A Complete Guide to Managed IT Services

**Inform.
Transform.
Protect.**

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What are managed IT services?

More and more people are transitioning to remote working in the wake of the pandemic. And we've seen a surge in the amount of businesses choosing to optimise their IT processes and improve the efficiency of their teams. It's a straightforward process to implement a new protocol, a new system, or a new idea. But when it comes to digital transformation, companies often fall short. Employees might lack the expertise required and new hardware can be costly. You can't fix every tech problem with a quick Google search. You can't always just turn it off and then on again. And your receptionist's 'computer whizz' son doesn't know all the answers. For this reason, many businesses looking to scale up without depleting their financial resources are opting to use managed IT services. Managed IT service providers take the weight off your shoulders. You can outsource IT tasks that your workers can't do. And you can access virtual IT infrastructures that your company wouldn't be able to afford (or house).

As part of a subscription service, you can reap the benefits of having a trained team of IT specialists at your disposal. All without the cost of taking on new, trained IT professionals. Vaguely techie employees are left to focus on their work. They can do what they do best rather than waste time scratching their heads at an error message on a blue screen.
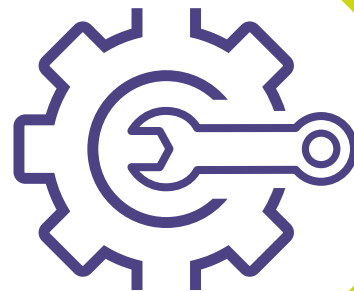
Introducing the managed services provider (MSP)

Your managed services provider (MSP) can support your business across everything from your network to your infrastructure, cybersecurity or applications.

What you use this team for on a day to day basis depends on what your company does. Many businesses use managed service providers for cloud services and data storage. Cloud platforms store data safely and remotely. Your managed service provider monitors your documents' security and is there to assist in disaster recovery if data is compromised. Cloud providers can save you a lot of money on hardware costs, offering masses of storage space with remote access from anywhere. Other MSP services include remote monitoring and management support services, managing anything from one computer to an entire network of computers for you. Your MSP works behind the scenes to monitor your hardware and software and make sure they are working. But these services can extend outside of the office too.

How do these services help?

With more people working from home long term, these services are a godsend when employees encounter tech difficulties in their houses. Someone can't access a file? The remote access system is down? Your manager has used a filter in a Zoom call and turned themselves into a potato? Who you gonna call? Your managed service provider, of course. Let's say you've got your own systems in place for all of the above. And they're working fine thank you very much. Managed IT service providers can still prove valuable assistance in a time of crisis. Many offer break fix service level agreements to help your existing IT team to solve problems outside of their capabilities. In fact, managed service models emerged from break fix subscription-based services. This managed service model allows you to outsource the tasks that your own team can't do. You adjust the level of services required depending on your needs. Pay your subscription and your MSP service is a phone call away, ready to tackle the issue should a problem pop up.

Advantages of managed IT services

24/7 support

MSPs are the roadside assistance providers of the digital world. It's better to have one in case you need it. Rather than break down and wish you'd ticked the box and paid the small monthly fee when you bought your car insurance. And they're open 24/7. Your in house IT team won't be there to help you at 8pm on a Saturday night when the system crashes. Your MSP will.

Professional expertise

Most employees are employed to do a specific role. Yes, people are more tech-savvy. But it's unlikely that Dave's GCSE in Computer Science is going to help you set up and maintain an efficient digital infrastructure. And it won't get you through a data security breach. He can support you when the printer ink runs out, but you should leave the bigger jobs to the professionals.

Access to the latest innovations

Smaller companies often can't afford to dish out thousands of pounds for the latest technology. But your managed IT service provider can. By outsourcing the techie stuff, businesses can reap the benefits of new developments without having to splash out on them. And here's the best part: you don't even need to worry about updates as your MSP does that for you.

In-house or managed IT services?

