

A close-up photograph of a network switch or patch panel with several white Ethernet cables plugged into the ports. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter.

What to Consider When Choosing an IT Services Provider

The Top Seven Considerations

Technology underpins the operations of any business. Effectively utilizing technology can not only help a business run efficiently and increase productivity, but if properly leveraged, can become a competitive advantage.

Given the value IT can bring to your business, finding a reliable provider to partner with for your IT needs is an important decision.

1. Technical Expertise

First and foremost, any service provider needs to have the technical skills to deliver the services your business needs. Does the provider understand the technologies your business uses? Are they certified in those systems? The right technical skills to provide the insights and solutions your company needs to grow is paramount to achieving value from partnering with a service provider.

A provider should also be up-to-date on the latest technical skills so they can identify the technology that will be most helpful in moving your business forward. Are they experienced in data migration to the cloud and other cloud management services? Do they have resources that can build software or mobile applications to support your business needs?

In addition to IT skills, do they also have in-house cybersecurity resources that can help protect your business? Rather than having to contract with another provider for cybersecurity in addition to an IT service provider, look for a partner with expertise in both areas from one in-house team. Not only will an integrated IT and cyber team save the hassle of trying to coordinate a game plan with two separate providers should you experience a security incident, but an integrated partner will be better equipped to identify and remediate any threats more quickly.

Here are some of the key services IT providers should offer:

- Backup and disaster recovery
- Cloud services
- Help desk support
- Cybersecurity, including data and network security
- Strategic IT consultation

2. Industry Experience

While the technical fundamentals may be the same, it's important for the provider to understand the unique challenges, compliance, and industry regulations associated with your particular market. Working with a partner who knows how to deliver optimal IT for your specific industry saves you time, helps you avoid mistakes, and gives you an advantage over your competitors partnering with a generalist managed services provider (MSP).

While some managed service providers claim to be industry-agnostic, the IT services partner that will deliver the biggest ROI for your organization will likely be industry-specialized. Your partner should carry industry and compliance-related certifications that qualify them to service the most complex requirements of many industries to help you navigate roadblocks specific to your industry.

3. Reputation

Maintaining an excellent business reputation involves more than just providing high-quality products and services, but also ensuring that potential clients recognize your company and its capabilities. But the buck doesn't stop with your company alone – it also extends to who your organization chooses to partner with.

Your strategic partners are an extension of your company's reputation. So when choosing an IT services partner, you want to be sure that you know the answers to the following questions:

- How long has the provider been in business?
- Do they have good references and client case studies?
- Have they been recognized for their work within the IT industry or won industry awards?

4. Integrated Cybersecurity

No longer an optional service, having cybersecurity in place today is critical to protecting your business. Many service providers don't have the cybersecurity expertise in-house and end up outsourcing this key function to a third-party. This can cause a disconnect in the event of an incident when there are multiple providers involved.

Be sure to look for a provider that can support both IT services from one in-house integrated team that help your company grow as well as cybersecurity services that keep your company safe.

5. Partnership

Moving your business forward through IT most likely isn't going to be achieved through a "one and done" approach but rather through a long-term, strategic partnership. The provider you choose should be committed to an ongoing relationship where they develop a deep understanding of your business, meet with you at least quarterly for a strategic review of business challenges and opportunities, and provide a multi-year roadmap so you understand the investment that is necessary to achieve your business outcomes.

Additionally, your IT services partner should be just as dedicated to your success as you are. Make sure that the provider you choose has the resources and skills to scale with you as your business evolves and grows over time. They should be able to demonstrate how they are able to pivot quickly from a technology standpoint to help your company address an ever-changing environment, such as supporting the rapid increase in remote workers.

6. Transparency

Understanding the value your IT provider brings and the specific actions they're taking to support your business is part of a good relationship between the provider and your organization. In addition to regularly scheduled business reviews, working with a provider that prioritizes visibility (for instance, a client portal where you can see in real-time what is happening across your company from an IT and cybersecurity standpoint) is a real value-added service.

When evaluating potential partners, ask if they have an application that allows you to view the work being done at your organization and, if so, request a product demonstration to see if the information meets your needs.

7. Strategic Insights

Given that one of the main reasons you are looking to hire an IT services provider is to help your company grow through technology, it's important that the provider you choose is able to provide a strategic IT perspective and insights that allow your company to thrive.

This is typically provided through access to one or more of the provider's key resources, such as a vCIO (Virtual Chief Information Officer) and a vCISO (Virtual Chief Information Security Officer). The ability to interact with these consultants can be a real game-changer for your overall IT strategy.

The Bottom Line?

The bottom line is that when choosing an IT services provider, you're looking for a long-term strategic partner that streamlines your unique business operations and provides transparent guidance towards a healthier IT and cybersecurity environment.

Whether it is improving efficiency, saving on costly disaster recovery by identifying potential vulnerabilities before they occur, or preparing a quantifiable roadmap to a more secure technology environment, a managed services provider can bring great value to your business and improve your bottom line. Finding a true partner that brings cohesion to your business technology strategy and addresses all your IT and security needs from one integrated partner is essential for your business growth.

About Corsica Technologies

Consistently recognized as one of the top managed IT and cybersecurity providers, Corsica Technologies helps organizations leverage technology as a competitive business advantage. Our integrated IT and cybersecurity services protect companies and enable them to succeed.

**Accelerating Your
Business Success.**

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