

The background of the page features a close-up of a hand holding a glowing globe. The globe is covered in a grid of small, bright yellow and orange lights. A network of thin, golden lines connects various points on the globe, creating a complex web of connections. The overall lighting is warm and futuristic, with a dark background that makes the glowing elements stand out.

A GUIDE TO SELECT THE RIGHT MSP FOR YOUR ORGANIZATION

Your resource for evaluating managed services providers to ensure you partner with the right company to meet your organization's needs.



Change isn't easy, especially if it involves moving away from an IT environment and infrastructure your organization has utilized for years.

Even though the benefits of moving to a managed services model are widely known—24.7.365 availability, greater scalability, predictable costs, and faster adoption of new technologies—there are several aspects about managed services that can leave IT personnel shuddering at the thought of losing control and no longer having all IT resources onsite.

Whether you are in the middle of interviewing managed service providers (MSPs) or are considering outsourcing to an MSP, this guide will help you to evenly evaluate your options for MSPs.





Be sure to ask whether that MSP uses a third-party NOC or whether they handle it in-house.

1. NETWORK OPERATIONS CENTER: INTERNAL OR THIRD-PARTY?

Selecting a managed service provider (MSP) that outsources its Network Operations Center (NOC) can introduce potential challenges. It's not uncommon for an MSP to utilize a third-party NOC, which, in turn, is white labeling NOC services through another vendor.

If you are in a heavily-regulated industry, such as financial services, legal, or healthcare, ensuring your MSP's third-party NOC adheres to regulatory mandates adds another important element to consider. Be sure to ask whether that MSP uses a third-party NOC or whether they handle it in-house.

2. SKILLSETS: WHAT ADDITIONAL SKILLS WILL THEY PROVIDE?

Find out whether the managed service provider employs engineers and solutions architects whose skillsets extend beyond those of your current IT staff. One of the key benefits of using managed services is access to specialists and experts who add value above and beyond what your current team can provide.

3. PREVENTATIVE MEASURES: HOW PROACTIVE IS THEIR APPROACH?

Sure, it's important that an MSP can resolve issues. However, it's just as vital that they prevent issues from occurring in the first place. Ask them about their use of data analytics and root cause analysis to prevent future events from taking place.

If you find they focus too much on break-fix scenarios and strategies, that might be a reflection of how they see themselves and have built their company. You don't want a Band-Aid approach to managed services, but one that includes a heavy dose of preventative care.

Ideally, the MSP you select will have deep experience in your particular industry and with organizations of similar size.



4. YEARS OF EXPERIENCE: HOW DEEP IS THEIR EXPERIENCE?

As companies increasingly adopt managed services, there are more and more vendors now offering these services. While some of the newer companies might be able to do a terrific job, it's best not to entrust the management of your network to a company that has just entered the field.

Determine if their managed services experience spans several industries, a wide variety of customer sizes, and different infrastructures, and technologies. Ideally, the MSP you select will have deep experience in your particular industry and with organizations of similar size.



Make sure the MSP you are considering allows the SLA to be reviewed on a regular basis and allow for alterations in the event your business needs and/or technologies change.

5. SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS: DO THEY ADAPT TO YOUR NEEDS OVER TIME?

Service Level Agreements (SLAs) in the IT industry are as ubiquitous as Cat5 cable. They simply detail the penalties and remedies, including credits, the MSP must provide in the event the agreed-upon services are not delivered as outlined in the contract.

SLAs should not be “set it and forget it” propositions. Make sure the MSP you are considering allows the SLA to be reviewed on a regular basis and allow for alterations in the event your business needs and/or technologies change.

6. BEST PRACTICES: ARE THEY ITIL CERTIFIED AND FOLLOWING THE LATEST PROCESSES?

The Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) is a framework outlining best practices for the delivery of IT services, as well as the key IT services lifecycle: service strategy and design; the transition and operations of services; and the continuation of services.

Ensure your MSP vetting process includes the question, “Are you ITIL-certified, and, if so, at which level?” If your query is met with a blank stare or a stumbling answer, it’s probably time to move on to the next candidate.



Find out if the MSP can not only accommodate your current needs, but those that might change or evolve in the future.

7. AUTOMATION: ARE THEY ABLE TO SPEND TIME WHERE IT'S CRITICAL?

Utilize an MSP that has the experience to automate some of the time-consuming, tedious, and repetitive tasks to allow for more time spent on monitoring, notification, interoperability, management, and reporting.

8. SCALABILITY: WILL THEY EVOLVE WITH YOUR NEEDS?

Find out if the MSP can not only accommodate your current needs, but those that might change or evolve in the future. Companies grow and need change, so ask questions about how they will—and have in the past—execute changes to address these issues.

If you have questions regarding your current Managed Services challenges, or if you are interested in exploring new Managed Services opportunities,

CONTACT US TODAY FOR A PERSONALIZED EVALUATION.

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