

ebook

6 Signs It's Time to Switch Your MSP



Are you happy with your Managed Service Provider?

Today's businesses demand more from their IT departments than ever before. A team that can repair and maintain your systems is no longer good enough. You also need people who can anticipate problems before they arise, get new applications up and running quickly, and prevent outages from happening in the first place.

Managed service providers (MSPs) are essential in keeping your operations running efficiently. A successful introduction to MSPs can reduce IT costs by 25-45% and boost operational efficiency by 45-65%. In addition, MSPs offer a much higher standard than many organizations can achieve in-house, taking a holistic approach to IT services. Top service providers provide ongoing management and maintenance of network and infrastructure, security, cloud, and end-user support.

However, if you've been with the same MSP for several years, you might see cracks beginning to appear in your partnership - or in the service they provide.

The Risks of Poorly Managed Services

From big IT disasters threatening security and downtime to day-to-day issues impacting employee productivity, the cost of poorly managed IT services can cause severe repercussions throughout your entire business. Here are some of the most significant risks to poorly managed IT services:



Downtime

Without continuous monitoring and management of your IT systems and quick response times, your organization is at risk of costly downtime. According to Gartner, network downtime costs \$5,600 per minute, extrapolating to well over \$300K per hour.



Security

Mitigating cybersecurity risk is a full-time job. Without certified and experienced security professionals, your organization is at risk of devastating cyber threats that can jeopardize business continuity, damage your reputation, fail compliance regulations and lead to significant financial loss.



Lost Productivity

Technology outages and issues can also rack up the bills regarding lost productivity. According to Robert Half Technology, professionals waste 22 minutes each day, on average, dealing with IT-related problems. For someone who works five eight-hour days for 50 weeks of the year, that results in a loss of more than 91 hours per year.



Inefficient IT Staff

An unreliable MSP can bog down your in-house IT team and distract them from more important projects if they cannot absorb routine tasks and respond to requests promptly, like user inquiries, patching, monitoring and backups.

6 Signs It's Time to Switch



They're not evolving with your business



Response times have slipped



They're not proactive



The same issues keep recurring



There are surprise costs



Security expertise is lacking

Have you put off making the switch?

Many business owners are reluctant to switch MSPs, even when the service they're receiving doesn't meet expectations. There's the worry that moving to a new provider will be a significant upheaval, resulting in downtime, lost productivity and unnecessary expenses. As a result, it may seem safer to stick with a provider you know.

But in reality, if you need better results from your current provider, making the switch could significantly benefit your organization over a very short period. And when you find the right MSP, they'll deliver an uninterrupted service with a seamless transition from your previous provider. So if your MSP is holding your business back, here are the six signs it might be time to switch to a new provider.



They're not evolving with your business

Consider when you first hired your current MSP. What did your business look like back then? Chances are your organization has evolved. With additional employees and customers, changing business needs and regulations and new business goals, you need technology that can keep pace.

Your current MSP may have served you well when you were smaller, and your technology needs were more straightforward. But if your MSP doesn't continue to expand their offerings and revise their strategies to meet your increasingly complex demands, then it's time to switch your provider.

Pro Tip

Look for an MSP that can manage demand and implement the latest innovative technologies based on your unique business needs. This includes scaling up and down and making a concerted effort in education and training.





Response times have slipped

How long does it take for you to hear back from your MSP after filing a support ticket?

If your MSP does not provide quick response-to-resolution times when you need them, your business could suffer significant downtime impacting business continuity that could result in financial loss.

When minor issues occur, if it takes over 2 hours for your MSP to get back to you, this may be a sign that they don't have the necessary resources to support you. And if it takes more than 30 minutes in an emergency, it may be time to say goodbye to your provider.

Pro Tip

If you've been with your MSP for several years, review your original service-level agreements (SLAs) and response statistics for the last 12 months. Determine if the initial resolution targets are still appropriate for your business and that your MSP has the resources to meet any changes.

2



They're not proactive

Does your MSP only respond when there is a problem?

If your MSP only reacts to IT emergencies instead of working with your organization to prevent them in the first place, they aren't using a proactive approach for your business.

Reactive IT support, or a 'break-fix approach', is uneconomical and can lead to more issues that can take longer to fix, hindering your business's productivity. Waiting until there is a problem for a preventable incident is often the direct result of an MSP that does the bare minimum to get by.

If you only hear from your MSP when things go wrong, it might be time to switch your provider.

Pro Tip

Your MSP should continuously work closely with your business to develop a strategy that evolves with your business, responds to technological changes, and informs you of the latest regulations and opportunities to implement best practices and keep your business up and running.

3



The same issues keep recurring

Are you reporting the same issues time and time again?

