You can use this knowledge to make more informed decisions about future IT capacity and performance needs.

10

You don't have access to dashboards to see key business metrics

A dashboard goes beyond standard reporting and can be created to match the varying needs of your business. This gives you visibility and insights into your company's performance in real-time, allowing you to adjust corporate strategy accordingly and promote ongoing improvements.

11

You don't have a clear understanding of your technology infrastructure

The world of technology is complex and ever-changing. Without professional technicians, it's almost impossible for you to get a comprehensive overview of your technology infrastructure due to limited time and resources. This is where MSPs come in. They will constantly be on the lookout for anything that might put your IT environment at risk, and will explain everything in terms you understand. They can also help create a well-defined list of which technology products, hardware and software are tied to your critical business functions, so that different service priority levels can be assigned to each.

12

You're spending too much time dealing with IT issues

With monitoring and remote management systems, most of your IT problems can be fixed without any disruption to your business or having a technician visit your office. For cases that require on-site repairs, most providers will dispatch a technician to your office the same day (if not faster) giving you support where and when you need it, and allowing you to get back to running your business quickly.

13

You lack continuous infrastructure assessment and auditing

MSPs will perform a thorough IT infrastructure audit. This audit provides clarity about resources utilized by your business, as well as any potential risks, threats and compliance issues. With continuous assessment and auditing, you can enjoy full peace of mind knowing your infrastructure is safe, secure and compliant with industry regulations.

14

You seek third-party technical support

Because MSPs are trusted business partners of various industry-leading tech giants, Managed Services give you instant access to third-party technical support. This means they not only assume the role of an in-house technical support team, but will also directly interface with third-party technology providers to coordinate services. MSPs act as a single point of contact for the resolution of any technology-related issue.

15

You don't have a clear road-map on how to tackle current and future IT obstacles

Many IT projects start out with clear goals and yet end up not meeting deadlines and going over-budget. This is mainly caused by a lack of a clear project road-map. Managed Services can help guide you in terms of what you need in order to meet your business objectives, and can make sure that you tackle current and future IT obstacles easily and within your budget.

16

You don't have the people or time to manage a new technology environment

From designing solutions to deploying, maintaining and monitoring them, MSPs are with you every step of the way. For instance, what if you're looking to make a transition to the cloud but don't know which cloud solution is right for your business? You probably don't have the people and time to help with those decisions, and this is where MSPs can help.

17

You need faster technology deployment

MSPs can increase your capabilities quickly, and deploy tailored services and solutions for your business in no time thanks to years of experience and the benefit of a team of certified technicians. This improves your agility and your ability to react to changes in today's competitive business environment. This benefit also allows you to adopt a position where you drive new innovation, rather than simply react to issues that have already occurred.

18

You want comprehensive reporting and analytics

With a technology provider, you'll have access to deep reporting and analytics into your company's performance issues, as well as insight into activity taking place on your network. This is vital for determining how you will allocate your budget in the future. Analytics let you know where most issues are coming from, and shows you when they have been resolved.

19

You want to better budget for your IT expenses

MSPs provide a Service Level Agreement when you choose an IT package. Experts will help you choose the best solutions for your company, then document all services provided within the agreement. This keeps your IT expenses predictable and eliminates the "unknown surprises" that can hit you right in your company's profits.

20

You want to secure technology peace of mind

What do your competitors have that you don't? It could be updated technology that keeps them on the cutting edge of communications, billing, and streamlining of their processes. An MSP will keep your company on top of all the latest trends specific to your business by providing you real-time solutions and updates.

RECAP:

- Your technology infrastructure is not up-to-date
- Your IT infrastructure isn't as scalable or flexible as you'd like it to be
- You find it difficult to learn about and implement new technologies
- You lack mobility
- You lack a centralized network
- You don't have a disaster recovery plan in place
- You need access to IT expertise
- You experience a lot of downtime
- You lack capacity-planning information
- You don't have access to dashboards to see key business metrics
- You don't have a clear understanding of your technology infrastructure
- You're spending too much time dealing with IT issues
- You lack continuous infrastructure assessment and auditing
- You seek third-party technical support
- You don't have a clear road-map on how to tackle current and future IT obstacles
- You don't have the people or time to manage a new technology environment
- You need faster technology deployment
- You want comprehensive reporting and analytics
- You want to better budget for your IT expenses
- You want to secure technology peace of mind

If you identify with one or more of these problems, your business may be ready for managed services.



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