How to Choose the Right Managed Services Provider

Devolutions

MANAGED SERVICES PROVIDERS HELP BUSINESSES — ESPECIALLY SMALL AND MID-SIZED FIRMS

Managed services providers (MSPs) **help businesses** — especially small and mid-sized firms that don't have millions of dollars to hire in-house IT experts — **increase their capacity and skillset, reduce risk, exploit growth opportunities, enhance user/customer experience**, and perhaps most importantly these days, **embrace uncertainty.**

However, as in any other industry, **not all MSPs are created equal.** Some are **professional, capable, affordable, and ethical** — and **some fail to check these essential boxes**. Connecting with the former kind of MSP is extremely important if you hope to avoid getting stuck in expensive multi-year contracts, while dealing with data loss, downtime, cyberattacks, user disengagement, and customer loss.

Fortunately, if your business is looking for a competent and affordable MSP, there's no reason to hope for the best while preparing for the worst. **Instead, you can wisely choose an MSP that is worthy of your trust by focusing on these seven factors:**

1. Services

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.** At the same time, one of the most important services that your MSP should offer — if not the single most vital — is **advice and consultation**. Your **MSP should guide you to make decisions and investments that are best for your business**, not for theirs.

2. Responsiveness

When you have a challenge to solve or an opportunity to exploit, the last thing you want is to chase down your MSP to get the attention and service you deserve — and indeed, which you are paying for. To avoid that costly and stressful experience, **pay close attention to different MSPs' responsiveness standards.** You want to know **how long it typically takes them to respond, how fast they resolve issues, and what to expect if you need on-site support** — and you want all standards to be locked into the Service Level Agreement.

3. Coverage

Just like Superman can't take a vacation in case something goes wrong (e.g. kitty gets stuck in a tree, evil henchman tries to take over world, etc.), **your MSP needs to monitor your infrastructure 24/7/365** in the event that your network or systems go offline or degrade for any reason.

4. **Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery**

Speaking of 24/7/365 coverage: **you can't afford to go off the grid in the event of a hardware failure, software failure, local power outage, cyberattack, or any other event** — because when that happens, your employee productivity grinds to a halt, and your customers start to head to the competition. To prevent this, **your MSP should implement tools and policies that support business continuity and disaster recovery.**

5. **Technology and Vendor Neutral**

Due to their vast experience, **good MSPs have intelligent views on choosing one technology or vendor vs. another**. This is perfectly fine, and in fact tapping into this knowledge is one of the benefits of working with an MSP — because what they know, you know. However, **your MSP should not aggressively insist on a specific technology or vendor**. Instead, they should **adjust and respond to your preferences and current infrastructure**, and **have good professional relationships with multiple vendors** — since once they are hired, they will be responsible for interacting with them and holding them accountable.

6. **Communication**

Yes, the best **MSPs can have robust expert-to-expert discussions with members of your in-house IT team**. But when it comes to speaking with non-techies, **they need to adjust their vocabulary and approach accordingly** — especially when it comes **to training business end users on things like password and access management policies**. Any MSP that cannot communicate effectively with diverse audiences is going to be part of the problem, not the solution. And speaking of solutions: **good MSPs don't hoard information. They gladly and freely share it**, because they want you to know what they've done, what they're doing, what they plan to do, and why. They wisely understand that the best client is an informed client.

7. **Consistency**

On the IT landscape there are good days and there are bad days. Obviously, **you can't expect your MSP to completely protect you 100% from cyberattacks or hardware failures**, since that's simply not realistic. But you can (and should) **insist that your MSP is consistent in terms of their approach and professional standards**. They should never lose sight of the fact that they work for you — not the other way around.

The Bottom Line

MSPs are vital for helping businesses stay safe, seize opportunities, strategically expand, and support end users and customers. Keeping the above factors in mind **will help ensure that the MSP you choose is a profitable asset**, and not a costly liability.

Are You an MSP?

At Devolutions, **we are proud to have many great MSPs as part of our community**, and which use Remote Desktop Manager, Password Hub Business, and/or Wayk Bastion to support their clients. To learn more about our MSP-focused solutions, **contact us at sales@devolutions.net**.