Are your employees frustrated by the consistent issues that occur when trying to complete everyday tasks? Unfortunately, these little issues can add up to a high cost for your business.

If you find that your MSP is failing to find solutions to your recurring IT problems, it could be a sign that they are not equipped to support your business any longer. For example, your MSP may lack the skills needed to get to the root of the problem. Or maybe they're just putting duct tape over issues rather than finding the best solutions to stop these annoying problems once and for all.

Pro Tip

A reliable MSP should be able to detect and resolve problems before they impact your business. However, if an issue occurs, a good MSP has the documentation and systems to fix it and an efficient process for resolving the problem quickly.

4



There are surprise costs

Have you ever been shocked by your MSP's invoice?

There are a few reasons why surprise charges can pop up on your bill. First, some MSPs are intentionally vague on the front end of their partnership with you. In their attempts to secure your business, they downplay one-off charges and aren't specific about individual service fees or the cost of extended-hours support. You could even be getting charged for services you don't need! Some MSPs lack the experience and planning skills to effectively audit your business and accurately estimate your costs based on the services your business needs.

But, regardless of their cause, these unexpected costs are detrimental to your bottom line and your business operation. So if any of this sounds familiar, it's time to switch providers.

Pro Tip

Each managed IT services contract should begin with an audit of your existing IT environment and processes. From there, your MSP can get an idea of the infrastructure you're working with and what services and equipment you'll need from them. A good MSP will clearly define the service cost in your contract and will be transparent about total fees and additional charges.

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Security strategy is lacking

Are you confident that your business is equipped with the latest technology, designed to fight, detect, and protect all vulnerabilities from cyber threats and malicious activities?

Companies that lack robust cybersecurity programs increase their chances of a devastating cyberattack. Over 50% of all cyberattacks target SMBs, and a small business's average data breach cost can range from \$120,000 to \$1.24 million.

If your MSP has not provided or maintained a comprehensive risk management and mitigation program tailored to your unique business needs, it's time to switch your MSP.

Pro Tip

A good MSP should equip you with the expertise, certifications, education, governance and technology required to proactively monitor and maintain your security risk posture today and in the future.

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How to Find the Right MSP for Your Business

Finding the right MSP for your business might seem daunting. MSPs vary widely in their services, so knowing where to begin when choosing one can be challenging. There are, however, a few essential questions to ask when choosing an MSP.

✓ Does the MSP understand your business?

There are no one-size-fits-all solutions in IT. And some MSPs offer a comprehensive range of services, while others focus on specific elements such as information security. What matters most is that the MSP you choose has the proven capacity to serve your particular needs. Therefore, looking for an MSP that understands your industry, your unique business needs, and any specialized systems, software, and regulatory compliance that may apply to your business is essential.

✓ Does the MSP have the necessary qualifications & expertise?

When you decide to outsource IT, the MSP you choose should exude expertise and experience. Though a freelance IT consultant might be able to help a small business, organizations scaling or managing complex network systems need more. Certifications, licenses, and accreditations are all excellent indicators of an MSP's capabilities and expertise in their respective field.

✓ Does the MSP have a proven track record?

If you only look at an MSP's certifications and qualifications, you might not be able to get a sense of their professionalism accurately. That's why referrals and testimonials are critical. Ask their customers if you want to determine whether an MSP is credible, dependable, and trustworthy.

✓ Does the MSP provide a proactive methodology?

Your network may go down for several reasons, which can impact employee productivity and cripple your reputation and revenue. Worst-case scenario, significant downtime can even force you to shut down your business. Therefore, the MSP you choose should offer 24/7 monitoring to proactively prevent and detect early signs of imminent cyberattacks or critical systems' failure. If spotted early, your MSP can mitigate these issues quickly before they can cause damage.

✓ Does the MSP offer responsive SLAs?

Service Level Agreements (SLAs) establish agreed-upon standards for quality, scope, responsibilities, and delivery time. The MSP you select should provide well-documented principles and policies that are responsive and evolve with your business to guide the successful delivery of service and ensure continual improvement.

✓ Does the MSP stay current?

Technology changes rapidly, and so does your business. Look for an MSP that makes a concerted effort to keep its team educated and trained on the latest innovations in information technology and its systems.



Switch on Success with Gibraltar

As your business grows, so should your relationship with your MSP. Whether you're adding new users, core capabilities, or infrastructure, that all comes with a new set of opportunities for your MSP to add value. You may have outgrown your current MSP if you feel they see these opportunities as challenges, cannot evolve with your organization or don't have the expertise and resources to support you.

If you're considering a new partner, Gibraltar has over 25 years of experience in the IT industry, delivering tailored technology solutions that not only address your current needs but also have the capacity to grow and evolve with your organization. Strategic or tactical, business-as-usual or major structural transformation – whatever service and support you need, we're here to help.

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