IT Support Services: When is It Time to Outsource?

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Your business is growing. Technical needs are expanding beyond your company's current capabilities. Should you outsource IT support services? Here's our guide.

You already know technology is the key to running your business at its full potential.

But you're having more issues with technology. The server freezes every day and the wireless connection varies around the building. Something has to change.

You may wonder if the benefits of IT support services will ever outweigh the cost. You may also worry that the stereotype is true, that you'll just be told to "turn it off, and back on again" when things go wrong.

But in a world where unplanned downtime can cost a business $100,000 per hour, it's a good idea to factor support services into your budget.

Read on to discover the signs that your business is ready to outsource its IT support services!

Do you find IT problems are happening more often?

You may already have an IT professional on your staff. But one person can only fix one problem at a time. And as good as that one person is, they're unlikely to be an expert in every IT area of your business.

Outsourcing your IT support services gives you access to a team of specialists. The right person will fix the problem, rather than the person who is available.

You also won't need to find cover if one member of the team is ill or on leave.

Your team is available 24/7. And they're focused on fixing your problems as soon as they occur, not when they have time to get to them.

Keep in mind that 70% of CIOs with a strong focus on growth choose to find expert partners, rather than handling everything in-house.

Are you spending more money on IT support?

If so, you might have a training issue. Staff needs to be able to use your systems properly, and correct use could lead to fewer IT problems in general.

An updated IT Usage Policy can discourage staff from installing untested applications that might conflict with your systems.

But higher support bills could also indicate that your existing system needs to grow in order to handle a greater workload. You may not want to task an extensive upgrade of your infrastructure to a single in-house technician.

Besides, your in-house IT professional also needs you to pay for regular training to keep their skills sharp and up-to-date. By outsourcing your IT support services, the technicians working on your systems are kept current by your provider – not you.

Can you afford to spend money on IT support services?

Conversely, you may not have enough IT problems to justify hiring a dedicated IT individual. Perhaps you have an employee who is good enough with computers to handle the issues that do occur.

If that's the case, then who is doing their actual job while they are fixing IT problems?

So while you might think you can't afford to spend money on an in-house technician, you might actually find it's more cost effective to use IT support services to fix problems on an as and when basis.

You might find that managed IT services can be a real game changer for your business!

Are employees spending more of their time on IT than their workload?

Heading for Google with a screenshot of an error message will only get you so far when your IT goes wrong.

Studies even show that workers can lose up to two weeks of productive working time every year, just in dealing with technology problems.

Investing in IT support services gives those two weeks back. You could be looking at months of increased productivity.

Don't forget, if you choose to outsource, many of the monitoring systems will alert your services provider who can fix the problem before you even notice there is one.

Do you think you need a robust backup system in place?

It's hard to believe but 50% of SMBs admit they don't create daily backups. It's crazy when you consider nearly 2/3 of IT professionals have lost data in their careers, either through theft or loss.

The loss of data won't just hit your profits, either. It can also lead to missed business opportunities and a drop in office morale.

Planning a strong backup system needn't be difficult. Physical backups still have their place, but they take up space in the office.

Instead, a cloud computing solution allows you to automate backups, freeing up your staff from scheduling or monitoring the process. It also keeps your data off the premises, ending the worry of losing data in case of fire or flood in your building.

Are you worried about the security of your data?

Surprisingly, less than 10% of the world's data is currently stored in the cloud. But news stories around high profile hacks of cloud computing aren't good adverts for using cloud solutions.

- You may worry about the security of cloud computing.
- You might be nervous about handing responsibility of your IT infrastructure to a third party.
- Will the customer support help the transition from your current system to a cloud-based setup?

These 3 worries are perfectly legitimate, but you may find that cloud computing actually solves a lot of your problems!

After all, storing data on your own servers uses up energy as you need to power them. Managing the software applications required by data storage and maintenance can be expensive and time-consuming.

If you do decide to invest in cloud services, just remember that you still own the data. Providers are also required to secure data against misuse – keeping it safe becomes their responsibility.

Would you like an integrated IT and telecommunications system in place?

Telecommunications have come a long way from the old switchboard systems. And in a world of email and instant messaging, making phone calls might seem a little old-fashioned.

But phone calls can save valuable time compared to lengthy email exchanges. And speaking with new business prospects is more personal than sending a cold email.

If you have a high-speed internet connection and sufficient bandwidth, then you might consider switching to VoIP. Your calls travel across the internet as data, much like email, bringing you lower running costs.

VoIP is also available for mobile devices, allowing you and your staff to work more flexibly. Remote working becomes easier as the staff takes their business phone number with them.

If you want to investigate managed IT services, your phone system will come into the discussion very early on because of the way that today's phone system works.

So did you answer 'yes' to any, or all, of these questions? If so, it looks like it's time for you to invest in IT support services. We'd love to help you.