Larger companies sometimes choose to have their IT service desk managed in house. If you're a huge corporation, this makes sense as you can train up staff to work on your systems. Even with a specialist team many corporations choose to use MSPs to back up their data. For other companies, it doesn't make sense to hire an IT technician. Why pay someone to sit around waiting for something to break so that they can leap into action? Your MSP is waiting instead. They've been working on thousands of other odd tech jobs in the meantime to build up their vast repertoire of experience. Thanks to the wonders of the internet, that person isn't taking up space in your office. They're not demanding a full time salary, or using up all the fancy tea bags you left in the break room without asking. Everything is remote. You can get on with your day knowing that a friendly computer nerd is in the ether, making sure everything runs smoothly.

**Managed
IT Services**
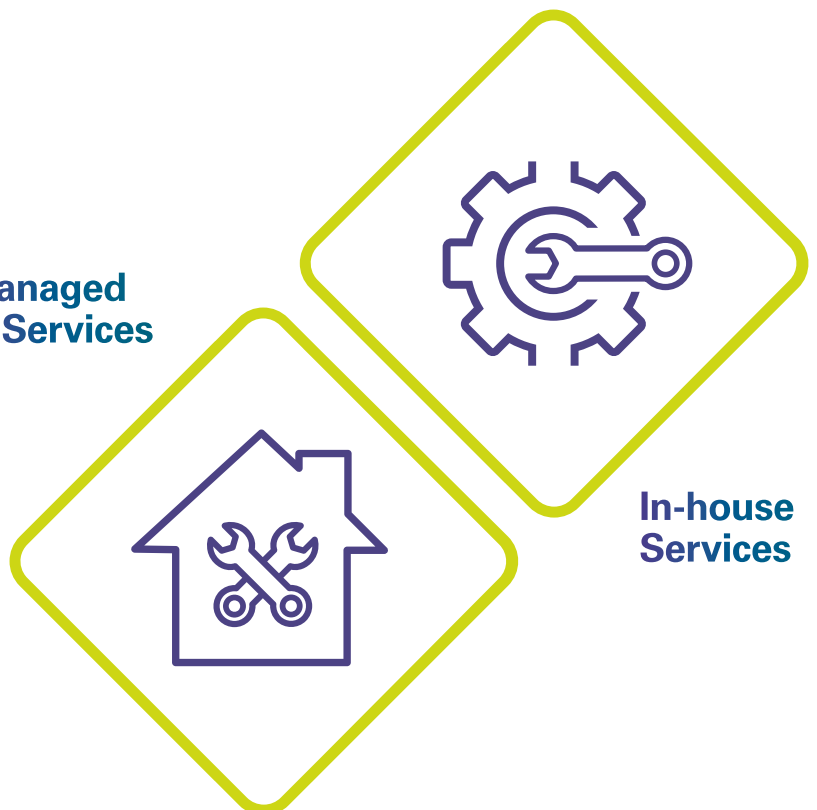
**In-house
Services**

A dual approach is the best solution

As with most of our articles, the answer to "which should you use" is a resounding "both". A dual approach to data storage means your data is backed up both in house and by your MSP. In-house IT services are better equipped to liaise with MSPs. And two tech wizards are better than one when it comes to thinking up solutions if you're in a tight spot.

Our 4 main tips when looking for a managed IT service are as follows:

- Be upfront about your technological capabilities. Establishing your service level agreement upfront sets out your expectations for the service you'll receive.

- Request an audit. Approach some reputable MSPs and see what they think of your current system. Some may have experience working with similar companies and may have good ideas on how to best boost your systems. Ask for relevant experience or testimonials.

- Assess their accreditations. An ISO accredited service provider has been audited to ensure their practices are up to scratch. You have peace of mind that they'll do a good job.

- Assume your business will grow. Can this provider scale up their services in line with your business growth? Are they flexible in terms of the levels of service they provide?

Get in touch

Our team is on hand to answer any further questions you may have about managed IT services. Drop us a message or give us a call and we'll get back to you as soon as we can.

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