

24 Questions to Ask Before Choosing a Managed IT Service Provider

1. Tell us about your business?
2. What kind of education, knowledge, experience and expertise do you have?
Check for any certifications, partnerships with major vendors, etc. Some vendors have limited knowledge and expertise with networking or server management while some have significant expertise. Check to see if they have a business degree such as an MBA.
3. Do you specialize in our vertical?
Some providers specialize in certain verticals such as healthcare, legal, manufacturing, etc., so they will better understand your business processes and workflows.
4. What is your pricing method?
5. Do your services align with our business goals?
A good service provider should offer an initial consultation to do a technology review of your needs and goals to align their services with your business goals.
6. How can you help us increase revenue, productivity, efficiency and reduce costs?
A good service provider should provide all of these to your business.
7. Do you offer any packaged services?
Usually, managed service providers offer packaged services such as Bronze, Silver and Gold or Basic, Standard and Professional.
8. What products and services do you offer?
A good service provider should provide a broad range of services such PC and server management, network management, security services, business applications, cloud services, Office 365, web design and development, internet marketing services, social media services, telephone services, etc. Check for any specific services that you are looking for.
9. Do you provide 24/7 helpdesk support?
10. What is your SLA?
SLA – Service Level Agreement includes elements such as response time, resolution time, etc.
11. What is your response time and resolution time?
Check to see how fast they respond to your problems. Many companies guarantee response time within minutes. How soon will they resolve an issue or problem? Usually, resolution time depends upon the severity of the problem. For systems that are down, the resolution time should be within a few hours. Ask them for resolution times for low, medium and high severity problems.
12. Do you have a client portal where we can create and manage our tickets?
A good managed service provider should give you access to their client portal for you to create new tickets and check your past tickets. This portal also includes other services such as creating reports.
13. Do you support our business applications?

A good managed service provider should be able to support your line of business applications.

14. Do you provide vendor management?

Some service providers will manage your vendors such as internet, telephone, application, hardware and other vendors as well.

15. What is covered and not covered in your agreement?

16. Will you give us a written agreement?

A written agreement should include clauses such as included and excluded services, fees, term of agreement, termination, breach, waiver, disputes, liability and other terms and conditions.

17. Do you offer any business applications?

Some companies offer support for business applications such as practice management, ERP (Enterprise Resource Package), BSA (Business Service Automation), CRM (Customer Relationship Management), etc. as a value added reseller.

18. Do you offer web design and development services?

19. Do you offer any internet marketing services?

Some companies can offer marketing services such as email marketing, Search Engine Optimization (SEO), Pay-Per-Click (PPC), etc.

20. Do you offer social media services?

Some companies can help you with social media services such as helping you set up accounts and actively posting content on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+, Pinterest, Instagram, etc.

21. Do you offer telephone services?

Check to see if they offer any cloud based telephony services. VOIP – Voice over IP.

22. Do you offer cloud based services?

With many applications available in the cloud, your service provider should have some cloud based service offering. Some examples include Office 365, Google Apps, Salesforce, etc.

23. What kind of guarantees do you offer?

24. Why should we choose you?

Check to see how they differentiate themselves from other competitors.

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